Efforts by the Republic of China Government to Convert Chinese Communist Prisoners of War during the Korean War

Young-sil PARK

Abstract

The Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950. The armistice talks, which began a year into the Korean War, lasted two years due to the issue of prisoners of war (POWs), particularly concerning the Chinese prisoners. This paper aims to demonstrate how Chinese communist POWs' decisions to go to Taiwan were actually due to the proactive efforts of the Republic of China (ROC) government. This paper investigates the activities of the ROC government in the conversion of Chinese communist POWs during the Korean War. Although it is impossible to identify all the individual reasons Chinese communist POWs chose to go to Taiwan, this research is able to substantiate the fact that the ROC government used various incentives to convince them to choose Taiwan. Examples of these ROC efforts include successful requests to the United Nations Command to send ROC interpreters to the POW camps, efforts to influence the atmosphere of the POW camps, and the infiltration of ROC secret agents into those camps. In the end, the Chinese communist POWs who chose to go to Taiwan were separated from their families and came to settle in their new home.

Keywords: Korean War, Chinese People's Volunteers, Chinese communist prisoners of war, Anti-Communist POWs Employment Guidance Section

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Introduction

On January 11, 2020, the results of Taiwan's presidential election marked the second term of Cai Yingwen 蔡英文. In response, countries such as the United States and Japan announced their congratulations on the election. In a diplomatic protest to those countries, the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of China (PRC) issued a statement saying, "No matter what changes there are to the internal situation in Taiwan, the basic fact that there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is part of China will not change." The decision to admit the PRC to the United Nations in 1971 resulted in the concurrent loss of Republic of China (ROC)'s membership status in that body. In hindsight, the series of diplomatic reaction to the 2020 elections puts into question the current status of Taiwan's in the international community.

On October 17, 2019, Shenyang Industrial University 沈阳工业大学 and the Korean War Museum in Dandong, Liaoning (known as the Memorial of the War to Resist American Aggression and Aid Korea, or Kangmei yuanchao jinianguan 抗美援朝纪念馆) signed a bilateral agreement to build an educational center to promote patriotism, marking the first time that the Memorial had undertaken a joint project with a higher educational institution. This illustrates how to this day the PRC government emphasizes patriotic education based on a memory of the Korean War.

On April 11, 1951, a PRC wartime journalist, Weiwei, published an article "Who's the Loveliest Person?" in the *People's Daily*, informing readers of the activities of the Chinese People's Volunteers (Zhongguo renmin zhiyuanjun 中國人民志願軍).[1] When Mao Zedong read this, he ordered the article's contents be promulgated to the entire army, and it was even incorporated into middle school textbooks. Unfortunately, 30,000 of the Chinese People's Volunteers—"the loveliest people" of the article's title— were taken prisoners of war (POWs) during the Korean War, and among these, two-thirds chose to go to the Republic of China (ROC), or Taiwan.

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1. Weiwei 魏巍, "Shui shi zui keai de ren?" 誰是最可愛的人 (Who's the Loveliest Person?), *Renmin ribao* 人民日報 (People's Daily), April 11, 1951.

The Korean War armistice talks, which began a year into that conflict, lasted two years due to the issue of POWs, particularly concerning the war's Chinese prisoners. This paper aims to show how Chinese communist POWs' decisions to go to Taiwan was actually due to the proactive efforts of the ROC government. The ROC was not a part of the multilateral UN coalition formed upon the outbreak of the Korean War. Therefore, given such historical circumstances in which the ROC was unable to directly participate in the war, this research investigates the nature of ROC efforts to influence the Chinese communist POWs to choose go to Taiwan instead of the PRC.

Thus far, studies on Chinese communist POWs of the Korean War going to Taiwan have been scarce in Korean War scholarship. Those few that exist were mainly conducted by researchers incorporating documents and oral statements (Yu 2014; Park 2016; Jung and Jin 2016; Shen 2013; Zhong 2014). More recently, an increasing number of studies have used oral testimonies and documents from the United Nations Command (UNC)'s Allied Translators and Interpreters Section (Chang 2011). However, precaution is warranted when using oral testimonies and interrogation statements by the POWs if the authenticity of the content cannot be verified. This is because such testimonies are often laden with various factual distortions.

The objective of this paper is three-fold. Firstly, it examines the process by which Chinese communist POWs of the Korean War chose to go to the ROC over the PRC. Secondly, it explores the ROC's participation in the Korean War. Finally, it looks at the situation of the Chinses communist POWs camps and the prisoner conversion activities by the ROC government. In the process, this study will illustrate the ROC government's activities in its relationship with the UNC through primary materials and memoirs.

