

## Chapter 3. A Negotiated Transition to a Limited Democracy

This chapter will deal with the period of democratization between 1981 and 1987. There were two negotiations over the transition to democracy during this period. One attempt in 1986 failed, but another succeeded in 1987. These different results will be examined by using the negotiated transition framework and the mediation model, after describing major events and illuminating how the major actors interacted during this period. The main events are the liberalization policy of the Chun regime, the emergence of strong social movements, the election in 1985, the first negotiation attempt in 1986, the June movement in 1987, and the negotiated transition to a limited democracy in 1987. By examining these events this chapter will explore how the major actors in this period learned from the failure during 1979-80, how the major actors changed their strategic choices when facing the counterparts' choices, what characteristics made for different results in the negotiations, and what the meaning was of the negotiated transition to the establishment of democracy in Korea.

### Reestablishment of the Authoritarian Regime

After the repression of the Kwangju pro-democracy movement, the Chun Doo Hwan group prepared to create a new ruling party in August of 1980. In creating the ruling party, the Democratic Justice Party, the Defense Security Command (DSC) played a critical role.<sup>1</sup> The DSC also intentionally created a multi-party system to maintain favorable conditions for the ruling party in dealing with several weak opposition parties. Due to those origins, the ruling Democratic Justice Party (DJP) could not have autonomous power. The core members of the regime believed that either the military or the DSC was the center of the power.<sup>2</sup> Eventually the DJP formed by a coordination of the DSC and the National Security Planning Agency on January 15, 1981. Thus the Blue House, the NSPA, and the DSC controlled the DJP including the opposition parties such as the Democratic Korean Party, the Korea National Party, the Democratic Socialist Party, and the Socialist Party.<sup>3</sup>

In a situation in which many politicians were prohibited from participating in the election, Chun Doo Hwan became president by an electoral college vote on February 25, 1981.<sup>4</sup> In the general

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<sup>1</sup>For how the DSC created the parties including opposition parties, see Dong-Yoon Han, "Minjungdang changdang jakjon" [The Operation for Creating the Democratic Justice Party], *Wolgan Choson* (October 1988): 404-18.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 409.

<sup>3</sup>The DSP and SP were created as symbolic parties. They did not have any autonomous abilities to represent their ideological interests under the regime. As other opposition parties, they were created by the DSC to play a pro-government party role. Ibid., 414-15.

<sup>4</sup>The Chun regime used the Committee of the Emergency measures for National Guard to prepare a new constitution and other laws during the transitory period from May 1980-March 1981. It passed the law "special law for renewal of the atmosphere of politics" on November 3, 1980. This law prohibited 567 politicians from participating in politics until June 30, 1988. Sung-Sik Park, *Sungo bunsokui irongwa silge* [The Theory and Reality in Analyzing Elections] (Seoul: Daeyoung Munwhasa, 1985), 59.

election, which was held on March 25, 1981, the DJP became the ruling party with 151 seats. In general, the elections occurred in an atmosphere of limited political freedom. Although there were some challenges from the social movements and the expelled politicians, the regime maintained its tight rule over the society until the end of 1983. Through its economic policy, the regime succeeded in increasing the economic growth rate from -5.2% in 1980 to 6.2% in 1982, and 9.3% in 1983. The tight control of the currency increase, the rationalization of industries, and the imposed stabilization measures all contributed to the accomplishment of high economic performance.

In order to undermine the capability of the workers' collective actions, the Chun regime arrested leaders of democratic unions which were active or organized during 1979-1980. With the first purification measures, local branches of unions were dissolved and small-and medium-sized businesses suffered a serious blow. The ratio of union organization fell sharply from 20% to 16% by the end of 1980.<sup>5</sup> With the second purification measure in September, 1980, about 80 union leaders were arrested and male leaders were sent to "Purification Camp", which was designed for correcting criminals.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the regime revised the three basic labor laws in December, 1980. Those were: the Standard Working law, the Trade Union law, and a new Labor Dispute law. These laws were revised to make it more difficult for workers to form unions, organize strikes, and form coalitions with other social groups.<sup>7</sup> By establishing the laws, the regime paved the way for the legal oppression of the workers' collective actions. As a result of the harsh repression of the regime, most of the democratic unions collapsed by the end of 1982.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout this period of transition, the U.S. changed its position in dealing with the Chun regime from absolute to selective support. However, that change did not mean an automatic guarantee of democratization of Korea. Although there were changes in U.S. foreign policy, events

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<sup>5</sup>Myung-Guk Jang, "Haebanghu hanguk nodong undongui baljachui [The Trace of Korean Labor Movement After the Liberation]," in *Hanguk nodong undongron 1* [The Theory of Korean Labor Movement], Kum-Su Kim and Hyun-Che Park (Seoul: Miraesa, 1985), 140-41.

<sup>6</sup>Basically, the Chun regime treated the union leaders as criminals who threatened economic development and social stability.

<sup>7</sup>The regime changed the existing union structure, "decentralizing the union movement to the company level" through the Trade Union Law. At the same time, "the regime increased the government's power in the mediation of disputes, subjected collective action to prior government approval, and prohibited the involvement of outside groups - grassroots church organizations and students, in particular-in labor disputes." This prohibition of third-party intervention in collective actions was critical to preventing assistance from outside of the union. Stephen Haggard and Chung-in Moon, "The State, Politics, and Economic Development in Postwar South Korea," in *State and Society in Contemporary Korea*, ed. Hagen Koo (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 82. Moreover, the Trade Union law prevented the workers from participating in politics collectively. That is, the union cannot donate money for a specific party and support a specific party publicly. This measure block any possibility for the workers to participate in politics collectively. Myung-Guk Jang, "Haebanghu hanguk nodong undongui baljachui [The Trace of Korean Labor Movement After the Liberation], 141.

<sup>8</sup>These unions were Chonggye Clothing and Textile Union, Bando Co., Data Control, Wonpung Textile and so forth. Dae-Young Chung, "Jaeya minju nodong undongui jungae kwajunggwa hyunhwang [The Current Situation and Process of Democratic Labor Movement of Jaeya], in *Hanguk nodong undongui inyom* [The Ideology of Korean Labor Movement], ed. Korean Christian Industrial Development Institute (Korea, Chungnam: Jungamsa, 1988), 183-84.

were needed to force the U.S. to take a different policy. Since the major goal of the U.S. in the Korean peninsula was to maintain political stability and guarantee economic benefits, any regime which could guarantee these goals would be supported by the U.S.<sup>9</sup> In order to secure these goals, the U.S. supported the Chun regime as long as it cooperated with the U.S. policy, which meant that the regime could maintain political stability in Korea with any means and could provide a favorable market for U.S. businesses.

For the first three years of the Chun regime, the Reagan administration placed an emphasis on the construction of the East Asian Defense system with Korea and Japan. For this strategic reason, the U.S. encouraged Japanese economic aid to the Chun regime and shared the costs of defense.<sup>10</sup> Since the Soviet Union was still a major threat for this region, the cold war atmosphere was maintained. The Reagan administration maintained its policy on democratization in Korea, i.e., gradual democratization through compromise between the regime and the opposition party.<sup>11</sup> Based on this principle, the Reagan administration encouraged the regime to take a more liberal policy when the regime obtained political stability and high economic growth. In addition, the Reagan administration praised the Chun regime's pledge to transfer power peacefully. To improve the status of Korea in the international arena in 1983, the Reagan administration supported Korea's bid for hosting the Olympic Games of 1988.<sup>12</sup> This became a major accomplishment for the Chun regime, and the Reagan administration used this chance to encourage the regime to open its tight control on the society. As a result of this encouragement and of the Chun regime's confidence in its accomplishment of high economic growth liberalization came at the end of 1983.

### The Liberalization and Emergence of the Social Movements

In late 1983, President Chun Doo Hwan began to liberalize his rule by lifting a ban on opposition politicians including Kim Young Sam who had staged hunger strikes to demand democratization in 1983. Kim Young Sam, who was banned in 1981 and was not permitted to participate in politics until 1988, broke the long silence and staged a hunger strike on May 18, 1983.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>William H. Gleysteen, Jr and Alan D. Romberg, "Korea: Asian Paradox," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1987): 1052-53.

<sup>10</sup>Hanguk Jungchi Yonguhoe, *Hanguk jungchisa* [The History of Korean Politics] (Seoul: Paeksan, 1990), 382-83.

<sup>11</sup>George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner's Book, 1993), 979.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 978.

<sup>13</sup>Sung-Sik Park, *Sungo bunsokui ironkwa silge* [The Theory and Reality in Analyzing Elections], 72; and Sang-Hwi Han and Yon-Ho Oh, *Kim Dae Jung, Kim Young Sam: Kyungjaengkwa kongjonui yoksa* [Kim Dae Jung Kim Young Sam: A History of Competition and Cooperation] (Seoul: Uiamchulpan, 1992), 154-5. His demands included the release of all political prisoners, a removal of the ban on politicians and a guarantee of political activities from them, freedom of press, allowance of ousted professors, workers, and students to recover their rights, and a revision of constitution.

Although this event was not reported by mass media in Korea, it contributed to revitalizing the struggles of the Jaeya group and the students against the regime. Moreover, Kim Dae Jung, who was expelled by the Chun regime and fled to the U.S. in 1982, strongly supported Kim Young Sam's hunger strike and demonstrated his willingness to form a coalition with him to struggle against the regime on May 24, 1983. Although Kim Young Sam's 23-day hunger strike failed to obtain any of his demands from the regime, it contributed to providing the momentum which students, the Jaeya, and former NDP politicians had formerly used to fight against the regime. Furthermore, with this event, Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung, who had lost their opportunity to obtain democracy by competing with each other in 1980, formed a coalition to struggle against the regime.<sup>14</sup>

The regime's liberalization policy permitted both student activists and professors who had been expelled from campus for their anti-government actions to return to campuses.<sup>15</sup> In addition, the liberalization included a "Campus Autonomy" policy which withdrew police from university campuses and permitted students to organize their own organizations.<sup>16</sup>

The possible sources of the Chun regime's liberalization are as follows. First, the regime had confidence in their economic development policy. Second, the U.S., which supported the Chun regime from the beginning, urged the regime to relax its tight control and to establish its legitimacy by giving opposition groups a chance to participate in the institutional political arena. Third, the protest of the opposition groups contributed to the regime's liberalization. Kim Young Sam's hunger strikes and Kim Dae Jung's activity in the U.S. put pressure on the regime to liberalize its control on the opposition groups.<sup>17</sup> As O'Donnell and Schmitter pointed out, the Chun regime, which suffered from lack of legitimacy due to its brutal crackdown on the Kwangju movement and its illegal coup, decided to lessen its control of society because it had confidence in its accomplishments in the economy and in the enhancement of its position internationally.<sup>18</sup> The situation developed differently from the expectation of the regime. With this opportunity, the social movements started to organize themselves and began to demand democratization.

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<sup>14</sup>Sang-Hwi Han and Yon-Ho Oh, *Kim Dae Jung, Kim Young Sam*, 157-8.

<sup>15</sup>Sagyejul Editorial Staffs, ed., *Chunhwan: 6wol tujaenggwa minjuhwaui jinro* [Turning-over: June Struggle and the Direction of Democratization] (Seoul: Sagyeju, 1987), 41-57; and Dae-Hwa Chung, "Hanguk jungchi byundong, 1987-1992: guka-jungchi sahoe-siminsahoe kwangyerul jungsimuiro" [The Change of Politics of Korea 1987-1992: Focus on the Relationships Between State-Political Society-Civil Society], (Ph.D. diss., Seoul National University, 1995), 80.

<sup>16</sup>Wonmo Dong, "University Students in South Korean Politics: Patterns of Radicalization in the 1980s," *Journal of International Affairs* (Winter/Spring 1987): 241.

<sup>17</sup>Im, "Politics of Transition," 207-09.

<sup>18</sup>O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, 15. They explain the reason why the authoritarian regimes try to open their policy. According to them, the regimes suffer "ideological schizophrenia." That is, these regimes "practice dictatorship and repression in the present while promising democracy and freedom in the future. To justify themselves, the regimes define them only "as transitional powers, while attempting to shift attention to their immediate substantive accomplishments: social peace or economic development." If the authoritarian regimes are confident with their accomplishments, they try to improve the lack of legitimacy by adopting liberalization policy to solve the discrepancies.

## The Student Movements

After the failure in the spring of 1980 and the Kwangju movement, student movements reevaluated the previous struggles and built a scientific theory with which to struggle against the Chun regime. The results of the theoretical debates and adoption of a new theory affected the strategies and tactics of the student movement. Above all the harsh oppression practiced by the regime contributed to the radicalization of student movements during this period. After the crackdown of the regime and the U.S. assistance of the regime, student activists turned their attention to the experiences of other Third World countries' struggles and their theoretical trends. The Dependency theory, liberation theology from Latin America, Neo-Marxist theory from Western Europe, Maoism, and orthodox Leninism were the main sources of their theoretical references until 1985. Eventually, North Korean ideology and revolutionary theory, Juche ideology, was accepted as one major theory. The process of the theoretical debates was a process of trial and error. In addition, the struggles were an attempt to modify those foreign theories in order to apply them to the Korean situation. With the adoption of a new theory, different strategies and tactics were used and these strategies affected the entire relationship with the opposition party and with the regime during the struggle for democracy.

The first debate was named the "Mu-Hak" debate. Although both the Murim and Hakrim groups defined the regime and the U.S. as arch-enemies and defined the goal of their movement as a revolution, there were some differences regarding the strategies used to obtain that goal. The major issue of the two different groups stemmed from different ways to strengthen the capacity of the movement. The Murim group argued that since the capability of the Minjung movement was weak except for its student movement, the student movements had to lead all the Minjung movement.<sup>19</sup> In order to do that, it was necessary to preserve the ability of the student movement. The student movement had to avoid adventurous protests which caused destruction of the movement. Instead, the student movement needed to prepare itself to boost and support the Minjung movement. To obtain this goal, the student activists needed to study and train themselves while they were in the student movement. Later they had to go into factories to teach and organize workers, who were the major force of revolution. The immediate task of the student movement was to discipline students and prepare them to become revolutionaries.<sup>20</sup>

In contrast, the Hakrim group criticized the Murim for the following reasons. First, the

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<sup>19</sup>The term Minjung is similar to the term people but this term was used in Korea to refer to a broad basic lower-class groups such as workers, farmers, and urban poor. The term is not a mere reflection of economic class, but also includes middle classes, national bourgeoisies, progressive intellectuals, and students. There were debates about the category of Minjung within the social movements. Although there are significant differences about including middle classes and national bourgeoisies in the Minjung category, generally the theorists of the movement defined the term as a broad category. Thus, the Minjung movement is a "class-based political movement." For details of the discussion of the terminology, see Hagen Koo, "The State, *Minjung*, and the Working Class in South Korea," in *State and Society in Contemporary Korea*, ed. Hagen Koo (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 142-47.

