

Taken!

North Korea's Criminal **Abduction**
of Citizens of Other Countries

A Special Report by The Committee for
Human Rights in North Korea



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Of Citizens of Other Countries

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This study owes a great deal to the dedication and hard work of many people too numerous to list. The Committee for Human Rights had the support of a major private foundation that prefers not to be mentioned by name, and its support made this extensive research project possible. No funds from any government were used in the preparation of this report; we benefitted from a number of generous private donors, some of whom are members of our Board, but many of whom are not.

The Committee sought to present in English a comprehensive report that takes into account all known information about North Korea's abductions and the circumstances facing the abductees in North Korea. The Committee was very fortunate to be able to engage as the principal researcher and author of the initial draft, Mr. Yoshi Yamamoto, who had in-depth knowledge of the issue from years of working with the abductees' families organizations in Japan and from the breadth of his own academic accomplishments. Without his knowledge of the available information, most of which is published only in Korean and Japanese, and his familiarity with and access to the research of experts like Tsutomu Nishioka, Yoichi Shimada, and Kazhiro Araki, this report could not have been as thorough and as well-documented. Recognizing that the abductions involve many nations, in addition to Japan, the Committee sent Mr. Yamamoto to Seoul with a very capable translator and analyst, Christopher M. J. Kim, to conduct interviews there. Their efforts were later supplemented by the expert assistance of Mr. Robert Collins, an American whose knowledge of North Korean politics and proficiency in the Korean language permits him to engage in in-depth discussions with defectors and conduct research in major Korean archives.

As a result of the involvement of many skilled linguists, this report delves into areas that are seldom explored in the context of the abduction issue: the abductions of talented and skilled professionals from South Korea during the Korean War, the so-called "rescues" of fishermen on the high seas, the luring of Korean residents in Japan to North Korea, and the sequence of violent and cunning abductions of individuals from fourteen different nationalities over a number of decades. The role of interns Caleb Dependahl and Kazunori Koyama in bringing the facts to light by comparing Japanese, Chinese, English, and Korean sources was especially important to locating key places identified in various memoirs.

A number of highly talented interns have volunteered to work with the Committee while they pursue academic studies in Washington. Three who had superb editorial abilities—Jason Keller, Samantha Letizia, and Harald Olsen, greatly enhanced the style and accuracy of this report. Even this sincere mention of the Committee's appreciation of their efforts does not do justice to the profound contributions of these dedicated, hard-working young people. Nicholas Rodman, Joohee Kim, and Su Park kept track of and explored many critical research requirements that were developed in the process of putting the report together. Hannah Barker's highly talented graphic artistic skills enhance the pages of this report, and are demonstrated in the design of its cover. All of these individuals have

talents that far exceed their youth and their nascent professional experience.

The legal analysis in chapter 7 is the generous contribution of attorneys at DLA Piper law firm, primarily the renowned human rights attorney Jared Genser and his colleague Kristen Abrams. The Committee is very grateful for the law firm's constant support of our efforts over the years.

Law students David Park and David Moon provided valuable suggestions in drafts of the legal analysis and recommendations. Nicholas Craft, a Washington-based attorney who volunteered to work with our office in the final weeks of this study, provided careful review of portions of the report that deal with legal issues and initiated an investigation into a very significant disappearance that may yet be revealed to have been a North Korean abduction.

Others have served in many ways to facilitate the work of the Committee. Under the leadership of Heesug Chung, Christopher Kim, and Haesun Jang, these interns included Purun Cheong, Chan Yang Choi, Isaiah Joo, Phil Kang, Andrew Kim, Min-kyu Kim, Sahrang Kim, Ali Nahm, and Narai Yim.

Many U. S. Government experts contributed their own time and effort in substantial ways to suggest improvements and expand certain parts of the report. Primary among them was Mr. An Hong, who helped with extensive translations, shared his recollections of his work with Choi Un-hee and Shin Sang-ok, brought our attention to the case of the attempted abduction in Zagreb, and provided many other contributions. The analysis of the organizational structure of the Departments of North Korea that have conducted abductions benefitted from the review and guidance of a North Korean defector, a permanent Non-Resident fellow of the Committee, Mr. Kim Kwangjin, and a number of American experts.

Japanese Government officials from a wide range of political backgrounds, especially in the Abduction Affairs office and the Diet, generously provided their time and expertise during numerous meetings. No official of any government deserves greater credit than Takashi Minami, whose attention to detail and dedication to the truth provides an energetic flow of information and advice that the world needs to know about North Korean practices.

Over the years, the effort to uncover the truth about abductions has attracted the devotion of thousands of advocates for the missing and their families. In the United States, their efforts gained expression in a masterful film, "ABDUCTION: The Story of Megumi Yokota" by Chris Sheridan and Patty Kim. Opening in theaters across the U. S. almost five years before this report was written, they successfully focused American attention on a crime that is very difficult to comprehend and explain.

Perhaps the most extraordinary assistance donated to this effort was that of Curtis Melvin. His genius in mapping every inch of North Korea through publicly available satellite images has led to the discovery of places where abductees have been employed and housed. This is critical information that we can all hope will prove valuable in their rescue.

Chuck Downs
Executive Director, *Committee for Human Rights in North Korea*
May 2011

A Note About Names as Represented in this Report

Chinese, Korean and Japanese traditional conventions dictate that the surname precedes the given name, and this sequence has been followed in this report for Chinese and Korean names. Korean names are generally of three syllables and there is a great deal of individuality in how they are presented in English, in terms of spelling, hyphenation, and capitalization. In keeping with the usage used most consistently by other human rights groups, we have followed a particular convention—Surname capitalized and first syllable of the given name capitalized, set apart from the second syllable of the given name with a hyphen, and the second syllable in lower case. For example, Choi Un-hee. This form is widely used in South Korea, and seldom used in North Korea.

Because of the success of the Japanese movement in bringing cases of abducted Japanese to the attention of the American press, many Japanese names are familiar in a western style of presentation: Given name first, Surname second. Megumi Yokota, for example, is a widely recognized name in the United States, as are many other Japanese abductees, and American readers would have difficulty recognizing the name Yokota Megumi (which is how she is most frequently referred to in Japan). For Japanese names, therefore, we have followed the western sequence for the English language version of this report (the Japanese language version will use the sequence familiar in Japan).

Our objective is simply to present the names in the manner that they have already become familiar to the widest population of analysts and advocates.

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Yoshi Yamamoto

Principal Researcher

For over a decade, Yoshi Yamamoto has been an essential element in advancing American understanding of the abduction issue. While he was an undergraduate student, his aunt Keiko in Niigata Prefecture, Japan, was one of the earliest volunteers working with the Yokota family, and he was inspired to do everything he could to bring international attention to the victims' plight. His opportunity to do so occurred when he pursued a Master's Degree in Georgetown University's Security Studies Program in Washington, D. C. He sought an opportunity to be involved on North Korean human rights issues, and became a co-founder and Steering Committee Member of the North Korea Freedom Coalition formed by Suzanne Scholte in 2003. He used his ability to communicate easily with the abductees' families organization to bring their concerns and hopes to policy makers in Washington, serving as a go-between for human rights groups in Washington and Japan. He set up and took part in most of the meetings that brought members of the abductees' families to Washington. For example, his behind-the-scenes service was essential to the inclusion of significant portions of the North Korea Human Rights Act, the historic 2006 hearing on abduction issues in the House of Representatives' International Relations Committee (Subcommittee on Asian Affairs), as well as the historic meeting between President George W. Bush and the family members at the Oval Office. He also suggested and organized the meeting between HRNK Board member Roberta Cohen and Japanese Diet member Jin Matsubara that started the process of formulating recommendations included in this report's final chapter.

For his part, Mr. Yamamoto dedicates this report to the courage of the local volunteers in Niigata who continue to provide persistent attention and service in hopes of returning those taken from their homes.

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North Korea's Criminal Abduction of Citizens of Other Countries

Introduction

Readers of this report have a distinct advantage over those who tried to make sense of North Korean abductions prior to 2002. That is because North Korea's Supreme Leader admitted the practice on September 17, 2002, when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visited Pyongyang to talk about this and other matters. Kim Jong-il "acknowledged that these [abductions] were the work of persons affiliated with North Korea in the past and offered his apologies, expressing his regret."¹ The reason given for these actions was particularly implacable. North Korean leader Kim Jong-il stated that the abductions were committed for the following reason: "to enable Japanese language training in special agencies and for agents to obtain false identities to infiltrate [other countries]..."²

Prior to September 2002, the North Korean regime had denied any role in the disappearances of people, saying that people believed to have been seen in North Korea had never entered the country. In official talks between Japan and North Korea, North Korean diplomats literally slammed the negotiating table with their fists and walked out at the very mention of abductees. On November 7, 1992 when the Japanese government raised the name of abductee Yaeko Taguchi during the 8th round of Japan-DPRK Bilateral Talks and requested an investigation, the North Korean delegation first threatened to cancel the talks and later did so; it halted subsequent talks for 8 years.

Meanwhile, on a more personal level, the family members who believed their missing loved ones had been abducted to North Korea were subjected to disbelief and sometimes ridicule. Yet the evidence of North Korea's involvement in abductions abroad continued to mount, even though the North Korean government continued to categorically deny it. It was not until the meeting with Prime Minister Koizumi that North Korea's Supreme Leader finally admitted that foreign citizens had indeed been taken by North Korean operatives and were living in North Korea.

But Kim Jong-il's admission did not tell the whole story and also left misleading impressions, both of which this report seeks to correct.

The impression deliberately left by Kim Jong-il was that the number of

¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA), "Opening Statement by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi at the Press Conference on the Outcome of His Visit to North Korea," September 17, 2002. Available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/press.html.

² Headquarters for the Abduction Issue, Government of Japan. The Abduction of Japanese Citizens by North Korea: Background. <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/abduction/background.html#how>. (Accessed 28 April 2011)

abductions was small, carried out by a handful of perpetrators in disparate actions and limited in scope. As a result, even well-informed people, if asked about North Korea's abductions, are likely to say they understand a small number of Japanese were abducted.

North Korea admitted to abducting only 13 people, eight of whom it claimed had died while in North Korea. Kim Jong-il permitted five surviving abductees to return to Japan in October 2002 and a few family members of theirs a few years later, in 2004. The impression conveyed was that the case was closed: the number of people involved was small and the people abducted had been returned home.

Telling the full story, or at least as much of it as is now known, is the objective of this report. The information collected shows that North Korea's policy of abducting foreigners was not limited to Japan or to small numbers of individuals. Of course, even a small number of abductees from Japan or any other country would be a severe violation of the rights of those abducted, a violation of international law, and a crime that would warrant international attention and concern. But North Korea's practice of abductions was neither insignificant nor short-lived.

North Korea's policy of abducting foreign citizens dates back to the earliest days of the regime, and to policy decisions made by North Korea's founder Kim Il-sung himself. Those abducted came from widely diverse backgrounds, numerous nationalities, both genders, and all ages, and were taken from places as far away as London, Copenhagen, Zagreb, Beirut, Hong Kong, and China, in addition to Japan.

Initially, people were abducted from South Korea during the Korean War. Soon afterwards, Koreans were lured from Japan and held against their will in North Korea. A decade later, children of North Korean agents were kidnapped apparently to blackmail their parents. Starting in the late 1970s, foreigners who



South Korean fishermen abducted and trained in North Korea shown touring North Korea.

could teach North Korean operatives to infiltrate targeted countries were brought to North Korea and forced to teach spies. Since then, people in China who assist North Korean refugees have been targeted and taken.

The number of abductees taken by North Korea may well approach 180,000:

- During the Korean War, by October 28, 1950, 82,959 South Koreans were abducted and taken to the North.³
- Since the Korean War Armistice was signed, an additional 3,824 South Koreans, 3,721 of them fishermen, have been abducted.⁴
- More than 93,000⁵ ethnic Koreans residing in Japan were lured to North Korea, and most were never allowed to return to Japan.⁶
- The Japanese government officially lists 17 persons whose disappearances it believes were attributable to North Korean abductions;⁷
- Japanese groups that investigate disappearances believe the number of disappearances attributable to North Korea is actually roughly 100.⁸
- News reports estimate that 200 Chinese (most of ethnic Korean background) were abducted to North Korea.⁹
- At least 25 other foreign citizens have been seen in North Korea by the accounts of numerous witnesses; they can be assumed to have been taken against their will and are more than likely being held against their will.¹⁰

These figures add up to 180,108.

There is no question that North Korea has engaged in the following practices: (1) trespassing into foreign territory to monitor and identify targets for abduction;

³ 2010 *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea*, Korea Institute for National Unification, p.453.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp.460-462. The number continues to rise.

⁵ This figure includes over 6,800 Japanese wives, husbands, and children who accompanied their Korean family members.

⁶ Araki Kazuhiro, *Nihon ga Rachi Mondai wo Kaiketsu Dekinai Hontou no Riyu* (Soshisa, 2009), p. 41.

⁷ Headquarters for the Abduction Issue, Government of Japan. *The Abduction of Japanese Citizens by North Korea: Background*. <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/abduction/background.html#how>. (Accessed 28 April 2011)

⁸ National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea (NARKN). *North Korean Abduction Victims Worldwide*. Available at: <http://www.sukuukai.jp/narkn/>. (Accessed 28 April 2011)

⁹ N. Korea Kidnapped Chinese in Refugee Crackdown: Report," AFP, November, 17, 2009

¹⁰ See the Quick Reference Guide to Captive Foreigner at the end of this Report.

(2) abducting foreign nationals from their home countries or while they were traveling abroad in third countries; (3) detaining foreign nationals against their will for long periods of time; (4) depriving abductees and detainees of basic due process of law; (5) severely restricting the movement of abductees and invading their rights to privacy and freedom of thought, conscience, religion, opinion, expression and association; (6) forcing abductees to work on behalf of the North Korean regime; (7) forcing abductees into marriages; and (8) subjecting abductees to physical abuse and, in some instances, torture and death.

North Korea's policy of abducting foreign citizens was intentional, directed by Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il themselves, executed by an extensive well-trained bureaucracy, and far-reaching in its scope and geographic reach. It has not been an unorganized, haphazard, or unauthorized action on the part of rogue agents. The majority of the abductions covered by this study were carried out by operatives and agents of four key Departments of the Secretariat of the Korean Workers' Party (KWP). These four Departments managed and supervised external espionage—that is, secret activities aimed at achieving the regime's objectives in South Korea and in foreign countries:¹¹ (1) the Research Department, also known as the Investigations Department; (2) the External Coordination Department, also known as the Foreign Liaison Bureau; (3) the Operations Department; and (4) the United Front Department.¹² All four reported directly to Kim Il-sung, and after his death, Kim Jong-il, who personally met some of the abductees on their arrival in North Korea. There is ample evidence that the regime had an official bureaucratic structure that employed, managed and monitored those abducted while they were in North Korea. Certain more recent abductions were carried out by State Security Department (SSD) personnel rather than from the four Departments that managed earlier abductions, but the official guidance behind the abduction policy is still clear.

There may be hundreds of abductees inside North Korea who are not known to be there. The regime undertakes to abduct its victims in absolute secrecy, and detains them indefinitely in closely monitored circumstances which do not permit them to come in contact with many people even inside North Korea. The opportunities the outside world has to learn of them are obviously extremely limited, and this is by design. Those on the outside of North Korea must accordingly be very careful about drawing conclusions about the abductees. We should not, for example, conclude that Kim Jong-il terminated North Korea's practice of abductions because he admitted that abductions had occurred in the past. His admission was not the whole truth, his government has provided false and unsubstantiated assertions since the admission, and demands for thorough bilateral investigations have repeatedly been denied by North Korea. It is difficult to conclude that the regime has anything more to hide on this issue, because it continues to hide the facts.

¹¹ Ahn, Myong-Jin. *Kita Chousen Rachi Kousakuin* (Tokuma Shoten, 1998), 30.

¹² Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 63-70.

The issue of North Korea's abductions remains a very pertinent and timely issue even ten years after Kim Jong-il's admission. Some of the cases of abductions that are the best known today took many decades to investigate. Some cases from the early 1970s have just recently begun to be investigated, and many of the North Korean operatives who are sought in connection with disappearances have been listed with Interpol for years. While it is certainly true that all unexplained disappearances of individuals around the world cannot be explained as North Korean actions, it is also true that many which appear to fit the pattern of North Korean abduction are not given the full attention they merit.

In the meantime, innocent individuals are being held in a place where their freedom is denied and their lives are managed in a way they would never have submitted to of their own free will.

The breadth and scope of Pyongyang's actions must be exposed, and the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea is proud to accomplish that with this report. The crimes North Korea has committed must also be condemned by the international community. As the mother of Megumi Yokota, a girl abducted at age 13, testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Relations Committee on April 27, 2006, "we should not rest until every citizen in North Korea whose rights have been violated is free and every foreign abductee has been rescued and permitted to live his or her life in peace."

CHAPTER 1:

How People from other Countries Are Taken, and Trapped in North Korea

North Korea's Abductions Have Roots in the Early Years of the Regime's Establishment

On July 31, 1946, Kim Il-sung issued an order to try to lure certain types of individuals—intellectuals and other educated professional people—to North Korea. He specifically stated, “In order to solve the shortage of intellectuals, we have to bring intellectuals from South Korea...”¹ Were it not for the tragic story of North Korea's abductions over the next decades, this initial order might be seen as a relatively innocent statement recognizing the talent of people who were not under the regime's jurisdiction, but who might help advance the interests of North Korea. Over the next sixty years, however, the regime would carry out a number of violent

The regime would carry out a number of violent and duplicitous actions to steal foreign citizens from their homes...

and duplicitous actions to steal foreign citizens from their homes, lure unsuspecting innocents, and trap misguided individuals into captivity in North Korea, with no regard for the wishes of the people themselves.

The tragic history of North Korea's forced abductions began in earnest during the Korean War (1950-1953).² On June 28, 1950, three days into the war, the Korean Workers Party Military Committee issued an order to North Korean forces to abduct

“Southern political, economic, and socially prominent figures, reeducate them, and strengthen the military front line with them.”³ Abductions of these people were not random acts of violence committed by individuals; they were based on calculated, methodical orders from the highest levels of government.

By August 1950, United Nations and Republic of Korea forces⁴ had been pushed into a small area in the southeast corner of the Korean peninsula known

¹ Kim, Il-sung, Works, English edition, (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Pyongyang, 1981), Vol. IV., 66-69.

² Lee, Mi-il. “North Korea: Human Rights Update and International Abduction Issues,” (testimony given before the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., April 27, 2006) provides a good summary of the regime's efforts.

