



CHAPTER 5

**Winning and Losing Strategies
And Tactics during the
2002 Presidential Election Campaign**

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Korea's 16th presidential race between Lee Hoi-chang of the opposition Grand National Party and Roh Moo-hyun of the ruling Millennium Democratic Party ended with the victory of Mr. Roh by a slight margin of 2.3% in the total number of votes cast. The percentage of voters who supported Mr. Roh was 48.9%, whilst 46.6% voted for Mr. Lee. With no doubt, this election could be recorded as one of the most dramatic presidential races in the history of Korea. Mr. Roh, an underdog who had once been 20% behind the opponent in the polls, succeeded in overcoming the deficit with three weeks of the campaign left. And a big reversal took place in only a few days. He maintained the lead thereafter and was elected the first Korean president of the new millennium. With this election, a swing of ups and downs was greater than ever before and, accordingly, a high degree of uncertainty over the final outcome prevailed until the very last day of the election.

The official campaign lasted for only three weeks. But candidates had to prepare for an election for a far longer period, employing various strategies and tactics that were intended to help them win the election. Certainly, some strategies and tactics worked toward their intent, and some did not. It is important to

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understand the merits and demerits of these strategies and tactics. Evaluating them can be a risky business, though. For a post-election study may readily fall into consequentialist jargon or functionalist fallacy. The winner's strategies and tactics tend to be given the undue weight of significance, while the loser's approaches are destined to obtain an evaluation of failure. Subjective conjecture and interpretation may be an unavoidable attribute in this sort of research. Nevertheless, the strategies and tactics employed in the election are worth studying, since they provide valuable information for our understanding of the nature, issues, outcome, and aftermath of the election.

This chapter will address the strategies and tactics employed by the two major candidates of the 2002 election, Lee Hoi-chang and Roh Moo-hyun. First, it evaluates the two competitors' contrasting grand strategies that sought to secure a winning majority in the electorate, and how effective these strategies were toward their intended goals. Next, it analyzes a few salient issues of the election and the strategies and tactics employed by the two to deal with these issues. Finally, it concludes with a recapitulation of the arguments and any ramifications stemming from them.

Corrupt Politics vs. Old Politics

The primary objective of the presidential election campaign for both Lee Hoi-chang and Roh Moo-hyun was to put together a winning majority in the electorate. All their strategies and tactics were accordingly directed toward this self-evident objective. The focus of Mr. Lee's campaign was placed on mobilizing the conservative elements of the Korean society by instigating the anti-Kim Dae-jung sentiment. His campaign's catchword was the "eradication of corrupt politics," which targeted at what Mr. Lee labelled "the corrupt and incapable Kim Dae-jung government." Mr. Lee demanded that voters pass a stern judgment on the Kim Dae-jung government and Kim's heir, Roh Moo-hyun.

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The Kim government had been implicated in several money scandals in the final years of Kim Dae-jung's term, including the ones associated with Mr. Kim's two sons. Riding on the rising wave of anti-Kim Dae-jung sentiment, this strategy succeeded in drawing the voters' attention. The strategy was effective during the local election held in June 2002. The popularity of Kim Dae-jung and his party, the MDP, plummeted. Mr. Lee Hoi-chang and his party, the GNP, became natural beneficiaries from their opponents' misfortune. The strategy seemed to work well at least for a few weeks before the election, but it suddenly revealed its own limits at the most crucial time. By the time the official race began, people had already been fed up with Lee's strategy.

The weakness of Mr. Lee's strategy lay in his inability to deliver his own fresh vision how he was going to lead a new Korea. Mr. Lee called for voters to be retrospective and to be a judge of the Kim Dae-jung government. But were Mr. Lee and the GNP sufficiently immune from a retrospective evaluation? The problem was that Mr. Lee's strategy had double edges; when Mr. Lee whirled his sword, he could never be safe from his own weapon. Many people regarded Mr. Lee as someone who made his professional accomplishments relying on the old-fashioned politics of corruption that he said he would fight against. Mr. Lee initiated his political career with the relatively clean image of a principled judge. However, his image was smeared during his five-year tenure as the opposition leader in the Korean style body politic. With respect to corruption, the GNP, led by Mr. Lee, had a far longer history and a more "impressive" track record than the MDP: Kwon Young-ghil, the presidential candidate of the Democratic Labor Party, even named the GNP as "the original party of corruption." With those old politicians with tainted careers surrounding Mr. Lee within the GNP, the catchphrase "eradication of corrupt politics" was able to play only a limited role in generating enthusiastic popular support.