Early Discussions Regarding the Republic of China's Participation in the Korean War

The Korean War, which broke out on June 25, 1950, changed the US government's perceptions of the ROC. In August 1949, the US Department of State had published its evaluation of the civil war in China from 1944 to

1949 titled, *United States Relations with China: with Special Reference to the Period 1944–1949* (US Department of State 1949). In particular, it assessed the failure of the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) in the civil war, as owning to the corruption and incompetence of the government, and following this the United States halted its military aid to the Chiang Kaishek regime now on Taiwan.

But the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 changed the situation. In a presidential statement on June 27, 1950, American President Truman vowed to provide naval and air support for Taiwan. Furthermore, he ordered the dispatch of the US 7th Fleet to defend Taiwan against occupation by the PRC, something that would pose a direct threat to the security of the Pacific and the US military in the region. Truman also called on the ROC government to cease all naval and air operations on the mainland,[2] and on July 28, K.L. Rankin was dispatched as US ambassador to Taiwan.

Meanwhile, when the Korean War broke out, the ROC government directly expressed its support for South Korea. In an article of June 27, 1950, Taiwan's *Zhongyang ribao* reported that "Relations between the Republic of China and South Korea are intimate.... Our country has resolved to support the Korean government at the UN Security Council... and yesterday Syngman Rhee had an important late-night call with Taipei." An editorial of the same issue carried a commentary titled, "Let's fight hand in hand, the Republic of China and Korea" (*Zhongyang ribao*, June 27, 1950).

On June 29, Gu Zhenggang 谷正綱, Taiwan's ambassador to the United States, and Livingston T. Merchant, US Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Far East, discussed the issue of Taiwan as broached in President Truman's statement of June 27.[3] During the discussions, Ambassador Gu expressed the ROC government's intention to support South Korea, placing its military forces under the US Far East Command, saying the ROC government had already made such a request to General Douglas MacArthur through the ROC delegation to Japan. Additionally, Gu requested US support for its

2. "Statement Issued by the President, June 27, 1950" (US Department of State 1976, 202–203).
3. "Problems Relating to Formosa Arising out of the President's Statement of June 27," NARA, RG 59, Records of the Office of Chinese Affairs 1945–50, Box 18.

33,000-strong corps, which was ready for deployment to the front but lacked means of transport.

In conjunction with this, Ambassador Gu inquired about two issues. The first concerned the status of the ROC government on the Chinese coast, a territory that faced frequent incursions by forces of the communist People's Liberation Army (PLA). The second was whether ROC could retaliate against any PLA attacks, though it would not launch a unilateral assault on mainland China. In addition, Gu stressed the need to establish a liaison group between the US 7th Fleet and the ROC, noting the commotion that resulted on June 28 when 20 unidentified planes flying over Taiwan were at first mistaken for enemy aircraft, but were later identified as American. In a parallel vein, Chiang Kaishek personally instructed Gu Weijun 顧維鈞 and Hushi 胡適, who were in the United States on June 29, to meet with President Truman to deliver a proposal for a Taiwanese troop dispatch to South Korea.

On July 31, MacArthur, accompanied by 16 aides, visited Taiwan. A meeting was held at the headquarters of the ROC Ministry of Defense, and attended by a total of 25 participants from Taiwan. The discussions primarily concerned intelligence on the movement of Chinese communist forces planning air and land raids on Taiwan, and the overall defense readiness of the island. Taiwanese minutes of the meeting noted how, "Chinese communist forces have as many as 2 million men, a Soviet-trained air force, and a navy. In addition, the PRC, having received a significant number of transport aircraft and amphibious equipment from the Soviet Union, were almost ready for an invasion of Taiwan by July 25."[4]

Prior to his visit to Taiwan, MacArthur had discussed the possibility of countermeasures to Chinese communist attacks on Taiwan with the US Joint Chiefs of Staff on July 28.[5] The US was also willing to cooperate if

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4. "Mei guo mai ke a se jiang jun fang hua hui tan ji lu" 美國麥克阿瑟將軍防華會談紀錄 (Record of General MacArthur's Visit to Taiwan), Ministry of Defense Edited Translation Section 國防部編譯局, File Number: 003.7/8043.9.

5. "Memorandum from Louis Johnson to Secretary of State," July 29, 1950, NARA, RG 330, Office, Administrative Secretary Correspondence Control Section Decimal File July to Dec 1950, Entry 199, Box. 177.