³ The book *Okuryoko no Fuyu* (Lee, Te Ho. *Okuryouko no Fuyu* (Shakai Hyouron Sha, 1993), pages 28-32), states that on June 28, 1950, the KWP Military Committee developed “the policy to subsume Southern political, economical, and socially prominent figures, re-educate them, and strengthen the military front line with them.” A document that survives from this period, signed by South Pyongan Province Political Security Officer Chief Pak Chong Hon, was entitled “Order to Carry Out Korean Workers Party Central Military Committee Order #74,” and was dated October 2, 1950. See Korean War Abductees Research Institute, *The Korean War Abduction Sourcebook 1, Domestic and Foreign Affairs Documents, Part III* (Seoul, 2006), p. 938.



During the Korean War, thousands of South Koreans were abducted and marched north.

as the Pusan Perimeter. North Korean forces controlled the rest of the peninsula, including Seoul. Seoul was liberated on October 28, 1950, and by that time, 82,959 citizens had been forcefully abducted and taken to the North.⁵ According to documents collected by the Korean War Abductees Family Union (KWAUFU), these eighty thousand abductees included at least twenty thousand who were “politicians, academics, government ministers, and civil servants.”⁶ Their professional expertise, however, would not be put to use in the North. A Soviet document implacably recorded this loss of human capital, noting “the plan of transferring Seoul citizens to the North for their job placement in factories, coal mines and enterprises is being implemented in each related sector.”⁷

Korean Residents in Japan Were Lured to North Korea and Trapped

North Korea, devastated by the war, needed to replenish its population of farmers, miners, and factory workers. Just as Kim Il-sung's pronouncements during the war drew intellectuals to the North who were then conscribed to hard

labor, educated and often prosperous Koreans resident in Japan were also lured by the idea of helping to rebuild North Korea. They found themselves trapped in a

⁴ From fifteen countries including the Republic of Korea (South Korea).

⁵ 2010 White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea, Korea Institute for National Unification, p.453.

⁶ Lee, Mi-il. “North Korea: Human Rights Update and International Abduction Issues,” (Prepared statement given at the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., April 27, 2006), p. 52-53.

⁷ Historical Record Relating to North Korea, No. 16, “Regarding the Cooperation to the Plan of Moving Out Seoul Citizens,” Gang-won-nae No. 3440, September 5, 1950.

nation that preferred to use their services in hard labor.

At the end of World War II there were over two million Koreans living in Japan. Most were descendants of laborers brought from occupied Korea during the 35 years of the Japanese colonial period.⁸ The current population of Japan still includes 405,571 ethnic Koreans,⁹ many of whose families have been in Japan for three generations. Despite being born in Japan, they are not afforded Japanese citizenship under Japanese law; they are considered foreign nationals. A portion came from families that originally lived in South Korea, but the majority of them have returned to South Korea or travel back and forth freely. Some Koreans in Japan came from northern families, or sympathized with Communism, and their descendants often travel on North Korean passports and support the regime in North Korea to varying degrees. Roughly 30,000-40,000 are considered to be North Korean nationals, many of whom have formed an association of local organizations in Japan referred to as *Chongryon*. These people are also referred to as *Chosen Soren* in Japanese or *Jo-chongryon* in Korean.¹⁰

An Association of Korean Residents, called Chongryon in Japan, Serves North Korean Interests

Chongryon literally means “General Association” in Korean, referring to the association of many smaller local organizations under its control.¹¹ *Chongryon* runs its own Korean language newspapers, hospitals, a traditional song and dance group, and manages its own trading companies and pachinko (a kind of pin ball game) parlors throughout Japan.¹² It also runs an estimated one hundred schools, a university, a bank, and a credit union which at one time had over 150 branches and held over \$1 billion.² Its political and economic status allowed for commercial vessels transporting goods between North Korea and Japan to sail with few inspections or restraints, and large amounts of cash—some estimates exceeded \$600 million annually—were remitted to North Korea from relatively wealthy Koreans in Japan.¹⁴ The regime in North Korea has always understood the advantage of having a sympathetic population living in the midst of a neighboring state, in particular

⁸ Aoyama, Kenki. *Kitachosen to iu Akuma* (Koubunsha, 2002), 15-16.

⁹ Statistics from the Japanese Ministry of Justice, 2009, “Registered Foreigner Statistics,” released on July 7, 2010 (accessed at <http://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/List.do?lid+000001065021>).

¹⁰ Chosun Ilbo Japanese version, “Botsuraku suru Chosen Soren, Kankoku Kokuseki no Shutokusha ga Kyuzo,” February 10, 2010 (<http://www.chosunonline.com/news/20100210000047>). “Chosen” (sometimes spelled Chosun) is the official name of “Korea” in North Korea; in South Korea, these people are referred to as “Han-kook.”

¹¹ This is referred to precisely as Jochongryon in the Korean language.

¹² Pachinko games resemble pinball machines and are widely used for gambling in Japan, where they manage to avoid the prohibitions placed on other forms of gambling.

¹³ Han, Gwang-Hee. *Waga Chousena*

¹⁴ Nicholas Eberstadt, “Financial Transfers from Japan to North Korea: Estimating the Unreported Flows,” *Asian Survey* 36:5 (May 1996), 523-542.

an American ally. Several senior *Chongryon* officials are afforded memberships in North Korea’s rubber-stamp legislature, the Supreme People’s Assembly. The Central Headquarters of *Chongryon* is in Tokyo and serves as a *de facto* embassy for North Korea, since Japan and North Korea have no official diplomatic ties.

Chongryon’s school system has played an important role in promoting the North Korean regime’s influence in Japan. It teaches Kim Il Sung’s writings, and classes generally start with vows of loyalty to the North Korean leader. These schools have also helped recruit people whom the regime thought could be helpful, facilitated the North’s espionage efforts in Japan, and sponsored programs that took people to North Korea who were never allowed to return to their homes in Japan.

Some Korean Residents in Japan Migrated to North Korea Expecting A Better Life

Starting in the years after the Korean War, many ethnic Koreans were encouraged to leave Japan and return to Korea.¹⁵ The majority were from South Korean families and almost one and one half million went to South Korea. Under a *Chongryon*-initiated project known as the Resident-Korean Returnees Project, those whose families had come from North Korea, or had sympathy for the regime, were urged to return to their motherland with the hope of building a prosperous socialist state. These returning immigrants were intended to supplement the North Korean labor force after it was decimated during the Korean War.¹⁶ During this period, Kim Il-sung’s North Korea was promoted as a “paradise.” As Kang Chol-hwan, a grandson of one of the returnees wrote, “The leaders of the *Chosen Soren* were very keen on seeing people with advanced education return to North Korea, and they continually played up the homeland’s need for individuals with knowledge and abilities. In North Korea a person could serve the people and the state rather than Japan, that pawn of American imperialism.”¹⁷ The project was also supported by many Japanese intellectuals, media, and the Foreign Ministry, largely out of guilt for the colonial exploitation of Koreans, in the belief that they would find better lives in their homeland.

¹⁵ The first ship left the port of Niigata, Japan for Chongjin, North Korea, on December 11, 1959. It is worth noting that right after WWII, there were over 2.1 million ethnic Koreans in Japan. Most of them came from the southern part of Korea, which later became the Republic of Korea. It is estimated that the number of ethnic North Koreans was less than 10 percent of the total population of Koreans living in Japan. The majority of ethnic South Koreans quickly returned to their hometowns after WWII. ROK government statistics indicate that 1,414,258 ethnic Koreans in Japan returned to the South between 1945 and 1949. Therefore, the people who joined the Returnee Project from the latter 1950s are from the approximately 600,000 who remained in Japan. See Aoyama, Kenki. *Kitachosen to iu Akuma* (Koubunsha, 2002), 15-16.

¹⁶ Interview with President Kotaro Miura of Japanese NGO, The Society to Help Returnees to North Korea (Mamoru-Kai).

¹⁷ Kang Chol-hwan and Pierre Rigoulot, *The Aquariums of Pyongyang* (translation from the French, Basic Books, New York, 2001), p. 19.

From the time the project started at the end of 1959 until the end of 1960, some 50,000 people boarded ships bound for North Korea. Rumors of harsh treatment in North Korea, however, began to leak out immediately. Censored letters from friends and family who had moved to North Korea held urgent requests for food and money. They also held carefully written but decipherable phrases that warned loved ones not to follow them. In 1961, the numbers suddenly decreased to less than half of the previous year; and only 22,801 returned. When the Project reached its fourth year in 1962, only 3,497 ethnic Koreans decided to participate.¹⁸

The returnees themselves began to realize the truth about North Korea as soon as they boarded their ships. On June 24, 1960, Chung Ki-hae boarded a vessel that had formerly been a Soviet warship; it looked clean and luxurious from the outside, but this façade concealed a wretched interior. Inside, the cabin rooms stunk, the toilets gave off a putrid odor, and a rotten stench came from the cafeteria. The ship had no refrigerators even though it was summertime. After seeing conditions onboard the ship, Chung began to feel very uneasy about what was awaiting his family in North Korea. He had heard about the new and modernizing nation of North Korea. He recalls asking himself at the time, “This is impossible. Could it be that we are headed somewhere unimaginable?”¹⁹

Shortly after boarding, Chung recalls that he stepped out onto the deck for fresh air, unable to bear the smell inside the ship. He looked back on Japan, a land he thought had treated him harshly as a Korean minority, but to which he suddenly found himself yearning to return.

After an eight-hour trip, his boat arrived at the North Korean port of *Chong-jin*. The returnees were greeted by North Koreans waving flags and shouting, “Welcome! May you live a long life!” Chung and the other passengers were shocked by how unhealthy, thin, and poorly dressed the North Koreans were. Their faces were dry and dark with malnutrition. He concluded they were ordered to put on the welcoming demonstration, since no one from the crowd actually walked over to greet the passengers personally as they came off the boat. Chung realized he had become a victim of North Korean propaganda.²⁰

When the Returnees Project finally ended in 1984, more than 93,000²¹

*Censored letters
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and money.*

¹⁸ Araki, Kazuhiro. *Nihon ga Rachi Mondai wo Kaiketsu Dekinai Honto no Riyu* (Soushisha, 2009), p. 41.

¹⁹ Chung Ki-hae, *Kikokusen* (Bungeishunju, 1995), 50.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ This figure includes over 6,800 Japanese wives, husbands, and children who accompanied their Korean family members.

individuals had left Japan for North Korea.²² The vast majority were never allowed to leave.

Many Fishermen Believed Lost At Sea Were In Fact Taken by North Korea

A total of 3,824 South Koreans, 3,721 of them fishermen, have been abducted by North Korea since the Korean War Armistice was signed.²³ South Korean fishing vessels have long been a favorite target of North Korean abduction efforts, since they are isolated and defenseless at sea.

One such fisherman was Lee Jhe-gun, who was abducted on May 29, 1970, along with 27 other fishermen on the fishing boat *Bongsan*. Late that night, as the crew was lowering the fishing nets, North Korean ships collided with the *Bongsan*, making an explosive sound. North Korean commandos boarded the ship with assault rifles, yelling, “Do you want to die? Get out!”²⁴ The ships then towed the *Bongsan* into North Korean territory. As the ship was being towed, many of the men wept realizing they might never see home again.²⁵

Although many of these and other South Korean fishermen are often returned after a detention of many months, as of 2010, there are still 506 South Koreans being held in North Korea, presumably against their will; 450 of these are fishermen.²⁶ Some of the fishermen have been recruited by North Korea to engage in espionage against South Korea.²⁷

Lim Kook-jae was a crew member on the South Korean fishing vessel *Dong Jin 27*, which was captured by North Korea in January 1987 near Baek Ryung Island in the Yellow Sea. All of the crew members were abducted. Lim eventually ended up in Chongjin Political Prison Camp, Number 25, after repeatedly trying to escape into China. He reportedly died there in 2008.²⁸

There were also Japanese fishermen who were taken to North Korea. Almost four decades after the fact, a 1963 disappearance at sea would be found to have been a result of North Korean actions. Takeshi Terakoshi was thirteen when he disappeared from the waters off Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, on May 11, 1963. He was with two uncles, Soto-o, age 24, and Shoji, age 36, sailing on their fishing boat the *Kiyomaru* when another vessel collided with theirs. In 1998, a North Korean operative who defected told the story he heard in North Korea about this incident. He said the young Takeshi began loudly shouting at the other boat, which turned out to be a North Korean spy ship. One of the operatives on board, Oh Gu-ho, immediately shot

²² Araki Kazuhiro, *Nihon ga Rachi Mondai wo Kaiketsu Dekinai Hontou no Riyu* (Soushisha, 2009), p. 41.

²³ 2010 *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea*, Korea Institute for National Unification, pp.460-462.

²⁴ Lee, Jhe-gun. *Kitachousen ni Rachi sareta Otoko* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2002), p.13.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ 2010 *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea*, Korea Institute for National Unification, pp.460-462.

²⁷ Lee, Jhe-gun. *Kitachousen ni Rachi sareta Otoko* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2002), pp. 40-43.

²⁸ *Abducted South Korean Dies in a North Korean Political Prison Camp*. DailyNK, 14 October 2008.

and killed Shoji and ordered the other two to board the North Korean spy vessel.²⁹ Soto-o is said to have died in North Korea. Terakoshi was seen again 24 years later his abduction, in 2002, after the summit meeting between Prime Minister Koizumi and Kim Jong-il, when he was one of the Japanese allowed to visit Japan. He claimed he had been “rescued” by North Korea and chose to return to North Korea.

There Was A Failed North Korean Attempt To Abduct a Famous South Korean Pianist and His Actress Wife in 1977

Actress Yoon Jung-hee and pianist Paik Kun-woo narrowly escaped an attempted abduction by North Koreans in Zagreb, Yugoslavia on July 30, 1977. Top-secret Croatian government documents confirming this event were released 26 years after the incident occurred.

The South Korean couple held their wedding in the Paris home of a noted painter, Lee Ung-no, and when Lee’s wife, Park In-gyeong, told them that Michail Pavlovic, a wealthy Swiss, wanted to hear Paik perform, Paik and Yoon flew to Zurich. Upon their arrival in Switzerland, Park’s secretary gave the couple an envelope with a name, address, directions, and 800 dinars and told them to fly to Zagreb, saying there was a change in Park’s schedule.

At the airport, Yoon spotted an airplane bearing North Korea’s Air Koryo logo parked in the runway and felt uneasy. She and her husband also saw an Asian woman wearing sunglasses, and thought that was odd. It was uncommon for people in Yugoslavia to wear sunglasses at that time, and her short North Korean-style skirt was out of place. The woman was later identified as Bang Hwa-jah, a North Korean spy who was the wife of Lee Sang-chun, a third secretary at the North Korean embassy in Vienna. He was in charge of communications between Zagreb and Pyongyang for this mission.

The South Korean couple was then driven to a villa that was guarded by Yugoslavian police officers. Zagreb’s police chief had been given \$30,000 to cooperate with North Korean spies who were hiding inside the residence.

When they arrived at the villa, the couple overheard people speaking with North Korean accents and grew more apprehensive. They fled and took a taxi to the U.S. embassy in Zagreb. Arriving at the embassy at 6:10pm they found the consulate closed but found a library clerk who introduced them to vice consul Christensen who, at age 32, had just taken the post in Zagreb. Christensen took the couple to the Palace Hotel where he was staying and got them a room. Around 6:40am the next day, Paik called Christensen when there was a knock at their door. Christensen told them that three North Koreans were at the door. American personnel arranged for the couple to escape to the lobby, and took them to the airport.

²⁹ Ahn, Myong-jin. Shin Shougen Rachi (Kosaido Shuppan, 1998), 150.

For the South Korean couple, the story ended happily. For the North Koreans who had bungled the abduction, death came swiftly. In his book, *Royal Families of the Daedong River: 14 years of Secret Travel in Seoul*, Lee Han Young³⁰ recounted that Lee Jang-ryong, deputy director of the North Korean spy agency called the KWP External Coordination Department, or “the Overseas Liaison Department,” told him that every North Korean spy who worked for him on the failed mission was executed.

North Korean Espionage Operatives Forcibly Abducted Innocent Foreigners on Orders from Pyongyang

Although it is rarely mentioned in Japanese Government publications that deal exclusively with North Korea’s abductions of Japanese citizens, the 1974

13-year old Megumi Yokota was walking home from badminton practice at her high school in Niigata when she was seized by North Korean operatives.

abduction of two children of a leader of the *Chosen Soren* would foreshadow the violent abductions of Japanese in the latter part of that decade. In June, 1974, two ethnic Korean children, seven-year-old Ko Kyong-mi and her three-year-old brother, Ko Kang, were abducted from their home in Saitama, Japan.³¹ The police believe the children were first taken to Tokyo, where they were held captive for six months, after which they were sent to North Korea on a North Korean spy ship that departed from northern Japan.³²

The Japanese National Police Agency had reason to suspect that their father was a North Korean agent. He operated a trading company that may have been a front for a North Korean spy operation. After three decades, in 2007, by which time Kim Jong-il had admitted that North Korea engaged in abductions, the police raided several offices and homes associated with the *Chongryon* which they believe were connected to the 1974 abduction. The police suspect the abduction was carried out by colleagues of the children’s father, including a North Korean agent named Yoko Kinoshita (a.k.a. Hong Su-hye). It may be that the regime sought to control their father by abducting his children. An arrest warrant for Ms. Kinoshita was issued and she has been placed on an Interpol wanted list.³³

³⁰ The nephew of Kim Jong-il who defected to Seoul through Switzerland in 1982, and was murdered by North Korean agents outside his apartment in Seoul on February 15, 1997.

³¹ “Suspected Abduction Case of Two Siblings.” Japanese National Police Agency document. Accessed: 14 January 2011. Available at: http://www.npa.go.jp/keibi/gaiji1/abd_e/fukui_2_e.html

³² “Police Raid N Korea Agency in Tokyo.” Aljazeera News. 25 April 2007. Accessed: 14 January 2011. Available at: <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia-pacific/2007/04/200852514365022196.html>

³³ “Suspected Abduction Case of Two Siblings.” Japanese National Police Agency document. Accessed: 14 January 2011. Available at: http://www.npa.go.jp/keibi/gaiji1/abd_e/fukui_2_e.html

On the afternoon of November 15, 1977, 13-year old Megumi Yokota was walking home from badminton practice at her high school in Niigata when she was seized by North Korean operatives. Although no one can know exactly how the abduction occurred, three decades later her mother would be able to piece together a gruesome description of Megumi's abduction. She believes Megumi was thrown into a car, taken to a nearby ship, and locked in a storage hold where she wept, screamed, and clawed at the steel door for the entire trip to North Korea.³⁴

Yaeko Taguchi was 22 years old when she was abducted by North Korea in June 1978.³⁵ In North Korea, she was given the name Lee Un-hae and forced to teach the Japanese language to spies, including the terrorist Kim Hyon-hui. Kim Hyon-hui successfully masqueraded as a Japanese tourist, and with an accomplice, planted a bomb on Korean Air Lines flight 858 in 1987. She was detained on suspicion of using a false passport after the plane departed and tried to commit suicide. The bomb exploded during the flight from Abu Dhabi to Thailand, killing 95 passengers and twenty crew members.