<sup>20</sup>Ilsonjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa* [The History of Theoretical Debates of Student Movements] (Seoul: Ilsonjung, 1988), 29- 30.

Hakrim argued that the logic of refraining from political protests was wrong since all the other movement sectors were in difficult situations and had no practical capability to mobilize people, so the students, who were relatively well-organized and possessed political consciousness, had to activate the movement by staging political protests. Second, the student movements were a spearhead of the social movement, but it was not the leading class. Instead, the workers were the main class who could lead a revolution. Therefore, the Murim made a mistake in assuming the student movement was the leading organization of the entire Minjung movement, which needed to be preserved above all. Third, the logic of preparation without struggle was not considered a correct way to improve the capability of movements. The Hakrim argued that organizations can be disciplined and improve their capability through struggles against the regime.<sup>21</sup> As a way to enhance the leading role of the labor movement, the Hakrim group tried to unite labor movements and student movements under a single leadership. However, the efforts of these two groups failed when the police arrested the Murim groups in November, 1980 and the Hakrim groups in July, 1981.

Succeeding the first debate, “Yabi” and “Chunmang” debates broke out in 1983.<sup>22</sup> The Yabi group was in line with the Murim, and the Chunmang group adhered to the logic of the Hakrim. Although these two debates demonstrated more articulate arguments regarding strategies and tactics, their basic arguments were focused on the role of the student movement in the Minjung movement and on the usefulness of leading political struggles.<sup>23</sup> Although the Murim group’s logic was accepted in the student movements, there were two symbolic events which showed the change of perspective of students about the U.S. Student activists burned the United States Information Service Center building in Pusan on March 18, 1982. They accused the U.S. of involvement in the Kwangju massacre and of assisting the regime. Several days later, the student activists at Kangwon University burned the U.S. flag in a campus rally on April 22, 1982 accusing the U.S. of assisting the regime. Despite the fact that the two events were not orchestrated by the student organization leadership, the events showed different perspectives on the U.S. The students started to view the U.S. as a kind of imperialist country. In general, the theoretical articulation of their strategies, tactics, and goals in the student movement became clear by the end of 1982.

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 31-34. and Yong Han. *80nyondae hanguk sahoewa haksaeung undong* [The Korean Society in the 1980s and the Student Movement] (Seoul: Chungnyunsa, 1989), 68-9.

<sup>22</sup>‘Yabi’ is a short version of ‘Yahak Bipan (The Critique of Night School)’ which was the title of a pamphlet. ‘Chunmang’ is the title of ‘Haksangundongui Chunmang (The Prospects of the Student Movement)’ which was also the title of another pamphlet.

<sup>23</sup>Ilsonjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeung undong nonjaengsa*, 39-45. The Yabi group adopted the logic of preparationists, thus they argued that restraining political struggles which would cause a serious blow to them in a situation where the regime was overwhelmingly superior to the social movement. The Yabi group criticized the Chunmang group’s leading political struggle strategy as an adventurous strategy which would risk many student activists and, as a result, jeopardize the Minjung movement eventually. In contrast, the Chunmang group argued the necessity of leading political struggle to disclose the regime’s illegitimacy and to let the people know how the regime was undemocratic in dealing with its opposition groups. The group believed that the student movement was the only possible group to launch such a political struggle which would contribute to the development of the Minjung movement.

In addition, students developed their tactics by learning from their experiences in Kwangju and from other street protests. The 1982 street protests were not expanded due to the leadership of the Murim, which focused on the enhancement of organization and consciousness of students through cultural or academic events, instead of political protests in the streets.<sup>24</sup> However, when the issues of the distortion of history textbook content in Japan were raised in September, 1982, the students organized mass protests in the streets. This successful event enhanced the confidence of students about their ability to carry out street demonstrations. In addition, the students discovered the effectiveness of coalition in mobilizing students. After this event, students formed a network across campuses and built a coalition organization beyond the limits of individual campuses. The coordination of street protests also became a major tactic.<sup>25</sup>

Along with the development of the strategies and tactics in the student movement, another round of theoretical debates occurred during 1984-85. It was the so-called “C-N-P debates.”<sup>26</sup> According to the Civil Democratic Revolution theory, Korean society is a peripheral capitalist society, in which not only social classes such as workers, farmers, and urban poor but also small-and medium-size businesses and the national bourgeoisie were oppressed by the imperialists and the military dictatorship. Therefore the major confrontation was between the military dictatorship and the Minjung, which includes the middle classes. This theory emphasizes the role of the national bourgeoisie, progressive intellectuals, youths, and students. However, it locates the workers as an assistant group in the revolution. The immediate task of the Minjung movement was to struggle against the military dictatorship and acquire a liberal democracy. After accomplishing this goal the imperialist should be the next target of a revolution. This theory is based on bourgeoisie revolution, and aims to build a liberal democracy.

The National Democratic Revolution theory viewed Korean society as a Neo-colonialist monopoly capitalism in which Korean capitalism deepened its dependency on world capitalism before it obtained its autonomous development. In this situation, merchant capital developed into industrial capital under state protection, which led to the concentration of and the accumulation of capital from which monopoly capitalism emerged. Therefore, the major conflict in Korea was between the military dictatorship, based on imperialism and monopoly capitalism, and the Minjung. The NDR emphasized the role of workers, farmers, and urban poor as a major leading power within the Minjung movement. Although the theory emphasized the leading role of “the basic classes” it tried to include the middle classes as an assistant group in the revolution. The students and revolutionary intelligentsia spearheaded the revolution. The target of the revolution was imperialism and the military dictatorship at the same time, for the goal of the revolution was to construct the Minjung democracy.<sup>27</sup>

The People’s Democratic Revolution defined Korean society as a state monopoly capitalism

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 77.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 87.

<sup>26</sup>The C stands for the first letter of the Civil Democratic Revolution, the N for the National Democratic Revolution, and the P for the People’s Democratic Revolution.

<sup>27</sup>Ilsonjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa*, 60-65. The concept of a people’s democracy was still vague at that moment.

in which Korean capitalism was fully established along with internal development paths, and normal class division was maintained. The major confrontation is between one bloc, including the military regime and the imperialists based on state monopoly and the bourgeoisie, and another bloc including the Minjung and the revolutionary intellectuals. Unlike other theories, the PDR excluded the middle classes and the national bourgeoisie from the revolutionary group. In its strategy, the PDR ignored the possibility of forming a coalition with the middle classes. The goal was the same as that of the NDR, that is, the imperialist and the military regime should be common targets. The PDR was the most radical theory among three theories: PDR, NDR, and CDR.<sup>28</sup>

Among these theories, the NDR obtained the majority of support from the student movements and other social movement sectors until 1985. However, the content of the Minjung democracy was not fully articulated yet at that time. Instead, the NDR used the so-called “Sammin” ideology.<sup>29</sup> Although these debates lacked a theoretical coherence in articulating their goals, there were some clear attempts to understand the U.S. role in Korean society. These theories analyzed the relationship between the Chun regime as the dependent state and the U.S. as an imperialist. Therefore, the U.S. and the Chun regime became major targets of the revolution. With these debates, the leading role of the workers in the revolution was clearly declared. Still there were differences about the inclusion of the middle classes and the national bourgeoisie. Although the theorists defined the U.S. as an imperialist country they did not adopt the idea of attacking the U.S. directly. The anti-American slogans did not show up at this time. Rather the target of struggle was the military regime.

Faced with the regime’s liberalization and “Campus Autonomization” policy at the end of 1983, students pushed themselves to form an autonomous student association within campuses. Since the police withdrawal from the campuses, the students’ collective actions became easier to stage. In evaluating the liberalization policy and planning their future direction, two different groups emerged from the student group. One group focused on the importance of student association as a popular organization and as an organization of struggle. Another group emphasized the limitations of the student association in political struggles, and the necessity to form a variety of special committees which can perform political struggles.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 84-85.

<sup>29</sup>Three Min: Minjok (Nation), Minju (Democracy), and Minjung (People). The goal of the NDR was the realization of the ‘Sammin’ which would guarantee national self-reliance against imperialist and substantive democratization, including economic equality. As it can be seen, however, there was some logical contradictions, since the Minjung cannot be a goal, but a subject to perform a struggle. This contradiction was later pointed out and the NDR group merged into the CA group.

<sup>30</sup>The two different groups were called MC and MT. MC is the abbreviation for the ‘Main Current’ group, which interpreted the liberalization policy as a result of interaction of international factors, such as U.S. pressure and the relaxation of tension around the Korean peninsula by the improvement of relationship between the U.S. and China during 1983-84. The MC estimated the policy would be maintained for a long time. In order to use this opportunity, students needed to focus on a popular struggle based on students’ support. The MC group adopted gradual strategy as strategy and tactics for the struggle for democracy, that is, focus on the establishment of student association and democratization of campus as a first step. The political struggle could possibly based on the results of the organization and day-to-day struggles on the campus. MT is the abbreviation of the ‘Minjuwha Tujangwiwonho (the Struggle Committee for Democratization).’ The MT group evaluated the liberalization policy as a result of the Minjung

Since the MC group gained support from student activists in early 1984, the student movements focused on democratization and autonomization of campuses. The demands of the students were the liberalization of the school press, the abolition of coerced confiscation, and the elimination of the graduation quarter system. Although these struggles contributed to obtaining students' attention for a while, the students failed to react to political issues. Toward the end of 1984, when the general election was approaching, the MT group took the initiative in the student movements. This group attempted a variety of adventurous political struggles using unexpected tactics. One of the major struggles was the occupation of the central building of the DJP on November 14, 1984.<sup>31</sup> This event activated people's interest about the election and sent a vivid sign about how students felt about the DJP and the regime, by criticizing the failure of the regime's policy in detail. In a situation where the mass media was under the tight control of the regime, this shocking tactic succeeded in delivering a sensational message to the people.

### The Labor Movements

Although there were some attempts to overcome the repression of the regime, these actions failed because of the regime's tight control over the labor movement until the end of 1983. One of the representative attempts was to form a nationwide organization, the Chunminnoryun (The Confederation of the National Democratic Unions) in 1981. The Chunminnoryun was led by dissident intellectuals who tried to form a type of vanguard organization to initiate the labor movement into revolution. Its purpose was to overcome the economic-issue-oriented struggles of the 1970s and to pursue revolutionary organization. In addition, the Chunminnoryun emphasized the role of the labor movement in the revolution, as well as the importance of building a coalition with other sectors of the social movements, especially with the student movements. This event was critical in the development of the labor movement, in that the first organizational reaction, the Chunminnoryun, clearly stated the leading role of the labor movement and the necessity of building a strong coalition with student movements for revolution. Unlike the 1970's movement, the experience of the Kwangju uprising and the new military group's unprecedented cruel oppression precipitated the radicalization

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movement's struggle against the regime. According to the MT group, the regime opened its tight control to solidify its weak legitimacy by including more conservative groups who were prohibited from politics up to that time, in addition to obtaining more favorable image to prepare for the coming election. Internationally the regime need to improve its notorious cruel reputation by making benevolent gestures. They thus believed that the liberalization would not last long unless they kept fighting against the regime. To use this opportunity, it was necessary to lead political struggle to reveal the regime's deceptiveness to the people. In order to accomplish this type of political struggle it is necessary to form a special committee instead of student association to react quickly to political issues. In addition, the MT group emphasized the importance of "No-Hak yondae" (the coalition between the workers and the students) as a way to assist the workers' political struggle. IIsongjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa*, 81-92.

<sup>31</sup>Yong Han, *80nyondae hanguk sahoewa haksae undong* [The Korean Society in the 1980s and the Student Movement], 108.

of the labor movement.<sup>32</sup> The Chunminnoryun was dissolved by the police in September 1981, due to the lack of a popular base rooted in each factory and the subjective rashness in establishing a nationwide organization without considering its abilities and resources.

After the failure of the Chunminnoryun, most labor movements turned into small group-oriented movements under the severe oppression of the regime until the end of 1983. This strategy was adopted primarily by former student activists, who went to factories in the Seoul area in order to lead labor movements. The student activists who emphasized the importance of labor movements in revolution went into factories in Seoul and around the Seoul area. These groups of students were factions in the student movements who argued “Junbiron” (theory of preparation).<sup>33</sup> Although the small groups existed broadly in Seoul and around the Seoul industrial area, the workers in other regions did not have contact with these activists until “the Great Strikes of Workers” during July and August of 1987.<sup>34</sup>

Although the student activists’ commitment to the labor movement and their efforts to organize workers by improving workers’ political consciousness had limitations, their transition to the labor movement contributed to the improvement of the workers’ consciousness, compared to the 1970s.<sup>35</sup> In general, during the period of 1980-83 the labor movement was under the control of the regime.

When the regime adopted a liberation policy at the end of 1983, the workers started to form new unions. Moreover, the dissolved democratic unions tried to reorganize themselves. Although this situation was similar to the one in the 1970s regarding the goals of the workers’ collective actions, the workers showed changes in their struggles. They tried to overcome the weaknesses of the 1970s unionism, which ignored the importance of political struggles. Moreover, they realized the necessity of building a coalition with other unions as well as with other social movement sectors in the struggle with the regime. The workers realized that establishing and preserving democratic unions were closely related to political struggles. Although the unions did not raise political issues, the

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<sup>32</sup> Since most of the leaders of the labor movements were former student activists their adoption of revolutionary theory is closely related to the development of the theoretical trends in the student movements. Yet the content of revolution was not fully developed.

<sup>33</sup> The theoretical source of this group began in the middle of the 1970s. However, two directly connected groups in the student movement were the ‘Murim’ and ‘Yahakbipan’ groups. Since they evaluated the failure of the Kwangju movement as a result of lack of leadership and organization, they emphasized the construction of a leadership which could orchestrate a revolution and of a nationwide organization which could mobilize people at the revolutionary stage. The attempt to construct the Chunminnoryun was in line with this strategy, but it failed due to the reasons mentioned above. As an alternative strategy, small-group-oriented organizational lines were suggested. Under the tight control of the regime, it was impossible to maintain open organizations such as unions, thus small group organizations were necessary to preserve the capacity of the labor movement. Moreover, the small group had several benefits: it could educate workers effectively ; it could maintain organization safely; and it could prepare for union construction in the future without disclosing the potential members of union.