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Whatever rhetoric Mr. Roh Moo-hyun employed to try to distance himself from President Kim Dae-jung, Mr. Roh was an apparent political heir to Mr. Kim. It was a hard fact that Mr. Roh followed much of his predecessor's policies and ideological orientation. The two even shared the educational background in that their final education was a commercial vocational high school. The irony was that despite so many similarities between Mr. Roh and President Kim, criticism of the Kim Dae-jung government failed to do much harm to Mr. Roh's popular standing. The problem lay in Mr. Lee's strategic inability to link Mr. Roh with President Kim in an effective manner.

What was then the weakness of Mr. Lee's strategy? Firstly, as a former long-time human rights lawyer, Mr. Roh had been relatively immune to corruption or power abuse throughout his political career. The slogan of anti-corruption proved to be an ineffective weapon against Mr. Roh. When Mr. Lee loaded his negative campaign against Mr. Roh with an allegation of illegal wiretapping by the National Intelligence Service, Mr. Roh was again unharmed. It was rather Mr. Lee who was blamed for utilizing a negative campaigning tactic, since Mr. Roh and his advisors turned out to be the victims of wiretapping.

This partly explains why Mr. Lee later shifted the focus of his attacks directly towards Mr. Roh's personality and qualifications. He concentrated on contrasting his image of "stability and responsibility" with Mr. Roh's "instability and irresponsibility." Aiming at Mr. Roh's progressive ideological tendency, Mr. Lee sought to portray Mr. Roh as "an irresponsible radical." But this strategy also proved to be ineffective, mainly because of Mr. Kwon Young-ghil of the Democratic Labor Party. Mr. Kwon was one of the three major candidates participating in the televised debates and most vociferously called for a need to reform the Korean society. With Mr. Kwon on his left side, Mr. Roh was seen as a moderate reformist to the electorate. In the

presence of Mr. Kwon, Mr. Lee's strategy of labeling Mr. Roh as a radical ideologue could not be successful.

Secondly, there was a problem with Mr. Lee Hoi-chang's "retrospective" strategy that resorted to the voters' willingness to evaluate the predecessor's past achievements in deciding whether or not to support a candidate of the ruling party. This strategy was widely known as being fragile and often counterproductive in previous presidential elections in Korea that allow only one term in office. A more serious problem with Mr. Lee's strategy was the lack of vision for the future. Mr. Lee placed his experience and leadership ability on the top of his merit list, but without vision they could not be seen as competent and sufficient merits to the electorate, especially to the relatively young voters who demanded change in Korean society. For most of those, who had a deep distrust in politics and looked for a new and fresh figure, a request for retrospection itself was not a persuasive appeal.

Mr. Lee's campaign strategy to generate a winning majority in the electorate was defensive in nature. Mr. Lee had been favored in every opinion poll until Mr. Roh Moo-hyun and Mr. Chung Mong-joon agreed to establish a unified single candidacy four weeks before the election. Mr. Lee had been a shoo-in, backed by a solid majority of staunch conservatives and Youngnam supporters. Many were convinced of his victory without a doubt. In order to avoid of any risk or uncertainty, Mr. Lee concentrated on safeguarding the already-earned support without seeking to extend his support base. Afraid of any backlash that could result in a decrease in the support of the Youngname electorate, Mr. Lee was even hesitant of launching his active campaign to the Choongchung electorate.

However, overconfidence and defensive strategy were the main causes of his defeat. While Mr. Lee was leading in the opinion polls, his approval ratings never exceeded 40 percent of the registered voters. His support ratings mostly hovered around 35

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percent. Mr. Lee underestimated how extensive an anti-Lee Hoi-chang alignment could be. Although he was perceived as a virtual shoo-in, there was no evidence to support that expectation. The problem was that Mr. Lee could not escape from that unconfirmed optimism and misperception. The claim of a shoo-in was waiting to be disproved when the time ripened. Many analysts attributed Mr. Lee's electoral defeat to his defensive strategies, disarrayed tactics, and their conservative nature. One can argue that some minor adjustments in his strategies and tactics in the direction of more assertiveness, aggressiveness, and pragmatism could have saved him from a razor-thin defeat in the election.

While Mr. Lee's slogans called for an incremental change of the status quo through the transfer of political power to the opposition, Mr. Roh's called for a more fundamental and structural change of Korean society. Mr. Roh matched Mr. Lee's motto calling for the "elimination of corrupt politics" with a catchphrase about the "liquidation of old politics." He sought to convey a hope of the "new and young politics" to the electorate. The notion of the new and young politics was confronted with an accusation of its being immature, inexperienced, and unstable. Still, Mr. Roh's motto seized the imagination of the voters, especially the young. Mr. Roh seemed to understand well the electorate's discontent with the old-fashioned politics. He pledged to eradicate all the negative symptoms of the old-day politics such as undemocratic party ruling by a charismatic boss, money politics, political opportunism, conspiratorial maneuvering of the red complex, and regional antagonism. Also, Roh Moo-hyun argued that Lee Hoi-chang's "stability claim" was no more than political rhetoric covering up the former's intention to uphold the status quo.