Taiwan needed to purchase weapons to strengthen its defensive capabilities.[6] On the question of Taiwan's defenses, it possessed "a total of 680,000 land, sea, and air forces, with 480,000 in the army, 130,000 in the air force and the navy, and 70,000 in miscellaneous other units." It was also estimated that if Chinese communist troops were to invade Taiwan, it would take about two days to arrive at the island by ship from Shanghai, and ten hours from Fuzhou. When MacArthur received this report during his visit, he promised to do his best to protect Taiwan and to visit again after further research and meetings with his command staff.[7]

In May 1951, the Unites States officially dispatched the US Military Assistance Advisory Group for Taiwan (MAAG Taiwan, known in Chinese as Meiguo junshi yuanhua guwentuan 美國軍事援華顧問團), headed by General William C. Chase. Military affairs were the primary focus of the American aid program in Taiwan. This is evident in General Chase's commemorative speech at the first anniversary of MAAG Taiwan. He noted that the reason he had come to Taiwan was first, to defend Taiwan and the Penghu Islands 澎湖諸島, and second, to maintain stability within Taiwan.[8]

The Taiwan issue resurfaced as a controversial topic after the Chinese communist intervention in the Korean War in late 1950. MacArthur judged that the war situation had changed dramatically with the entrance of Chinese communist troops into the conflict. In consequence, on December 3, MacArthur suggested accepting Chiang's proposal to send ROC forces to Korea, but this never ultimately happened. Controversy surrounding Taiwan's military involvement in the war continued to spur public debate in the United States.

With the entrenchment of the Korean War after 1951, some UN coalition troops returned to their own countries, and in the United States,

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6. "Memorandum from Dean Rusk to J.H. Burns," July 17, 1950, NARA, RG 330, Office Administrative Secretary Correspondence Control Section Decimal File, July to Dec 1950, Entry 199, Box 174.

7. "Mei guo mai ke a se jiang jun fang hua hui tan ji lu" 美國麥克阿瑟將軍防華會談紀錄 (Record of General MacArthur's Visit to Taiwan), Ministry of Defense Edited Translation Section 國防部編譯局, File Number: 003.7/8043.9.

8. *Gonglun ribao* 公論日報 (Opinion Daily), May 2, 1951.

the prolongment of the war and rising anti-war sentiments led to increasing domestic debate over the costs of the conflict. Since the US had provided a set amount of military aid to Taiwan at the time, the proposal to assess ROC military capabilities and to dispatch ROC troops to Korea in lieu of American troops began to be considered.

The practical consideration of using ROC's armed forces began in the US Congress at the Armed Forces Policy Council on July 15, 1952. The Council noted that the use of Taiwan's military required the approval of Taiwan's president Chiang Kaishek, as well as the consent of the UN General Assembly. It was also noted that South Korea's response should also be taken into consideration.[9]

After much deliberation, the issue was again discussed publicly by the Armed Forces Policy Council on August 19. The meeting was convened on the assumption that 60 percent of the ROC's troops were fully organized and on a war footing. At this meeting, were calculating the costs for two divisions of the ROC Army and two new ROK Army divisions.[10] But despite these various discussions, due to cost-effectiveness issues, the ROC military never participated in the Korean War.

The Status of Chinese Communist POWs and the UN Command's POW Management Policy

Status of Chinese Communist POWs

The extended talks over the repatriation of Korean War POWs aroused the interests of the international community, and researchers in the United States began to examine the issue. In early 1953, scholars from Johns

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9. "Supply Priority for Formosa," July 17, 1952, NARA, RG 330, Office, Administrative Secretary Correspondence Control Section, Decimal Files, Entry 199, Box 318.

10. "Comparative Cost of Preparing, Deploying and Maintaining in Korea, for One Year, Two National Government of the Republic of China(NGRC) Divisions Verse Two Newly Activated ROKA Divisions," August 23, 1952, NARA, RG 330, Office, Administrative Secretary Correspondence Control Section, Decimal Files, Entry 199, Box 318.

Hopkins University and George Washington University asked the US Psychological Warfare Section (PWS) of the Department of Defense to launch a detailed investigation into North Korean and Chinese communist POWs, and to conduct interviews with them. The team conducted extensive interviews with the POWs, examining their ages, education levels, and social and military backgrounds. The survey assessed the majority of the Chinese communist POWs to be peasants, and almost all illiterate. In addition, on average they had served in the communist army for about a year prior to their capture and most were veterans of the Chinese Nationalist (Kuomintang) army before being incorporated into the communist People's Liberation Army (PLA) between 1949 and 1950. It was particularly noticeable that unlike North Korean POWs, Chinese POWs considered themselves to be soldiers (Bradbury et al. 1968, 227).

From early on, the Republic of China government had an immense invested interest in the Chinest communist POWs. The ROC government publicly expressed its position on the POWs when its foreign minister, Ye Gongchao 葉公超, met with Associated Press reporters on December 18, 1951. At the press conference, Ye claimed that communist China's violence and inhumane conduct were the reason Chinese communist POWs were refusing to return to the mainland, and to forcefully send them back to this communist tyranny with full knowledge of such circumstances went against the principles of democracy and Christianity. Henceforward, he asserted, the issue of POWs was to be resolved with respect to human rights and dignity based on the principles of the United Nations Charter (Chou 2005, 172–173).