<sup>34</sup> Chong-Oh Lee, “80nyondae nodongundongron jungaegwajungui ihaerul wihayo” [For the Understanding of the Process of the Labor Movements in the 1980s], in, *Hanguk nodongundongui inyom* [The Ideology of the Korean Labor Movements], ed, Korean Christian Industry Development Center (Chungnam, Korea: Jungamsa, 1988), 224.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 229-31

regime oppressed the workers' strikes, because their strikes endangered the interests of the regime as well as the interests of the owners. The state's strong involvement in oppressing the workers' collective actions contributed to the politicization of the labor movement. During this period (1983-84), many democratic unions were organized and the coordination between the workers and the student movement began.<sup>36</sup>

The workers' collective actions erupted in the wage negotiation season of 1985. Most collective actions and bargaining were led by democratic unions. One representative collective action occurred at Daewoo Automobile Company in April 1985. The student activists-turned-workers led the collective actions and obtained broad support from workers. Although the case was criticized by revolutionary activists, the struggle demonstrated the possibility of the positive role of student activists-turned-workers in the labor movement.<sup>37</sup>

Another memorable strike broke out in Kuro Industrial Complex which is located in Seoul, on June 24, 1985, when the police arrested the union leaders of Daewoo Apparel. The several democratic unions joined the strike demanding that the oppression of the democratic unions in this region be stopped, and the resignation of the Labor ministry, and the abolishment of the labor law.<sup>38</sup>

This alliance strike was the first attempt of its kind since 1950. Although the strikes were quelled by the police and the workers did not obtain what they wanted, the impact of the strikes was critical in that it provided the student activists-turned-workers with a new possibility in which to pursue political struggles, that is, revolution.

Based on positive evaluations of the event, the leaders of the labor movement formed the Sunoryun (The Labor Movement Confederation in Seoul) on August 25, 1985. After this the Innoryun (The Labor Movement Confederation in Incheon) was formed on February 7, 1986.<sup>39</sup> These two organizations played an important role in the development of the labor movement, in that the two

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<sup>36</sup>The "No-Hakyondae" (The Alliance Between Students and Workers) strategy started to gain support on the campuses in the MT groups within the student movements. Several street protests were organized to test and demonstrate the strategy near Kuro Industrial Complex and the Chunggye streets in 1984.

<sup>37</sup>Although the workers obtained high increases of wages through their strikes, the revolutionary activists criticized the strikes based on the following reasons: first, they denied the other social movement sectors' assistance for fear of the regime's repression; second, they gave up the struggles for the rescue of the fired workers who were mostly student-turned-workers; and third, the content of the agreement with the company was so humble that the acquirement of wage increases seemed obtained due to the company's generosity.

<sup>38</sup>Daewoo Apparel, Hyosong Co., Sunil Textile, Garibong Electronic, and Buhung Co. participated in the alliance strikes. Dae-young Chung, "Jaeya Minju Nodong Undongui Jungae Kwajunggwa Hyunhwang [The Current Situation and Process of Democratic Labor Movement of Jaeya], 193. The main current of the labor movement leaders evaluated the strikes as follows. First, the strikes overcame the weaknesses of isolated individual struggles. Second, the strikes were political struggles. The issues of the struggles were the regime's oppression of the workers instead of improvement of economic issues. Third, the struggle became possible due to small groups' leadership and the construction of networks between the groups. Since these small groups and activists grew enough to form a political organization, it is necessary to form an organization within the region. The leaders argued that the unions were not a proper organization framework in which to attempt political struggles. Thus an immediate task was to form a mass political organization.

<sup>39</sup>The Incheon had another major industrial complex, located near Seoul.

organizations became main currents and leading organizations in the labor movements until the end of 1986. Although they did not specify their goals, they were similar to those of socialist revolution.<sup>40</sup>

The Sonoryun and Innoryun emphasized the importance of the political struggle and the leading struggle by the vanguard. In facing the wage bargaining season in 1986, the organizations tried to orchestrate collective actions and bargaining. However, their efforts failed due to the activists' hold on the political struggles and the neglect of the workers' economic demands. Moreover, the division within the movements prevented them from organizing a coordinated struggle.<sup>41</sup> The Sunoryun and Innoryun were obsessed with the idea that they had to make alliance strikes, and did not count the ability of individual unions. This obsession led into adventurous strategies and then lost many activist members.<sup>42</sup>

### The Jaeya

Like other social movement sectors, the Jaeya group changed their strategy and tactics after the experience of the Kwangju uprising. Although the impact of the failure in the spring of 1980 and the Kwangju uprising were significant enough to change strategies, the Jaeya group was stagnating in terms of its organizational ability under the tight control of the Chun regime between 1980 and 1983. During this period, other social movement sectors were in a slump except the student movement.<sup>43</sup> However, through this period the Jaeya also sought to accept new theories and strategies. As mentioned earlier, along with other social movements sectors the Jaeya group, except for the Minchuhyup and some Christian religious factions, adopted the NDR as an alternative until 1986.

Before the Chun regime's liberalization policy, former student activists formed an

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<sup>40</sup>By early 1986 the social movements in Korea started to accept both the Marxism and Juche ideology of North Korea as their ideologies. However, it was impossible for the social movements to propose their goals publicly, since it would devastate the social movement by the regime. The existence of the National Security Law in South Korea allowed the death penalty for people who proved to be members of pro-North Korean organizations. The regime abused the NSL and violated human rights so frequently and broadly that had been a major human rights issue. For the details of the abuse of the NSL, see Asia Watch, *Human Rights in Korea*, (New York: Asia Watch, 1986). Although they manifested more moderately or abstractly their goals "to construct a society in which the workers are not oppressed," their goals were similar to those of a socialist country. Since the two organizations adopted the NDR, and later the CA, their final goal was socialist revolution. For the specific content of the NDR and the PDR see the section of the student movement.

<sup>41</sup>The remaining groups who complained about the two organizations' dogmatic leadership tried to build another organization. Thus there were two different major groups in the labor movements when they faced wage bargaining season in 1986. Dae-Young Chung, "Jaeya minju nodong undongui jungae kwajunggwa hyunhwang [The Current Situation and Process of Democratic Labor Movement of Jaeya], 198.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 199.

<sup>43</sup>Ung Choi, "Jaeya seryukgwa minjuhwa undong [The Power of the Jaeya and the Democratization Movement], in *Hanguk sahoe ui sunggyukgwa undong* [The Movement and Characteristics of Korean Society], Jin-Kyung Cho (Seoul: Gongdongche, 1987), 290.

organization, the Minchungryun (The Youth Association of Democratization Movement) in September 1983.<sup>44</sup> The purpose of the Minchungryun was to provide youth groups, who finished their student movements and needed a structure, with an organization. The Minchungryun adopted the mass-line and organizational movement strategies. Along with the Minchungryun other Jaeya groups formed a variety of organizations using the open political opportunity which began at the end of 1983. The ousted professors formed the Council of Ousted Professors in December 1983. In the same fashion, the ousted journalists formed the Council of Ousted Journalists in April, 1984. Other intellectuals, such as dissident artists, musicians, poets, and novelists, organized the Minjung Munhwa Undong Hyupuihoe (The Council of the Minjung Cultural Movement) in April, 1984. The banned politicians formed the Minchuhyup at the same time.<sup>45</sup>

Based on these open mass-oriented organizations, the Jaeya attempted to form a coalition organization. This effort resulted in the forming of the Minjung Minju Undong Hyupuihoe in June, 1984.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, the dissident notables who led the Jaeya movement during the 1970s formed the Minjutongil Kukmin Hoeui by using the opportunity of opposing President Chun's visit to Japan in September, 1984. These organizations tried to build nationwide networks, and similar organizations were formed at the local level modeled on them. The expansion and growth of the networks at the local level contributed to enhancing their mobility across the country.<sup>47</sup>

All these sectors of the social movements demonstrated different strategies that enhanced their capacities, compared to their situations in 1970s and in early 1980. In terms of their ideology, the social movements showed that they started to adopt more radical ideologies, such as Marxism, although the level of their knowledge was still low. Their basic process was to find a relevant theory which they could then use for revolution in Korea. Clearly, they had changed their goal from obtaining liberal democracy to starting a revolution. As time went on, they tried to demonstrate their goal more clearly and became obsessed with this idea, without considering the peculiar situations in Korea such as the experience of war, the narrowness of ideological choice, the existence of a strong and well-disciplined military, and the existence of North Korea.

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<sup>44</sup>The full name is the *Minchuwha Chongryun Undong Ryunhap*

<sup>45</sup>Since the Minchuhyup participated in the NKDP as well as in the Jaeya, it is difficult to include the Minchuhyup in the category of the Jaeya. However, part of the Minchuhyup, especially the followers of Kim Dae Jung, remained in the Minchuhyup until the June movement in 1987, and they engaged in non-institutional protests than the NKDP did. Thus, it would be proper to include the Minchuhyup in the Jaeya.

<sup>46</sup>The Minminhyup was organized based on the principle of accepting members by organizations instead of as individuals. In addition, it emphasized the role of the labor movement and farmers' movement organizations within the coalition. Ung Choi, "Jaeya seryukgwa minjuhwa undong [The Power of the Jaeya and the Democratization Movement], 293.

<sup>47</sup>The Jaeya movement during the 1980s demonstrated several characteristics. First, the Jaeya groups adopted a Minjung ideology and a national self-reliance which developed into anti-Americanism. Second, the central role of the notables in the Jaeya movement decreased and instead, the organizations played an important role in the movement. Third, each group of the Jaeya was divided and developed its own capacity to mobilize people; religion, women, and cultural movements emerged as important sub-groups within the Jaeya. Fourth, the popular movement rooted in workers and farmers played an important role in the Jaeya. These groups' entrance into the Jaeya lessened the influence of the middle classes and intellectuals in the direction of the movement. *Ibid.*, 292.

## The General Election and Emergence of the Moderate Opposition Party

The Minchuhyup (the Council of Democratization) -- an organization formed on May 18, 1984 by Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung after the hunger strikes of Kim Young Sam--played an important role in leading the struggle against the regime and provided the banned politicians with an organization in which to prepare themselves to participate in the coming election. When the regime lifted the ban on politicians except core leaders of the NDP on November 30, 1984, they started the discussion about forming a new party.<sup>48</sup> The regime allowed more radical opposition politicians to compete in the coming election two months before the election day to minimize the opposition party's challenge in the election. This effort to form a new party was orchestrated by the two Kims although they were still banned by the regime. Facing the coming election, the Minchuhyup had debates about their strategy in dealing with the election. Eventually the Minchuhyup decided to participate in the election. Although there were three major factions within the Minchuhyup they cooperated in front of the strong regime. Moreover, their historical experience, the failure of their attempt to establish a democratic regime in the spring of 1980, compelled them to cooperate with each other.<sup>49</sup>

The Minchuhyup aimed to create a new party, the New Korean Democratic Party (NKDP), which was organized on January 18, 1985. This was only 49 days before the coming election. During the campaign, the NKDP and students worked closely together to win the election. The students assisted the NKDP candidates who lacked financial resources and volunteered resources. This cooperation became an opportunity for the student movements to improve their ability and status in the relationship with the NKDP. The platforms of the NKDP focused on ending the military dictatorship and acquiring direct presidential elections by revision of the constitution. As a result of their campaign the NKDP succeeded in obtaining 50 seats (29.2% of total votes) and became the main-opposition party in the National Assembly. In contrast, the KDP obtained 26 seats (19.5% of total votes). The DJP obtained 87 seats (35.3% of total votes), which meant that if the opposition parties' voting rates are combined, they (48.7%) are over the DJP's voting rates (35.3%).<sup>50</sup> Specially the DJP lost its support in the major cities and near Seoul.<sup>51</sup> Although the NKDP could not become

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<sup>48</sup>There were three occurrences when the ban on politicians was lifted before the election: the first was on January 18, 1983, and 250 people were allowed to participate in politics; the second was on February 25, 1984; and the third was on November 30, 1984. Sung-Sik Park, *Sungo bunsokui ironkwa silge*, 73.

<sup>49</sup>The three major factions were Kim Dae Jung's group, Kim Young Sam's group, and the other conservative group which was led by Chul-Sung Lee and Taek-hee Lee. *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>50</sup>B.C. Koh, "The 1985 Parliamentary Election in South Korea," *Asian Survey* (September 1985): 889.

<sup>51</sup>Jung-Gu Je, "Suchiro bunsokhan 12dae chongsun [The Numerical Analysis of the 12th General Election]," *Shilchon Munhak* (Spring 1985): 360-361. The DJP obtained 26 seats and lost 5 seats, compared to 11th election in the major cities of Seoul, Pusan, Taegu, Incheon, Kwangju, Taejeon, Chunju, and Masan. In contrast, the NKDP obtained 30 seats. More significant is the fact that the NKDP had 21 assemblymen who became the first winner in the multi-district system. However, the number of the DJP's first winner in the district decreased from 26 to 7, which demonstrated a serious setback in the major cities.

a ruling party, its success in the election dealt a serious blow to the DJP and to the regime. In addition, the DJP needed to prepare for the new opposition party, who was more belligerent than other royal-opposition parties. Within a month, the NKDP had absorbed most of the KDP assemblymen and became a major opposition party. By absorbing the KDP seats, the NKDP could block the DJP's attempts at passing bills.

### The Revision of the Constitution

With the emergence of the strong new opposition party, the NKDP, the DJP and the regime had to prepare for a different political situation. From then on, the DJP had to compete with a strong opposition party that was unlike the other loyal opposition parties created by the Chun regime.<sup>52</sup> The DJP representative, Kwon Ikhyun, evaluated the election results, and suggested that Chun Doo Hwan, who was then president of the DJP, take several measures to improve the DJP's image.<sup>53</sup> Based on negative evaluations of the election, the regime reacted to this situation with a broad reshuffling of its cabinet and party organizations.<sup>54</sup> All of the major officials were core members of the Chun groups who had maintained power from the coup on December 12, 1979. The purposes of the reshuffling were to maintain strong administrative power to prepare for expected political difficulties caused by the emergence of the NKDP, to improve the cooperation between the administration and the DJP, and to improve the political power of the regime.<sup>55</sup> There were no signs of confrontation between the Chun administration and the DJP.<sup>56</sup> Roh Tae Woo tried to revitalize

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<sup>52</sup>Immediately after the election, most of the KDP assemblymen and some members of the KNP defected to the new party and increased the number of the NKDP assemblymen to 102. As a result, the NKDP had enough assemblymen to veto the passage of any proposal for constitutional revision (two-thirds requirement) advanced by the ruling party. Im, "Politics of Transition," 238.