Mr. Roh's campaign strategy was more future-oriented in substance. Rather than battling with Mr. Lee with negative campaign ads, Mr. Roh sought to deliver a future-oriented

message to the electorate. He came up with a vision of Korea as a business hub in Northeast Asia and talked about a peaceful and prosperous Korean peninsula. The vision was of no particular freshness or ingenuity, but it helped promote his image as a future-oriented politician. Mr. Roh's slogan of "sweeping away the remnants of old politics" was not necessarily antithetical to the demand of the Lee supporters; it was inclusive of all of those who wished a certain change from the status quo. The difference was to what extent the Roh and Lee supporters wanted to change their country, respectively. Mr. Roh's strategy was to ask the voters to choose between "change" and "no change" and to urge them to stand with him if they could not tolerate "no change."

With respect to ideological stance, Mr. Roh's orientation was clear-cut, relative to Mr. Lee's "catchall strategy." The former's target group was "common people of no privilege and prerogative." Having been a pro-welfare and pro-labor advocate, he had no qualms about being a defender of the interests of the less privileged classes of Korean society. During his campaign, Mr. Roh pledged to pass an anti-money laundering law, a *chaebol* (large conglomerates) reform, a financial reform, and a reform for greater transparency in business and markets in general. This ideological posture differed greatly from the ideological stance of Mr. Lee Hoi-chang, who drew support mainly from the upper-middle class and the large business groups, including *chaebols*.

Strategies of Coalition-Building: Exploiting Regional and Generational Divides

Mr. Roh's strategy aimed at securing a winning majority was to formulate the broadest anti-Lee Hoi-chang front with new coalition politics. The nature of this coalition-building strategy is worthy of close examination. It was a mixture of regional and progressive coalitions. The regional coalition was targeted towards the electorate of Honam and Southern Youngnam, while the progressive coalition was supposed to bring in the votes of

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the relatively young electorate in their twenties and thirties, with the collateral support of the reform-oriented civic groups.

Having secured the overwhelming support of the Honam electorate, Mr. Roh's primary objective was to garner a third of the Youngnam electorate to win the election. In 1997, Mr. Kim Dae-jung had succeeded in putting together a regional coalition between Honam and Choongchung with the help of Mr. Kim Jong-pil. The coalition was an important historical watershed. Almost for three decades prior to the 1997 presidential election, the Choongchung electorate had sided with Yongnam, alienating Honam. A long-term regional tie was broken at that critical election. Korea's first horizontal transfer of power to the opposition would not have been possible without that unprecedented shift in regional realignment.

Mr. Roh's task to create a new electoral alignment did not seem facile; it required a coalition building between two very competitive regions -- Honam and Yongnam. Mr. Roh, of course, had a competitive advantage over Mr. Kim Dae-jung, since he was a native of Youngnam and was able to hold on to stable support from the Honam electorate, as President Kim Dae-jung's heir. Still, he had to be very careful and pursue a delicate balancing strategy to generate a winning electoral coalition between the two regions.

However, Mr. Roh's initial move was not as refined and articulate as required. Right after he was nominated as the MDP presidential candidate, Mr. Roh made a coarse move to dissociate himself from President Kim Dae-jung and the unpopular MDP in an attempt to reach out to and extend his support among the Youngnam electorate. But this move soon proved to be disastrous, as had been the case with Mr. Lee In-je. Mr. Lee In-je, who had been a promising shoo-in for the MDP's presidential nomination, surprisingly lost to Mr. Roh in the primary because he failed to secure the support of the Honam electorate. The reason for that was that the radical dissociation with President

Kim could generate a tremendous backlash, pulling the Honam electorate away from its support for Mr. Roh. While the alienated Honam electorate was dissatisfied with Mr. Roh's treacherous move, the Yongnam electorate was still less than confident of accepting him as their hometown native. Furthermore, the dissociation created a lot of cacophony inside the MDP, and many people began to raise doubts about Mr. Roh's leadership skills.

Mr. Roh's popularity waned rapidly during the month of August 2002 to less than 20 percent, which was mainly because the Honam electorate pulled out their support for him. Mr. Chung Mong-joon was on the rise enough to compete fairly with Mr. Lee Hoi-chang, briskly encroaching on Mr. Roh's support base in that region. While Mr. Roh hoped for a rebound in his support rate, expecting a shift of the Youngnam electorate toward him, his standing in the public opinion polls remained stagnant.

He recognized the inherent limitation of his original coalition-building strategy and sought to modify it by narrowing the distance he kept from the Kim Dae-jung government. He surely was a fast learner, who possessed the faculty of speculative instinct and adaptive flexibility to survive from fierce political competition. By the middle of November 2002, Mr. Roh was able to regain some of the popular support and, again, it was the Honam supporters who helped revive and re-energize Mr. Roh's presidential bid.