Yasushi Chimura and his fiancée, Fukie Hamamoto, both 23, were abducted from the rocky shores of Wakasa Bay in Obama, Japan, on the evening of July 7, 1978. The young couple were on a date when they were attacked by North Korean operatives and forced into a nearby boat. They would not see Japan again for more than 25 years.³⁶ It was learned they were abducted by North Korea, and did not merely disappear, when Kim Jong-il admitted North Korea's role in 2002.

On July 31, 1978, a 20-year-old college student Kaoru Hasuike and his girlfriend, Yukiko Okudo, were walking along the shore of Kashiwazaki City, Japan. The couple planned to watch the sunset on the beach at the end of a hot summer day. They walked to a secluded area, hoping to get away from the crowds. They noticed several suspicious men watching them nearby, but assumed they were visitors. One of the men walked up to the couple and asked if they had a light for his cigarette. The man suddenly struck Hasuike in the face, while two others rushed to tie his arms. Stunned, Hasuike was unable to respond before he was gagged and forced into a large bag. Okudo was quickly bound in the same way and shoved into another bag.³⁷ The two were left lying on the ground for some time, listening to their attackers standing guard. They were loaded into an inflatable boat that took them to a larger ship farther out at sea. Once they were onboard, Hasuike and Okudo were told that if they remained quiet, they would

³⁴ Yokota, Sakie. *North Korea Kidnapped My Daughter*, (Vertical, Inc., 2009). p.7,117.

³⁵ *The Abduction of Japanese Citizens by North Korea: Cases of Abduction Recognised [sic] by the Government of Japan*. Government of Japan, Headquarters for the Abduction Issue. June 2007.

³⁶ Munk, David. *Japan Neither Forgives Nor Forgets North Korean Abductions*. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. October 31, 2009.

³⁷ This story is based on what the older brother Toru Hasuike heard from Kaoru Hasuike after he came back from North Korea in 2002. Hasuike, Toru. *Dakkan*. (Shinchousha, 2003), 79-87.



Yukiko Okudo



Kaoru Hasuike



Kyoko Matsumoto

not be harmed. Drugged, they stayed silent, watching the lights of Kashiwazaki City fade over the horizon. The next view of land came two days later when they arrived at the port of *Chongjin*, North Korea.³⁸

Suichi Ichikawa, 23, and Rumiko Masumoto, 24, both of Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan, disappeared on the evening of August 12, 1978. In North Korea, the two were married in July 1979. In 2002, North Korea claimed the two died of heart attacks, Mr. Ichikawa in September 1979, and Ms. Masumoto in 1981. They would have been 24 and 27, respectively.³⁹

Nineteen-year-old Hitomi Soga and her mother Miyoshi, age 46, were abducted on the same date as Ichikawa and Masumoto in their hometown of Sado City, Japan. The two had stopped for ice cream on the way home from shopping when they were suddenly accosted by three men who quickly bound and gagged them. Hitomi was put into a large black bag, thrown over one of her attacker's shoulders, and carried to a boat waiting on the nearby Kokufu River. After traveling for over an hour, Hitomi Soga was transferred to a larger boat, where she was taken below, to the hold of the ship. The boat steamed for a full day before she was allowed on deck for a short time. Her mother was nowhere to be seen, and there was nothing but open sea as far as her eyes could see.⁴⁰

A few days later, on August 15, 1978, a 28-year old man and his 21-year old fiancée escaped an attempted abduction near Takaoka City, Japan.⁴¹ After an afternoon swimming in the ocean, they returned to their car around 6:30 P.M., and noticed six suspicious men standing nearby.⁴² The six men grabbed the couple and bound the woman, tying her arms and legs together and gagging her with a towel. Her fiancée resisted, but was subdued and handcuffed. His legs were tied and his mouth gagged before he was forced into a body bag. The kidnappers placed the two Japanese captives under some nearby trees, covering them loosely with leaves and branches. A dog barked in the distance, which seemed to distract the kidnappers. The woman, realizing that other people were nearby, untied her legs and escaped to a nearby house. The owner of the house, a former policeman, helped her untie her arms and asked her to call out to her fiancé. They heard him call back from far

³⁸ Hasuike, Kaoru. *Hantou he Futatabi*. (Shincho Sha, 2009), 54.

³⁹ *The Abduction of Japanese Citizens by North Korea: Cases of Abduction Recognised [sic] by the Government of Japan*. Government of Japan, Headquarters for the Abduction Issue. June 2007.

⁴⁰ Jenkins, *To Tell the Truth* (Japanese Version), (Kadokawa Shoten: 2005), 110.

⁴¹ Araki Kazuhiro (COMJAN Chairman), "Takaoka Rachi Misui Jiken," <http://araki.way-nifty.com/ara-ki/2009/07/post-c5ba.html> (July 21, 2009).

⁴² *Ibid.* Police reports at the time stated that the two mentioned they saw four people, but later during an interview with a magazine reporter, they said they saw six people.

away. The fiancé also had managed to escape; with the bag still tied around his head, he was able to get up and run to another house 200 meters away from where his fiancée had taken refuge.

Local police later retrieved the items that were used in this abduction attempt, including a handmade rubber gag, with holes so that the victim could breathe while gagged and rubber ear covers so they could not hear; a set of old metal hand cuffs; green nylon bags; rope; and towels.⁴³ The assailants were never captured, but the physical evidence and its similarity to the Hasuike-Okudo abduction were strong indicators (in retrospect) that North Korea was behind the attempt. At the time, the attempted abduction raised suspicions that Japan's mysterious disappearances were connected "to foreign intelligence operations."⁴⁴

In the same year (1978) but almost four hundred miles away, sixteen-year-old Kim Young-nam was playing on the beach in Gunsan, South Korea, when he was abducted by North Korean operatives. In 1997, a former North Korean spy named Kim Gwang-hyeon admitted that he participated in the abduction.⁴⁵

Tadaaki Hara was 43 years old when he was abducted in June 1980 from Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan. North Korean operative Sin Kwang-Su later confessed to Japanese authorities that he abducted Hara. According to North Korea, Hara married Yaeko Taguchi in 1984, and died from hepatic cirrhosis in 1986.⁴⁶

Some Abductees Were Lured to North Korea with Fraudulent Promises of Business and Education Opportunities

Abductions have occurred not only by brute force, but have sometimes been executed with exceptional guile and cunning. Many times it is under the false pretense of lucrative business opportunities.

In July of 1978, North Korean operatives posing as Japanese businessmen took four Lebanese women from Beirut. Pretending they were on an official business trip to recruit new workers for the Hitachi Corporation, the men held fake business



Miyoshi Soga and her daughter Hitomi

⁴³ Following normal procedures for handling of evidence, after the proscribed period of seven years, the local prosecutor's office disposed of these pieces of evidence. Lack of such important evidence has since hindered attempts to further study the abductions.

⁴⁴ Abe, Masami, "Abekku Sankumi Nazo no Jyohatsu." Sankei Newspaper (Morning Edition: Front Page), January 7, 1980.

⁴⁵ Lewis, Leo. "Boy Kidnapped by Regime 28 Years Ago Meets His Mother." The Times UK. 29 June 2006.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Romanian artist Doina Bumbea (in photo on desk) was abducted in 1978 from Italy.



interviews to select their targets. The women received phony offers of employment—they were told they would work in Tokyo or Hong Kong, would receive a monthly wage of \$1,500 plus a signing bonus of \$3,000 dollars, and were given airline tickets. After a number of connections in their flights, they arrived in Pyongyang. They had been abducted by North Korean operatives.⁴⁷ They eventually escaped North Korea and provided information regarding other abductees they saw there.

Also in 1978, a Romanian artist living in Italy named Doina Bumbea was lured into going to an art exhibition in Hong Kong. She was instead flown directly to North Korea.⁴⁸ She is reported to have died in North Korea twenty-one years later.

Chantal Sobkowicz, a French national of Polish heritage, was invited by the North Korean regime to translate a book titled "La Verité du Ministre" ("The Truth of the Minister") in 1991. When her official duties were complete, she was informed she was not allowed to leave. She was later deported when it was discovered that she was a Christian missionary proselytizing in North Korea.⁴⁹

A former North Korean operative revealed that during the 1980s and 1990s, North Korean operatives brought ROK exchange students studying in Europe to North Korea by recruiting them with academic opportunities. Identifying himself only as "Kim," this former operative worked in Copenhagen where he recruited ROK students to "use them as spies and ultimately overthrow the South Korean government from within South Korea."⁵⁰ The operative took credit for having

⁴⁷ "Kouan ni yoru Chousa no naka de Kitachousen kara no Kikansha Futari wa Supai Katsudou no Kunren wo Uketa" El-Nahar (Lebanese Newspaper, in Japanese translation). November 9, 1979.

⁴⁸ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth*, (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 97.

⁴⁹ "Bukhanseo Chubangdoen Seongyosa Hangeuiseohan Bonae." Yonhap News. 24 April 1992.

⁵⁰ NHK news agency, Yodo-go to Rachi, (NHK Shuppan, 2004), 205, 303.

persuaded four South Korean students to go to North Korea.⁵¹ He told how the four South Korean students were flown from Copenhagen's Kastrup Airport. This location allowed Kim and his colleagues easily to meet the students, give them North Korean passports, and fly them to Moscow, East Berlin, or Beijing. Once the students arrived at these locations, they were transferred to flights to North Korea. The former North Korean operative observed, "if the recruit was brought here to Kastrup Airport, that would mean the abduction was already 98 percent successful."⁵²

Keiko Arimoto, twenty-three years old at the time of her abduction in 1983, was one of those flown to North Korea from this airport under the guidance of a prominent North Korean operative known to be Kim Yu-chol.⁵³

In 1982, Guinean student Aliou Niane was sent by his government to go to North Korea to study agricultural technology at Wonsan Agricultural University. This was part of an educational exchange agreement reached between Kim Il-Sung and Guinean President Ahmed Sekou Toure. North Korea did not allow Aliou Niane to leave for five years.⁵⁴

Many North Korean efforts to recruit or capture foreign citizens took place in the former Yugoslavia. North Korea was allowed to open a consulate in Zagreb because of Kim Il-sung's close relationship with former Yugoslav President Josip Broz "Tito." The Zagreb consulate functioned as a base for North Korean spies like Kim Yu-Chol, who worked for the KWP External Coordination Department, also called "the Overseas Liaison Department." Jordan Denich, a Yugoslavian diplomat stationed at the Embassy in Pyongyang during the 1970s, explained:

"The DPRK was undertaking many activities in order to recruit foreign citizens, primarily prominent South Koreans residing in Western Europe. At that time, Yugoslavia was also open to the West. North Korea used Yugoslavia as a stepping-stone for the recruitment of South Koreans. However, the capital, Belgrade, was heavily guarded and it was difficult for foreign diplomats to function due to Yugoslavian surveillance. North Korea circumvented this surveillance with the Consulate in Zagreb, a location that was not as closely watched and which was even closer to destinations of interest, such as Austria and Italy."⁵⁵

⁵¹ Ibid. 303

⁵² Ibid. 306.

⁵³ Ibid. 306-307

⁵⁴ Kiely, Jodi. "Memories of an African Student Forced to Study in North Korea during the 1980s." *One Free Korea*. 28 May 2009.

⁵⁵ NHK. *Yodo-go to Rachi* (NHK Shuppan, 2004). 295-296.



Keiko Arimoto (above) and her distraught parents

This allowed North Korea to bring South Korean and other foreign nationals into Yugoslavia without undergoing intense immigration scrutiny.⁵⁶ As mentioned above, one of the most stunning examples of a failed North Korean abduction attempt occurred in Zagreb on July 30, 1977.

North Korean Operatives Abducted A Movie Star and Her Director Husband

On January 11, 1978, South Korean actress Choi Eun-hee went to Hong Kong at the invitation of Wang Dong-il, an executive of Kum Chung Productions, a Chinese movie studio. The two had met the previous year in Seoul, and Wang had proposed establishing a relationship between their studios' acting schools. After three days of meetings, shopping, and sightseeing as a guest of the studio, Choi was introduced to a man named Lee Young-seng and a woman named Lee Sang-hee. Ms. Lee met Choi for lunch on January 12 and said she would like to introduce her to another friend afterwards. Choi agreed, and they drove to Repulse Bay where there was a small white boat waiting on the beach. Lee spoke briefly with the men in the boat, then turned to Choi and explained that the boat had been sent by her friend to take them to his villa on the other side of the bay. Suddenly, the men leapt from the boat and grabbed Choi, forcing her on board. She struggled, but was easily overpowered. The boat pushed off, and headed for open sea. When she frantically asked, "Where is this boat going?" she was told, "Madame Choi, we are now going to the bosom of General Kim Il-sung."⁵⁷

ACTRESS CHOI EUN HEE WAS ABDUCTED BY KIM JONG-IL HIMSELF WHO MET HER ON ARRIVAL IN NORTH KOREA, JANUARY 22, 1978

"I arrived in North Korea around 3 p.m. on January 22, 1978. I shall never forget the day. As I followed my captors I heard people whispering, "Someone important is coming." I didn't care who was coming. It was none of my concern. I had been torn away from my family and friends and brought to North Korea and would probably never leave. Why should I care who was coming?"

I walked with my head bowed. Someone was strutting toward me. I heard a man's burly voice.

"Thank you for coming, Madame Choi. I am Kim Jong-il." I knew the name. The South Korean press had been reporting for several years that the son of the North Korean dictator Kim Il Sung was named Kim Jong-il and that he was being groomed to be his father's successor. He was called the "dear leader" and was one of the most powerful men in that communist society, but he was a shadowy enigma to the rest of the world because, strangely enough, even though he was being groomed as the

⁵⁶ Ibid. 280-293.

⁵⁷ Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli* (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-Il), Vol I. p 24.

successor, his name had never appeared in the North Korean media. It was North Korea's way of keeping the father-son succession away from the prying eyes of the outside world.

He thrust out his hand. I didn't want to shake hands with the man who had engineered my kidnapping, but I had no choice. With my head lowered, I extended my hand. At that moment, cameras everywhere began to snap photos. I was dressed in a jacket and bell-bottomed slacks and my hair was a mess. I screamed hysterically for them not to take my picture. I didn't want any record of that moment."

SOURCE: Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-Il)*, Vol I. p 28.

Choi Eun-hee's ex-husband, a famous movie director, Shin Sang-ok, traveled to Hong Kong when Choi did not return to Seoul on time and could not be reached. He was met by two of his associates, Kim Kyu-hwa and Lee Young-seng, who told him that Choi had been missing for over ten days, and that while in Hong Kong she

had met with Mr. Wang Dong-il and Ms. Lee Sang-hee.

Shin immediately suspected that North Korea was involved, knowing that Lee Sang-hee had a child with a businessman who frequently traveled to Pyongyang. He also knew she had frequently visited the Shin Films office in Hong Kong, and recalled a particular time when Lee had taken several pictures of him as "souvenirs."⁵⁸ Shin told Kim and Lee of his suspicions, and asked them to notify him if anything turned up.⁵⁹

To avoid censorship in the South Korean film industry, Shin used Hong Kong as a base, traveling from there to several countries to promote his films outside of Korea, all the while continuing to search for clues regarding his ex-wife's disappearance. Kim Kyu-hwa, who had arranged for Choi to come to Hong Kong, provided the most important clue: he confessed to Shin that he had been paid by Lee Sang-hee and Wang Dong-il to abduct her.

In July of 1978, Shin needed to renew his passport, but Lee Young-seng suggested he could avoid returning to Seoul to get one. He suggested that Shin could buy a passport from a Central American country for \$10,000. Shin agreed, and that night the two of them drove to Repulse Bay to complete the deal. After they waited at the assigned time and place, Lee phoned his contact, and a white Mercedes came and picked them up. When they got in, Shin asked where they were going, and Lee did not reply. They came to a point where four men were blocking the road, opened

⁵⁸ Ibid., p 156.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p 53-54.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p 47-49.

the door, pulled Shin out, and put a knife to his throat. They put a nylon bag over his entire body, and carried Shin toward the ocean.⁹

Shin believed they were going to murder him, until he overheard the word "comrade" in a thick North Korean accent. His abductors loaded him onto a motorboat and sped off. In the morning, they transferred him to a freighter, the *Sugun-ho*. Although he did not know it, the same vessel had transported Choi to North Korea. Crewmembers revealed to Shin that Lee Young-seng was not Chinese, and was in fact one of their operatives, and showed him pictures of Shin that Lee himself had taken. When Shin asked if Choi Eun-hee was alright, they made up a story that South Korean intelligence had kidnapped her and killed her for cooperating with North Korea's Fatherland Reunification Front.⁶¹

After 3 days of travel, Shin was transported to a black speedboat which traveled all night and finally delivered him to one last vessel. On July 22, 1978, Shin arrived at the harbor in Nampo. Two men dressed in Mao-style tunics greeted him on shore, with one reaching out his hand saying, "Welcome to the Socialist Fatherland."⁶²

WHEN DIRECTOR SHIN SANG-OK ARRIVED IN NORTH KOREA, THE REGIME HAD ALREADY PREPARED CUSTOM-MADE CLOTHES FOR HIM

Shin recalled this conversation with the North Korean "handler" who welcomed him:

"See, everything has been prepared so that you can live without any inconvenience."

There were socks, underwear, shirts, cufflinks, a German-made manicure set...

"I don't know about the rest of it, but I'll bet the shirts don't fit," I said. "I wear a size 16 ½ collar, which is bigger than average, and the arm length is 32 inches, which is shorter than the average ready-made size.

"Try them on."

He seemed strangely confident.

"Try them on now," he said.

"I'll try them on later," I said.

"No, please try them on now," he insisted.

I gave into his persistence and took off my clothes and tried on the shirt. I was amazed.

The shirt fit as if it had been custom made for me.

"How did you know my neck size and arm length?" I asked.

"Ha ha...with such an important guest, do you think we would not know such a thing?"