<sup>53</sup>For the evaluation of the election results of the DJP, see, Sung-Sik Park, *Sungo bunsokui ironkwa silge*, 209-211. Kwon proposed four major suggestions: 1) lifting the ban completely on politicians; 2) hiring more civilians in the offices of the DJP; 3) initiating the campus autonomy policy and other policies for university students and; 4) preparing atmosphere conducive to dialogue before the opening of the 12th National Assembly.

<sup>54</sup>For details of the reshuffling, see *Ibid.*, 272-77. President Chun Doo Hwan appointed Roh Shin Young, who was head of the NSPA, as a prime minister. Also, he placed Jang Sedong, who was a secretary of president, as head of the NSPA. For the new party representative, Roh Tae Woo was appointed.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 274-5.

<sup>56</sup>Im Hyug Baeg argued in his dissertation that the reshuffling was a watershed for the emergence of the softliners in the DJP. However, this argument is a misunderstanding of the situation. The reason for reshuffling was clearly to prepare for a newly emerged hard-line NKDP. Again, the regime's intention to maintain its power by using the multi-party system failed and a practical dual-party system was set up. In addition, the reshuffling and the emergence of Roh were in preparation for the later power transfer which will allow the military to hold power in the next election. Chun said that he appointed Roh to train him as the next president. For his argument of this point, see his memoir, Song-Ik Kim, "Chun Doo Hwan, yoksarul wihan yuksongjungun1"[Chun Doo Hwan, the Real Testimony for the History 1], *Wolgan Choson* (January 1992): 332-33. This should not be interpreted as a sign of fracture within the DJP and the regime. The reshuffling was a typical custom after a regime or a ruling party lost in the elections to show the regret of the regime in Korean politics. Chun Doo Hwan maintained his tight control of the regime, of the

the DJP, and there were some signs of a changed attitude among the members of the DJP.<sup>57</sup> However, when the NKDP took a hard stance against the regime and the DJP, the DJP also reacted with a hard-line policy.

In reaction to the NKDP's demand for the revision of the constitution, the Chun regime and the DJP flatly denied the possibility of changing the constitution before Chun stepped down, which was due in 1988. The National Assembly began on May 23, 1985. In dealing with the NKDP the DJP delayed and avoided the opposition group's demand for establishment of the Special Committee for Revision of the Constitution (SCRC) in the National Assembly. At the same time, the regime repressed the social movements which maintained a somewhat loose relationship with the NKDP after the election. Since the social movements especially student activists' help in the election contributed to the surprise emergence of the NKDP, the regime tried to separate the relationship between these two groups and weaken the social movements. The regime carefully maneuvered the NKDP by using the DJP on the one hand, and oppressed the social movements on the other hand. However, the social movements were not weak counter-partners anymore. Their ideological radicalization and theoretical sophistication played an important role in maintaining struggles against the regime during this time (1985-86)

As a clear cut opposition party, the NKDP raised the issue of the revision of the constitution as an immediate and permanent goal. The NKDP had two stages of political struggle planned. The first stage was a struggle within the National Assembly which would focus on forcing the DJP to agree to the establishment of the SCRC. The second step was, assuming the first step failed, to adopt a combination of struggle inside and outside the National Assembly. The NKDP would try to organize the national movement for the revision of the constitution.<sup>58</sup> The DJP and the regime refused to establish the SCRC in the National Assembly in December 1985. With this reaction of the DJP, the NKDP launched the campaign for the revision of the constitution in February 1986. In addition, the NKDP started to open local branches for the campaign in the major cities. This campaign gained a surprising amount of support.<sup>59</sup> The success of the Philippine revolution in February 1986 provided the leaders of the NKDP with a strong motivation to resort to people's support.<sup>60</sup> The social movement and the NKDP formed a coalition organization for the struggle, the Minkukryun (People's Liaison Office for Democratization) on March 17, 1986.<sup>61</sup>

The campaign and rallies succeeded in favorable situations such as the collapse of the Marcos regime in the Philippines and the assistance of the U.S to make a transition in the Philippines.

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DJP, and of the military.

<sup>57</sup>Park, *Sungu bunsokui ironkwa silge*, 289-94.

<sup>58</sup>Korean Christian Social Research Center (hereafter KCSRC), *Gaehungwa minjuhwa undong* [The Revision of the Constitution and the Democratization Movement], (Seoul: Minjungsa, 1986), 19.

<sup>59</sup>The rally in Pusan obtained a broad support. About 300,000 people gathered for this rally in March, 1986. With this event, the leaders of the NKDP gained confidence in their push for constitutional revision. At the same time, the social movements realized the importance of the issue and tried to use the NKDP's rally for their own political purposes.

<sup>60</sup>KCSRC, *Gaehunkwa minjuwha undong*, 38-42.

<sup>61</sup>Im, "Politics of Transition," 252.

Throughout these rallies and campaigns, the Reagan administration supported the NKDP and the Minchuhyp and urged the regime to allow the peaceful rallies. At the same time the U.S. persuaded the NKDP to maintain peaceful rallies and dialogue with the regime.<sup>62</sup> After 1985, the international atmosphere started to change because of emerging new leadership in the Soviet Union. As Gorbachev became the new head of the Soviet Union, there were signs that the cold war was ending. Since the Soviet Union could not maintain its deteriorating economy, it tried to cut the military expansion by negotiating with the U.S. In addition, as the Soviet Union's power decreased, the possibility of exporting revolution decreased seriously throughout the Third World countries. The subtle change of the Reagan administration's foreign policy was demonstrated through its treatment of the Philippines' democratization movement in February, 1986.<sup>63</sup> With several experiences in the Latin American countries, the Reagan administration shifted its policy from absolute support for the authoritarian regime as long as it championed anti-communism to selective support for the authoritarian regimes throughout the world.

In this context, the U.S. urged the Chun regime not to oppress the NKDP, even when the NKDP initiated its campaign for constitutional revision in February, 1986. In line with the principle of peaceful solution by dialogue, the U.S. supported the dialogue between the regime and the NKDP for the revision of the constitution. However, this encouragement of dialogue did not mean withdrawal of U.S. support for the Chun regime. Instead the U.S. did support the Chun regime. During his visit to Korea, Secretary of State Shultz praised the Chun regime and criticized the NKDP's coalition with radical social movements.<sup>64</sup> Although the U.S. supported the NKDP's demand for the negotiation for the constitutional revision, the Reagan administration made sure that the NKDP would sever its relationship with the social movements which raised anti-Americanism.

As Gaston Sigur, Assistant Secretary of the State Department for Asian and Pacific Affairs, said, the Korean case was different from the case of Philippines in that the Chun regime accomplished high economic development, had a stable military, and pledged a peaceful transition of power.<sup>65</sup> For the Reagan administration, there was no reason to take risks by supporting the NKDP's demand for immediate revision of the constitution as long as the Chun regime guaranteed economic benefits as well as national security. That was why the U.S. did not try to influence the regime more than in the ways indicated above.

Basically, the goal of the NKDP was to obtain a better position in the negotiations with the regime. The NKDP believed that the guarantee of direct presidential elections was essential for a democracy. However, the goal of the social movement was to obtain more radical change. The NKDP faced difficulties in dealing with the radicalized social movements. The two Kims criticized

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<sup>62</sup>KCSRC, *Gaehunkwa minjuwha undong*, 44-45.

<sup>63</sup>Tamar Jacoby, "The Reagan Turnaround on Human Rights," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1986): 1083-86. In this article he explains how the conflict between the Reagan administration and Congress contributed to the shifting of the administration's policy on human rights. He points out that the cases of Haiti, the Philippines, and Chile demonstrated the change of the administration's policy.

<sup>64</sup>George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State*, 979.

<sup>65</sup>Richard Holbrooke also emphasized the same points when he compared Korea and the Philippines. Richard Holbrooke, "East Asia: The Next Challenge," *Foreign Affairs* (Spring 1986), 125.

the student movements' anti-Americanism and radicalization. Due to these critiques, the Mintongryun decided to withdraw from the Minkukryun on April 28, 1986. In this situation the regime took the initiative to induce the NKDP to participate in the National Assembly and to separate the NKDP and the social movements. President Chun yielded to the demand of the NKDP on April 30, 1986 during the meeting with Lee Min Woo. Both Chun and Lee agreed that if the DJP and the opposition parties agreed on the revision of the constitution and the plan for future political process, Chun would follow that agreement.<sup>66</sup> Although this meeting sent a signal that the Chun regime was willing to talk, there was no specific guarantee of having direct presidential elections or of the establishment of the SCRC. Thus, the NKDP and the Minchuhyp still attempted to push the regime to yield more. Right after this meeting, the NKDP had a rally at Inchon (near Seoul) on May 3, 1986. This rally became a watershed for the NKDP and the social movements. The radicalization of the social movements and outbreak of anti-Americanism made the NKDP give up future rallies. With this event, the U.S. started to criticize the NKDP and urged it to participate in the dialogue and go back to the National Assembly. Although the NKDP and the CD knew that there were no guarantees that the regime and the DJP would accept their demands for direct presidential elections and the revision of the constitution, there was no choice but to return to the National Assembly and accept the regime's minimized retreat. At this point, the regime accepted the establishment of the SCRC in the National Assembly on the condition that the NKDP return to the National Assembly. In this situation, the NKDP decided to return to the National Assembly when the two Kims agreed to accept the regime and the DJP's offer of the establishment of the SCRC on May 27, 1986. The firm stance of the Reagan administration against the NKDP and the radicalization of the social movement played a major role in the two Kims' decision-making.<sup>67</sup>

### Radicalization of the Social Movements and their Repression by the Regime

Although there were some differences between the MC and the MT groups, both groups understood the necessity of letting people know about the role of the U.S. in the Kwangju uprising and the truth about the event. As a way to protest against the U.S., the Sammintu occupied the United States Information Service building in Seoul on May 23, 1985.<sup>68</sup> This occupation lasted for

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<sup>66</sup>The major issues of the meeting were as follows: 1) that the discussion for the revision was possible but the campaign movement must be stopped; 2) that the morality of the argument that direct presidential election was right and indirect election was undemocratic; 3) that it was necessary to make a permanent constitution which did not need revision after reunification; 4) that the government made research committee for the institutions of the constitution and politics under the president and handed the results of the research to the National Assembly; and 5) that if it was necessary for Roh Tae Woo and Kim Young Sam to meet each other it would be pursued. KCSRC, *Gaehungwa minjuhwa undong*, 81.

<sup>67</sup>KCSRC, *ibid.*, 97-8.

<sup>68</sup>Sammintu (The Struggle committee for the realization of three Min: Minjok, Minju, and Minjung). The Sammintu was an army organization of the Chunhakryun (the National and Democratic Student Association) which was formed on major campuses in Seoul. The students on the major campus led student movements in general. These

three days and had a significant impact on the U.S. and the regime by using sit-in tactics to criticize the role of the U.S. in Korean politics and the relationship between the U.S. and the regime. In addition, the event showed the ability of the student movements and their perspective on the U.S. Although students used a forceful occupation to make their statement, still they denied that their action was a demonstration of anti-Americanism.<sup>69</sup> After this struggle, the regime started to oppress the student movements severely, and the Sammintu collapsed when its members were arrested in June, 1985.

Along with the NDR, the student movements also emphasized the importance of the growth of the labor movement. With the outbreak of “Kuro-alliance strikes” in June 1985, student movements tried to build a coalition with the workers. The event itself was a result of pursuit of the No-Hak Yondae (the coalition between students and workers) strategy. For the student activists, one way to practice the strategy was to work in the factories with workers to enhance class consciousness and to organize them in preparation for political struggle. The student movements also attempted to build a coalition with farmers, by working with farmers in rural areas during the busiest period of harvest.<sup>70</sup> These organizational efforts caused the regime seriously to attack the student movements. The Chun regime attempted to enact Hakwon-Anjung-Bup (Campus Stabilization Law) in July, 1985. The main goal of this law was to separate student activists from campuses and to send them to “Purification camp.”<sup>71</sup> However, this effort was met with broad protests from a variety of social groups, including the NKDP. Although the regime dropped this law, it changed its liberalization policy and started to oppress the social movements harshly.

The student movements reorganized the Chunhakryun and Sammintu and recovered the coalition among campuses in September, 1985. However, in general the student movements were in a defensive position until February 1986. With the NKDP’s efforts to raise the issue of constitutional revision, the student movements paid attention to the issue as an important political agenda. After the searching for alternatives the student movements raised the slogan “abolishment of the constitution (the Fifth Republic constitution)” as their strategic goal in November, 1985. Amidst the harsh repressions of the regime, the Chunhakryun launched another occupation of the

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major campuses were Seoul National University, Yonsei University, Korea University and Sonkyunkwan University. The nationwide network was a main goal of the student movements. This goal was obtained after the June Movement in 1987. The main demands of the Sammintu were an apology from the Reagan administration for its assistance in the Kwangju uprising; an end to the support for the Chun regime; and that the U.S. should do its best to establish a healthy relationship between Korea and the U.S. Yong Han, *80nyondae hanguk sahoewa haksaeung undong* [The Korean Society in the 1980s and the Student Movement], 128-34.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 132.

<sup>70</sup>The student association organized collective activity in the rural areas during summer vacation. This effort was blocked by the regime, but the students kept maintaining their efforts. The original purpose was to enlighten the farmers and to assist the farmers’ organizations. It is difficult to evaluate how the student assistance impacted on the development of the farmers’ movement, but students gave them the impression that they were trying to help the farmers. The students obtained moral support from the farmers. Practically, student movements were powerhouses of the social movement during 1980s in Korea.