The ROC government was unable to confirm the specifics of POWs' personal histories while they were in the POW camps. It had only obtained a list of POW names. Chinese communist POWs were being held under the UN Command at Moseulpo, Jeju Island. They would be held there up to the armistice agreement—eventually signed on July 27, 1953—after which those refusing repatriation would be relocated to a camp near the demilitarized zone (DMZ).

Immediately after the armistice was signed, through a follow up agreement with the UNC, the ROC government was able to dispatch two

delegations to the Chinese POW camp on Jeju, one official and the other unofficial. The unofficial delegation was led by Ye Wenya 倪文亞, a legislator of the Taiwanese National Assembly, and consisted of 11 members, including an inspector and a colonel. It called itself the Delegation to Comfort Anti-communist POWs of the Korean War (in Chinese, Zhonghua minguo xuanwei hanzhan fangong zhanfu daibiao tuan 中華民國宣慰韓戰反共戰俘 代表團) and withheld any information about its mission and activities to the outside world by classifying them as top secret.

The delegation's dispatch was discussed by Chiang Kaishek and high-ranking officials Zhou Zhirou 周至柔 and Chiang Jingguo 蔣經國, and it notably incorporated the opinions of the head of the MAAG Taiwan, William C. Chase. Chase noted that the POW representative at Moseulpo would cooperate with the ROC delegation. The delegation subsequently arrived in South Korea on August 23, 1953 and began its activities. It was only then that the delegation was able to confirm the identities of the 14,269 Chinese on the POW list.[11]

On January 5, 1954, the Anti-Communist POWs Employment Guidance Section (ACPEG Section, in Chinese, Fangong yishi jiuye fudao chu 反共 義士就業輔導處) was established by the ROC government to handle POW-related matters. Belonging to the ROC executive branch, the ACPEG Section oversaw the transport of POWs from Korea to Taiwan, along with their classification, management, education, and employment. These functions were decided upon at the first meeting of the ACPEG Section in December 1953, and Chiang Jingguo was designated the Section's head.

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11. "Fan gong yi shi jiu ye bao dao chu gong zhuo cong bao gao (1954.6.24)" 反共義士就業輔 導處工作總報告 (1954.6.24) (Final Report of the Anti-Communist POWs Employment Guidance Section [June 24, 1954]), The Processing Agenda of the Anti-Communist POWs in Korea 留韓反共義士處理案, File Number: 300.4-7760, Ministry of Defense Military History Section 國防部史政局.

The ACPEG Section, which managed the POWs, detailed the prisoners' education levels and social statuses in a final report.[12] In the following paragraphs that outline this information, it should be noted that the number of POWs surveyed in early February 1954 was 14,335, but the number of POWs that ultimately went to Taiwan was 14,342.

The POWs' regions of origin were distributed across 46 provinces and cities in China, with 4,449 (31%) from Sichuan, and 1 person each from the three regions of Xinjiang, Mongolia, and Hejiang. Their education levels were 43 percent illiterate, 50 percent with a primary school education, 6 percent with a middle school education, and only 12 individuals who were professional college graduates.

The reported occupation of 56 percent of the POWs before joining the PLA was that of soldier . Among those former soldiers, 64 percent had served in the ROC armed forces. Meanwhile, 47 percent had been PLA soldiers for less than a year prior to their capture, while 85 percent had served less than three years in the PLA following the communist victory. Therefore, although there were many veterans among the prisoners, their actual time in the PLA ranks was brief. Furthermore, the prisoners included 1,072 former ROC military or infantry school graduates, while 587 were educated in institutions such as the Military and Political University as PLA soldiers.

In terms of the age of POWs, 2 percent were under 20 years old, 66 percent between 21 and 30, 29 percent between 31 to 40 years, and 3 percent aged 41 or above. The age of POWs was important because the majority of those who chose to go to Taiwan could reenlist in the military according to the ROC Military Service Act of the time.

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12. "Jie yun fan gong yi shi shi shi jiang guo ji jian tao bao gao (1954.3.3)" 接運反共義士實施經過及檢討報告 (1954.3.3) (Report on the Progress and Review of the Transport of Anti-Communist POWs [March 3, 1954]), The Processing Agenda of the Anti-Communist POWs in Korea 留韓反共義士處理案, Military Archives, File Number: 300.4-7760, Ministry of Defense Military History Section 國防部史政局.

United Nations Command's POW Management Policy

In the early days of the war, the ROC government made multiple offers to participate in the Korean War, but the United States refused to accede to the request. However, as the war continued, the United States assessed that Taiwan's cooperation was necessary. The ROC Ambassador to South Korea, Shao Yulin 邵毓麟, was stationed in Korea up until September 1951. According to his memoirs and his telegrams home, in November 1950, the US asked for a dispatch of persons who could speak English and Chinese to interrogate POWs, in response to which ROC government selected and sent the appropriate agents. From that time, the US continued to request personnel, and the ROC government followed through with the dispatch of additional personnel (Shao 1980, 248–250).