In the meantime, Mr. Roh's strategy of consolidating and mobilizing the young electorate base turned out to be more successful than initially expected. Mr. Roh realized a demographic shift rapidly occur in the composition of the Korean electorate. About half of the electorate was younger than forty, and they revealed the tendency of being more adaptive to progressive ideas and less averse to leftist ideology. The election outcome showed that Mr. Roh drew 62.1% and 59.3% of the voters in their twenties and thirties respectively, surpassing Mr.

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Lee Hoi-chang's 31.7% and 33.9%. In the meantime, Mr. Roh managed to get only 39.8% of the voters older than fifty, compared to Mr. Lee's 59.3%. Voters in their forties were evenly split. The election constituted a historical landmark in that it drew the first major generational division in the Korean electorate.

As electoral campaigning approached toward its final stage, Mr. Roh's strategy toward Youngnam was modified: target groups became more selective. An emphasis was placed on how to infiltrate the young voters in the region. Rohsamo, which was Mr. Roh's political fan club, was most active in Southern Youngnam and contributed to organizing the support of the young voters in that region. The final result after the election showed that Mr. Roh got the votes of some 30% of the electorate in his hometown, Southern Youngnam, and 20% in Northern Youngnam. The question of whether Mr. Roh succeeded in campaigning in his native region would produce diverse evaluations. Mr. Roh received more support in Youngnam region, as compared to President Kim Dae-jung in the 1997 presidential election. But Mr. Lee Hoi-chang also garnered a higher voter support in the region, as compared to the outcome of the 1997 presidential election, when three candidates ran for the highest executive office. Had Mr. Roh lost his presidential bid, Youngnam could have been the prime cause of Mr. Roh's failure in the election.

In addition to the support of the young electorate, Mr. Roh owed his victory to the assistance he received from the reformist non-governmental organizations. Mr. Roh believed that President Kim Dae-jung failed to implement his reform policy agenda largely because he did not have an effective cooperative relationship with civil groups. This belief in part explains why Mr. Roh was eager to improve his relations with the NGOs. Reform politics needs broad support in society: in order to succeed, it must rely on the civil society. While civil groups

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were divided along ideological orientations, most influential groups stood by Mr. Roh, thus giving him massive moral support.

Still, a coalition of all progressive forces was not enough to warrant a winning majority in the election. Mr. Roh's popularity lingered around 30 percent until he convinced Mr. Chung Mong-joon to combine their electoral campaigns and field a single presidential candidate (often referred to as "the unification of candidacy" in Korean press). Mr. Roh needed to absorb any possible anti-Lee Hoi-chang forces that were spread extensively among the middle strata of the ideological spectrum. The only feasible option was to produce a unified candidacy with Mr. Chung. The option did not come without cost, though. Mr. Roh had to take a great risk of losing a run-off primary. Indeed, various polls in early November 2002 indicated that Mr. Chung was ahead of Mr. Roh. However, there was no other way but to accept a run-off, because Roh Moo-hyun's chances of winning in a three-way race appeared to be nil. The goddess of fortune sometimes behaves in mysterious ways; she finally raised the hand of Mr. Roh.

The fact Mr. Chung broke a unified candidacy and withdrew his support from Mr. Roh on the eve of the election was another episode for many to recall. A reasonable conjecture on its impact is that Mr. Chung's withdrawal may have done some damage to Mr. Roh; the number of deviating voters from Mr. Roh appeared to be greater than the number of regressing voters. But fortune still did not desert Mr. Roh; he won the election by a small margin of 2.3%. Without Mr. Chung's withdrawal, Mr. Roh Moo-hyun might have had a more comfortable margin of victory. To recapitulate, Mr. Roh's catchphrase "liquidation of old politics" appealed to the electorate more effectively than Mr. Lee Hoi-chang's slogan of "eradication of corrupt politics." Mr. Roh's electoral strategies were more aggressive and future-oriented than Mr. Lee's. Korea has been in the midst of

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profound demographic, ideological, and structural shifts for the past few years, and Mr. Roh proved to be better prepared for it.