SOURCE: Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-Il)*, Vol I. p 165.

⁶¹ Ibid., p 47-50.

⁶² Ibid., p 162-163.

Four men were blocking the road, opened the door, pulled Shin out, and put a knife to his throat.

North Korean Operatives Have Entered China To Abduct People Who Help North Korean Refugees

On July 7, 1995, a South Korean pastor, Rev. Ahn Seung-woon, had just left a Christian worship service in southern China when he was approached by two North Korean operatives who forced him into a waiting taxi. He was seen on North Korean propaganda television two weeks later, but Ahn's family has not heard of from him since his abduction.⁶³

Another courageous South Korean pastor, Kim Dong-shik, was abducted from Yanji, China, on January 16, 2000. Pastor Kim had lived in Illinois, where he was pastor of the Chicago Evangelical Holiness Church for 36 years; he and his wife held permanent residence status in the United States; one of his children is a US citizen. In the year 2000, he was working in the Chinese border area, helping North Korean refugees find their way to freedom.⁶⁴ He was approached by North Korean agents who told Kim they would guide him to a North Korean refugee family. After talking with them over lunch, Kim agreed to follow them. His family never heard from him again.⁶⁵

Testimony recorded during the 2005 trial in Seoul of an ethnic-Korean Chinese national named Liu Yong Hua and the trial of another agent in 2006, provides chilling information regarding this recent abduction by North Korea's State Security Department. North Korean operatives who worked in the Hamgyeongbuk-do Hoeryong City Security Department, including Yi Yeong-su and his boss, an SSD official named Yoon Chang-ju, orchestrated Pastor Kim's abduction in China with the help of Korean-Chinese agents, including Liu Yong Hua. Liu ran a small trading business in China. SSD operative Yi Yeong-su approached him and asked for assistance in identifying refugees who escaped from North Korea to China, offering protection for the business in exchange. Liu assisted North Korean operatives with at least 8 abductions, in which he located and kidnapped victims in the People's Republic of China and turned them over to North Korea.⁶⁶

Reverend Kim Dong-shik had helped at least eleven North Korean refugees escape through China to Mongolia and was reportedly marked by the North Korean regime as a "target for elimination."⁶⁷ Liu arranged for Pastor Kim's abduction and turned him over to Yi Yeong-su and his men.

The abduction, according to testimony presented in the court case, was accomplished in the following way: "They placed Reverend Kim in handcuffs and

⁶³ <http://www.durihana.tv/news/MakingADifferenceinNorthKorea.htm>

⁶⁴ Kessler, Glenn. "N. Korea's Abduction of U.S. Permanent Resident Fades from Official View." *The Washington Post*. 19 June 2008.

⁶⁵ <http://www.durihana.tv/news/MakingADifferenceinNorthKorea.htm>

⁶⁶ South Korean court records from The Seoul Joong Ang Ji Bang Court, Criminal Part 23, were summarized and translated for this study to confirm the summary that originally appeared in Christian Solidarity Worldwide, *North Korea: A Case to Answer, A Call to Act*, (New Malden, United Kingdom, 2007), p. 57.

⁶⁷ <http://yb.gnk.cc/date01/2005.html>

went over his belongings one more time. In the meantime, the Defendant and Choi Yong-chul waited in Choi's vehicle. Kim Song-san and Nam Soo each held one of the arms of Reverend Kim and crossed the Yalu river, which took about ten minutes. Across the border in North Korea at Hoeryong City in Hamgyeongbuk-do they transferred the reverend to Director Ji Young-soo and Kim Sung-kook. They then returned to China and took Choi's vehicle to return home."⁶⁸

Liu and an SSD operative named Kim Song-San fled China to Kim Song-San's house in North Korea because his family claimed that Chinese authorities were looking for them. The two hid out there for four months until Liu's wife, who was then in South Korea, recommended that he would be safer if he fled to South Korea. It was possible China or North Korea might have killed him just to dispose of the case, so he fled to South Korea in 2004 where he was arrested and tried for the abduction. Kim Song-san was arrested a year later trying to enter South Korea with a fake passport. Both men told the court that 4-5 North Korean SSD operatives and 4 ethnic Korean Chinese had collaborated in the abduction of Rev, Kim Dong-shik under guidance from North Korea's State Security Department.⁶⁹

In an effort to target the underground refugee network, North Korea has abducted over two hundred citizens of the People's Republic of China (PRC) since the early 1990s. As the *Chosun Ilbo* has reported, North Korean agents operate close to the border within Chinese territory, searching for secret safe houses that are used by North Korean refugees, NGOs, religious humanitarian groups, and local ethnic Korean-Chinese citizens.⁷⁰ These ethnic Koreans are targeted by North Korean agents and border guards as part of a campaign to stop those fleeing North Korea. By abducting the ethnic Koreans living in China within the border area, North Korea is warning others not to help any refugees. Ethnic Koreans, though they possess Chinese citizenship, could be jailed for supporting refugees. The PRC government has never filed any official complaints against North Korea, as it is said to view the abductions as a problem between Koreans rather than a national or humanitarian problem. By refusing to react even to abduction of its own citizens, the People's Republic of China is giving tacit support to North Korea's abduction policy.

In an effort to target the underground refugee network, North Korea has abducted over two hundred citizens of the People's Republic of China (PRC)...

⁶⁸ The Seoul Joong Ang Ji Bang Court, Criminal Part 23.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁷⁰ "N. Korea Kidnapped Chinese in Refugee Crackdown: Report," AFP. November, 17, 2009.

Other Abductees, Some of Whom May Still Be Alive in North Korea, Have Been Identified, But Very Little is Known About Them

Little is known about Kenzo Kozumi's abduction in 1961, and even less about the rest of his life in North Korea. However, the Japanese National Police Agency have issued an arrest warrant for a North Korean operative named Choe Sung Chol who assumed Mr. Kozumi's identity in Japan. Pretending to be Kozumi, Operative Choe conducted espionage operations for many years, including abducting Kaoru Hasuike and Yukiko Okudo on July 31, 1978.⁷¹

Ms. Hong Leng-ieng was abducted from Macau on July 2, 1978, along with another native of Macau named Ms. So Mio-chun. Their abduction to North Korea was noted in the independent accounts of Choi Eun-hee, Kim Hyon-hui, and Charles Robert Jenkins, all of whom knew Ms. Hong in North Korea.

Hong told Choi that soon after being sent to Pyongyang, she and Ms. So visited the Indonesian Embassy there to plead for asylum. After deliberating for some time, Indonesian officials brought out a magazine containing a picture of Choi and asked if they had seen her. Their interest in Ms. Choi can only be explained by her fame; she was not an Indonesian citizen. After replying that they hadn't seen the famous actress, the embassy officials turned the two women away, saying they could be of no further assistance since the women did not hold Indonesian citizenship. When they were told to leave the embassy, Ms. So resisted strongly. The two women were then separated and never saw each other again.⁷²

Ms. So Mio-chun was never heard from again. Ms. Hong's present status and whereabouts are also unknown. It is possible that they could still be living in North Korea. Hong was only 20 years old at the time of her abduction in 1978.

A Thai national, Ms. Anocha Panjoy, was also abducted in Macau, and transported to North Korea in the same boat with Hong and So. Ms. Panjoy was reported missing on July 2, 1978, although she was probably abducted earlier. When she left her Macau apartment on May 21, 1978, she told friends that she was on her way to the beauty salon. Until Charles Jenkins told her story 27 years later, no one had any idea what had become of her.⁷³

In North Korea, Ms. Panjoy lived near Jenkins for nine years (1980-1989). Jenkins recalled that she had been forced to marry U.S. military deserter Larry Abshier. She was with Abshier when he died of a heart attack on July 11, 1983. Because they had no children, she stayed with the Americans until April 1989, when a member of the KWP told Panjoy they had found another husband for her. She was

⁷¹ Kozumi is not yet listed by the Government as a victim of abduction by the DPRK, but the two major Japanese NGOs list him as a victim based on the information they have gathered on their own. See also 1978 Abductions: Police Get Warrants for Pyongyang Agents. The Japan Times Online. 24 February 2006.; Niigata Prefectural Police Department Document: http://www.police.pref.niigata.jp/onegai/ratiryugi/e_page02.html

⁷² Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-Il)*, Vol I., p. 306-307.

⁷³ Information obtained from the Association for the Rescue of North Korean Abductees (ARNKA), Chiang-mai, Thailand.

moved to be with a German national involved in trading, and she has never been seen outside of North Korea since then.⁷⁴

In June 1979, a South Korean teacher named Ko Sang-moon was abducted while in Europe. Some sources indicate that he disappeared in Norway;⁷⁵ others, perhaps because of problems of translation, say the Netherlands.⁷⁶ North Korea later claimed he defected to North Korea of his own volition after he entered the North Korean Embassy in Oslo, Norway; South Koreans suggested that Ko's taxi driver might have mistakenly delivered him to the wrong Korean Embassy.⁷⁷

In 2005, Jenkins reported that between the years of 1980 and 1981 he saw a foreigner operating a ride at an amusement park in Pyongyang.

Five women were abducted from Singapore in 1978. They were: Yeng Yoke-Fun, Yap Me Leng, Seetoh Taih Thim, Margaret Ong Gat Choo, Diana Ng Kum Yim.⁷⁸

In August 1987, Lee Chae-hwan, a South Korean studying at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was abducted while visiting Austria.⁷⁹ His father had sent him to Europe for the summer hoping he could "absorb a little of European culture."⁸⁰

The Lebanese women referred to earlier in this chapter were sent to an espionage training facility where they saw a number of foreigners whose presence in North Korea is noted only because they gave this eyewitness account:

"Once our passports were confiscated, we were sent to an institution where we were trained in spy activities including judo, taekwondo, karate, eavesdropping as well as being given indoctrination lectures to believe the teachings of Kim Il-Sung. There were 28 young ladies in the institute including 3 French, 3 Italian, 2 Dutch ladies among other Western-European and Middle-Eastern ladies. They were equally powerless in rebelling against their captors."¹⁰

The rest of the story of these unfortunate foreigners whose names are not known, but who were seen in North Korea, may never be known.

Countless others may be captives in North Korea, victims of a regime that keeps their existence secret. They may be unknown to anyone except their captors.

⁷⁴ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth*, (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 140-148, 155.

⁷⁵ Kyodo News Service, "Taguchi Seen Alive Last Year in Pyongyang Along with Two South Abductees," January 20, 2011.

⁷⁶ Lankov, Andrei. "Body snatching, North Korean style," Asian Times Online. February 26, 2005. <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/GB26Dg01.html>

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ "North Korea denies Jenkins' claims". News Straits Times (Malaysian Newspaper, in English translation), December 20, 2005.

⁷⁹ U.S. Congressional Research Service. *North Korean Provocative Actions, 1950-2007*. Order Code RL30004, 20 April 2007. By Hannah Fischer. Accessed: 3 January 2011.

⁸⁰ Sakie Yokota, "North Korea Kidnapped My Daughter," p.122.

⁸¹ Translation by HRNK staff of an article from the Lebanese newspaper *El Nahar*, November 9, 1979.

CHAPTER 2:

Some Foreigners Entered North Korea of Their Own Free Will But Also Found Themselves Trapped in Captivity

The Unfortunate Case of Megumi Yao Started with A Fascination for Juche

Seemingly innocent study groups in Japan and South Korea attracted some foreign citizens who were later held against their will in North Korea. Even today, curious students attend study sessions promoting the North Korean regime's ideology of *Juche* and the history of North Korea. Over twenty thousand South Koreans are believed to participate in these seemingly innocuous groups, which often camouflage their association with North Korea by claiming to promote world peace and to equalize the disparity between have and have-not nations.¹ These organizations are seldom what they seem; many are managed by North Korean operatives in an organized effort to recruit pro-North Korean supporters.

Megumi Yao, a former advocate of *Juche* ideology, wrote in her memoirs that her first exposure to North Korea was in Osaka, Japan, when she attended a North Korean film screening and a discussion following the film. Pro-Pyongyang agents contacted those who attended, visiting their homes and inviting them to future sessions. Yao grew increasingly involved and recruited other Japanese citizens to attend such events. Although she was never told the truth regarding the group's motives and the regime's backing, she accepted an offer from an operative to visit North Korea, ostensibly for three months.² Yao became a captive in the country for over seven years. While there, she was forced to marry and give birth to a child, all the while taking part in acts of espionage under orders from the Korean Workers Party.³

A Group of Japanese Terrorists, called the Yodo-go Group, Found Themselves Stuck in North Korea

The late 1960s and early 1970s were a turbulent time when Communist and socialist organizations were active among young adults and college students around the world. In 1969, a small, radical group of young Japanese split off from the Japanese Communist League to form the more violent Red Army Faction, called the "Japanese Red Army" outside Japan.⁴ The Red Army Faction was led by Shiomi Takaya, their ideological leader, and Tamiya Takamaro, who was their operational

¹ Doh, Hee-yun. (President, *Citizen's Coalition for Human Rights of Abductees and North Korean Refugees*.) Personal Interview with Yamamoto. Seoul, South Korea. 29 October 2009.

² Yao, Megumi. *Shazai shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002). p.58-59.

³ NHK, *Yodo-go to Rachi* (NHK Shuppan, 2004), 91.

⁴ The group gained international notoriety on May 30, 1972 when three of its members served as gunmen during the Lod airport massacre. Pulling submachine guns out of their baggage, they opened fire on innocent civilians. Twenty-seven people were killed and seventy-two wounded. See David A. Korn, *Assassination in Khartoum* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1993), p. 48.

commander.⁵

The Red Army Faction naturally attracted intense police attention. An investigation uncovered an elaborate plot to kidnap Japanese Prime Minister Eisaku Sato and led to the arrest of over 50 Red Army members.⁶ Shiomi and Tamiya decided they needed to flee Japan. On March 30, 1970, Tamiya led eight other Red Army Faction members in a mid-air hijacking of Japan Airlines Flight 351 carrying 129 people from Tokyo to Fukuoka.⁷ The hijackers hoped to go to Cuba, and thought they could convince North Korea to send them there.⁸

Armed with Japanese swords, steel pipes, and bombs, they were able to overtake the plane. Some passengers were freed in Fukuoka, and the rest at South Korea's Gimpo Airport. The flight finally arrived at North Korea's Mirim Airport on April 3, 1970.⁹ The name of the plane they hijacked was the "Yodo-go", and the hijackers became known as the *Yodo-go Group* in Japanese media.¹⁰ Their lives in North Korea would become intertwined with those of foreign abductees.

Some U.S. Military Defectors Went to North Korea Never Expecting to Spend Their Lives There

Private James Dresnok walked across the DMZ at noon on August 15, 1962. With a court martial pending for forging a pass, Dresnok picked up his rifle, fired back at the American side, and walked across the line.¹¹

Charles Jenkins, age 24, deserted from the U.S. Army and crossed the DMZ on January 4, 1965. He decided to desert without any knowledge of North Korea. He had grown up in a poor, rural North Carolina town and claims his objective

⁵ Steinhoff, Patricia. "Kidnapped Japanese in North Korea: The New Left Connection." *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 30.1 (2004): 123-142. *Project Muse*. Web. 16 Nov. 2010. p. 126

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Japan's National Police Agency Report. *Focus: The Growing Severity of the International Terror Situation: Movements of the Japanese Red Army and the "Yodo-go" Group*. Volume 271. Available at: <http://www.npa.go.jp/keibi/kokutero1/english/index.html>. Accessed: 20 December 2010.

⁸ Steinhoff, Patricia. "Kidnapped Japanese in North Korea: The New Left Connection." *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 30.1 (2004): 123-142. *Project Muse*. Web. 16 Nov. 2010. p.127

⁹ Japan's National Police Agency Report. *Focus: The Growing Severity of the International Terror Situation: Movements of the Japanese Red Army and the "Yodo-go" Group*. Volume 271. Available at: <http://www.npa.go.jp/keibi/kokutero1/english/index.html>. Accessed: 20 December 2010.

¹⁰ Steinhoff, Patricia. "Kidnapped Japanese in North Korea: The New Left Connection." *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 30.1 (2004): 123-142. *Project Muse*. Web. 16 Nov. 2010. p.127

¹¹ Russell, Mark. "An American in North Korea, Pledging Allegiance to the Great Leader." *New York Times*. 19 Oct 2006.

These organizations are seldom what they seem; many are managed by North Korean operatives...



Charles Jenkins and his wife Hitomi Soga

in going to North Korea was to get back home safely.¹² After surrendering to North Korean soldiers, he expected to be transferred to the Soviet Union. He had heard that the Soviets would deport foreign deserters back to their home countries. Jenkins reasoned that afterwards, a U.S. court-martial would discharge him and send him back to his hometown.

During the early morning hours of August 28, 1982, U.S. Army Private Joseph T. White walked away from his guard post and used his M16 to shoot the lock off a gate leading into the DMZ. He could be heard announcing, "I'm coming!" in heavily accented Korean as he crossed the border. White's reasons for defecting remain a mystery and very little is known of his life in North Korea. Within a year of his defection, his photograph appeared in North Korean propaganda leaflets. His parents' only letter from their son came in February 1983. He told them he was happy, harvesting crops and teaching English. There was no mention or explanation of his defection. They received one more letter on November 8, 1985. It was from a man named Li Gun-ho, who described himself as "Joe's best friend and a student of English." He wrote that White, being a "fearless adventurer," had drowned while trying to swim across the Chongchon River. The family never heard anything else, and never received their son's remains.¹³

Megumi Yao, the terrorist hijackers of the Yodo-go plane, and American military deserters might seem out of place in a study of North Korea's policy of abducting innocent victims from their homes. Yet these foreigners, whatever their objectives when they entered North Korea, also suffered from the abuse of their rights, and perhaps more importantly, they have provided valuable information on the whereabouts and treatment of other foreign victims. From the perspective of

learning about the lives of the abductees, very important information came from the partisan Megumi Yao and the American defector Charles M. Jenkins. Jenkins married a Japanese abductee and both were eventually allowed to go to Japan, where they live today. Yao has also published her story in depth and is still living in Japan. Their books have provided a treasure trove of rare information that brings light to the cases of abductions. They also emphasize the nature of a regime that harms not only innocent people but also those who wish it well. They are people who, to paraphrase John F. Kennedy¹⁴ tried to ride the back of the tiger but ended up inside. As Charles Jenkins put it after almost forty years in North Korea, he regretted knowing so little about the true brutal nature of North Korea, where "once you step in, most people never could get out."¹⁵

¹⁴ John F. Kennedy Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961: "We shall not always expect to find [formerly colonized nations] supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom -- and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside."