In 1951, 73 Chinese interpreters worked at the United Nations Command in South Korea and Tokyo, some of whom were dispatched to Geoje Island to take part in interpretation work for Chinese communist POWs in May and June of that year (Chang 2011, 14).

The increase in numbers of POWs as the war progressed resulted in the problem of their management. Under these circumstances, on March 23, 1951, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff approved a program of POW education, which was initiated under the direction of the Chief of US PWS. On April 3, 1951, following UNC General Order No. 8, the Civil Information and Education (CI&E) Bureau of the UN Combined Forces Command was established under UNC headquarters to develop and operate an educational program for POWs. More specifically, the CI&E was established to provide literacy training, vocational training, physical education, and art classes, but these programs remained at the level of *orientations*. The agency's personnel and organizational plans were approved in mid-April 1951, and the selection and deployment of military personnel and Korean and Chinese agents was conducted from early to mid-May of that same year (Lee 2010, 428–429). Civilians and POWs were also recruited as CI&E agents as the manpower demands for the CI&E program increased.

The CI&E's education program included both formal classroom and informal education. The themes of classroom education were the

background of war, democracy and totalitarianism, the lifestyle of people in free-world countries, the revival of Korea and the world, leadership in collective activities, and the development and acquisition of technology. Informal education significantly affected the daily lives of POWs, with radio programs and recordings broadcast three times a day inside the camp, while censored books, pamphlets and newspapers were provided through libraries and information centers. In other aspects, periodic exhibitions and performances were also held.

However, illiteracy programs emerged as the most significant area of concern. This was perhaps due to the fact that POW illiteracy was the most challenging issue faced by the education agents. Korean and Chinese language readers were only prepared by the end of 1951, and orientation course series were adapted in only the most basic terms for those who had completed their basic reading and writing courses (Bradbury et al. 1968, 258).

In August 1951, the CI&E in Tokyo dispatched ROC personnel to the 72nd POW camp on Geoje Island. The selection criteria for these personnel were based first, on the anti-communist sentiment; second, on former rank within the ROC Armed Forces; and third, on experience, that is, knowledge and ability in lecturing. Li Qi 李祺, who was fluent in English, led the personnel delegation, with others dispatched included Liu Chenghan 劉承漢, Dong Zhongqian 董仲謙, Sun Zhonggeng 孫忠鯁, and Li Hailou 李海樓 (Anti-Communist POWs Struggle History Compilation Committee 1955, 98).

In addition, there were cases where POWs became leaders of a CI&E program. One example, according to the memoirs of Liu Lang 劉朗, was the 72nd Regiment of the 72nd POW camp on Geoje, which elected Liu Bingzhang 劉柄章 as its principal of the CI&E. As a Shandong local, Liu Bingzhang was familiar with how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) deceived and paralyzed the minds of ordinary youth, as well as how to remedy this. He made use of intelligent POWs as teachers, and at the same time utilized their speeches to expose the malicious nature of the CCP to other POWs. After later being transferred to Moseulpo on Jeju Island in 1952, Liu Bingzhang allegedly met with a Chinese interpreter from Taiwan at the request of the UN forces (Liu 1955, 238–251).

The Situation of the Chinese Communist POW Camp and the Efforts of the Republic of China Government to Convert POWs

Situation in the Chinese Communist POW Camp

With the continual inflow of captives during the war, establishing POW camps was an early challenge to be reckoned with. The first POW camp was set up in an army prison at the Daejeon Detention Center on July 7, 1950, and following the amphibious landing at Incheon in September 1950, more camps were established in Incheon, Seoul, Pyongyang, Daejeon and Wonju. However, the entrance of Chinese communist forces into the war in the fall of 1950 forced most of the UN Command's POWs and its security forces to retreat south to Busan. With the increase of POWs in the Busan camp, by late December 1950 the existing facilities there became inadequate. As Busan was being burdened not only with POWs but many wartime refugees, it was decided to transfer the POWs to Geoje Island, just south of Busan.

When the CI&E program began in June 1951, it promoted communal activities by POWs. However, language became the biggest obstacle as the number of Chinese communist POWs increased. Put differently, there was an absolute shortage of Chinese-speaking UN POW management personnel.