<sup>71</sup>Yong Han, *80nyondae hanguk sahoewa haksaeung undong* [The Korean Society in the 1980s and the Student Movement], 138.

learning center of politics of the DJP in December 1985. With this struggle, many students criticized the strategies of the Chunhakryun and its support of the Sammin Revolutionary theory.<sup>72</sup>

As an alternative to the Sammin theory, two groups emerged. One group defined the U.S. as an imperialist country which controlled the Korean state, and emphasized the importance of attacking the U.S. in the revolution. This group adopted North Korean Juche ideology and its revolutionary theory, the National Liberation and People's Democracy Revolution (NLPDR).<sup>73</sup> The NLPDR viewed Korean society as a colonial semi-feudal society in which the imperialists controlled the dependent capitalistic and neo-colonial fascist state.<sup>74</sup> The major confrontation was between the imperialists and the Minjung, which included the middle classes and the national bourgeoisie, as well as the lower class workers, farmers, and urban poor. The theory accepts the national bourgeoisie as an assistant group in the revolution. In addition, progressive students were included in the core group with the lower-classes. This group formed the Jamintu (the Struggle Committee for Anti-America Self-reliance, Anti-fascist Democratization) on April 10, 1986. The Jamintu focused on the struggle against the U.S. and added one more item to the agenda, peaceful unification as part of their major slogan.<sup>75</sup> Regarding the constitutional revision struggle, the Jamintu acknowledged the necessity of the struggle and of the cooperation with the NKDP. At the same time, they tried to induce the NKDP into the revolutionary camp by helping the NKDP. However, in case the NKDP leaned toward a conservative coalition with the regime, the Jamintu would criticize the NKDP. Thus, the Jamintu participated in the NKDP's campaign rally in the early 1986. But their anti-American slogan made the NKDP withdraw from the coalition, and brought down oppression from the regime.

Another group adopted the NDR and formed the Minmintu (the Struggle Committee for Anti-imperialism, Anti-Fascism, and National Democracy) on April 11, 1986. In its theory the middle classes and the national bourgeoisie were excluded from the revolutionary group. In addition, the Minmintu focused on the struggle against the Fascist Chun regime. The Minmintu adopted the Constituent Assembly (CA) which originated from Lenin's revolutionary theory.<sup>76</sup> The Minmintu denied the necessity of forming a coalition with the NKDP because it defined the NKDP as a conservative bourgeois group. The Minmintu criticized the NKDP's strategy regarding the revision

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<sup>72</sup>The Sammin revolutionary theory is basically the same as the NDR. The only difference is that the Sammin revolutionary theory suggested the concrete content of revolution as realization of three Min: Minjok, Minju, and Minjung. The Chunhakryun was led by the MT group who adopted adventurous political struggles. Ilsongjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa*, 111.

<sup>73</sup>The process of adopting the Juche ideology started within the student movements without any support from North Korea. The theorists within the student movements learned the theory through government documents and North Korea radio broadcast.

<sup>74</sup>Ilsongjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa*, 115-17.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 119.

<sup>76</sup>The adoption of the CA showed that the student movements now accepted orthodox Marx-Leninism as their working theory. The CA strategy was used in the Russian Bolshevik revolution after the first revolution in 1905 to undermine the Duma, which was composed of bourgeois representatives. The CA would be composed of workers and farmers' representatives instead of the bourgeoisie. The CA is the institution that prepared a socialist constitution and would guarantee proletariat dictatorship in the socialist society. Ilsongjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa*, 124.

of constitution issue and represented its own alternative, the CA.

Although the theoretical debates and the adoption of the Juche ideology and Leninism contributed to deepening the students' understanding of Korean society and of the U.S., and to organizing core student activists, the competition of the two groups, the NLPDR and the CA group, within the student movements resulted in a serious setback of the movement. Both groups became more radical, as did their theoretical lines, which eventually alienated them from other students and people. In addition, both groups ended their relationship with the NKDP. At the same time, they faced harsh oppression from the Chun regime. The combination of the regime's oppression and serious political mistakes during 1986 brought about a significant set back of the student movement. One of the representative events was the Inchon rally on May 3, 1986. This rally was organized as one of the campaigns by the NKDP and the social movements for constitutional revision. However, due to fracture within the social movements, the rally resulted in a riot which was partly coordinated by the regime's conspiracy. Even the students criticized the NKDP. The failure of coordination within the social movements led to violent clashes with the police and raising radical slogans such as "Yankee Go Home", alienating people who tried to participate in the rally.<sup>77</sup>

The NLPDR group gained support from major campuses by the end of 1986. During the first negotiation period in 1986, the group reevaluated its policy on the issue of the constitutional revision. The group acknowledged the necessity of a procedural democracy including direct presidential elections as long as direct presidential elections contributed to the establishment of a substantial democracy in colonial Korea. If obtained by the people's struggle, the procedural democracy will not fall into illusory constitutional reform limited to reproduction of the military regime. The NLPDR group's basic assumption was that the military would never accept direct presidential elections, and the opposition party would remain united.<sup>78</sup> In contrast, the CA group denied the usefulness of direct presidential elections. Instead, they argued the CA as an alternative. This radical attitude failed to gain support from students as well as other people. These groups kept up their argument until the end of 1987. Although the NLPDR group was beginning to take the initiative in the student movement, its efforts to form a nationwide organization had failed by the time of the regime's attack on October 28, 1986.<sup>79</sup> In the aftermath of the event, the student movements lost most of their leaders, and their organizational capacity decreased significantly. The regime practically overwhelmed the student movements as well as the other social movement sectors by the end of 1986. The radicalization of the student movements and their adoption of leading political struggle strategies alienated other students as well as average people.

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<sup>77</sup>This slogan appeared for the first time in Korea after the Korean War (1950-53). Although this rally made a strong impression on the people about the role of the U.S., the student movements did not get much support from ordinary people.

<sup>78</sup>Ilsonjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa*, 168.

<sup>79</sup>The students gathered in Konkuk University in Seoul to form a nationwide organization, the Patriotic Students' Struggle Confederation for Anti-imperialism and Anti-dictatorship. Although the level of the student movements was not high enough to construct the confederation, which was the highest degree of coalition, the Jamintu attempted to form this type of organization. The regime propagandized the PSSC as a pro-North Korean organization. The police arrested about 1525 students, and 1290 students went into court.

In the labor movement, the Sonoryun and Innoryun adopted the Constituent Assembly (CA) line regarding the constitutional revision issue. When they participated in the Inchon rally on May 3, 1986, they demanded the CA. These groups were more radical in that they excluded the NKDP from their alliance groups. Instead, the NKDP was included in the ruling bloc. In the rally, the two groups demonstrated their radical characteristics fully by attacking the NKDP assemblymen. They did not attempt to build a coalition with the NKDP, because they felt the issue of direct presidential elections was wrong for them. In contrast, the radicalization of the labor movement and the isolation of the NKDP allowed the regime to oppress the labor movement. Consequently, the labor movement could not assist the NKDP in dealing with the regime during the first negotiation period.

The two groups collapsed under the regime's harsh oppression after the Inchon rally. Afterward, there were several attempts to form a vanguard organization but these attempts were frustrated by the regime.<sup>80</sup> All these efforts provided the regime with an excuse to push the NKDP to separate from the social movements, as well as to threaten the people not to support the social movements.

On the side of the Jaeya, the Minminhyup and Kukminhoeui merged and formed the Minju Tongil Minjung Undong Yonhap (Mintongryun; Democratization Unification Minjung Movement Association) in 1985.<sup>81</sup> The Mintongryun emerged as a major popular movement organization in the campaign for constitutional revision in early 1986. Although the Mintongryun did not agree with the NKDP over the issue of direct presidential elections, it participated in the campaign for the revision of the constitution when it saw that the NKDP succeeded in mobilizing mass people in the Kwangu rally in March 1986. At that point, the Mintongryun adopted the NDR and the Sammin constitution as its alternatives.<sup>82</sup> In addition, the Mintonryun formed a coalition with the NKDP, the Minkukryun (People's Liaison Office for Democratization) to pursue the political struggles systematically. However, when the NKDP criticized the radicalization of the student movements, the Mintongryun withdrew from the Minkukryun in April, 1986.

At the Inchon rally on May 3, 1986, the Mintonryun was in line with other social movements and criticized the NKDP for abandoning the principle of engaging in a "turn down the military

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<sup>80</sup>The police and the NSPA announced that they had caught several Marx-Leninist revolutionaries. The three representative cases were the 'M-L party', the 'Anti-imperialists' and the 'Constituent Assembly group.' All these cases were destroyed by the authorities under the regime's tight control over the labor movement near the end of 1986. Like the student movements the labor movement was on the verge of collapse. The critical weakness of these attempts were that they completely ignored the importance of the support for the workers. Without considering the status of the workers and the efforts to obtain the workers' support, they rashly tried to build a vanguard organization. Ilsongjung Editorial Staffs, *Haksaeng undong nonjaengsa*, Ibid., 203.

<sup>81</sup>The details of the sub-organizations of the Mintongryun, see Im, "Politics of Transition," 246. The Mintongryun composed of local level and sectional level organizations. Its level of organization was a council instead of association or confederation which can maintain a central administration. Although it was a loose umbrella organization it had a symbolic effects in mobilizing people at the national level.

<sup>82</sup>The Sammin constitution is not clearly different from the NKDP's liberal democracy. This slogan was criticized by other groups later due to its vagueness and conflicts in the logic. For the details of the Sammin ideology and the NDR see the student movement section.

dictatorship” struggle, in order to get a favorable position for negotiation with the regime. Furthermore, the Mintonryun criticized the NKDP’s attitude of negotiation with the regime as an attempt to construct a conservative coalition with the regime.<sup>83</sup> The Mintonryun argued that the Chun regime could not be a negotiating partner, but a target to bring down. According to the Mintonryun the acquisition of democracy was possible after the bringing down of the Chun regime through a revolution. The radical nature of the Mintonryun caused it to be severely oppressed by the regime. Right after the Inchon rally, the regime cracked down on the Mintonryun and disbanded it in November, 1986. The police arrested most of the leaders of the Mintonryun, or made them fugitives. The Mintonryun then was unable to function normally and fell into to slump until early 1987. By the time of the Inchon rally, the Chun regime had increased the crackdown on the social movement sectors.<sup>84</sup> As a result by the end of 1986 the social movements suffered, and most organizations were considered illegal and the activists were arrested. The radical nature of the social movements contributed to their isolation from the NKDP and average citizens. The regime maximized this opportunity to undermine the social movements as well as the NKDP. As O’Donnell and Schmitter pointed out, when the social movements threatened one of the two crucial issues of the regime, private ownership, by raising socialist slogans, the social movements faced serious repression.<sup>85</sup>

#### Negotiation for the Revision of the Constitution

Through the NKDP’s participation in the National Assembly the first negotiation for the revision of the constitution started. The SCRC was established in the National Assembly but the dialogue between the NKDP and the DJP stalled when the NKDP demanded the amnesty and reinstatement of Kim Dae Jung’s rights as a precondition for the negotiation in June 1986. The regime’s strategy was to divide the NKDP leadership by treating the two Kims differently. That is, the regime allowed Kim Young Sam to participate in politics, but it prohibited Kim Dae Jung from participation in politics by putting him under house arrest. With this different treatment, the regime kept trying to entice Kim Young Sam to agree to the parliamentary system. However, this plot failed because the two Kims managed to maintain a firm stance against the regime. Kim Young Sam realized the risk which he would face if he accepted the regime’s offer. Although there were some differences between Kim Young Sam’s and Kim Dae Jung’s view about the direct presidential election system, they did not split while facing the regime.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>KCSRC, *Gaehunkwa minjuwha undong*, 71.

<sup>84</sup>For an evaluation of the struggle, see Yong Han. *80nyondae hanguk sahoewa haksae undong* [The Korean Society in the 1980s and the Student Movement], 163.

<sup>85</sup>O’Donnell and Schmitter stated that the two core values of the authoritarian regime were private ownership and the military. O’Donnell and Schmitter, *Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, 69.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., 24. Kim Young Sam showed more flexibility in dealing with the regime than Kim Dae Jung. He said that he was willing to accept a parliamentary system if that system was accepted by the people in May, 1986. Also he persuaded Kim Dae Jung who firmly believed that the direct presidential system was the only alternative, to join the National Assembly, by arguing that the regime did not have any alternative at that time. Kim Young Sam argued that

The DJP suggested the parliamentary system for its alternative but the NKDP preferred the presidential system. The issue here was not about which one was the better system for democracy. Instead, both sides preferred one system to another, because a specific system was better for serving their purpose to obtain power. For instance, the regime and the DJP believed that a parliamentary system would serve their purpose of maintaining power within the DJP, due to the lack of a prominent leader within who could compete with the opposition party in the presidential election. The two Kims strongly believed that if there was an opportunity to have a direct presidential election, they could win the election; therefore, they supported a direct presidential election system. Since the two Kims had more experience and confidence in their political ability than in Roh Tae Woo's, they firmly argued for a direct presidential system.

Since the regime and the DJP supported the parliamentary system, and the regime did not allow Kim Dae Jung's participation in politics, negotiation within the SCRC was impossible. The SCRC was practically abandoned and negotiations were at an impasse from July 1986. Meanwhile, the president of the NKDP, Lee Min Woo, tried to establish his own independent leadership in the NKDP. This effort accelerated when Kim Young Sam joined the party in August, 1986. Since Kim Dae Jung was still under prohibition Kim Young Sam joined by himself under an agreement with Kim Dae Jung to enhance the position of the NKDP during the negotiation. After this, there were frequently conflicts in creating party policies. Due to these conflicts, the coordination between the two Kims and Lee Min Woo became difficult.

In this situation, when the regime and the DJP delayed as much as possible and did not yield regarding the issues of constitutional revision, the two Kims tried to revive their outside rallies which were stopped in May 1986. They still believed that there were possibilities in mobilizing people to force the regime to accept their demands. At the same time, the NKDP tried to recover their relationship with the social movements, which were experiencing great difficulties under the regime's oppression. The NKDP sent their lawyers to defend the activists in the courts. In a way, the relationship started to improve.<sup>87</sup> However, the NKDP's attempt to organize a rally in Seoul in November 1986 was completely blocked by the regime. The regime had confidently overwhelmed the social movements already. With this event, the NKDP fell into internal conflicts.

Eventually, Lee Min Woo suggested his own alternative to break the impasse of the negotiations on December 24, 1986. He proposed that if the regime accepted seven items of democratization preconditions he was willing to accept the regime's parliamentary system.<sup>88</sup> With

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it will be better to participate in the negotiations when the regime was not ready yet. However, Kim Young Sam refused to accept the parliamentary system when people doubted his real intention. He argued that he did not want to share power with the regime when the possibility of the opposition's advance to power was certain. Kim Dae Jung, *Building Peace and Democracy*, (New York: Korean Independent Monitor, 1987), 404.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 406-7.