¹⁵ Jenkins, *To Tell the Truth* (Japanese Version), (Kadokawa Shoten: 2005), 31.

¹² Jenkins, *To Tell the Truth* (Japanese Version), (Kadokawa Shoten: 2005), 31.

¹³ Neff, Robert. "Joseph White's Walk in the Dark." *Asia Times*. 23 Feb 2007.

Chapter 3:

How Abductees Have Been Treated in North Korea

Terrorized Abductees Arrived in a Strange and Fearsome Place

In his memoir, Japanese abductee Kaoru Hasuike recalls seeing the warm, bright lights of Kashiwazaki City through his bruised eyes as he was being taken away on a North Korean spy ship. This last impression of Japan was very different from his first impression of North Korea at the cold, dark port in Chongjin where he disembarked two days later.¹ For those who found themselves in North Korea, life was never the same as it had been before. Whether they were violently captured and stolen away or lured under false pretenses, they found themselves trapped in a world where they were no longer free to make fundamental decisions over their own lives. As defector and former North Korean agent Ahn Myong-jin put it, it is very hard for someone who has never lived in North Korea to understand “how frightening it is to see someone suddenly lose everything.”² This chapter will attempt to describe the everyday lives of the abductees after they arrive in North Korea, and where those who may be still be alive might be found.

There are very few comprehensive reports on the life of abductees once they arrive in North Korea. Many never get a chance to recount how they lived—those who do may not reflect the experiences of the majority of the abductees. What we know has been gathered from the memoirs and testimonies of those who have escaped, were arrested on spy missions, or were otherwise returned to their native countries. Perhaps we might assume that those whom the regime allowed to leave would have led more comfortable lives than the others who still remain in North Korea; we simply do not know. But what we know from those who have returned is troubling enough—their testimony portrays a country where basic human rights are so completely suppressed that the situation is unimaginable to outsiders. Even among these lucky returnees, many are reluctant to speak about their experiences out of persistent fear of retaliation and persecution by the North Korean regime. Many fear for the safety of family members and friends who are left behind in North Korea.

Some of what we know comes from captured agents. Liu Yong Hua, the ethnic Korean Chinese who collaborated with North Korea’s State Security Department in the abduction of Pastor Kim Dong-shik, was able to tell a court in Seoul about Pastor Kim’s treatment in North Korea.³ He testified that Kim was

¹ Hasuike, Kaoru. *Hantou he Futatabi*. (Shincho Sha, 2009), 54.

² Ahn, Myong-jin. Interview with Yoshi Yamamoto, October 28, 2009.

³ Liu was sentenced to a prison term of ten years, in 2005, for his involvement in the abduction of Pastor Kim. Christian Solidarity Worldwide, “North Korea: A Case to Answer—A Call to Act,” p. 57. See also The Seoul Joong Ang Ji Bang Court, Criminal Part 23.

tortured until he died in February 2001 at age 54 and was buried in the District 91 military training base in Sangwon, near Pyongyang. This terrible case is significant for many reasons, and marks a new objective for North Korea’s illegal operations in a foreign country—to halt the rescue of citizens who escape from the regime, and to warn and punish those who offer humanitarian assistance to those refugees. Pastor Kim’s abduction in the year 2000 has been followed by more reports of abductions of other rescue workers and Chinese nationals who are taken from their homes in China to detention centers in North Korea.⁴

Even Though the Regime Sought them out, Korean War Abductees Faced Poverty and Captivity in North Korea

As mentioned in the first chapter, The Korean War Abductees Family Union (KWAFU) believes that more than 80,000 South Koreans were abducted during the Korean War, and among those, 20,000 were handpicked by the regime for their talents and expertise. Because they had special skills that Pyongyang needed, it could be expected that they were treated relatively well during the initial period after their arrival in the North. But soon after their arrival, the North Korean government grew suspicious and viewed them more as former enemies than assets. When these abductees did not adhere to the tenets of Communist ideology, they were put under constant surveillance and severely punished.⁵ They and their families were categorized in the lower ranks of *songbun*, North Korea’s nefarious caste system that attempts to classify people in terms of their perceived loyalty to the regime. For generations, their descendants would be denied educational and employment opportunities.⁶ Many of them were purged and disappeared into labor camps, remote mining areas, lumber camps, and political prisons. Lee Mi-il of KWAFU believes that the South Korean war abductees who managed to survive this harsh treatment were likely the first victims of the famine of the 1990s because of their lower social status.⁷

⁴ Yoo, Jee-ho. “4 South Koreans detained by North.” Joongang Daily (English). February 27, 2010. See also Agence France Press, “North Korea Kidnapped Chinese in Refugee Crackdown,” November 17, 2009.

⁵ Lee, Mi-il. “North Korea: Human Rights Update and International Abduction Issues,” (testimony given at the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., April 27, 2006).

⁶ Demick, Barbara. *Nothing to Envy* (Spiegel & Grau, New York, 2009), Pp. 26-28. The system of *songbun* is the topic of a forthcoming report from the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea.

⁷ Lee Mi-il, “North Korea: Human Rights Update and International Abduction Issues,” (testimony given at the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., April 27, 2006), p. 53.

Korean-Japanese Returnees Were Treated Worse Than They Could Ever Have Imagined

Ethnic Koreans who lived in Japan were encouraged to return to what they believed was “the workers’ Paradise” in the 1950s and 1960s. When their ships entered North Korea, the returnees were directed to a *guest house*, where the authorities decided where each family would reside. Here the new arrivals were often met by family members and friends who had arrived before. To their surprise and apprehension, many of those who had arrived earlier explained that they had made a terrible mistake. They pitied the new arrivals for choosing to return, and cautioned them how to handle their new, difficult lives in North Korea. They were advised to use bribes when necessary, especially to the officials in charge of living arrangements.⁸

They were also advised that they would have no future if they ended up in areas where they would be assigned to mines and farms. Life in Pyongyang was said to be better than in other cities, but when the returnees specifically requested Pyongyang, the authorities said “under President Kim Il-sung’s leadership, everywhere in the nation is equal.” They knew they had no choice but to accept their assignment to any location. Only a few returnees were selected to live in Pyongyang city.⁹ The majority of the returnees were sent to distant mines, fields, mountains, and farms.¹⁰

Those who were in senior positions in the *Chongryon* or who had highly advanced skills were treated with certain consideration; the rest of the recent arrivals, however, were asked to submit resumes, none of which were taken very seriously by the authorities.¹¹

For example, Chung Ki-hae tells how his family was assigned to live in Chongju (or Jongju), a county, an area with a population of 100,000, about 20,000 of whom lived in Chongju City. Residents in the area were thin and wore shabby clothes, much worse than what Chung and his family saw people wearing when they traveled through Pyongyang, Chongjin, and Hamhung by train. He noted that

Ethnic Koreans who lived in Japan were encouraged to return to what they believed was “the workers’ Paradise” in the 1950s and 1960s.

⁸ The account of Chung Ki-hae is taken from the author’s translations of Chung Ki-hae, *Kikokusen* (Bungei Shunju, 1995).

⁹ One famous one was the grandfather of Kang Chol-hwan whose entire family ended up prison camps. Kang’s account is published in the book that was made famous when President George W. Bush read it and invited Kang to the White House on June 13, 2005. Kang Chol Hwan and Pierre Rigoulot, *The Aquariums of Pyongyang* (Basic Books, New York, 2001).

¹⁰ Chung Ki-hae, *Kikokusen* (Bungei Shunju, 1995), 67.

¹¹ Ibid.

about 70 percent of the population were farmers and the rest were laborers. The area had one store, one cafeteria, and one post office. Residents used “*Ryangkwon*,” or coupons, for buying necessities at these facilities. About 20 Korean families from Japan moved into this area during the years of the *Returnee Project*.¹²

They soon learned that they would be under strict surveillance. KWP secretaries and the manager of their factory visited the new arrivals every day. The internal security police warned Chung and his family not to become friends with certain locals and recent arrivals. The internal security personnel urged residents to inform on one another in order to weed out those who were rebellious or critical of authority.¹³

The returnees quickly learned to be circumspect about what they said. For example, Party members brought tomatoes to them and asked whether Chung and his family had ever eaten them before. Chung’s family had of course eaten tomatoes in Japan, but stayed quiet and placated the KWP representatives by showing false gratitude.¹⁴

Fear became a constant feature of their lives. Chung’s memoirs tell of numerous times when local authorities forced workers and farmers to watch their compatriots’ public trials and executions.¹⁵

In 1965, Chung was arrested for “spying.” He was reported to have said, when talking with five of his returnee friends, that life was so stressful that he wished to go back to Japan. Though he had mentioned it in passing, one of his friends later reported this comment. Five of the six returnees who were talking that day, including Chung, were arrested by the Ministry of Public Security (MSP) and sent to a prison cell at the far North of Hyesan City. For four months, Chung was interrogated and suffered from malnourishment and exposure. He was forced to testify that he was a spy.

This experience haunted Chung for the rest of his time in North Korea because his neighbors and fellow factory workers saw him differently than they did before his arrest. Being friends with Chung would mean nothing but trouble for others. In 1981, 16 years after he was released from prison, Chung was targeted by MPS personnel who had come to the factory to find spies. Chung was criticized in front of all the workers regarding his arrest on suspicion of spying. Chung tried to explain how he was proven innocent and released, but it was of no use.¹⁶

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid. 218-220.

Forced Abductees Faced Debilitating Moral Dilemmas and Suffered from Profound Depression

Very little is known about the cases the world would most like to hear the North Korean regime explain. The compelling story of Megumi Yokota is arguably the most infamous example of a forced abduction, largely because of Megumi's young age at the time (thirteen) and the devoted activism of her parents, Sakie and Shigeru Yokota. Unfortunately, little is known about her life in North Korea except small glimpses, many of them second-hand, gleaned from former North Korean agents like Kim Hyon-hui. Kim, a former terrorist agent for North Korea, revealed Yokota had been a language instructor in Pyongyang.¹⁷

Another North Korean agent who defected recalled the young Megumi as very smart. He said that she had begged to be returned to Japan, and was told that if she studied the Korean language hard, she would be returned. Believing this, she studied hard and for 5 years, repeatedly asked for permission to leave but was always denied. The agent opined that this cycle of promises, betrayal, and disappointment led her to become mentally ill and she was sent to a mental hospital generally reserved for agents. The former North Korean spy said he had met her at the hospital where she told him her story.¹⁸

Through reverse DNA testing in 2002, it was discovered that Megumi Yokota had married a South Korean abductee, Kim Young-nam, and, subsequently, that they had a daughter named Hye-gyong. According to the testimony of abductee Kaoru Hasuike, Yokota and Kim separated in the spring of 1993.¹⁹

Although North Korea claimed in 2002 that Megumi Yokota died in March of 1993, another Japanese abductee, Fukie Chimura, said she had lived next door to Yokota for several months, starting in June of 1994. Chimura testified that Yokota "was suffering severe depression and was mentally unstable."²⁰ Another abductee, Hasuike, claimed that he helped arrange for Yokota to enter a psychiatric hospital in March of 1994.²¹ Therefore, some details of Megumi Yokota's life in North Korea have been corroborated but whether she remains alive is still unknown.

¹⁷ Kim, Hyon-hui. *Wasurerarenai Hito* (Bungei Shunju, 1997), *passim*. Kim Hyon Hui's book explained that another Japanese abductee, Yaeko Taguchi, taught her Japanese, but in a press conference she later revealed Megumi Yokota and other abductees had also been involved in language training.

¹⁸ Ishidaka, Koredemo Shira wo Kirunoka Kitachosen, pp.18, 19.

¹⁹ Megumi Seen Alive 2 Months after Pyongyang Said She Had Died." Mainichi Daily News (English). May 26, 2008.

²⁰ "Megumi Yokota 'Seen Alive' In 1994," The Chosun Ilbo (English). May 27, 2008.

²¹ "Megumi Seen Alive 2 Months after Pyongyang Said She Had Died." Mainichi Daily News (English). May 26, 2008.

Even the Most Privileged Abductees, Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, Sought to Escape North Korea

Choi Eun-hee, the famous South Korean actress, and film director Shin Sang-ok, her ex-husband, were both abducted in 1978, at separate times. Kim Jong-il's direct involvement in the abduction is well-established. He personally welcomed Choi when she arrived in North Korea and took her on a tour of Pyongyang.²²

*For five years,
Choi and Shin
were held captive in
North Korea, each
without knowing
the fate of the other,
until Kim Jong-il
himself revealed this
to them.*

In keeping with the artifice that she was an honored guest of Kim Jong-il, the actress was given a home in one of Kim Jong-il's villas, where she noticed that all of the lavish furnishings had been imported.²³

Choi discovered that at night she could receive a strong radio signal from Seoul, and she listened to it whenever she could. A few months after her arrival in North Korea, she heard a news report about her own abduction and learned that South Korea had demanded North Korea return her. She hoped she might be returned, but after Kim Jong-il sent 50 bolts of fabric to her for clothing, she realized that Kim intended to keep her in North Korea for the rest of her life.²⁴

Upon his arrival in North Korea, Shin Sang-ok received similar treatment to his ex-wife, but attempted to escape and was sent to a labor camp. There was nothing to eat but bark, salt, and grass. He also tried to starve himself, but was force-fed. During his time at the labor camp, he wrote letters to Kim Jong-il and Kim Il-sung, begging them to release him. Kim Jong-il eventually did.²⁵

For five years, Choi and Shin were held captive in North Korea, each without knowing the fate of the other, until Kim Jong-il himself revealed this to them. The two were reunited at one of Kim Jong-il's grand parties, where Kim declared that Choi and Shin would re-marry and resume their film careers together.

Fishermen Were Indoctrinated and Often Trained to Serve as Spies Against Their Homeland

When abducted South Korean fishermen arrived in North Korea, they were usually taken by State Security Department (SSD) officers to a *guest house* referred

²² Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-il)*, Vol I. p. 28-30.

²³ Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-il)*, Vol I. p 30.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 41-45.

²⁵ "Shin Sang-ok," The Economist, Obituary Section. April 27, 2006.



to (in Korean) as a “hotel,” where they lived together and were indoctrinated in the teachings of Kim Il-sung. Here, SSD officers explained to the fishermen that they had been captured for the crime of espionage. They were interrogated every day for hours as the SSD tried to force confessions from them.²⁶

Conditions for Korean abductees were different from those of non-Koreans. Since they spoke the same language and are considered to be of the “same race” by DPRK leadership, they were allowed to live among the general public after going through intense education and training. Ethnic Korean victims are often able to marry local women, move to different areas, become full-fledged DPRK citizens, and in some cases even become Workers Party members. Yet this difference in privileges did not always mean that ethnic Koreans lived a better life than the non-Korean abductees. They may actually have faced harsher conditions because they were treated like average North Korean citizens. And like other abductees, they were constantly watched by the State Security Department (SSD), the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), and the Korean Workers Party (KWP).²⁷

²⁶ The account of Lee Jhe-gun is taken from the author’s translation of his memoir, *Kitachousen ni Rachi sareta Otoko* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2002).

²⁷ Ibid.

Ideological Supporters like Miss Yao and the Yodo-go Hijackers Were Treated Very Well

Ideological friends of North Korea were naturally treated with a certain deference. Upon their arrival in North Korea, the *Yodo-go Group* hijackers were given a hero’s welcome. The hijackers were given homes in a place called “Revolution Town.” “Revolution Town” was situated on a huge plot of land in Pyongyang, and included an office building, cafeteria, schools, homes, tennis courts, a soccer field, a shooting range, and conference facilities.²⁸

For the first few days after Megumi Yao (the student advocate of *Juche*, not to be confused with the violently abducted Megumi Yokota) arrived in Pyongyang in February of 1977, she lived in a luxurious *guest house*, equipped with movie theaters, multiple bedrooms, and a private chef. All of these luxuries seemed fabulous to the 22-year-old.²⁹

Kim Il-sung visited “Revolution Town” on May 14, 1977. The visit was naturally a significant event for the residents. When he arrived, Megumi Yao was given the chance to walk beside Kim Il-sung on a path through the woods, smiling and excited because she was finally able to meet the legendary leader. Yao heard Kim say, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful to have bird houses high on these trees where the birds could come?” She nodded, but did not realize how seriously the people of the DPRK took their leader’s instructions. A few days later, Yao noticed that bird houses had been placed high in the trees throughout the neighborhood. She was impressed by how seriously everyone took his every wish.³⁰

Yao and the others were driven in a Mercedes-Benz wherever they went. They lived a rich life, where all of their food was fresh and various meats were provided and cooked by chefs. Her residence had central heating. She remembered being able to live there in the winter wearing nothing but short-sleeved garments. This treatment increased her enthusiasm to work for the revolutionary cause. The lavish accommodations were also evidence that the North Korean leadership considered its foreign ideological allies to be very important people. In addition to superior housing, the regime gave the *Yodo-go* hijackers generous monthly stipends.³¹

Jenkins...was questioned for ten to twelve days without being able to leave...

²⁸ Yao, Megumi. *Shazai shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 125-140.

²⁹ Ibid., 56.

³⁰ Yao, Megumi. *Shazai Shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 121.

³¹ Ibid., 125-134.

U.S. Military Deserters Lived Together under Constant Surveillance

After his voluntary defection to North Korea, Sergeant Charles R. Jenkins was eventually taken to Pyongyang and kept in a small house not far from Kim Il-sung University. The house was made of concrete and the floors were covered with thick paper sheets. Jenkins was placed in a room with a single light bulb, which he was not allowed to turn off, even while sleeping. He was questioned for ten to twelve days without being able to leave, except to use the restroom next door. A female cook delivered porridge to him at mealtimes. At the end of this initial period of questioning, a North Korean Colonel told him that he would live with the three other U.S. military personnel who had crossed the DMZ earlier. Jenkins had heard of Larry A. Abshier, James J. Dresnok, and Jerry W. Parrish during his military service.³²

The four were relocated frequently during their time in North Korea, but were generally kept together. Their first house was in the *Sadong* area, where they stayed for only six months. The brick house had two bedrooms. One room was occupied by a KWP official, called the *Instructor*, who watched over them and managed their lives. The four Americans lived in the other bedroom, which was about 100 square feet in size. There was another small room in the house for the cook to live in, a kitchen, and a dining room with a table and a set of chairs. The four were not allowed to eat in this dining room, which was used as a sleeping area by other government officials who would stay overnight. The toilet was outside and although there was cold running water in the house, the four often drew water from a well. The house was surrounded by a two-meter high wall to prevent outsiders from looking in. A surveillance booth was set up on top of nearby electricity poles, where a guard would continuously watch the men, making sure they did not escape. In June 1965, Parrish looked into the attic of the house they occupied in Mangyonda neighborhood in Pyongyang and discovered that hidden listening devices were connected to every room.³³

If the Americans asked for permission, they could travel to restricted areas and go shopping at elite stores in Pyongyang, accompanied by their handlers. Despite these privileges, the four had to endure countless moments of cold, hunger, and mental anguish, some of which made them think that committing suicide was the solution to their situation. Jenkins says he suffered mental anguish when he was asked to educate the North Korean military men in English or when he appeared in propaganda movies and posters that made him betray his home country.³⁴

³² Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 46.