Eventually, 23 Chinese were employed through an agreement with the ROC government. Their aptitude was excellent, but their mere presence at the camp encouraged pro-nationalists to oppose forced repatriation. Although unintended, some Chinese instructors operated as ROC government agents in and outside the classroom (Bradbury et al. 1968, 259). Further, the ROC Embassy in Seoul hired overseas Chinese interpreters to broadcast in Chinese to the POWs by radio, sometimes visiting a camp to meet with the anti-communist POW leader (Wang 1988, 21). Several memoirs also illustrate the atmosphere within the POW camps at the time.

Wang Shunqing 王順清 was originally a member of the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) Army, serving as a platoon leader during the Battle of Hainan Island in spring 1950, but was later captured by the Chinese communist forces and deployed to the Korean War. After being taken prisoner in Korea, he was placed in Dongnae POW Camp in Busan,

together with North Korean POWs. He is said to have directly resolved with
the POW management officials such issues as discrimination in food rations
and the use of toilets. Subsequently, he was recommended by other POWs
to become their leader and started to form an anti-communist organization,
which in less than a month had attracted the participation of some 90 anti-
communist POWs (Jiang 1955, 66–68).

A former senior member of the Chinese Nationalist Party Army, Wang
Futian 王福田 maintained his anti-communist beliefs along with Wang
Shunqing, and on April 8, 1951, participated in the process of classifying
pro-communist and anti-communist figures among the POWs, information
later reported to the UNC (Jiang 1955, 72–74).

Dong Zhongqian 董仲謙, who surrendered in January 1951 when
his unit was besieged by UN forces, was scouted by the UNC to become
the principal of the CI&E school in the 72nd POW Camp due to his high
educational qualifications (Jiang 1955, 60–65).

At the 72nd Camp, Liu Chunjian 劉純儉 related how a fellow pro-
ROC POW had been forcefully tattooed by the Chinese communist
prisoners, which marked the beginning of the practice of tattooing anti-
communist prisoners with tattoos designating them as such. Due to his
educational background, with a middle school education, Liu also served as
an instructor educating anti-communist POWs in the camp (Jung and Jin
2016. 43–44).

In such an atmosphere, various organizations were formed within the
POW camps. On May 28, 1951, Li Daan 李大安, a Chinese POW at the 72nd
Camp, organized the Chinese Patriotic Anti-Communist National Salvation
League (in Chinese, Zhongguo aiguo qingnian fangong jiuguo tuan 中國愛
國青年反共救國團) to unite the POWs, with members Wu Jiansheng 吳建生,
Zhao Shaozhong 趙紹忠, Qui Ruliang 邱汝亮, Deng Guangshe 鄧光社, Nie
Anyun 聶安雲, Li Fang 李芳, and Xu Jun 徐鈞 (Jiang 1955, 64). In addition,
the anti-communist POW organizations, Nationalist 63rd Branch 中國國
民黨六三支部 and the Anti-Communist and Resist Russia Patriotic Youth
Alliance 反共抗俄青年愛國同盟會, were also formed by Chinese captives in
the POW camp.

No ideological inclinations had been revealed among the POWs until

the truce negotiations began, but the conflicts among the prisoners led to frequent and violent incidents. Ultimately, the kidnapping of the director of the Geoje Island POW camp, Francis. T. Dodd, on May 7, 1952, led to measures of segregating POWs according to nationality and political propensities. As a result, most Chinese communist POWs were moved to Moseulpo.

Shao Yulin 邵毓麟, the ROC Ambassador to Seoul from 1949 to 1951, reported that access to Chinese communist POWs increased after their relocation to Jeju Island. The primary plan was to communicate directly with the POWs by any means, which involved securing overseas Chinese and Korean interpreters to conduct liaison and instructional work and set up formal organizations in the POW camps. In the process, Shao also collaborated with the South Korean government, attempting to use the media to marshal favorable public opinion. He also induced anti-communist POWs to fast, self-tattoo, and march in protest to refuse their repatriation to the mainland (Shao 1980, 354–356).

Such ROC activities are also substantiated in PRC sources, specifically in a report submitted to central officials by Head of the Political Bureau of the Chinese PLA, Du Ping 杜平. The report was written up based on evidence submitted by those POWs who returned to communist China in a mutual exchange of wounded POWs just prior to the signing of the armistice agreement in 1953. It read as follows:

