

Introduction

"Promoting Religious Freedom in North Korea": Panel 2 Introduction

24 January 2002

CHAIRMAN YOUNG: I'd like to start this second session of this hearing this morning, again with an expression of appreciation to our prior panel. I'd now like to extend that appreciation to the current panel that's joined us. We have an extraordinary amount of expertise on U.S. policy with respect to North Korea gathered at this table and gentlemen, we appreciate very much your time and effort to be with us today.

Let me introduce each of the four panelists now, ask you again if you can keep your prepared remarks to seven minutes or less. We're delighted to receive as voluminous additional submissions for the record as you would care to give us.

So let me just start from my right to left and I presume we'll proceed in that order unless you have agreed differently. We have with us Dr. Stephen Linton, who is chairman of the Eugene Bell Foundation, which is a humanitarian organization active in North Korea. Steve has himself been to North Korea at least 50 times and indeed grew up in South Korea, so someone with extraordinary experience with respect to Korea and we're delighted to have you here with us.

Next to him is Mr. Donald Oberdorfer, whom many of us know as a correspondent for the Washington Post for many years and also the author of a very widely acclaimed book on the history of Korea over the past 50 years. He's now an adjunct professor and journalist in residence at SAIS at the Johns Hopkins University. We're delighted to have you with us. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chuck Downs is also with us, who is a private consultant and author of a book, as well, "Over the Line," a former Pentagon official and congressional aide who has written widely on Korean affairs, U.S.-Korean relations.

Then we have Mr. Jack Rendler with us. We're delighted to have you with us, as well. He is vice chairman of the U.S. Committee on Human Rights in North Korea, the executive director of the Aurora Foundation, which has been very active in promoting human rights in North Korea.

So this is a wonderful panel and gentlemen, we very much appreciate your time. Dr. Linton, we'll start with you.