<sup>88</sup>The seven items included the release and reinstatement of political prisoners, a guarantee of freedom of the press, and three labor laws. The suggestion of this plan meant that Kim Dae Jung could be released in exchange for accepting parliamentary system. Lee Min Woo's liberalization reform measures included following seven items: 1) freedom of press and speech, and abrogation of the Basic Press Law; 2) guarantee of people's full basic rights; 3) political neutrality of governmental officials; 4) the release of prisoners of consciousness and restoration of their civil

this event, the NKDP fell into deep internal conflicts. Since Lee Min Woo was a member of Kim Young Sam faction, Kim Young Sam tried to dissuade him from his course but, due to another faction's challenge of the leadership of Kim Young Sam, the internal fractures became worse. Lee Chung Sung faction within the NKDP waged an anti-two Kims campaign in March, 1987. In addition, the regime and the Reagan administration kept supporting the Lee Min Woo plan and tried to undermine the influence of the two Kims in the NKDP.<sup>89</sup> In order to boost Lee Min Woo's position in the NKDP, the regime and the DJP acknowledged that they would treat Lee Min Woo as the practical leader of the NKDP, while Kim Young Sam was trying to solve the internal conflicts. This maneuver forced the two Kims to give up on the NKDP, and to decide to make a new party.

When Lee Min Woo as the formal president of the NKDP suggested his plan, the U.S. also supported his idea eagerly. Although the softliner Lee did not get much support in the NKDP, the Reagan administration invited Lee to meet with a variety of high U.S. government officials and congressmen.<sup>90</sup> In addition, the Reagan administration criticized the two Kims as hard-liners. During the first negotiation period in 1986, the Reagan administration buttressed the Chun regime and tried to create internal fractures within the NKDP by supporting the softliner, Lee Min Woo. However, this scheme failed when the two Kims created the new party, the Reunification Democratic Party in March, 1987.

Faced with internal fracture and external attack, the two Kims declared on April 8, 1987, that they would form a new party. The Chun regime reacted on April 13, 1987 with the 4.13 Measure which prohibited any discussion of the revision of the constitution on April 13, 1987. With this event, the first negotiations for the revision of the constitution ended.

### The Failure of the First Negotiation in 1986

At this juncture there were four major actors in the negotiation game: the moderate opposition party, the NKDP, the radicalized social movements, the regime, and the U.S. The goal of the opposition party was to obtain a procedural democracy. In contrast, the social movement pursued revolution. The major goal of the regime was to maintain and prolong power through limited elections. The U.S. interest in Korea was in maintaining political stability first, and then encouraging a gradual transition to democracy.

According to the negotiated transition model, the existence of the reformers within the regime is necessary to make a transition to democracy. The reformers initiate the liberalization policy. Furthermore, the reformers should control the hardliners in the regime through the process of negotiation with the moderates in the opposition bloc. However, without experiencing a stalemated situation between the reformers and the moderates it is impossible for both parties to engage in a

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rights; 5) establishment of a two-party system; 6) implementation of local autonomy; and 7) fair election laws. *Korea Weekly Report*, 6, no. 1. January 6, 1987. Cited in Hyug Baeg, Im, p. 275.

<sup>89</sup>Dae-Hwa Chung, "Hangukui jungchi byundong," 95.

<sup>90</sup>KCSRC, *Gaehungwa minjuwha undong*, 178.

negotiation.

The Korea case during 1986 showed different configurations regarding the regime. Without any significant divisions within the regime, the regime itself initiated a liberalization policy. In this situation the moderate NKDP emerged and maintained a coalition with the radical social movements. It was possible for the opposition bloc to mobilize mass populations by campaigns and rallies for the revision of the constitution. This successful mobilization provided the NKDP with leverage to force the regime to participate in the negotiation. At the same time, the U.S. also encouraged the regime to participate in the negotiation. However, the magnitude of the mass mobilization was not enough to force the regime to mobilize the military.

Faced with this situation, the regime had two choices: to go back to the initial position, that is, repression of the opposition and abandon its liberalization policy or to accept the negotiation and obtain its own alternative, parliamentary system. Since the Chun regime had confidence in its economic performance it wanted to broaden its legitimacy by adopting procedural democracy. The Chun regime clearly presented its time table for peaceful power transfer. Thus, the regime's attitude in the process of transition near to the transition from above, i.e., transformation.

Although the regime agreed to participate in the negotiation for the revision of the constitution, the regime had its own choice for the alternative government system--a parliamentary system. In this situation the NKDP had two choices: participate in the negotiation although there were no guarantees for acquisition of direct presidential elections ; or further its struggle with the social movements to force the regime to accept the direct presidential elections.

The choice of the NKDP depended on the attitude of the social movements. If the social movements were not radicalized and cooperated with the NKDP to obtain a goal, the NKDP would further its mass mobilization. However, if the social movements became radicalized and the NKDP could not control the social movements, the NKDP would agree to participate in the negotiation although there were no guarantees of its goal.

According to the negotiated transition model, both parties should realize that the power balance between the two is roughly equal to make a successful negotiated transition. If the reformers think that they can contain the mobilization of the opposition bloc they will not engage in the negotiation sincerely. At the same time, if the moderate opposition believed that it could succeed in bringing down the reformers, then it would not engage in negotiation.

The Korean case showed similar movements of the regime and the moderate opposition party, the NKDP. After the Chun regime and the NKDP engaged in the negotiation, the regime began to repress the social movements and delayed the negotiation. Moreover, the regime used the internal fracture of the NKDP to undermine the power of the NKDP. In this situation, the two Kims, who were champions of a direct presidential election system, decided to withdraw from the negotiation table. The two Kims believed that they could mobilize the masses to force the regime to accept their demand. With this choice of the NKDP, the regime, which had confidence in containing the social movements and the NKDP, also decided to give up the negotiation with the NKDP. As the negotiated transition model pointed out when the regime and the NKDP believed that there were other possibilities to force their own counter-partners, the negotiation would fail. Since the NKDP and the Chun regime did not experience a genuine stalemate situation or roughly equal power, they

would not engage in negotiation. The power balance between the regime and the NKDP was skewed toward the regime. The U.S. played an important role in this negotiation by throwing its weight behind the regime.

Although the negotiated transition model can explain the interaction of the regime and the NKDP, this model cannot explain the role of the U.S. It may be possible to include the U.S. in the ruling bloc. However, this framework would not work when the U.S. tried to become a mediator between two parties. The U.S. did not attempt to involve itself directly in the process of transition politics in Korea, but it attempted to foster peaceful transition toward a procedural democracy by using its resources. According to the mediation model, it was necessary for the U.S. to produce a stalemate situation and then provide other accommodations to make a successful mediation.

The U.S. tried to mediate the negotiation in the early 1986. Actually the Chun regime and the NKDP began its negotiation as a result of the U.S. call for dialogue between two parties. However, as the U.S. explicitly supported the Chun regime, the U.S. contributed to increasing the power gap between the regime and the NKDP. When the NKDP faced internal fracture by Lee Min Woo's plan, the U.S. supported Lee who was not the core of the NKDP leadership. By adopting these strategies the U.S. failed to play its mediator role adequately. The two core conditions for the successful mediation were the creation or existence of the stalemate situation between parties and the existence of responsible representatives of each side. The U.S. failed to create a stalemate situation by supporting the Chun regime. In addition, the U.S. failed to support responsible representatives of the NKDP. Rather the U.S. tried to undermine the leadership of the two Kims. Thus the U.S. failed to be a successful mediator and the negotiation was in vain.

Im Hyug Baeg has argued that the reason why the first negotiation in Korea in 1986 failed was due to the lack of autonomous power of the reformers and the moderates. Part of this argument is relevant. But his argument about the existence of the reformers is irrelevant because the Roh Tae Woo group, who are supposed to be reformers within the regime, shared the same view with the Chun Doo Hwan group about the future time table and alternatives. According to O'Donnell and Schmitter, the reformers and the hardliners had to possess different views about the future plan for democracy. The hardliners believed that no change was necessary and tried to maintain the authoritarian regime as it was. However, the reformers believed that it was necessary to change the way to rule and tried to accept liberalization policy as long as their interests could be secured. This is why the reformers took the initiative to liberalize their policy.<sup>91</sup> In the case of Korea between 1985 and 1986, the Roh Tae Woo group did not possess its own political views or strategies. The Chun regime itself liberalized its policy.

The first negotiation failed because there was no stalemate situation between the regime and the opposition bloc. The radicalization of the social movements contributed to this power imbalance. Moreover, the internal fracture of the NKDP undermined the strength of the opposition party. Im's argument about the lack of the reformers within the regime is not plausible considering the cohesiveness of the regime during the first negotiation period. Rather the regime took the initiative

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<sup>91</sup>O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, 19-20.

in the negotiation by suggesting a parliamentary system. No groups within the regime opposed this alternative. Unlike Im's argument, the failure of the negotiation stemmed from the weakness of the opposition bloc. In a situation in which the regime did not experience division, it was necessary for the opposition bloc to succeed in mass mobilization to force the regime to participate in the negotiation.

### The June Movement

The political situation became unfavorable for the regime due to the revelation of the torture-death of Park Chong Chul, a former student activist, in January, 1987. On February 7, 1987 the social movements launched a rally for a memorial ceremony for the late Park Chong Chul. With this event, the social movements began to regain their strength. Although the Chun regime still managed to control major protests in the cities, President Chun's 4.13 Measure caused serious protests from variety of social groups and it provided the social movements with a good opportunity to mobilize people.<sup>92</sup> Combined with the torture-death of Park Chong Chul, the measure gave rise to serious protests from a variety of social groups as well as from the social movements. Although he was not involved in any organizations of the Jaeya, Cardinal Kim Su-Han presented a message deploring the 4.13 Measure on April 14, 1987. With this action the KNCC, the Mintongryun, and other groups joined in the critiques of the Chun regime and readied to participate in collective action. The priests in Kwangju touched off hunger strikes on April 21, 1987 and the KNCC initiated the Sign Campaign for Democratic Constitution. Professors and other intellectuals joined this campaign and the movement started to grow. Even the middle classes began leaning toward the opinion that democracy and human rights should be a more important issue than economic development.<sup>93</sup> Eventually, when the Catholic Priesthood for Realization of Justice revealed on May 18, 1987 that the regime tried to cover up the torture-death investigation, the Jaeya sought to form an umbrella organization to fight against the regime.

Since the situation needed an immediate decision to react against the regime, the social movements did not have much time to prepare a united organization. However, the issue of a major slogan and inclusion of the RDP became major issues to solve before the social movements decided to form an umbrella organization. The RDP was careful to participate in forming the coalition of the National Movement Center for the Democratic Constitution (NMCDC). Since there were differences about the issue of direct presidential elections within the social movements, the RDP took time to

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<sup>92</sup>For his evaluation of the situation and why he took this action, see his memoir. Song-Ik, Kim "Chun Doo Hwan, yoksarul wihan yuksongjungun 1 [Chun Doo Hwan, the Real Testimony for the History 1 ], *Wolgan Choson* (January 1992) : 304-47.

<sup>93</sup>One opinion poll showed that 85.7 % of the self-identified middle class believed that human rights should be promoted, even if it delayed economic growth. *Hanguk Ilbo*, June 9, 1987. Cited in Wonmo Dong, "What Roles Does the Middle Class Play?" in *Korea Under Roh Tae Woo*, ed. James Cotton (Australia Canberra: Australia National University Press, 1993), 88.

solve the differences. The social movements wanted to bring down the dictatorship and to abolish maintaining the constitution as major issues, but the RDP demanded the acquisition of direct presidential elections as a major slogan instead of the other two. Since the social movements suffered from the regime's harsh oppression and experienced danger in raising radical slogans such as "Establish Constituent Assembly" or "Yankee Go Home," they were careful about selecting slogans at that point. In general, it was the mainstream of the social movements which wanted to lower the level of their slogans to appeal to as many people as possible.<sup>94</sup> After the social movements agreed to the RDP's demand for the major slogans, the RDP participated in the Kukminundong Bonbu (The National Movement Center for Democratic Constitution; NMCDC). The first nationwide coalition organization, the NMCDC, which included most social movements and the RDP was formed on May 27, 1987. The NMCDC included almost all social organizations and local branches. The NMCDC launched a nationwide rally on June 10 for the abolishment of the constitution and for condemning the cover-up of Park's torture-death.

Although the student movements and the core leadership did not recover fully from the loss, the spontaneous reaction of ordinary students developed into mass mobilization. As a way to build networks across the campuses in Seoul, the representatives of the campuses in Seoul formed the Sudaehyup (The Council of Representative of Students in Seoul) on May 8 1987.<sup>95</sup> The Catholic Priests for the Realization of Justice disclosed a cover-up of the investigation of Park Jong Chul who was a victim of torture death on May 18, 1987. This event contributed to massive student demonstrations nationwide. Under the Sudaehyup, they formed a special committee, the Suhakhyup, on May 27, 1987 to prepare protests.<sup>96</sup> With this Suhakhyup student movements participated in the June 10 protest which was coordinated by the NMCDC. For 19 days the student movements played a critical role in providing people with an opportunity to join in the protests by breaking the police blockade.

Unexpectedly the June Movement succeeded in gaining support from middle classes in the major cities.<sup>97</sup> The protests were maintained and developed by people's spontaneous participation.

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<sup>94</sup>The CA group within the student movement still held on to their slogan "Establishment of the Constituent Assembly" at that point. For the details of the different strategy of the student movement.

<sup>95</sup>This name showed that they did not try to form a high level of organization, such as alliance or association. Instead they agreed to build the lowest level of coalition organization. Although the leaders of the Sudaehyup adopted the NLPDR as its formal theory it did not directly announced its goal. Rather, it focused on the immediate issues, which were related to constitutional revision and the torture practice of the regime.

<sup>96</sup>The full name of this committee is the 'Hohun chulpewa Minjuhunbup Jaengchirulwihan Seouljiyok Hansaeng Tujaengyonhap' (The Student Council for Abolishment of the Constitution and Acquisition of Democratic Revision of the Constitution).

<sup>97</sup>Although the labor movement of early 1980s accepted new theories and defined the labor movement as a core class in the revolutionary movement, it failed to prove itself as a practical leader of the social movements. Above all, the radicalization of the labor movement did not contribute to the improvement of their status in dealing with the regime in the process of democratization. For the CA group a democratization which is led by the bourgeoisie did not have much meaning in their socialist revolution scheme. Thus, they excluded the NKDP from their alliance against the regime. Furthermore, they attacked the NKDP as a conservative party. This extremism lost many supporters in the middle classes and isolated them. As a result, when the regime oppressed the labor movement it lost its momentum

The passion and participation of the people surpassed the expectations of the NMCDC's leadership. Although the Chun regime arrested many of the leaders and staff of the NMCDC the movement grew so fast that without specific leadership the movement developed. The Chun regime proposed a talk between President Chun and Kim Young Sam on June 24, 1987. Chun Doo Hwan repeated his same policy about being willing to open discussion about the revisions if Roh Tae Woo and Kim Young Sam agreed to open discussion. However, Kim Young Sam flatly rejected the offer and decided to further the struggle until the regime accepted direct presidential elections. At the same, the two Kims emphasized nonviolent protests in the rally scheduled on June 26, to avoid any blame from the U.S. and the regime. Since the two Kims felt confident about the people's support for direct presidential elections, they decided to continue the struggles. The NMCDC organized two more nationwide rallies and pressured the regime to accept its demands. Eventually, the regime reacted with a surprise strategy.