³³ Ibid. 68.

³⁴ Ibid. 56-57.

Abductees Generally Had Similar Housing Arrangements and Daily Lives

Abductees were typically forced to live in small groups at isolated facilities called *Guest houses*. In the case of the abducted South Korean fishermen, these facilities were called “hotels.” The fisherman Lee Jhe-gun said they were housed in the “Pyongyang International Hotel.”³⁵ To monitor the abductees, the DPRK authorities sent KWP personnel, referred to as *Instructors*, to live with the victims in the same *guest house* and manage the abductees’ everyday activities. The *Instructors* rotated shifts with other *Instructors*, guaranteeing round-the-clock surveillance. Their role was to educate the abductees and watch their every move, as well as ensure that they were indoctrinated and adhered to North Korean ideology.³⁶

Most of what is known about Hong Leng-ieng, the Chinese woman abducted from Macau, is based on Choi Eun Hee’s account, which carefully reports information about where they were housed. The two met in the early summer of 1979 when they were housed in the garrison-like area called Tongbuk-ri.³⁷ Choi believed her *guest house* and the surrounding area was a training site for North Korean espionage agents and infiltrators and foreign nationals were housed in the same area. She described it as being on the side of a mountain and said it contained several guesthouses. No North Korean civilians were allowed in this compound.³⁸

Ms. Hong and a Jordanian woman lived in Building #4, while Choi lived in Building #3.³⁹ On September 20, 1979, Choi was moved and did not see Hong again until she was moved back to the garrison area on January 22, 1982. At that time, Choi was put in Building #1, near the entrance to the restricted area. Ms. Hong was still in Building #4 in 1982, and Choi noticed that Hong’s Korean language skills had improved considerably. Hong shared her Catholic faith with Choi, and they prayed together. On March 7th, one day before Choi was relocated again, they said “goodbye” to each other and Choi tried to give Hong \$200 as a gift. Hong replied “That’s all right. I receive a salary, you know. I think you need it more than I.”⁴⁰ They wept, parted, and never saw each other again.⁴¹

Choi later heard rumors that Ms. Hong had been relocated many times and eventually got a job teaching Cantonese to female North Korean espionage agents. This was corroborated by the testimony of the former North Korean espionage agent responsible for the bombing of KAL 858 in 1987, Kim Hyon-hui. She said she

³⁵ Lee, Jhe-gun. *Kitachousen ni Rachi sareta Otoko* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2002), 41.

³⁶ Ibid. 50.

³⁷ Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-il)*, Vol I. p. 304-305.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 247.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 304-308.

⁴⁰ Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-il*, Part IV. “The Prison Door Opens, (April 16, 1981-February 23, 1983), pp. 182-185.

⁴¹ Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, *Jogukeun Jeohaneul Jeommeolli (Kidnapped to the Kingdom of Kim Jong-il)*, Vol I. p. 459-462.

was one of the agents to have received Chinese language training from Ms. Hong in 1984.⁴²

Although none of the foreigners knew it, modern satellite research suggests where this complex may have been—its location would indicate that the regime found it easier to monitor all the abductees in one area of the country. It is likely that there are abductees in North Korea still alive today, and it is possible they still live in this complex.

The constant relocation of the abductees to different *guest houses* is a peculiar example of the treatment that abductees endured in North Korea. The moves kept the abductees from learning geographical knowledge of their location that could help them escape. Some victims recall returning to familiar *guest houses* multiple times.

In their memoirs, abductees note that they often had no access to the outside world and were secluded in compounds “deep in the mountains.” They were kept away from the general public and other neighborhoods. Authorities sent KWP personnel and guards to watch over them every hour of the day. Any movement outside the residence or external communication required the permission of guards.⁴³

The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, having compared the testimony from numerous sources, believes the satellite images reproduced on the next pages shows the location where some abductees lived and might still be living today. These images appear on the cover of this report.

While the abductees who have been used in training spies may be expected to be in the location shown above, there are other foreign language schools that could also be expected to have foreign captive instructors. Furthermore, if some foreign captives have become respected agents active in North Korean espionage, they could be expected to live in housing close to their offices. In 2011, for example, there was a report that Japanese abductee Yaeko Taguchi (who had taught Japanese to the terrorist Kim Hyon-hui) was seen in the company of two South Korean abductees near her apartment on Changgwang Street in Pyongyang.⁴⁴

When Megumi Yao married the hijacker Yasuhiro Shibata, their apartment in “Revolution Town” had three bedrooms, a living room, dining room, and a kitchen, each of which was about 900 square feet.⁴⁵ In her memoirs, she drew a diagram of the apartment and a map of “revolution town.” We have not yet located this site in satellite images.

⁴² “Macau Abduction Victim Taught Chinese to former North Korean terrorist Kim Hyon-Hui.” NARKN Updates. Mar 10, 2009. <http://sukukai.jp/narkn/updates.html>

⁴³ This information is corroborated by the accounts of many abductees, including Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok, Charles Jenkins, and Lee Jhe-gun.

⁴⁴ Kyodo report January 2011. North Korea claims that Yaeko Taguchi died in 1986.

⁴⁵ Yao, Megumi. *Shazai shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 125-140.

Abductees Had No Choice But to Accept Marriages Arranged by the Korean Workers Party

Forced marriages were arranged by Party officials for many of the captive foreigners. It can be said these marriages gave them a sense of purpose and permanence. At the same time, an abductee’s family ties gave the regime a source of leverage and diminished an abductee’s desire to flee North Korea, since doing so would result in retaliation against family members left behind.

In 1997, a former North Korean spy named Kim Gwang-hyeon who had abducted Kim Young-nam from South Korea reported that in North Korea, Kim Young-nam had married the famous thirteen-year old abducted from Japan, Megumi Yokota.⁴⁶

After two Lebanese abductees escaped from North Korea in 1979, Lebanon demanded the return of the other two women who still remained. However, Siham Shraiteh, who had married U.S. military deserter Jerry Parrish, chose to stay in North Korea with her husband and child.⁴⁷

Anocha Panjoy, the Thai woman abducted in Macau, had the unfortunate fate of being ordered to marry whomever the regime demanded. She was first forced to marry U.S. military deserter Larry Abshier. After his death by heart attack on July 11, 1983, she temporarily stayed with the other American families,⁴⁸ but in April 1989 a member of the KWP told Panjoy they had found another husband for her, a German national involved in trading, and she was sent to live with him.⁴⁹

Kaoru Hasuike and his girlfriend Yukiko, the Japanese couple abducted in July of 1978, were initially kept apart in North Korea and were not allowed to see each other for over two years. During those two years, when either of them asked about the other, their captors told them that the other had been sent back to Japan.⁵⁰ Eventually, the regime allowed them to reunite and

Yao points out the irony that a woman like her “who had a progressive mind and believed in woman’s liberation” ended up in a group of people “who weren’t ashamed to commit violence against their wives and yet called themselves revolutionaries.”

⁴⁶ Lewis, Leo. “Boy Kidnapped by Regime 28 Years Ago Meets His Mother.” The Times UK. 29 June 2006.

⁴⁷ “Father of missing Japanese urges tough Lebanese approach.” The Japan Times Online. June 8, 1998.

⁴⁸ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 140-143.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 155.

⁵⁰ Hasuike, Toru. *Dakkan Dai Ni Shou* (Shinchousha, 2005), p. 57.

they were married. Hasuike surmised that the reason his fiancé Yukiko was allowed to reunite with him after two long years of separation was because her captors abandoned their plans to use her as a spy.⁵¹

On May 6, 1975, Kim Il-sung ordered the *Yodo-go Group* members to advance their revolutionary activities by finding wives and having children. The KWP 56th Division, which is in charge of overseeing the *Yodo-go Group*, selected brides for the eight members to fulfill Kim's instructions.⁵² The deadline for the marriages was set for May 6, 1977, two years after Kim Il-sung's order. From May 1-5, 1977, weddings were conducted for the four remaining *Yodo-go Group* men and the candidate wives. The four wives were Yoriko Mori, Sakiko Wakabayashi, Fukui Takako,⁵³ and Megumi Yao. Yao, who was married to Yasuhiro Shibata at this time, believes that all of the Japanese wives (except for Takako, who had voluntarily come to North Korea to marry her lover Takahiro Konishi), were victims of forced marriage.⁵⁴ Although in her memoirs, Yao points out that she did not like Shibata even when she married him, but she expected her stay in North Korea to last only a few months, and thought she could annul the arrangement after that. That was not to be the case.

In her memoirs, Yao points out the irony that a woman like her "who had a progressive mind and believed in woman's liberation" ended up in a group of people "who weren't ashamed to commit violence against their wives and yet called themselves revolutionaries."⁵⁵ Yao was brutally beaten and raped by Shibata.

She complained about her marital problems to other colleagues, but they criticized her for not being supportive of her husband's revolutionary mission. They also rebuked her for complaining about her forced marriage, arguing that the only way their organization could pay back the KWP for its generosity was to follow orders unconditionally.⁵⁶

The American deserter Charles Jenkins had an arranged marriage to Japanese abductee Hitomi Soga. One day his KWP *Instructor* introduced him to Soga and told Jenkins, "while you two might not know this yet, your destiny is very similar. There is nothing promising in this country for you two, but if you decide to be together, at least you will have each other." Jenkins, who continues to enjoy his marriage with Soga in Japan today, recalls those were "words that spoke the truth."⁵⁷

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Takazawa, Koji. *Shukumei* (Shinchousha, 1997), 486-89. Of the nine members, Kintaro Yoshida had already gone missing. Others in the group said that he was later found out to be a spy. The official year of his death according to North Korea was 1985.

⁵³ Japan National Police Agency. "Suspected Abduction Case of Two Japanese Males in Europe." http://www.npa.go.jp/keibi/gaiji1/abd_e/europe_e.html

⁵⁴ Yao, Megumi. *Shazai Shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 118.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 183-202.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 207.

⁵⁷ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 118.

All Abductees Were Subjected to Interrogation, Indoctrination, and Reeducation

All abductees were initially interrogated when they arrived in North Korea. The most rigorous may have been for the American deserters.

After crossing the DMZ and defecting to North Korea, Charles Jenkins was surrounded by ten North Korean soldiers, blindfolded, searched, and placed in a small room where he was questioned. He was then driven in a Soviet-made utility vehicle to a military compound in Kaesong, where he was questioned again for over an hour. He was transferred yet again, to a government-run *guest house*, where seven to eight military men in uniform and a colonel asked more questions.

Jenkins' interrogators questioned him on basic subjects through a translator, such as why he had crossed over and whether he had come alone. But they also wanted military tactical information, such as the locations of U.S. forces, and responded brutally when they thought Jenkins was misleading them. Jenkins recalled that the Colonel asked him about the height of a mountain where U.S. troops had stationed a surveillance tower. The translator mistakenly interpreted Jenkins' answer of "several thousand feet" into "several thousand meters." When the North Korean Colonel heard that, he struck Jenkins in the face, saying there was no mountain that high in that area and that he was lying. With blood pouring from his nose, Jenkins explained to the interpreter that he was speaking in "feet" and not "meters."⁵⁸

All abductees were also forced to go through specialized education courses upon entering North Korea. The curriculum included the North Korean regime's perspective on history, culture, economics, and *Juche* ideology, focusing on the teachings of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il. The academic and ideological progress of the abductees is evaluated by KWP *Instructors*, who perform surveillance as well as indoctrination roles.

The reeducation curriculum included Korean language lessons for the abductees who had no Korean language background. *Instructors* used textbooks about *Juche* ideology or mythical war stories of Kim Il-sung's encounters with U.S. and Japanese imperialism. The *Instructors* forced the abductees to memorize and read aloud long passages without making any mistakes. Choi Eun-hee recalled reading aloud for two hours daily with her *Instructor* Kang Hae-ryong. North Korean agents who had been taught by abductees like Megumi Yokota recall that they were "pretty good speakers of Korean."⁵⁹

Study of these subjects was necessary to force the abductees to accept the supremacy of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il. The DPRK government often told the abductees that by being good students, they would someday be granted the rights of North Korean citizens and could even become KWP members. It was presumed to be a great honor, not only for abductees, but for every citizen of the DPRK to

⁵⁸ Ibid., 43.

⁵⁹ Kim, Hyon-Hui. *Wasurerarenai Hito* (Bungei Shunju, 1997), 33.

become part of the Party. Party membership granted access to elite networks and exclusive facilities. Besides opening the doors to better education and healthcare, KWP membership also increased the amount of money and rations a person received from the government every month.⁶⁰

During the first several years after the four American deserters entered North Korea, they were forced to meet frequently with *Instructors*. Even as time passed and the four deserters settled down, they still met with an *Instructor* at least once per day to talk, be criticized, and engage in discussions.

If the abductees were not considered to be good students or they took too long to acquire language skills and absorb the teachings of *Juche*, they were forced to study more or were threatened with being sent to prison camps. In Charles Jenkins' memoirs, he says that his North Korean *Instructors* considered him to be a "failure," resulting in constant criticism and physical punishment.⁶¹

Like other "privileged" abductees, the actress Choi would sometimes argue with her *Instructor* after which she was chastised and disinvited from some of Kim Jong-il's parties.⁶²

Chonghwa Sessions Force the Abductees to Admonish Themselves and Change Their Behavior

To monitor and control North Korea's citizens, the regime requires all citizens to engage in self-criticism sessions called *Chonghwa*. *Chonghwa* consists of public meetings in which citizens are called upon to admit their shortcomings in front of their peers. Citizens are divided into groups determined by status, and each citizen speaks to his peers about how he has performed since the last meeting. The gatherings are facilitated by local Party members. Weekly self-criticisms take place in every part of the country on the same day, so that at the same time millions of people are gathering in small groups and pointing out their faults and the faults of others. Monthly *Chonghwa* sessions are also held, and they are reported to be more extensive and intimidating.

The self-criticism in these meetings can be trivial, but confessions of significant crimes sometimes occur. Knowing the possible consequences, no one wants to confess to any serious crimes; the objective is to reveal your zeal in your intentions to carry out the regime's objectives. Since the core objective of *Chonghwa* is self-criticism, those who have done nothing wrong must fabricate offenses in order to bring an end to the sessions, so they admit to petty crimes such as walking

⁶⁰ Demick, Barbara. *Nothing to Envy* (Spiegel & Grau, New York, 2009), Pp. 26-27, 35, 68-69.

⁶¹ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 50-52. According to Jenkins, their *Instructors* stayed with them for the length of their time in North Korea, even after the four Americans had each married and started families.

⁶² Bartas, Magnus, and Fredrik Ekman. "All Monsters Must Die," *Cabinet Magazine*, Fall 2009, Issue 35.

too slowly at work.⁶³ At the end of each *Chonghwa*, each participant concludes by saying how they will try harder to become an ideal citizen who is worthy of practicing the teachings of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il.⁶⁴

Abductees are not spared this burden inflicted on the average North Korean, but there were differences in how the policy was implemented among abductees. Because their identities and existence were kept secret, they were not allowed to attend the larger gatherings and generally conducted smaller meetings among themselves. Their *Chonghwa* sessions generally took place in their living quarters. Another difference from a *Chonghwa* of an average North Korean citizen was the presence of *Instructors*. *Instructors* and higher ranking KWP personnel, called *Secretaries* or *Chiefs of Staff*, attended these meetings to see if there was progress in the abductees' reeducation.

Abductees who were considered failures by the *Instructors* were required to undergo additional reeducation and write their problems down on paper, as was the case for Charles Jenkins.

For Charles Jenkins, the *Chonghwa* process usually focused on how poorly he performed in his studies. He was required to keep a diary to refer to during the *Chonghwa* sessions. Sometimes, however, he neglected to write any entries, and would be at a loss for things to confess. For fun, he would make up a story about how he stole a piece of fruit, even though the Instructor knew he had no fruit. After explaining all of the problems that he had caused, he would express regret about how his "revolutionary ideology" was incomplete and he could not properly follow the teachings of Kim Il-sung. He then apologized for how he had let down the KWP and Kim Il-sung. Finally, Jenkins would avow his intention to do better and admit ways he could improve his behavior.⁶⁵

The weekly *Chonghwa* was taken much more seriously by the *Yodo-go* terrorists. They met every day with KWP *Instructors* and professors who would teach them revolutionary ideology. After the day's lesson there would always be time for discussion.⁶⁶ In some cases, group members tried to share their own point of view, whereupon the *Instructors* would dissuade them from independent thinking and insist that they repeat the principles of *Juche* ideology in order to absorb the

⁶³ Lee, Jhe-Gun. *Kitachousen ni Rachi Sareta Otoko*, (Tokuma Shoten, 1998), 119-120.

⁶⁴ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 50-52.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Takazawa, Koji. *Shukumei* (Shinchousha, 1997), 95.

In North Korea, any effort to gain freedom is seen as an act against the regime, and many abductees learned that when they tried to escape, the terms of their captivity became much worse.

teachings in the right way.