Electoral Tactics and Salient Issues

Every election has some salient issues that are critical in the determination of the result of the election. The 16th presidential election was no exception. It would be interesting to inquire into the nature of the issues and tactics employed by candidates and their effectiveness to deal with the issues. Confronted with issues, a candidate often adopts the “triangular tactic,” which intentionally obfuscates his stance on the key issues. Obfuscation could be an effective tool to neutralize an opponent’s advantage with respect to a particular issue or to avoid a circumstance where a candidate could be involved in a controversy over an issue. Much of the campaign pledges made by both Mr. Roh and Mr. Lee indeed consisted of political rhetoric with no real content. For example, the issues of North Korea, the Status of Forces Agreement, and the relocation of the national capital all carried a considerable amount of sensitivity, and the candidates avoided exposing their clarified stances about these issues in one way or another. One of the prime reasons that Mr. Roh Moo-hyun refused to reveal his positions about some of these issues was associated with the unification of candidacy with Mr. Chung Mong-joon. Mr. Roh and Mr. Chung differed widely in many policy areas. They shared politically untainted fresh images and youth relative to Mr. Lee, which made them popular among the young electorate. However, there were very few other visible common characteristics between the two. Their political orientations were so different, especially regarding the North Korea policy and their respective economic platforms. Mr. Roh’s tactic of obfuscating his policy views was an inevitable consequence of his desire to maintain a cooperative relationship with Mr. Chung. Furthermore, Mr. Roh did not want his radical image to be implanted too strongly into the minds of

the moderate voters. So he chose to conceal his policy stance over some issues.

Mr. Lee Hoi-chang's reason for obfuscating his policy platform derived mainly from his defensive strategy. Mr. Lee wished to solidify the electoral status quo that was in his favor. He did not want to generate any new issues of political or social controversy, the unexpected development of which could jeopardize his lead. This tactic of passive agenda-setting would be a rational choice, but it was doomed to fail. Mr. Lee adopted the "catchall strategy" that targeted the whole electorate. But the "catchall strategy" with no reasonable guarantee of policy implementation was ill-suited for the "triangular tactic" in which candidates intentionally promoted a multitude of policies, even mutually inconsistent, to diffuse their positions on the key issues facing the voters. It is not clear how Mr. Lee intended to square off the effects of the "triangular tactic" with his "catchall strategy." Alternatively, Mr. Lee might have been an outright pragmatic opportunist who determined his positions on diverse policies circumstance by circumstance.

The outcome of Mr. Lee's passive agenda-setting tactic was a bit anomalous: when he suddenly lost his lead in the polls, Mr. Lee was devoid of any issue powerful enough to turn the table around. Furthermore, the electorate refused to take seriously much of Mr. Lee's policy pledge, taking into consideration his ideological beliefs and the GNP's ideological tenets. The policy agenda in question included the SOFA overhaul, the progressive welfare policy, and even radical income distribution policy. Obfuscation is one of the important electoral tactics frequently employed in a situation of tight political competition. But its utility is not always proven.

Mr. Lee Hoi-chang and Mr. Roh Moo-hyun identified the following issues as the most prominent ones during the election campaign -- the unification of candidacy between Mr. Roh and Mr. Chung, the North Korea policy and anti-Americanism, and

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the relocation of national capital. The next section will focus on the analysis of different tactics the two camps used to shape and advance these issues, as well as the role of the Internet in the 16th presidential election.

Unification of Candidacy

The decision to field a single presidential candidate on the basis of a common political platform (i.e., “the unification of candidacy”) made by Mr. Roh Moo-hyun and Mr. Chung Mong-joon was the most critical event in the 16th presidential election, from a tactical standpoint. Mr. Roh made a last-minute pact with Mr. Chung Mong-joon of the National Alliance 21 to use a run-off to settle upon a unified candidate. The pact required a tedious process of bargaining and compromising between the two. There was enormous political pressure to reach any form of agreement. The pressure was exerted by diverse social factions that were not comfortable with the idea of Mr. Lee as the next president. The run-off was finally set up, though in a peculiar way; the run-off was to be done through a survey method rather than a national primary. The question designed for the poll was, “Between Mr. Roh Moo-hyun and Mr. Chung Mong-joon, who would you support as a unified candidate to compete against Mr. Lee Hoi-chang of the Grand National Party?” The poll showed 46.8 % of the respondents favoring Mr. Roh and 42.2% voting for Mr. Chung, after screening out possible supporters for Mr. Lee.

After the run-off on November 24, 2002, Mr. Roh’s support rating leapfrogged instantly by more than 10 percent, surpassing Mr. Lee’s. Until Mr. Roh became a unified candidate, Lee had led in every opinion poll by a wide margin. Suddenly, the election was a close race. The subsequent polls showed that Mr. Roh continued to draw three to ten more percentage points of the votes ahead of Mr. Lee thereafter. Still, it was difficult to predict a comfortable victory for Mr. Roh Moo-hyun.

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Where did such a surge in support for Mr. Roh come from? Some analysts believe that the decisive factor in Mr. Roh's victory was his own personality and qualifications. It is true that the popularity of Mr. Roh in the public opinion polls was higher than that of the MDP. He surely showed some attraction in his personality that contributed to gaining more votes. But counting too high on his personal merit would not be wise; with respect to personal popularity, Mr. Lee Hoi-chang also maintained a higher personal approval rating than the popularity of the GNP.