The regime's preparation for the peaceful transition of power was not interrupted until the June movement, which forced the regime to rethink its strategy of maintaining power. With a strategic calculation, Chun decided to back off at this point, and created a well-organized retreat from hard-line policy. Based on the calculations of the possibility of winning in direct presidential election, the regime decided to accept the opposition group's demands. In order to maximize the possibility of winning in the election and dramatic effect of the measure Chun asked Roh to take the initiative in suggesting a surprising measure, June 29 Declaration, which accepted most of the opposition groups' demands including the demand for direct presidential elections.<sup>98</sup> When Roh Tae Woo

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easily. Despite the fact that the NLPDR group, who adopted more realistic and mass-oriented lines, started to gain support from the activists, the workers did not organize and prepare as much as the activists expected. There was a significant gap between the activists' political consciousness and that of the ordinary workers. They had to wait until the July and August workers' strikes in 1987 to see the simple truth that the unions are the core organizations with which the workers can realize their interests whether it is political or economic. With this gap between activists and union workers, the labor movement could not have a strong influence on the NKDP and act as a leader of the social movements. Eventually, the labor movements faced the June Movement without any preparation for it. Some workers participated in the movement individually. Since most activists were arrested, and the labor movement stagnated, the labor movement failed to participate in the June Movement.

<sup>98</sup>There were two different arguments about who made June 29 Declaration. The Chun Doo Hwan side argued that Chun was the mastermind of the declaration, and had asked Roh to take the risk in supporting presidential election. However, Roh Tae Woo's group argued that Roh Tae Woo himself presented this idea and asked Chun to accept this suggestion. These two different arguments are related to the power struggle after the establishment of the Sixth Republic under President Roh Tae Woo. For the argument for Chun's initiation of the declaration, see "6.29sonon, Chun Doo Hwanui jakpumida" [The June 29th Declaration, Chun Doo Hwan's Work], *Wolgan Choson* (June 1989): 212-22; Song-Ik Kim, "Ikkuki 6.29 Jongsada" [This is the Right History of the June 29 Declaration], *Wolgan Choson* (November 1992): 162-69.; Song-Ik Kim, "Chun Doo Hwan, yoksarul wihan yuksongjungun 1" [Chun Doo Hwan, the Real Testimony for the History 1], *Wolgan Choson* (January 1992): 290-396.; and Song-Ik Kim, "Chun Doo Hwan, yoksarul wihan yuksongjungun 2" [Chun Doo Hwan, the Real Testimony for the History 2], *Wolgan Choson* (February 1992): 290-401. For the argument for Roh Tae Woo's initiation of the declaration, see Kap-Je Cho, "Naegakje gaehuneui sosinun byunhamyupda" [There is No Change in Belief of the Revision of the Constitution for A Parliamentary System], *Wolgan Choson* (February 1992):158-75. ; and Song-Jae Kang, "6.29ui makhuinmul, Kim Bokdong" [The Figure Behind the Scene of the June 29th Declaration: Kim Bokdong], *Shindonga* (September 1987):

accepted the RDP's demands by proposing the 6.29 Declaration on June 29, 1987 the two Kims acclaimed the decision. Right after this, the RDP agreed to participate in the negotiations for the revision of the constitution.

The change in the U.S. policy was demonstrated in Gaston Sigur's speech in February, 1987.<sup>99</sup>

Although the regime and the opposition groups interpreted the references of Gaston Sigur differently, the impact of his remarks about the situation of Korean democracy and its future was significant. Considering the importance of U.S. policy on Korea, this straightforward reference to the Korean situation made a significant impact on the views of the major actors in Korea. Facing the Chun regime's April.13 Measurement in 1987, the Reagan administration showed concern about the end of the dialogue, but it did not support the RDP. Instead, the Reagan administration acted carefully in dealing with the Chun regime. Although the Reagan administration was critical about the measurement, it maintained its support for the peaceful transition of power. During his visit in Korea, Sigur made sure that the Chun regime would keep its pledge to transfer power peacefully in 1988, although it would be done within the framework of the current constitution.

Until the June movement the Reagan administration hesitated to interfere directly in the situation, but as the June movement grew and the confrontations between the regime and the opposition groups intensified, the Reagan administration tried to mediate the confrontations between the regime and the opposition groups. First, the U.S. emphasized a peaceful resolution of the problem between the regime and the opposition groups. As the first direct action, President Reagan corresponded with Chun Doo Hwan and advised him not to use the military to crack down on the mobilizations.<sup>100</sup> After the experience of the Kwangju uprising the U.S. knew what would be the result if the military was used to crack down on the nationwide protests. With this measure, the U.S.

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250-63. There is also a revisionist opinion about the sources of the declaration. Dae-Gun Kim, "6.29 mystery" [The mystery of the June 29th declaration], *Shindonga* (June 1991): 180-192. I believe that Chun Doo Hwan was in a position to initiate the declaration. In considering his position in the regime, Roh could not make such a recommendation. Moreover, Roh kept opposing direct elections in the meeting of the DJP on June 21, 1987 (mystery, p. 188). The critical point here is that the regime did not have significant fracture in facing the crisis. Instead, the regime responded more rationally and unilaterally than the opposition groups. The increased opening of the regime did not come from the power struggle within the regime. Rather, the regime responded it more systematically to the opposition groups and took the initiative to lead the political situation. The above documents showed that both Chun and Roh calculated the possibility of the division of the RDP when they restored Kim Dae Jung's civil rights and allowed him to run for president. Song-Ik Kim, "Ikkuki 6.29 Jongsada" [This is the Right History of the June 29th Declaration]: 167. and Song-Ik Kim, "Chun Doo Hwan, yoksarul wihan yuksongjungun 1" [Chun Doo Hwan, the real testimony for the history 1]: 384-85. Chun also said that he prepared to support Roh as his successor. Ibid., 332-33. He explained in the meeting of the Blue House the reason why picked up Roh as his successor. Chun kept emphasizing the importance of the knowledge of the military as the best criterion for president. Ibid., 357-59.

<sup>99</sup>Gaston Sigur, "Korean Politics in Transition," *Current Policy* no. 917. United States Department of State. Washington D.C., 1987. He delivered this policy before the U.S.-Korean society in New York on February 6, 1987. Sigur declared that it was essential to create a more open and legitimate political system in Korea. In addition, he encouraged the military not to intervene in politics, since other parts of society can lead politics. Instead, he advised the military to concentrate on its own task, i.e., to protect the nation from the threat of North Korea.

<sup>100</sup>*New York Times*, June 19, 1987. A8.

Congress adopted a resolution to pressure the regime to accept the demands of opposition groups.<sup>101</sup> The reaction of the U.S. in this period was unusual in its swiftness and effectiveness. By taking a moderate stance and trying not to give the military the impression that the situation was a crisis, the U.S. could prevent military mobilization.<sup>102</sup>

During the June movement, many U.S. officials met with opposition leaders as well as with government officials. Through these meetings the U.S. tried to find possible solutions to the problems between the regime and the opposition party leaders. On the one hand, the U.S. discussed with the regime what they would have if they cooperated with the movement. On the other hand, the U.S. tried to create a channel with which both parties could avoid the clash. The U.S. warned the opposition party leaders of the danger which they would face in case the June movement developed into violent riots. The U.S.'s persuasion had a positive effect on the decision-making of the opposition party leaders, as well as on the regime.

Before Roh Tae Woo's declaration, Sigur had already implied that there would be a change in the Chun regime's policy on the revision of the constitution on June 27, 1987.<sup>103</sup> In addition, the Reagan administration welcomed Roh's decision and highly praised it as a brave resolution. The Reagan administration and Congress promised strong support for the regime. During the process of the second negotiation, the U.S. maintained the position of mediator by providing a favorable atmosphere in which to create a negotiated transition.<sup>104</sup> The U.S. interest was in helping the regime create a procedural democracy which would give more legitimacy to the new regime, regardless of its capacity to guarantee a substantive democracy.

### Negotiation for Transition

With the June 29th declaration, the negotiations for the revision of the constitution started. Although the social movement played a major role in the June movement, when the stakes were about setting new rules for the elections, the RDP became a major actor at the negotiation table. However, the DJP and the regime maintained favorable positions over the RDP, due to the fact that the regime did not collapse and the military still played a critical role as a potential power reservoir. Also, the DJP used the fact that Roh Tae Woo made a critical decision and a June 29th declaration. Since the RDP owed the success of the June movement to the social movements, it tried to accept some issues

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<sup>101</sup>Ibid.

<sup>102</sup>Actually, Chun Doo Hwan tried to use emergency martial law the night of June 18 1987 after the massive demonstrations in Pusan, but he dropped his order on June 19. The reasons that Chun gave up using the military are complex. However, one of the main reasons was the swift movement of the U.S. to survey the movements of the military and the public announcement that it was impossible to use the military to crack down on the protests. Gleysteen and Romberg already suggested a possible solution when the U.S. faced this situation before the June movement. The Reagan administration's operation was exactly what they suggested. See their article, William H. Gleysteen Jr. and Alan D. Romberg, "Korea: Asian Paradox," 1053.

<sup>103</sup>*New York Times*, June 27, 1987. A3.

<sup>104</sup>Dukhong Kim, "The Dynamics of Negotiated Transition: A Korean Case Study," Paper presented at the annual meeting of Midwest Political Science Association in April, Chicago, 1996. 16-7.

which were raised by the social movements. Owing to the issue of the release of political prisoners the negotiations had difficulties. However, since the RDP did not want to lose the opportunity, it agreed with the DJP to finish the negotiation by the end of August.

In the midst of the workers' strikes in July and August 1987 the RDP hurried to finish the negotiations and to grab an opportunity to compete in the elections for president. Since the major goal of the RDP in this negotiation was to obtain direct presidential elections, it was willing to sacrifice other issues which could guarantee substantive democracy.<sup>105</sup> During this period, the social movements did not launch violent protests to prevent giving the military an excuse to interfere in the negotiations. Rather, most social movement sectors engaged in forming new organizations and tried to pressure the RDP to guarantee important issues in the constitution.

In the negotiations the RDP demanded that several important issues be included in the new constitution. The first demand was the inclusion of a phrase to acclaim the spirit of the Kwangju uprising, which was the original source of the regime's illegitimacy. However, the DJP argued that the evaluation of the Kwangju uprising needed more time, and it was not proper to include that event in the constitution yet. The second demand was for the clarification of the role of the military. The RDP demanded the inclusion of the clause which prohibited the military's interference in politics under any circumstances. This issue, however, faced strong objections from the military and from the regime. The military openly threatened to veto Kim Dae Jung's bid for president.

The third demand was for guaranteeing the workers' participation in company management. The Korean Federation of Industries, an organization of businessmen opposed this demand strongly. The regime did not ignore the strikes to threaten the middle class and the RDP during the process of negotiation for the new constitution. Faced with these workers' strikes, the regime did not interfere for two months instead allowing the owners of the companies to deal with these strikes. It was a well-calculated strategy which used threats to the middle class and to the bourgeoisie to let them know what would happen if they supported the RDP, and what would happen if the regime did not interfere in the workers' strikes. Fearing the result of the workers' collective action and concerned about the degradation of the economic power of the countries which were the main target of the mass media's distortion, the middle classes who supported the democratization, withdrew their support for the workers' collective action. Backed by the disinterested middle classes and the upper bourgeoisie, the DJP succeeded in deleting the RDP's demand for the guarantee of the workers' participation in management of the companies. Since the RDP feared the possible collapse of the negotiations due to the workers' strikes, it remained defensive and dissuaded the workers to restrain their strikes. In a situation caused by the regime intentionally spreading the rumor of September or October crisis, the RDP was extremely anxious to guarantee elections by making any necessary sacrifices.<sup>106</sup> Eventually the RDP dropped all these issues to get elections.<sup>107</sup>

Obsessed with the possibility of winning in the election, the RDP did not pay attention to other laws, such as labor laws, which prohibited the unions from assisting parties and from donating

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<sup>105</sup>KCSRC, *Daetongryung sungo tujaeng* [The Presidential Election Struggle], (Seoul: Minjungsa, 1988), 10.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

<sup>107</sup>For the details of these issues, see Im, "Politics of Transition," 303-08.

any money to political parties. In addition, the RDP did not try to revise the law which made it difficult for minor parties to maintain themselves if they cannot get a certain amount of support in elections. The RDP's ignorance of these two laws made a great impact on later general elections and practically blocked the emergence of progressive parties. Lastly, the RDP failed to pay attention to the specific rules of the presidential election law. Even though the two Kims had already made it clear that they would run for president, the RDP agreed on the law which adopted a simple majority rule.<sup>108</sup> The simple majority rule would allow a candidate who had the most votes to win regardless of percentage. The regime and the DJP calculated at least three candidates when they engaged in the negotiations and demanded the implementation of the rule. Traditionally, the ruling party maintained a certain percentage of votes in every election. Since the regime already calculated that the opposition party would be divided against each other and compete with each other, it tried to prevent the possible run-off vote when there were no candidates who obtained more than the majority.<sup>109</sup> Confident of winning, even with two or three candidates in the opposition parties, the two Kims did not pay attention to this rule. In contrast, the two Kims justified their division by arguing that having three candidates in the opposition party would make it more likely for them to win in the election.<sup>110</sup> By being in such a hurry and by yielding so much, the RDP ended the negotiations and the revision of the constitution on September 16, 1987. The constitution adopted a presidential system for the next government and direct elections as a way to elect the president. In sum, the regime and the DJP obtained all they wanted including making Roh Tae Woo a champion of democracy. Through these negotiations the regime and the DJP obtained a favorable rule of games which would allow for them to benefit in the elections. Gaining these favorable rules was possible because the regime still maintained the military and other state appellates as a threatening power, and the regime adeptly maneuvered the workers' strikes.

