

take-off while probing constantly and surreptitiously for weak spots in their neighbours' armour. The Japanese have fallen in on themselves, temporarily, as they wrestle with disturbingly intractable economic problems. Their first tentative essays in peacekeeping may point the way towards greater independence in the foreign policy realm, but they will pick their opportunities with care and the problematic quality of the coalition argues against many foreign policy initiatives in the short term.

The Korean impasse suggests fewer and fewer options and greater and greater levels of danger. A radical departure in negotiating procedures may be necessary in order to move beyond the nuclear issue and address the economic dynamic which underlies the DPRK's difficulties and the peninsular imbalance. Until such time as the economic asymmetry between the two Koreas is addressed there will probably be little if any movement on the nuclear issue and until there is movement on that issue there will be little if any room for the application of traditional arms control and verification processes.