In 1972, two years after the hijacking, the group held its first press conference in Pyongyang for the Japanese media. In front of the media, they wore the typical North Korean pins of Kim Il-sung on their suits, admitted that they had been naïve during the hijacking, and described how the hijacking was not necessary to the struggle to bring about a revolution. They stated that they now knew what needed to be done to start a revolution according to the teachings of Kim Il-sung.⁶⁷

Through criticism from his own colleagues, the leader Takamaro Tamiya wrote in his diary that he was able to “finally adjust his own selfish thoughts and relate to what is better for the people.” Tamiya concluded that he was “now certain that *Chonghwa* is a powerful way to change human beings.” After the experience of being criticized by other colleagues during *Chonghwa*, he came to realize that “every human being could be converted into a revolutionary being” if they were subjected to reciprocal criticism.⁶⁸

Although the initial objective of the *Yodo-go Group* before going to Korea in 1970 was to become an independent terrorist group advancing a global revolution, they were transformed into partisans of Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il and the *Juche* ideology of North Korea.⁶⁹

Some Attempts at Indoctrinating Abductees Failed

There were many abductees who never truly internalized the teachings of Kim Il-sung and later escaped from North Korea, like returnee Chung Ki-hae and fisherman Lee Jhe-gun. These individuals pretended to be brainwashed, but as Charles Jenkins would say, “the mind control never had worked.”⁷⁰

Takeshi Okamoto, a 25-year-old member of the Red Army *Yodo-go Group* and a devout revolutionary, could not agree with one teaching of his KWP *Instructors*. The KWP taught the *Yodo-go Group* members that a worldwide revolution was only possible after reunification of the Korean peninsula, in accordance with Kim Il-sung’s teachings. Okamoto believed the reunification of the two Koreas was not necessary for revolution in Japan. Though Okamoto believed in worldwide revolution, he did not see why he needed to focus on Kim Il-sung’s views of South Korea when there was work to be done immediately in Japan. The *Yodo-go Group*’s leader Tamiya, however, understood the importance of accepting their host’s views. The two confronted each other during a group meeting. Okamoto’s criticism of Tamiya was seen by KWP *Instructors* as a criticism of Kim Il-sung himself, causing the participants in the meeting to become outraged at Okamoto’s disrespect. The act

⁶⁷ Ibid., 114.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 98.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 87-100.

⁷⁰ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 60-61.

was immediately brought up in the *Chonghwa*, and the young man was criticized.⁷¹

Okamoto attempted to escape, was captured and was taken away. Soon after, the North Korean government pronounced Okamoto and his wife dead.

Another of the *Yodo-go Group*, Kintaro Yoshida, was rarely mentioned by the other members of his group and mysteriously died in 1985.⁷²

Toru Hasuike, the brother of a Japanese abductee released in 2002 after Prime Minister Koizumi’s visit to Pyongyang, shared an interesting perspective on the regime’s attempts at thought control. When his brother Kaoru returned, he declared to Toru that he was “a citizen of North Korea,” and his purpose in returning to Japan was “to normalize the relationship between the two countries as a member of the North Korean delegation.” At first, Toru saw such behavior as proof of the regime’s successful brainwashing.⁷³ After spending time with his brother, however, Toru concluded that he was not brainwashed, but was instead “wearing body armor to protect himself from North Korea.” While removing that “body armor” was a long and difficult process, after it was gone, Toru once again saw the younger brother that he had known from before.⁷⁴

Many Abductees Attempted to Escape; Some Managed to Return to Their Countries

Failed Escape Attempts

In North Korea, any effort to gain freedom is seen as an act against the regime, and many abductees learned that when they tried to escape, the terms of their captivity became much worse.

One of the four American army deserters, Jerry W. Parrish was especially passionate about escaping. He entered the Chinese Embassy and asked for asylum, planned escape routes through the mountains and rivers, and even built his own wooden boat. None of his attempts were successful; it was almost impossible for anyone to leave the country, especially for a foreign national under intense surveillance.⁷⁵

The closest the four American military deserters ever came to escaping was through the Soviet Embassy. One day, after a meeting at the KWP Headquarters, the four fled to the CCCP compound across the street, where the guards assumed they were Russians. After entering the Soviet compound, the men requested asylum.

They spoke with Embassy staff about their harsh life in North Korea for over

⁷¹ Takazawa, Koji. *Shukumei* (Shinchousha, 1997), 368.

⁷² Ibid., 491-505.

⁷³ Hasuike, Toru. *Dakkan* (Shinchousha: 2003), 36-37.

⁷⁴ Hasuike, Toru and Ota, Masakuni. *Rachi Tairon* (Ota Shuppan, 2009), 62-63.

⁷⁵ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 68

two hours in a private room. The Soviet officials seemed to listen to their plight with great sympathy and promised to do as much as they could, and said that they needed to call Moscow. They left the room for over an hour and Jenkins and the others thought that things were moving in the right direction. However, the same staff came back and said that they could not help them and that they must never attempt to visit the embassy again.

Anguished after this experience, the four returned to their residence, without exchanging a single word. They concluded that there was no way out of this country and that they were “going to die on North Korean soil.”⁷⁶

There Were Some Successful Escapes

After eight years of captivity in North Korea, Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok managed to escape in 1986. Sent to a film festival in Vienna, Austria, they managed to lose their guards, who were traveling in a separate taxi behind them. They bribed their taxi driver to take them to the U.S. Embassy, and after running through the doors, they requested and were granted political asylum.⁷⁷

Korean-Japanese returnee Chung Ki-hae had been brooding over the idea of escape since he got on the boat bound for North Korea 34 years earlier. The famine of the early 1990s and the end of rice and corn distribution in 1992 made Chung Ki-hae decide to escape from North Korea at all costs. In December of 1993, he fled to China, leaving his wife and five children behind. He believed that after his life in the PRC became stable, he would be able to rescue his family, but instead, he defected to South Korea. His memoirs do not talk about what happened to his family back in North Korea, but are filled with his regret for having left them.⁷⁸

In August of 1979, as news of the abductions was breaking in Lebanon, the four Lebanese abductees were taken to Yugoslavia to call their families. The women were told to say that they were safe in Japan, but two escaped to the Kuwaiti Embassy and were returned to Lebanon. The Lebanese government then negotiated with North Korea for the return of the remaining two women, and they were released to Lebanon in December, 1979. As mentioned earlier, one of them, Siham Shraiteh, who was pregnant with Jerry Parrish’s child at the time, returned to North Korea shortly thereafter.⁷⁹

South Korean fisherman Lee Jhe-gun decided to escape to China in 1998 because of increasing hardships in North Korea. His wife had relatives in China and they thought they might help them. He planned for his wife and child to travel to

⁷⁶ Ibid. 68.

⁷⁷ “Kidnapped by North Korea,” Mike Thompson. The BBC Online. March 5, 2003.

⁷⁸ The account of Chung Ki-hae is taken from Yamamoto’s translations of Chung Ki-hae, *Kikokusen* (Bungei Shunju, 1995).

⁷⁹ “Father of missing Japanese urges tough Lebanese approach.” The Japan Times Online. June 8, 1998.

China separately, since it was safer to move in small groups.

On August 18, 1998, Lee set out for China, carrying a set of shoe repair tools so that he could claim he was traveling in search of work. There were times when Lee was close to the border and encountered guards. He pretended that he had gotten lost and asked for their help. Other times, he bribed them. He arrived at the Tumen River on September 1 and paid the equivalent of \$50 to a guide who helped him swim across the border to China.⁸⁰ After successfully crossing the Tumen, Lee received food, money, shelter, and support from the Korean-Chinese community.

Since Lee’s wife had relatives in China, she was able to travel to the border saying she needed to meet visiting relatives. After several days of cautious travel, Lee’s wife and son successfully crossed the Tumen River into Chinese territory and managed to reach a relative’s house.⁸¹ Lee reunited with his wife and son in Harbin, China.⁸²

On October 5, 1998, Lee petitioned the South Korean Embassy to allow him to return to his homeland, but his request was ignored. Lee, not understanding the reason for such treatment by his own country, visited one of the ROK Consulates.

He was again ordered to wait, on grounds that the fisherman’s return to the South might ignite “a sensitive diplomatic issue with the Chinese Government.”⁸³ Lee’s wife’s relatives could not continue to provide shelter, so the family had to rent a small room.⁸⁴ At that point, South Korean Christian pastors and NGO workers found out about his tragic situation. One of the NGO workers was Choi Sung-Yong, President of the Abductees’ Family Union. Assisted by Choi’s efforts, Lee and his family were finally able to return to his homeland on July 23, 2000.⁸⁵

Some Abductees Were Sent Out of North Korea on Missions for the Regime

Kim Yong-Kyu is one of the very few Korean War abductees who managed to return to the South. He was able to return only because he had trained as a spy for North Korea and was sent to infiltrate the South. He surrendered to South Korean authorities, and wrote about his life in the book *Silent War* (Wonmin Press: 1999).

He was not the only captive who managed to leave North Korea on missions for the regime. In 1984, Megumi Yao was ordered by the *Yodo-go Group* leader Tamiya to conduct an espionage operation in Yokosuka, Japan. She was told that she would start an upscale café bar called “Yume Miha,” near the U.S. military and Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) bases. Her story was revealed in May 1988, when the Japanese

⁸⁰ Lee, Jhe-gun. *Kitachousen ni Rachi sareta Otoko* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2002), 208.

⁸¹ Ibid. 175-180.

⁸² Ibid. 210-215.

⁸³ Ibid. 217-219.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 215.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 244.

Public Security Police discovered her in Yokosuka and arrested her.⁸⁶

Her mission, as she confessed during her trial in 2002, was to recruit National Defense University students and high school students to be useful contacts for North Korea as they sought to acquire important Japanese national security information. After her arrest, she provided information on the *Yodo-go Group* to Japanese police, and wrote memoirs. Today she resides in Japan with her two daughters.

Some Abductees Were Expelled or Released

Hitomi Soga, the wife of Charles Jenkins, was the only member of her family to return to Japan in October 2002, thanks to a deal negotiated during the Pyongyang Summit. Jenkins and their two daughters remained in North Korea. Negotiations immediately resumed in 2004 in order to unite the family, but Jenkins' status as a U.S. citizen and deserter from the U.S. Army complicated matters, since Jenkins assumed he would have to face U.S. military justice.

On the morning of May 22, 2004, two years after Soga's return to Japan, several senior personnel from the North Korean Foreign Ministry came by car to pick up Jenkins and his two daughters, who still resided in Pyongyang. They took him to the Daedonggang *Guest house* where they met Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi in person.

Jenkins and his daughters initially refused to return to Japan with Koizumi. His memoirs describe the behind-the-scenes discussions in which, for three hours before Koizumi's arrival, senior DPRK officials warned him of the consequences if he were to take Koizumi's offer and agree to go to Japan.⁸⁷ They claimed that the U.S. would charge him with desertion and that even if he were not executed, he would be jailed for life. They claimed his two daughters and his wife would be harassed in Japan and their lives would be miserable. One suggested that the car carrying Jenkins and his daughters from the *Guest house* would not in fact take them to the airport, but instead to a political prison. The officials would see Koizumi off and tell him that Jenkins had decided to stay. Even the DPRK's Vice Foreign Minister joined in the threats and said that Jenkins was "not to leave North Korea."⁸⁸

Jenkins accordingly declined Koizumi's offer, but Koizumi, understanding Jenkins' predicament, proposed that he and his daughters should meet Soga in a third country. Somehow this arrangement was acceptable to North Korea, perhaps

⁸⁶ NHK, *Yodo-go to Rachi* (NHK Shuppan, 2004), 91.

⁸⁷ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 200.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 202-203.

The regime continues to deny any knowledge of the abductees Miyoshi Soga, Yutaka Kume, Kyoko Matsumoto, Minoru Tanaka, Anocha Panjoy, and many others.

because they believed the family would return to North Korea. Jenkins was allowed to go to Indonesia, and there, outside of North Korea's jurisdiction, in 2005, he freely expressed his family's desire to go to Japan, which they did.

For the Abductees in North Korea, Even Death is Uncertain

In November of 1985, the parents of PFC Joseph T. White received a letter from North Korea. The letter arrived on the same date as White's birthday. The letter, written by White's supposed best friend Li Gun-Ho, describes White's drowning after attempting to swim across the Chongchon River. It was dated August 22, 1985. His body was never recovered.⁸⁹

In response to the Japanese investigations into the abduction of its citizens in 2002, North Korea pronounced certain people dead and delivered ashes to their families. According to North Korea, Rumiko Masumoto died of a heart attack on August 17, 1981; her husband the abductee Shuichi Ichikawa suffered a heart attack while swimming and drowned on September 4, 1979; Megumi Yokota died on March 13, 1993; Kaoru Matsuki died in a car accident on August 23, 1996; Tadaaki Hara died of hepatic cirrhosis on June 19, 1986, and his wife Yaeko Taguchi followed in a car accident on July 30, 1986. The ashes said to be those of Yokota and Matsuki have been proven through DNA testing *not* to be theirs. The DPRK claims that six of the graves of admitted abductees (Rumiko Masumoto, Shuichi Ichikawa, Keiko Arimoto, Toru Ishioka, Yaeko Taguchi, Tadaaki Hara) were washed away by floods, and their remains lost.⁹⁰

As recently as January, 2011, there was a report that Yaeko Taguchi was seen alive in Pyongyang.⁹¹

After Kaoru Hasuie testified that he saw Yokota in the spring of 1994, Pyongyang changed its story and said that Yokota committed suicide at a psychiatric hospital in April of 1994.⁹²

On September 6, 1981, Toru Ishioka's family received a letter postmarked from Poland. The letter, presumably written by Ishioka himself, said that he was living in Pyongyang with two other Japanese abductees, his wife Keiko Arimoto and Kaoru Matsuki. In 2002 North Korea claimed that on November 4, 1981, two months after the letter was sent, Ishioka, Arimoto, and their children had all died of gas poisoning. The regime claimed their graves were swept away by floods.

According to Charles Jenkins, the Romanian abductee Doina Bumbea died

⁸⁹ "Joseph White's Walk in the Dark," Robert Neff. Asia Times Online. February 23, 2007.

⁹⁰ Japanese press sources cited North Korea's statements in 2002. The United States Congress' Concurrent Resolution H. Con. Res. 168 (2005), called upon North Korea to accurately account for the remains of abductees.

⁹¹ Kyodo News Service, "Taguchi Seen Alive Last Year in Pyongyang Along with Two South Abductees," January 20, 2011. A government analyst confided to an HRNK interviewer that there was no evidence to back up the report.

⁹² Megumi Seen Alive 2 Months after Pyongyang Said She Had Died." Mainichi Daily News (English). May 26, 2008.

of cancer in North Korea in 1977. Her widower, James Dresnok, later remarried. The two had two sons, one of whom, Gabriel, was named after Doina's beloved brother. In 2006, Daniel Gordon and Nicholas Bonner directed a documentary film about Dresnok titled *Crossing the Line*. The second son appeared in the film, and Doina's family in Romania noted his resemblance. Doina's brother Gabriel now works tirelessly to bring attention to the tragedy that befell his sister, and advance the cause of the abductees.

The regime continues to deny any knowledge of the abductees Miyoshi Soga, Yutaka Kume, Kyoko Matsumoto, Minoru Tanaka, Anocha Panjoy, and many others.



A Thai national, Ms. Anocha Panjoy, seen in the background of this photo of Charles Jenkins and his family taken at a lake in North Korea.

Chapter 4:

How the Regime Used Captive Foreigners

Trapped Foreigners Were Funneled into Efforts to Further the North's Espionage Objectives

As discussed in Chapter One, we know that in 1946, Kim Il Sung called for intellectuals in the South to be brought to North Korea to aid the revolution, and in 1950, the KWP issued a directive to North Korean troops to seek out certain professionals and bring them to the North. In North Korea, these individuals were often compelled to participate in organizations that served as front organizations for the regime, such as the "Committee for Promotion of Peaceful Unification of the Fatherland." President Lee Mi-il of the Korean War Abductees Families Union points out that the objective of these early abductions was for Pyongyang "to gain necessary human resources, to promote political propaganda within the North, and to create confusion in the South in hopes of readying it for Communist unification."¹ In the 1950s and 1960s, North Korea continued to lure Korean residents in Japan to come to North Korea, captured South Korean fishermen, and used other opportunities to trap certain individuals once they had arrived in North Korea. This set a pattern that grew more aggressive in the 1970s.

Abducted Fishermen Were Recruited as Spies against the South

One of the South Korean abducted fishermen who later returned, Lee Jhe-gun, became very familiar with SSD and MPS personnel during his daily life in North Korea. KWP personnel kept a careful watch on each fisherman with an eye to recruiting spies who could be trusted to return to South Korea to conduct espionage operations.

After their arrival in North Korea, Lee and five other crew members who had been on his ship were separated from their compatriots and sent to a base in *Chongjin*. They were given a tour by personnel from the Planning Department of the Korean Workers Party. On their return to Pyongyang, Lee was told that the other crew members had been sent back to South Korea;² the six who had been selected would remain.³ The selectees were admitted to the Central Party Political School (later named the Kim Jong-il Politics and Military University), and their

¹ Lee, Mi-il. "North Korea: Human Rights Update and International Abduction Issues," (testimony given at the U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C., April 27, 2006).

² "Former Abducted Victim Lee Jhe-Gun Talks about his 30 years in North Korea," *The Dong-A Ilbo* (Japanese). January 9, 2006. According to a later interview, some of the crew was sent back on November 29, 1970 and eight were left behind.

³ Lee, Jhe-gun. Interview with Author. October 30, 2009. Lee mentioned that he has not been able to meet the other members of the crew since escaping and returning to South Korea.

Instructor promised them a privileged and luxurious lifestyle.⁴

Lee Jhe-gun details his experiences in his memoir. He entered the espionage school at the end of 1970 and began a rigorous daily curriculum. Every day at 6:00 A.M. the students were awakened for group exercise. They would then gather and read history books, such as the “Memoir of Those Who Participated in the Anti-Japanese Partisan Operations,” as well as other military-related historical stories that glorified the Kim family.

When eating breakfast, in order to hide their identities from each other, the students wore sunglasses and masks, and used umbrellas when lining up for food. They would then attend three classes, each lasting for 90 minutes, on subjects such as *Juche* ideology, revolutionary history, political science, economy, philosophy, analysis of South Korea, and current Workers Party policy. They also received practical training in conducting spy operations — marksmanship, radio communication, swimming, marching, tunnel digging, geography, lock picking, and martial arts. These morning classes ended at roughly 1:00 P.M. The students would rest for an hour after lunch; from 3:00 P.M. they would take courses until dinnertime at 7:00 P.M. The students would review what they had learned that day until 10:00 P.M. Finally, all of them would run 12 kilometers in two hours, carrying a 25kg weight on their backs as well as 5kg weights on each of their legs. Lee recalls this daily running as the most dreadful training he did during his three years of study at the spy academy.⁵

Despite all of his training, Lee was sent to work at a maritime engineering factory at Hamheung away from central Pyongyang because he evidenced “some problems in ideology and thinking.”⁶ Yet in 1982 and 1985, Lee was called back to the Wonsan Bases to join other ROK abductees who had been trained as spies. There, he went through another year-long training period, submitting to tests, training, and reeducation.⁷ Wonsan 62 Base was the retraining facility for ROK abductees. The food served on the base was better than average rations, amounting to 800 grams of rice, beef, pork, fish and vegetables. The students were also allowed to have milk. Lee recalled that over the course of four months of training, their faces gradually regained the weight they had lost and no longer carried a yellow hue.⁸ During Lee’s second tour of duty there in 1985, he did not recognize anyone from his visit in 1982. Lee was appointed to a leadership position since he had already graduated from the espionage school. He concluded that not all of the ROK abductees who were training at the Wonsan Base had gone through the intensive training process particular to the Kim Jong-il Politics and Military University that Lee had attended

⁴ Lee, Jhe-gun. *Kitachousen ni Rachi sareta Otoko* (Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2002), 28-41.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 43-46.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 85, 90.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 85-86.