> According to the information brought by repatriated POWs, the US military did not attempt to overpower the POWs in the early stages, but later adopted the policy of "using POWs to subdue POWs" (以俘制俘). The method and procedure, which began in May 1951, was originally to attack the Communist Party centering on infiltrations by special agents of the Nationalist Party [Kuomintang], thereby acquiring moderate forces and agitators. Former Kuomintang soldiers, such as Wang Shunqing, Wang Futian, and Liu Bingzhang 刘炳章, alongside 11 others, returned to the POW camp upon receiving training in Tokyo, and after they returned in October 1951, Wang Shunqing and Wang Futian took the leadership positions in the 62nd and 86th Regiments, allocating former Kuomintang

military figures to leadership positions in their respective battalions, companies, platoons, and guard units. With the support of the CI&E, a special mission school was opened to print and publish reactionary booklets, such as "Korea's Statement," "China's Realization," and "Soviet Invasion of Asia," and a representative from Taiwan lectured at the POW camp. In June of the same year, the 63rd Branch of the Kuomindang was established in the 72nd Regiment, headed by Secretary General Wei Shixi 魏世喜. In the 86th Regiment, Zhou Yongda 周永达 and Wang Zunming 王尊明 formed a group, "Anti-Communist and Resist Russia Alliance" (反共抗俄大同盟), and contacted agents of the Kuomintang regime in Busan through a foreign and an ethnic Korean-Chinese pastor named Han Binghe 韩秉赫 who was a missionary in the POW camp. (Du 1989, 340–341)

The Republic of China Government's POW Conversion Activities

It was in 1953 that the Republic of China government formally dispatched agents to the POW camps in South Korea, although it regularly contacted the camp's interpreters and other POWs. In the spring of 1953, "Group Six" of the ROC's Central Party Committee (Zhonghua minguo zhongyang dangbu 中華民國 中央黨部) arrived in Korea and began its activities. Wen Jianyou 文健友, who was a POW there at the time, recalled that Chen Jianzhong 陳建中, head of the Group Six, was in charge of CI&E-related duties in Taiwan and that 120 interpreters later arrived from Taiwan at the request of the United States (Chou, Zhang, and Ma 2013, 349).

After the Kuomintang moved to Taiwan in 1949, that party's Central Party Committee passed the "Chinese Nationalist Party Reform Plan" (Zhongguo guomindang gaizao fangan 中國國民黨改造方案) on July 22, 1950 and organized the Central Reform Committee (Zhongyang gaizao weiyuanhui 中央改造委員會) on August 5. The Central Reform Committee was composed of a total of 13 organizations, to include a training committee, discipline committee, and seven so-called Groups (*zu* 组) tasked with different missions. Chen Jianzhong was dispatched to Korea as an agent in the Central Reform Committee's Group Six. The task of Group Six came to encompass the functions of collecting, researching, and

organizing information on social, economic, and political conditions, and to plan and instigate counter-communist unrest (Yang 2014, 16–17). To this end, members were sent to the POW camps to continue the struggle against the Chinese Communist Party. According to Shao Yulin's recollections, Chen Jianzhong was dispatched to meet and instruct the POW camp's anti-communist leader in the process of establishing a formal organization within the camp.

Under the name Chen Zhiqing 陳志淸, Chen Jianzhong disguised himself as an attaché to ROC Ambassador to Korea Wang Dongyuan 王東原 (who had succeeded Shao Yulin) and was assigned to the ROC embassy in Seoul, while actually serving as a team leader for special operations and the running of espionage units. Those who were dispatched at that time were attached to the US PWS's Operations and were divided into interpreting and interrogating teams and assigned to work on exploiting relevant documents, the creation of leaflets and other psychological warfare products, as well as espionage activities. Some of those dispatched remained in Korea for years after the armistice—as late as 1957—carrying out espionage and psychological warfare operations (Hong 1995, 282–283).

In addition, Wang Dongyuan entrusted the embassy's key officials and pertinent agencies with organizing a "small guidance group" (in Chinese, *zhidao xiaozu* 指導小組) to take charge of the overall planning and guidance of ROC's programs in the POW camp. The group dispatched personnel to Moseulpo in order to liaise with each camp, while concurrently setting up a regular contact network between Busan and Jeju Island to ease communications (Wang 1988, 22). Besides Ambassador Wang, the group included Chen Jianzhong, Zhuo Xianshu 卓獻書, and three undercover agents. The group was later augmented by Li Shifen 黎世芬, Lin Zhengqi 林徵祁, and Wei Jingmeng 魏景蒙, among others, who identified as journalists. Wang Dongyuan directed his secretary, Zhuo Xianshu, to formulate a roster of the Chinese POWs and to conduct covert operations among them. Chen Jianzhong was to manage the operations with the full support of the embassy (Chou 2010, 128–129).

As a result of these efforts, the Chinese communist POWs in the camps were able to contact and receive instructions from the ROC government.

Furthermore, after the Chinese communist POWs were relocated to a neutral zone near the DMZ, the United Nations Command allowed journalists from 16 participant countries in the Korean War to report on the POW persuasion operations for their overseas audiences.[13] At the same time, two Taiwanese journalists were also allowed to enter the neutral zone. In addition to the dispatch of journalists, the hospital located in the neutral zone was an important venue through which the Chinese communist POWs were able to communicate with Taiwanese representatives (Anti-Communist POWs Struggle History Compilation Committee 1955, 168).