After the revision of the constitution, the two Kims started a fierce competition, forgetting the experience that they had in 1980. In addition, Kim Jong Pil ran for president. The two Kims' confidence in winning in the election was a complete misunderstanding of the situation. As a result, Roh Tae Woo won the election in December 1987, and the transition to democracy began to progress slowly with difficulties. Although the RDP succeeded in creating favorable conditions for the second negotiation in 1987, it failed to establish a democratic regime due to its divisions in front of the regime as well as its ignorance of the importance of setting rules.

The Reagan administration explicitly supported Roh as its favorite candidate when the election campaign started.<sup>111</sup> In September 1987, Roh became the first presidential candidate who visited the

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<sup>108</sup>KCSRC, *Daetongryung sungo tujaeng*, 12.

<sup>109</sup>Ho-Ki Kim, *Hyundae jabonjuuiwa hanguk sahoe: gukga, siminsahoe, minjujuui* [Contemporary Capitalism and the Korean Society: State, Civil Society, and Democracy] (Seoul: Sahoe Bipyungsa, 1995), 323. Also see the Korean Christian Social Research Center (KCSRC), *Daetongryung sungo tujaeng* [The Presidential Election Struggle], (Seoul: Minjungsa, 1988), 283-84.

<sup>110</sup>Sang-Hwi Han and Yon-Ho Oh, *Kim Dae Jung, Kim Young Sam: Kyungjaenggwa kongjonui yoksa*, 210-11.

<sup>111</sup>KCSRC, *Datongryung sungu tujaeng*, 20; and Hong Nack Kim, "The 1987 Political Crisis and its Implication for U.S.-Korean Relations," in *Political Change in South Korea*, ed. Ilpyong Kim and Young Hwan Kihl (New York: Professors World Peace Academy Book, 1988), 230.

U.S. With this visit the Reagan administration treated him as a hero of democracy and promised to support his efforts to lead a peaceful election process and power transition. After the presidential election, the U.S. praised the results of the election and ignored the opposition groups' protests of the election being rigged. By taking sides with the regime, the Reagan administration pushed the opposition groups' demand for holding another election aside. The U.S. satisfied itself that although the election was not a fair election, Roh became president by an election instead of by a coup or by some other illegal method. In other words, the Reagan administration backed up the regime's transition strategy, which allowed the regime to take advantage of the opposition parties in the elections.

### The Position of the Social Movements during the Negotiations

Although the student movements felt that there was something behind the regime's 6.29 Declaration, they could not mobilize other students further because most students and people were satisfied by the regime's measure. The student movements focused on the construction of nationwide student organizations as other sectors of the social movements. On August 19, 1987 the student movements, which adopted the NLPDR, formed the Chundaehyup (The Council of the National Student Representatives) to improve their mobilization ability.<sup>112</sup>

During the negotiation period the Chundaehyup demanded the regime retire from politics immediately and demanded the establishment of a pan-national transitional government. However, the Chundaehyup did support the RDP's negotiations and tried not to provoke the military with any real mass demonstrations. This period was a time to build up their organization for the student movements.

At the same time, the student movements were caught in a theoretical debate about the evaluation of the June movement and their relationship with the RDP. Internal competition prevailed during the period of negotiations and the student movements failed to assist the RDP at the negotiation table. Their internal competition and their focus on the reorganization of the nationwide networks made the student movements indifferent about the negotiations.<sup>113</sup> Even when the labor movements broke out in July and August 1987, the student movement did nothing but present a declaration. Preparing for the presidential election, the student movements demonstrated serious fractures and internal competition. The failure to obtain a democratic regime dealt a serious blow to the student movements.

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<sup>112</sup>Another group which adopted the CA and its representative organization was the Minminhakryun (The Students' Struggle Committee for the Anti-Imperialist, Anti-Fascist and National Democracy) which was organized April 29, 1986. It demanded revolutionary transitional government. It did not get much support from the people, due to its radical and unrealistic slogan. Above all, it still believed that the June movement was a revolutionary struggle, and the movement was the result of their efforts. They diagnosed the June movement and later period as revolutionary situation. Still it did not believe that the RDP and the regime were major actors in negotiation.

<sup>113</sup>KCSRC, *Daetongryung sungo tujaeng*, 18.

## The Labor Movements

The workers' massive strikes during July and August, 1987, occurred without any assistance from the incumbent labor movement leaders. Using the open political opportunity, unprecedented strikes occurred spontaneously. Most strikes broke out in the heavy and chemical industry sectors. Those factories were located mainly in the regions of Ulsan, Changwon, Okpo, Gumi, Iri, and so forth.<sup>114</sup> The number of collective actions of the workers increased dramatically, from 276 in 1986 to 3,749 in 1987. In addition, the number of unions increased from 2,658 in 1986 to 4,086 in 1987.<sup>115</sup>

The characteristics of these strikes were as follows. First, these were spontaneous strikes which were not led by so-called "vanguard" activists. Instead, these were mostly the result of spontaneous reaction to owners' inhumane treatment of workers and low wages. Second, these strikes focused on economic issues and pursued the construction of democratic unions. Third, a democratic union or an autonomous organization within the company played a critical role in organizing these strikes.<sup>116</sup> Fourth, there were changed patterns of the company sizes of the workers who participated in the strikes. Most strikes occurred in big companies. Fifth, male workers were dominant in the strikes. These characteristics showed significant shifts in the labor movement.

These strikes demonstrated the potential of the labor movement, which the activists had wanted so desperately for a long time. However, the role of the activists in these struggles was minimal. Even the student movements which were obsessed with the idea of *Nohakyondae* (alliance between workers and students), could not do anything to assist the strikes due to lack of networks in those big companies. Toward the end of the strikes in August 1987, when the regime decided to oppress the strikes with force, the students tried to assist the workers, but those efforts failed due to the regime's effective oppression as well as to the shift in political issues.

What was the role or impact of the labor movements and the strikes in the process of negotiation? Above all, the sudden eruption of the workers' strikes contributed to the regime's initiative to threaten the middle classes who were the supporters of the June movement. The regime intentionally did not intervene in the workers' strikes for almost two months.<sup>117</sup> The regime blamed the strikes on leftists' penetration into the factories and their propaganda. Apparently, this blame was completely groundless, considering that the strikes occurred spontaneously and that the activists

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<sup>114</sup>KCSRC, *7-8wol nodongja daetujaeng* [The Major Struggles of Labors in July and August ] (Seoul: Minjungsa, 1987). The strikes started at Ulsan, but shortly these spread out nationwide.

<sup>115</sup>Hagen Koo, "The State, *Minjung*, and the Working Class in South Korea," 149.

<sup>116</sup>The representative case is Hyundai Machinery. The pro-company organization in the company turned into a leader of collective action, which were the first massive strikes, accelerating other strikes.

<sup>117</sup>Chun Doo Hwan said that the businessmen should solve the strikes by themselves. Song-Ik Kim, "Chun Doo Hwan, yoksarul wihan yuksongjungun 2" [Chun Doo Hwan, the Real Testimony for the History 2]: 316-17. This policy was a complete surprise compared to his former reaction about the workers' strikes. Later, he mentioned that the strikes contributed to Roh Tae Woo's win. *Ibid.*, 333.

failed to penetrate those big companies. This blame came from strategic calculations of the regime to lead the political situation after the 6.29 declaration. The Chun regime put every effort into shifting the issue from the confrontation between the democratic groups and anti-democratic groups to the confrontation between the conservative right and the revolutionary left. By blaming the strikes on the work of the leftists they could kill two birds with one stone. They oppressed the social movements and undermined the opposition party by making the middle class conservatives.

Although the workers' strikes gave a promising view of class struggles for the activists, it failed to provide favorable conditions for the transition to democracy. As the DJP used the strikes to threaten the RDP with a possible military intervention, the RDP could not push the issues of guaranteeing participation of the workers in management of business. In addition, the RDP could not use the labor movement as its threat power since the middle classes which were another major supporter of the RDP, would withdraw their support in case the RDP supported the workers. The regime's adept use of the right and left confrontation strategy worked effectively. The workers' unprecedented strikes ironically were used to further this logic for two months during the negotiation period. Thus, unorganized spontaneous strikes undermined the RDP's position in the negotiations.

During the negotiations, the NMCDC was busy establishing its own organizations at the local level. Like other social movements, the NMCDC did not try to provoke the military and restrained its collective actions. The NMCDC was especially puzzled over how to react to the workers' strikes. Since they were such unexpected strikes, the NMCDC did nothing other than present some declarations urging the regime not to use military forces to quell the strikes. Under the regime's campaign for anti-left propaganda, the NMCDC failed to escape a barrage of attacks during the negotiations. In addition, the RDP, which was fearful of military intervention and of the collapse of the negotiations, tried to distance itself from the NMCDC which was accused by the regime of being a leftist organization. In this situation, the NMCDC failed to produce positive negotiation results.

After the negotiations, the Mintongryun, one of the representative groups in the NMCDC, decided to support Kim Dae Jung over Kim Young Sam, figuring that Kim Dae Jung was more progressive and that his win would contribute to the establishment of a more substantial democracy. Faced with the division of the two Kims, the social movements also experienced fractures.<sup>118</sup>

The Jaeya contributed to the activation of the social movements by providing a symbolic and nationwide organization during the 1980's. In the first negotiations, the radicalization of the Jaeya alienated the NKDP and caused serious oppression from the regime. As a result of this radicalization the Jaeya failed to coordinate with the NKDP. In facing the impasse, the Jaeya provided people with

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<sup>118</sup> There were three different strategies in dealing with the presidential election. The Mintongryun argued for the critical support for Kim Dae Jung, who was relatively progressive and close to the ideology of the social movement. The main current of the student movements, most of the NLPDR groups, followed this. Another group argued that it was necessary to obtain a united candidate to win in the election. This argument was supported by a minority of the NLPDR group. This strategy emerged too late when the situation was too far gone to solve. The last group which adopted the CA strategy argued the necessity of having an independent Minjung candidate. All these different strategies contributed to accelerate the fractures within the social movements. The aftermath of the failure in the presidential election was so severe that the social movements did not recover strength until after the election in April 1988.

an opportunity to mobilize themselves to express their desire for democratization. Although the Jaeya succeeded in coordinating with the RDP and mobilizing people, the success itself was a trap which the Jaeya failed to escape. During the second negotiation, the Jaeya, like other social movement sectors, cooperated with the RDP but was circumscribed by the regime and became obsessed by the presidential election itself. Thus, the Jaeya failed to influence the negotiation result.

### The Negotiated Transition to Democracy

The major actors in the second cycle of negotiation were the same as in the first negotiation: the moderate opposition which did not pursue revolution but instead pursued a procedural democracy; the regime which was willing to negotiate but did not want to take the risk of having a direct presidential election system; the U.S. which emphasized the importance of gradual progress and dialogue; and the social movements which were under severe repression from the regime due to their radicalization.

As the negotiated transition model and the mediation model suggest, it is important to have responsible representatives from both sides who want to participate in the negotiation. Second, the existence of the stalemate situation is another critical condition for the successful negotiation and mediation. The emergence of the RDP, which maintained a strong leadership and cohesiveness, contributed to having a responsible representative in the opposition bloc. On the regime side, the Chun regime already had maintained its leadership.

In order to meet the second condition, the existence of stalemate, the RDP and the social movements played an important role. The success of the June movement provided them with an important power leverage which could create a stalemate situation. The social movements change of their strategies and coordination with the RDP contributed to successful mobilization.

At this juncture the U.S. played an important role as a mediator. As the mediation model suggested, the U.S. played its role as a manipulator, communicator, and formulator in this negotiation. According to the model, the manipulator has power to encourage two opponents to participate in negotiation and to change their views of each other's choices.<sup>119</sup> As a manipulator, the U.S. moved through open diplomacy to push the regime toward democratic change. The U.S. clearly opposed military intervention in the confrontation during the June movement and subsequent negotiation periods. The U.S. opposition to using the military provided a stalemate situation between the regime and the opposition bloc.

At the same time, as a communicator and formulator who helped to bring a dialogue between two opponents, the U.S. government contacted opposition party leaders, seeking to demonstrate their firm commitment to peaceful transition and compromise. Gaston Sigur's meeting with President Chun and other opposition party leaders had a positive effect on the resolution of the confrontation. Sigur was able to assure the opposition leaders that the military would not intervene in the protests. At the same time, he encouraged the leaders not to use violence in protests. Other officials also met with

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<sup>119</sup> William Zartman and Saadial Touval, "International Mediator: Conflict Resolution and Power Politics," *Journal of Social Issues* 41, no. 2 (1985): 38-40.

the opposition leaders to encourage them to resolve their confrontations through negotiation.

Faced with this situation, the regime had two choices: mobilize the military to quell the mass mobilization or accept the opposition bloc's demand. If the regime took the first choice the regime would face three possible results: military coup, civil war, or hurting its legitimacy nationally and internationally again by quelling mass mobilization by using the military. Since the U.S. as well as the majority of military leaders opposed using the military to quell the mass protests, there was a possibility of experiencing another coup. Considering the experience of the Kwangju uprising, there was a possibility of facing civil war in case the military was used to crack down on the masses. These two options were worse than accepting the opposition's demand and competing with opposition party candidates.

As the mediation model suggested, there were two necessary conditions for successful mediation at the second negotiation in Korea: the existence of the responsible representative and the stalemate situation. The strategic change of the social movements contributed to successful mobilization. The U.S. contributed to create a stalemate situation by opposing military mobilization. At the same time, the U.S. played its role as a mediator. Since the U.S. had resources, (e.g., the CFC system, economic sanction, and using international opinion), to encourage the regime and the opposition party to negotiate, it performed its role as a manipulator, mixed with other roles of communicator and formulator.

As was pointed out in the earlier section, the Korean case showed different configurations of the major actors. At this juncture, there were no practical divisions within the regime. The fracture within the regime did not occur when the regime faced the mass mobilization of the opposition bloc. Since the regime believed that it could win in a direct presidential election in which Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam would compete with each other, it decided to accept the demand of the opposition. Moreover, the regime's confidence in its economic accomplishment and the coming Olympic Games contributed to the regime's decision. Im argued that there was a practical division within the regime but his argument is irrelevant in considering the documents published later.

The negotiated transition model has problems in explaining the role of the U.S. in the Korean transition. Since the U.S. played an important role in creating a stalemate which is a necessary condition for a successful negotiation, the role of the U.S. needed to be included in the negotiated transition model. The mediation model can provide a framework by including the U.S. as a mediator in the negotiated transition. The mediation model can explain the Korean case by incorporating the U.S. in the interactions of major actors during the transition process.