A decrease in Mr. Roh's popularity during summer 2002, without a doubt, had something to do with an "anticipatory effect." The "anticipatory effect" denotes that voters may not want to throw their votes away by casting them for the candidate who is unlikely to win. It would be difficult to explain why the support rate for Mr. Roh fluctuated so radically, if the support was based mainly on his personality. What made possible such a sudden surge of support for Mr. Roh after the unification of candidacy was the people's aspiration for new politics and a fresh politician. The people waited for the emergence of a likable candidate who could win before deciding on their final support. Perhaps a choice between Mr. Roh and Mr. Chung could have been a minor factor. When a politician with a fresh image and the competency to beat Mr. Lee Hoi-chang was on the front stage, they lent him their full support. It was Mr. Lee's critical error in judgment that he underestimated how serious the impact of the unification of Roh-Chung candidacy was.

Relocation of National Capital

The relocation of the administrative capital from Seoul to the Choongchung province became a hotly debated issue during the final week of the electoral campaign. Mr. Roh Moo-hyun's policy advisory group composed of college academics and researchers from various public think tanks, who specialized in urban planning, decentralization, and local government, proposed the idea of capital relocation in July 2002. Part of the rationale

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for their scheme was strategic: it meant to attract the Choongchung electorate to the Roh camp. But its strategic disadvantage was also evident; the Lee Hoi-chang camp could counter-attack the capital relocation plan, provoking the anti-Roh anger of the Seoulites who would be hurt with the scheme. Mr. Roh disregarded this possibility, taking into account the fact that Mr. Lee was a Choongchung native, and he had proposed a similar scheme in 1997 when he was running in the 15th presidential election. Still, the Roh camp designed a safety check for securing the agreement of the people. A legislative procedure, including a national referendum, was stipulated into their proposal as the first step to initiate the capital relocation project.

Mr. Lee Hoi-chang launched a counter-attack in the final weeks of the election campaign. Mr. Lee's approval rating in the polls fell behind Mr. Roh's; therefore, he had to take a decisive step, even at the expense of the voter support from his native province, to maximize the support of the Seoul electorate. The motivation was that Seoul had more than twice of the population of the whole Choongchung province. Mr. Lee's gamble worked toward his intent to some extent. Support for Mr. Roh dwindled in Seoul, though this drop was not enough to reverse his lead. In retrospect, the idea of capital relocation bought little admiration and gained few votes for Mr. Roh. If anything, it may have contributed to increasing the total vote turnout rather than reducing it.

One of the interesting ramifications with regard to the issue of capital relocation is that Mr. Roh was able benefit from the DJP coalition that had been made between Mr. Kim Dae-jung and Mr. Kim Jong-phil in 1997. The voter support rates by the Choongchung electorate for Mr. Kim Dae-jung in 1997 and for Mr. Roh Moo-hyun in 2002 reveal a surprisingly similar pattern. Mr. Kim led Mr. Lee Hoi-chang by 25.8, 6.6, and 24.8 percent in Taejeon, Choongbook and Choongnam, respectively.

Meanwhile, Mr. Roh surpassed Mr. Lee by 24.3, 7.5, and 11.0 in the same regions. Mr. Kim Dae-jung achieved the voter support with the help of Mr. Kim Jong-phil, whereas Mr. Roh achieved the same with the scheme of capital relocation. Would it have been possible for Mr. Roh to obtain such level of support in Choongchung, had there not been a precedent of the DJP coalition that had once aligned the Honam and Choongchung electorate together? A historical significance of the DJP coalition was that it dissolved the long-lasting anti-Honam coalition. The DJP coalition was a new form of coalition regionally alienating Youngnam. Could one claim that the legacy of the DJP coalition was revitalized through the scheme of capital relocation in 2002? If this claim were assured of reasonable validity, it would generate interesting ramifications for prospective elections to come.

North Korea Policy and Anti-Americanism

The North Korea issue did not constitute a determinant factor in the 1997 presidential election when the economy-related issues, especially the problem of the IMF relief, became prominent. The situation was different in the 2002 election. Approaching the final weeks of the election campaign, the North Korea issue came to the fore, drawing voters' attention. North Korea announced its decision to expel the International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors, to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and to reactivate ("unfreeze") its nuclear facilities. The DPRK-U.S. relationship was worsening rapidly. The United States responded to the escalating North Korean threat with a hard-line posture, suggesting even a possibility of preemptive strike against the Yongbyun nuclear facilities. South Koreans were divided over the issue of how to deal with the development of the North Korean nuclear crisis.