When the Chinese communist POWs opposed their relocation to the neutral zone, the US government asked for the support of the ROC government, to which Chiang Kaishek remitted instructions encouraging the POWs to cooperate with the UN forces. The Taiwanese small guidance group made a final relocation to Seoul to attune their instructional operations to the changing situation, and a "frontline small group" (in Chinese, *qianjin xiaozu* 前進小組) was then set up in Munsan. The group was composed mainly of interpreters and journalists to keep in close contact with the POWs that had been moved to a neutral zone (Wang 1988, 23).

As the persuasion operations began in the neutral zone, the small guidance group presented three policies and five conditions for all the POWs to strive for, centering on the principle that: "our belief is that we pledge to unite firmly and go to Taiwan." The three policies consisted of the following: "First, uniting with the Korean anti-communist POWs. Second, winning the sympathy of the Indian army. Third, cooperating with the UN forces. The five conditions for their strife were, first, to oppose fear (反恐怖), second, to resist interpersonal division (反分化), third, to counter communist spies (反共匪), fourth, to spurn fatigue (反疲勞), and finally, to oppose delay (反延期)" (Wang 1988, 25).

On December 23, 1953, when the Neutral Nations Repatriation Committee completed the process of persuading POWs, the ROC government formulated a full-fledged plan for their repatriation, and on January 20, 1954, the POWs were officially exchanged, and the withdrawal of POWs

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13. *Xianggang shibao* 香港時報 (Hongkong Times) September 9, 1953.

began. Once the POWs were released from the DMZ, they were loaded on to more than 500 dedicated vehicles, transported to the US military's Logistics Support Command in Bupyeong, where they were fed and given new clothes before being processed for departure to Taiwan, After this, they again boarded vehicles and were transported to Incheon (Anti-Communist POWs Struggle History Compilation Committee 1955, 223–224).

At Incheon, the handover of the POWs was carried out in 16 tents near the pier. The UNC and the ROC military officers called out the names from the roster one by one and then both officers affixed their signatures. The formal signing took place on Janueary 23, 1954 at the Eighth Army Headquarters. The ceremony was attended by Maxwell D. Taylor, Commander of the Eighth Army and representing the United Nations Command, while the Korean attendees included, Gen. Paik Sunyup and ROC representative Lai Mingtang 賴名湯. The total number of Chinese communist POWs going to Taiwan was 14,220.[14] A great many of the Chinese communist soldiers opted to go to Taiwan, a direct result of the efforts and activities of the ROC government.

Conclusion

On December 24, 2008, a program called "The Wandering Taiwanese POWs" (in Chinese, Liuluo Taiwan de zhiyuanjun zhanfu 流落台湾的志愿军战俘) aired on the Phoenix News Channel in Hong Kong. The program featured the story of Ran Hongtu 冉宏圖, who had fought in the Korean War and who afterwards moved to Taiwan, but who later returned to mainland China (Zhang and Gao 2011, 290–295).

At the time of the broadcast, Ran was 83 years old and had been living in mainland China since 2007. A native of Sichuan, he had first served in

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14. "Jie yun fan gong yi shi shi shi jing guo ji jian tao bao gao (1954.3.3)" 接運反共義士實施 經過及檢討報告 (1954.3.3) (Report on the Progress and Review of the Transport of Anti-communist POWs, [March 3, 1954]), The Processing Agenda of the Anti-Communist POWs in Korea 留韓反共義士處理案, Military Archives, File Number: 300.4-7760, Ministry of Defense Military History Section 國防部史政局.

the Nationalist Kuomintang army and later became a soldier of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. He had been deployed to fight in the Korean War in June 1951. He testified in the program that he chose to relocate to Taiwan due to pressure by fellow soldiers in his unit.

The UN Command, which was in charge of the POW camps in South Korea, had made requests to the ROC government to provide the necessary interpreters for the management of the Chinese communist POWs, something that coincided with Taiwan's interest in winning the state propaganda war with communist China by directing Chinese POWs towards Taiwan. From that point, ROC's agents began to play a major role in the education programs for Chinese communist POWs, and these activities became a decisive factor in the large number of Chinese communist POWs who chose to go to Taiwan.

This paper investigated the efforts of the Republic of China government to convert Chinese communist prisoners of war during the Korean War. Although it is impossible to identify all the individual reasons Chinese communist POWs chose to go to Taiwan, this research was able to substantiate the fact that the ROC government employed various incentives to turn Chinese communist POWs to the idea of choosing to Taiwan. In the end, the Chinese communist POWs who chose to go to Taiwan were separated from their families and came to settle down in their new home. Even though the Nationalist Kuomintang had lost the Chinese Civil War, by refashioning the lives of Chinese communist POWs, the ROC could showcase an ideological victory.

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