Mr. Roh Moo-hyun's North Korea policy platform was derived from President Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine Policy. Mr. Roh took a softer line on North Korea, supporting deeper engagement with

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the North in all possible areas of cooperation. He was a “dove,” who believed there could be no other way around the strategy of peaceful reconciliation with the North. He requested that the United States restrain a radical response to the DPRK, which created some misgivings in the minds of foreign policymakers in Washington. In the meantime, Mr. Lee Hoi-chang had more in common with those North Korea “hawks” in Washington, who advocated a tougher stance against the North. Mr. Roh was on the defensive, as the situation continued to deteriorate.

At that very moment, there occurred a critical incident that sparked anti-American sentiment among the Korean public. An U.S. armored vehicle ran over and killed two South Korean schoolgirls, and the soldiers in charge of the vehicle were later acquitted in an U.S. military tribunal. The incident did not merely bring tens of thousands of people to demonstrate and to have candlelight vigils on the streets of Seoul, Taejon, and Pusan; it also triggered a call for a large-scale revision of the ROK-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement. The South Korean “doves,” who were not satisfied with the Bush administration’s dealing with North Korea, rode on this anti-American sentiment, quieting the voices of the anti-North “hawks.” They blamed the rigid hard-line policy toward North Korea pursued by the conservative Bush administration as the main culprit for the escalation of the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula. Suddenly, the Bush administration, not North Korea, became the lucrative target to hit. Progressive civil groups began to shout out loudly: “we need a president who can say no to the United States.”

When the popular emotions reached a crescendo, both presidential candidates could no longer ignore or resist the public mood of anti-Americanism. It was Mr. Roh Moo-hyun who appeared to benefit the most from a dramatic surge in the anti-American sentiment. Mr. Lee was the apparent loser in the fallout after the acquittal. Because he was pushed into a corner,

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Mr. Lee went on the offensive by actively defending the anti-American demonstrations and calling for an apology from President Bush. But this tactical move alienated some part of his ultra-conservative support base and became a focal point of criticism by the nation's staunchest hardliners, who blamed Mr. Lee for being inconsistent in his foreign policy towards Korea's closest ally.

Despite Mr. Lee's anti-American initiative, people were unsure as to how sincere he was in his move, speculating that the move was tactically designed to draw votes from the young and the moderate. The move indeed may have reflected Mr. Lee's panicked state of mind derived from the fact that he was lagging behind in the polls. Mr. Roh remained relatively reticent; he tried not to do anything rash that would further solidify his dominant image of a radical politician. He was well aware of the increasingly negative popular mood toward the United States, and he continued to vow publicly to develop the ROK-U.S. bilateral relations on a more equal and reciprocal footing.

The aftermath of the schoolgirls' deaths weakened the conservative position with regard to North Korea to a great extent. "Red-baiting tactics" lost their utility under these circumstances. In the previous presidential elections, the hawks sought to mobilize the "fear-appeal tactic" by building up a confrontational situation with the North in order to implant fear in the voters' minds. When there existed a severe emotional conflict with the closest ally, the delineation of friend and enemy became blurred. Unexpectedly explosive escalation in anti-American sentiment in Korea must have been one of the decisive factors that determined the outcome of the 16th presidential election.

Internet and Cyber-Campaigning

The role of the Internet in the 2002 presidential election is worth special notation. The impact of the Internet on the election was broad and diverse. First, it brought a new form of political participation led mostly by the technologically savvy electorate of the young and the urban. Those who were apathetic to politics began to utilize keyboards to make their political voices heard. The Internet removed the problems of low “political efficacy” and/or of the lack of information that made many voters politically apathetic and inactive. It allowed the voters to be better informed at a low cost and to be more confident of what political scientists call political efficacy.

Political efficacy denotes a voter’s self-estimation of the effect of his or her vote on the election. A high level of efficacy does not imply that voters can actually influence political outcome. It is a mere belief of voters. The notion of high political efficacy runs counter the inference of the economic theory of voting in which the act of voting is an example of irrational behavior. For the probability of one vote to change an electoral outcome is so infinitesimal that the expected benefit of voting becomes negative, as the theory of the paradox of voting expounds.

While the source of political efficacy constitutes an academic subject in controversy, it would be hard to refute that the political efficacy of the politically apathetic in the past was taken to a new height through this election. The Internet transformed much of the passive electorate into active. According to a survey, half a million people logged onto Mr. Roh’s website a day. Rohsamo, a support group for Mr. Roh Moo-hyun, gathered seventy thousand members mostly through the Internet. On the very day of the election, Mr. Roh’s supporters sent messages through the Internet to the mobile phones of one million people urging them to head to the polls. To be sure, the Internet played a pivotal role for Mr. Roh’s victory in the election. The prime users of the Internet consisted of the relatively young people who were under

the age of forty and in favor of Mr. Roh. Coincidentally, Mr. Lee Hoi-chang's primary supporters, the old and the conservative, were mostly ignorant of or less comfortable with this new form of communication. It was the Internet that opened up a new era of generational division in Korean politics. And many expect that this generational division will help attenuate the relative significance of the regional division in future elections.

Second, another major role of the Internet was that it provided "substitutive media." During the election, independent Internet media competed with the three major conservative-leaning newspapers, i.e., "Joong-Ang Daily," "Chosun Daily," and "Tong-Ah Daily," by providing young voters with neutral information about the election and communication channels to validate the information. The practices of biased reporting by those conservative newspapers have been notorious. According to a survey conducted by Hangil Research in July 2002, which was administered to a representative sample of 400 newspaper reporters, 83.2 percent of the respondents acknowledged that biased reporting was omnipresent during the election period, especially at the three major national newspapers. The dominant influence of the conservative newspapers was, however, dramatically weakened in the 2002 presidential election campaign by the Internet-based "substitutive media." Subsequently, they may also experience a further reduction of influence. Third, the Internet brought revolutionary changes to the electoral campaign itself. Traditional campaigns resorted ordinarily to party organization and members for soliciting voters. Parties customarily employed "paid" campaigners consisting of taxi drivers, market vendors, beauty salon employees, and so on. This so-called "old brick-and-mortar" voter mobilization tactic was costly and proved increasingly ineffective, however. Mr. Roh, who was financially weaker than Mr. Lee, could not run such an old-styled campaign. Instead, he concentrated on the Internet campaign, which did not require well-oiled machine politics or expensive mass rallies. The

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Internet made Mr. Roh lean on small donors rather than big corporations for his electoral financing: it helped him raise 7 billion won (an equivalent of six million U.S. dollars) from a quarter million donors of the voting age.

The full-fledged power of the e-campaigning is yet to be seen. The 16th presidential election only hinted at the immense potential of the Internet for electoral purposes. Still, the role of the Internet in the 2002 election cannot be underestimated. The Internet must have been a crucial factor for Mr. Roh's victory. It was Mr. Roh who was surely better prepared for the new era of the Internet.

Conclusion

Why did Mr. Lee Hoi-chang lose the 16th presidential election? Mr. Lee was beholden to the memory of his best days in the past. Being deeply submerged into that memory, he failed to read the new undercurrent of the Korea society that was in a rapid shift. The popularity he enjoyed during his best days was an incidental by-product of President Kim Dae-jung's sinking popularity. The majority of the electorate did not endorse him: Korean voters were looking for someone else to support. Yet Mr. Lee continued to maintain a risk-averse campaign strategy that was not intended to modify the status quo in his favor but merely to adhere to it. When he had to act decisively and aggressively, he remained too hesitant and passive, being afraid of taking any risk because of the uncertainty that was likely to follow. Even worse, some of his tactics were in disarray or ill-prepared. To reverse the losing trend, he resorted to desperate tactics at the last minute, but they had only limited results. For instance, in order to silence the critics who said that Mr. Lee represented "old politics" and elitism, he tried to counteract that image by dying his hair brown and campaigning in pubs and fast food restaurants. But, to no avail. The ultimate outcome was Mr. Lee Hoi-chang's defeat in the election.

Mr. Roh also made a lot of strategic and tactical mistakes during his campaign. But he differed from Mr. Lee in a few respects. He proved to be able to read well what Koreans demanded, and went for a successful ride on the public mood for change. He was in the right spot at the right time when people were thirsty for new politics and looked for a fresh figure. He also showed determination and a willingness to take any risk, if needed. Being confronted with the deep political distrust of the people, he sought to revitalize their hope with a clear, albeit not entirely new, vision. In retrospect, Mr. Roh's strategies and tactics were in general better thought out and executed than Mr. Lee's. Mr. Roh's slogan of the "liquidation of old politics" proved to be a more effective weapon than Mr. Lee's motto of the "eradication of corrupt politics."

It would be a rather abrupt conclusion to mention "luck" after all of these discussions of winning and losing strategies and tactics of the election. One may be tempted to close the chapter without mentioning the role of luck. However, a careful speculation on a series of all the unexpected incidents that ultimately contributed to making Mr. Roh first the presidential candidate of the MDP, then the unified candidate, and finally the 16th President of Korea may lead to a conclusion that fortune sided with him. Some strategies and tactics evidently failed to serve their intended purposes, but the mysterious unfolding of incidents turned the table clearly into Mr. Roh's favor. During his campaign, Mr. Lee Hoi-chang criticized the influence of "an invisible hand," having in mind President Kim Dae-jung, who had pledged to take a complete neutral stance in the election. The true owner of that hand, however, must have been somewhere else, concealing her appearance.