South Korean fishermen on a tour of North Korea after completing indoctrination training in North Korea

earlier.⁹

Kim Yong-kyu is one of the very few Korean War abductees who managed to return to the South. Kim was only able to return to South Korean society because he had trained as a spy for North Korea and was arrested while infiltrating into the South.¹⁰

This treatment was not merely limited to South Koreans; potential infiltrators of other nations were also trained. After returning to Lebanon, the two abductees Siham Shraiteh and Haifa Skaff told *Al-Nahar* newspaper they were forced to train in “judo, taekwondo, karate, [and] eavesdropping” while being brainwashed with Kim Il-sung’s teachings. They claimed they saw 28 other foreign women in the training facility with them, including three from France, three from Italy, two from the Netherlands and others from the Middle East and Western Europe.¹¹

In the 1970s, a More Concerted Effort was undertaken to Abduct Foreign Individuals for Use in Espionage Training Operations

Former operatives who had worked in North Korean spy agencies have reported that Kim Jong-il made a very important speech in 1976, in which he revamped North Korea’s espionage policies. In this speech, Kim harshly condemned

⁹ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹⁰ Kim has written about his experience in the book *Silent War* (Wonmin Press: 1999).

¹¹ *Al-Nahar* (Lebanese Newspaper), November 11, 1979.

earlier failures of North Korean espionage efforts, and outlined a new approach to use foreign citizens to train and educate North Korean operatives.

In this speech, Kim Jong-il used a term that roughly approximates “localization” or “local integration” as an objective for bringing people from abroad to North Korea. The term means that foreigners were to be used to familiarize North Korean intelligence agents with the idiom, behaviors, and cultures of other countries, such as South Korea and Japan, so that intelligence agents could blend in without being discovered. He ordered that North Korean operatives be trained directly by foreign nationals.¹² Kim Jong-il divided his espionage initiative into two categories: (1) operations aimed at infiltrating South Korean territory; and (2) the infiltration of foreign lands other than South Korea, including Japan.

In the first category, Kim Jong-il stated that the operatives not only needed to act like local South Koreans, but should actually find employment and run businesses there. To accomplish this, North Korean operatives were to infiltrate South Korea, eat at local restaurants, sing South Korean songs, stay at local hotels without arousing any suspicion, and participate in the normal life of South Koreans. This required infiltration, but it would be more successful if it followed training by South Koreans in the North.

In the second category, North Korean agents would need to assume false identities, counterfeit identification cards, and false passports, as well as language skills that would allow them to disguise themselves as foreign citizens. Kim Jong-il asserted that if North Korean agents could successfully assimilate into a foreign country, the DPRK would be able to gather information without interference. He reportedly understood that the process of *localization* would be a lengthy one, taking from one to two years.¹³

The process could be accelerated, however, if foreigners were able to assist in the training. The espionage agencies that carried out the abductions were the same agencies that managed the process of exploiting the abductees in North Korea, so their potential use in training spies seemed readily apparent.

In 2011, a defector from the State Security Department¹⁴ confirmed that the high-level policy order was promulgated in the mid-to-late 1970’s and recalled that this policy order generated competition among North Korean intelligence and security agencies and military units to carry out Kim Jong-il’s wishes.

¹² This analysis is based on the book written by former KWP Southward Division Senior Staff Sin Pyon-Gil titled Kim Jong-il’s Southward Operations, published in South Korea. Testimony by Ahn Myon-Jin obtained in Tsutomu Nishioka’s research corroborates this information, as does Kim Hyon Hui’s testimony.

¹³ Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 54-60.

¹⁴ Kwon worked at Unit 5454 and on the brigade staff of the Korean People’s Army 62nd Brigade, a Reconnaissance Bureau special operations unit located in Chongbong-ni, Koksan county, North Hwanghae Province. HRNK interview, February 18, 2011.

Many of the Abductees Are Known to Have Been Used to Train North Korean Spies

The success of Kim Jong-il’s plan would be seen in an infamous act of North Korean terrorism in 1987, a dozen years after his speech. Pretending to be a Japanese tourist named Mayumi Hachiya, North Korean agent Kim Hyon-Hui and an accomplice carried out the bombing of Korean Air Lines (KAL) Flight 858 in November 1987, killing 115 passengers. Unlike her accomplice, Kim Hyon-Hui survived a suicide attempt when she was arrested, and lived to explain the planning that went into the attack.

During her interrogation after the bombing, she revealed that her ability to portray herself as a Japanese was the result of careful training. She had been taught Japanese language and culture by a Japanese citizen abducted from Japan. Her instructor’s assumed name in North Korea was Lee Un-hae. Lee Un-hae was later discovered to be Yaeko Taguchi who was abducted in 1978. Taguchi not only taught Japanese but provided instruction on many facets of Japanese culture and customs.¹⁵

Other abductees who were used as language teachers include Megumi Yokota, the Japanese girl abducted when she was 13, and Hong Leng-ieng, who taught Chinese. Agent Kim Hyon-Hui later recalled that Yokota was the Japanese teacher for Kim Suk-hee, another female spy that she knew. Fukie Chimura, one of the five Japanese abductees who returned in 2002, also said that Yokota taught a woman whom she recalled was named named “Suk-Hee.”¹⁶ There is also some evidence that Yokota taught two sons of Kim Jong-il—Kim Jong-nam and Kim Jong-chul.¹⁷ When he defected, former agent Ahn Myong-jin testified that he received language instruction from Yokota at the Kim Jong-il Political and Military University.

When Japanese victim Shuichi Ichikawa taught language classes at Madong-Ri Reconnaissance University (also administratively identified as “8284”) for mid-career military personnel, students and teachers knew that he and other teachers were abductees under constant surveillance.¹⁸ Abductees used in training spies were forbidden to meet privately with their colleagues or students, and the identities of

North Korean Operatives were to infiltrate South Korea, eat at local restaurants, sing South Korean songs, ...and participate in the normal life of South Koreans

¹⁵ Kim, Hyon-Hui. *Wasurerarenai Hito* (Bungei Shunju, 1997), 15-18.

¹⁶ Takahashi, Kosuke. “Fake Ashes, Very Real North Korean Sanctions.” *Asia Times Online*. December 16, 2004.

¹⁷ “Yokota Alive in 95,” *Sankei Newspaper*. May 20, 2004.

¹⁸ Kim, Guk-Seok. *Rachi Higaisha wa Ikiteiru*, (Koubunsha, 2004), 74-75.

both students and teachers were secret. The US military deserter Charles Jenkins also taught English to North Koreans there from March 1, 1972 to 1976 and from 1981 to 1983. All his lectures were one-on-one for a particular mid-career student, but taped for others. Every one of his lectures was recorded. Several years afterward, Jenkins was ordered to translate foreign radio programs like Voice of America and NHK.¹⁹

North Korea Has Abducted Some Foreign Individuals in Order to Steal Their Identities that are then Used by North Korean Agents

North Korean agents have used the identities of abductees to infiltrate other countries. This is an especially effective intelligence effort if the person abducted has few or no close relatives, or if the abduction itself has not been discovered by authorities. North Korean agents or local collaborators²⁰ will find a single person with few connections who can disappear without being noticed, abduct him or her to North Korea, and send agents from North Korea to operate under the individual's identity. North Koreans called this strategy "detour intrusion."²¹ It is an extreme form of identity-theft.

North Korean agents used the identity of Yutaka Kume while working in Japan. In 1977, a North Korean agent named Kim Se-Ho used a collaborator named Lee Akiyoshi to help him abduct a Japanese man, Yutaka Kume. Kume was a perfect candidate for abduction—he was divorced, lived alone, and did not keep in contact with any relatives. He had borrowed money from Lee Akiyoshi's lending company. Lee lured Kume with a business offer that could "make him a great deal of money through a private trade business," and introduced him to North Korean agents.²² The agents visited Kume at his home and told him they needed him to go by boat to deliver a package of money to one of their associates, and that he would have to stay at the drop-off location for six months. They made sure that Kume brought a copy of his residency registration from the local municipal bureau, a document they needed in order to use his identity.

¹⁹ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell The Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005). 95, and written comments on the present report.

²⁰ Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 187, 196. One Chongryon collaborator, Han Gwang-Hee, was assigned to locate convenient, strategic spots on the Japanese coastline for North Korean spy ships to land covertly and deliver agents. In addition to finding landing points, he also guided commandos after their arrival in Japan. Han, Gwang-Hee. *Waga Chousen Soren no Tsumi to Batsu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 97. See also Kim Guk-Seok, *Rachi Higaisha ha Ikiteiru* (Kobunsha: 2004), 23.

²¹ Kim, Guk-Seok. *Rachi Higaisha ha Ikiteiru* (Kobunsha, 2004). 22.

²² Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho*, (Shogakukan, 1999), 203-204. The ethnic Korean, Lee, who helped Kim Se-Ho, was arrested by local police and confessed to supporting Kim in his abduction operation. Despite Lee's confession, the incident was not made public at the time. The police seemed to have concluded that Lee was not a member of the elite Chongryon Gakushu-Gumi. Lee's status raises the possibility that some abductions have been carried out by non-Gakushu-Gumi or non-Chongryon ethnic Koreans who were recruited through irregular channels such as the Department of Coordination and Operation instead of the United Front.

On September 19, 1977, the North Korean agents entertained Kume with a luxurious dinner and fine liquor. At some point during that evening they persuaded him to take a walk along the nearby shore, where there were three more agents waiting. Kume was put on an inflatable boat, and disappeared into the night.²³

On February 24, 1985, North Korean spy Sin Kwang-su was arrested in Seoul. He was carrying the passport of abductee Tadaaki Hara. Lee Sang-jun, an ethnic Korean and owner of the Chinese noodle shop "Hokairo" in Osaka, had provided personal information regarding Tadaaki Hara to Sin Kwang-su and Kim Kil-uk, the DPRK agents who abducted Hara in June of 1980.²⁴ Lee had hired Hara as a chef in the noodle shop and knew the details of his background, but may not have expected his indiscretion to lead to any foul play; he denied any responsibility for Hara's disappearance.²⁵

Some Abductees Infiltrated Other Countries, Spied, and Conducted Abductions Themselves

During the Cold War, citizens of a Communist state like North Korea, faced travel restrictions. Even if the regime itself wanted them to travel, they were limited in their ability to do so because of their nation's poor international reputation and because of their inexperience in traveling. Even securing travel documents like tickets was difficult to accomplish without raising suspicion. These limitations made recruiting individuals overseas as sources of intelligence extremely difficult. By contrast, citizens of South Korea or Japan were able to maneuver more freely. Even the Yodo-go hijackers, internationally wanted terrorists, could operate as agents overseas where North Korean operatives often could not.²⁶

The *Yodo-go Group* played a pivotal role in the abduction of Japanese tourists in Europe. Travelers Keiko Arimoto, Kaoru Matsuki, and Toru Ishioka are three victims listed by the Japanese government as having been abducted by the *Yodo-go Group*. It is likely that there were other foreign citizens abducted by the hijackers in operations abroad that have not been uncovered.²⁷

²³ Gaiji Jiken Kenkyukai Edition, *Sengo no Gaiji Jiken* (Tokyo Hourei Shuppan, 2007), 117-118. Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho*, (Shogakukan, 1999), 199-211. Additional Interview with undisclosed Japanese official.

²⁴ Ibid. 275-285. Additional interview with undisclosed Japanese Government Official. Gaiji Jiken Kenkyukai Edition, *Sengo no Gaiji Jiken* (Tokyo Hourei Shuppan, 2007).

²⁵ Kume and Hara are officially acknowledged as cases of abduction by the Japanese government. Author's interview with a Japanese Government official.

²⁶ Han, Gwang-hee. *Waga Chousen Soren no Tsumi to Batsu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 149.

²⁷ In 1996, Yodo-go hijacker Yoshimi Tanaka was arrested in Cambodia with more than \$120,000 in counterfeit US dollar bills, while he was attempting to flee to Vietnam in a North Korean embassy car with a number of North Korean diplomats. He was extradited to Japan two years later after he was arrested in Thailand, and stood trial in Japan for the hijacking and later kidnappings. He was sentenced to twelve years in prison in 2002. See "Jail for Japanese Red Army hijacker," cable news network, Turner Broadcasting System, February

In 1983, the Yodo-go leader Takamaro Tamiya ordered Megumi Yao to find a single Japanese woman under the age of twenty-five in London and to bring her to North Korea. Yao flew to London in May of that year and enrolled in a language school to locate a target. She befriended three Japanese women studying at the school and spent time with them to see whether they fit Tamiya's criteria. One of the three, Keiko Arimoto, was a 23-year-old student who was amenable to the idea of being hired by a North Korean company. Yao contacted her colleague Kimihiro Abe, who was at a safe house in Zagreb in the former Yugoslavia, and reported that she had found the right person. In June of 1983, Yao and Abe met with Kim Yu Chol, a North Korean agent, in Zagreb and planned Arimoto's abduction. They practiced roles for each to play after Yao introduced them to the target. Abe pretended to be the CEO of a trading company and Kim played the role of a North Korean businessman.²⁸ In July of 1983, Arimoto left London for Copenhagen and was persuaded to fly to North Korea. She has not been heard from since.

In 1984, Megumi Yao was sent to operate in Yokosuka, Japan. Four years later, the Japanese Public Security Police discovered and arrested her.²⁹ She had opened an upscale café bar called "*Yume Miha*," in an area close to U. S. and Japanese Self Defense Force (JSDF) bases in order to recruit students and acquire information on Japanese national security.

After her arrest, Yao began providing information on the *Yodo-go Group* to Japanese police, and has apologized for her activities on behalf of the North Korean regime. On March 2, 2002, she met the parents of Keiko Arimoto, bowed down in tears, and apologized for her role in abducting their daughter. The parents, after seeing her beg and cry helplessly, answered that they had been waiting for her to confess her true feelings and had found a way to forgive her now that she had apologized from the bottom of her heart.³⁰ Today she resides in Japan with her two daughters.

Some of the Captives Were Used in Propaganda

There are cases where foreign victims have been used for propaganda purposes. After the hijacking of Korean Airlines YS-11 by a DPRK agent on December 11, 1969, the two pilots were forced to appear on national TV in Pyongyang and testify that they defected of their own free will.³¹ The pilots appeared in press conferences right after they arrived, affirming Pyongyang's claims. North Korea hosted a welcoming ceremony for them, which was again widely publicized. The two cabin attendants of KAL flight YS-11 were also shown on North Korean

14, 2002.

²⁸ NHK, *Yodo-go to Rachi* (NHK Shuppan, 2004), 300.

²⁹ Ibid. 91.

³⁰ Yao, Megumi. *Shazai shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 337-341.

³¹ Hwang In-Cheol personal interview with Yamamoto, November 2, 2009.

national television.

Coerced statements by foreign victims that glorify North Korea are nothing new. Captured foreigners are often required to admit to committing acts of espionage on national television to thank the "Great Leader's tolerance and mercy," whereupon they are sometimes released, or sometimes sent to prison camps.

The South Korean teacher Ko Sang-moon who disappeared in 1979 incited a small propaganda war in 1994 when information circulated that he was in a prison camp. Pyongyang's Central News Agency said Ko was in North Korea, and happily married. Ko appeared in a press conference where he said, "Americans are disguised beasts and the imperialistic intention of the U. S. will doom Korea." The former school teacher urged Korean students to "break out from the US influence by driving Americans out of Korea and by increasing anti-US protests."³² Since 1994, there has been no further news of Ko Sang-moon's whereabouts.

The abduction of Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok was clearly related to the production of propaganda films. Kim Jong-il considered films vital to maintaining Pyongyang's dictatorship. And the two were given every resource to produce propaganda films that glorified the regime.³³

The actress recalled meeting with Kim Jong-il to discuss his 15,000-strong film collection.³⁴

Shin and Choi directed and performed in seven movies in North Korea, and assisted on the sets of ten others. The most famous of these is "Pulgasari," which is inspired by Godzilla and depicts a monster that helped start a revolution in the 14th Century.³⁵

Choi was useful in other more subtle propaganda efforts as well. She was required to attend Kim Jong-il's lavish parties on Friday evenings, accompanied Kim Jong-il to public entertainment such as the theater and the circus, and participated in state visits of Chinese Prime Minister Hua Guofeng and Romanian President Ceausescu. In her memoirs, Shin mentions meeting Chung Kyung-heui, the head of



Former American military personnel in a propaganda movie

³² Kim In-ku, "NK Broadcast Urges Students to Fight Americans," Chosun Ilbo (English). April 8, 2001.

³³ Choi Eun-hee and Shin Sang-ok's memoir was also published in Japan under the title *Yami Karano Kodama*, (Bunshun Bunko, 1989).

³⁴ Bartas, Magnus, and Fredrik Ekman. "All Monsters Must Die," Cabinet Magazine, Fall 2009, Issue 35.

³⁵ "Shin Sang-ok," The Economist, Obituary Section. April 27, 2006.

the External Liaison Department, in one of many parties Kim Jong-il hosted. Choi wrote that Kim Jong-il personally introduced Chung to her.

Charles Jenkins and the other three U.S. Army deserters who were held captive appeared in numerous propaganda films, on the radio, and in posters that promoted the greatness of life in Pyongyang compared to life in the United States. In 1980, Jenkins appeared in a TV series.³⁶ In 1981, the four Americans began teaching English again,³⁷ and in 1992 Jenkins played a soldier in the U.S. Navy in a propaganda movie.³⁸ Jenkins appeared in over ten movies during his time in North Korea. His last role was in the year 2000.

One of the *Instructors* told Jenkins that Kim Il-sung had said “one American is equal in value to 100 North Koreans,”³⁹ alluding to the role of the American prisoners in propaganda posters and movies. Jenkins surmised it was important for North Korean authorities to keep their foreign victims healthy so that they would not look miserable when they were featured in propaganda posters.

Some Abductees Were Used to Fill Gaps in North Korea’s Technical Expertise and Workforce

Kim Jong-il put South Korean abductees Shin Sang-ok and Choi Eun-hee in charge of the North Korean film industry in March of 1983. He told them he wanted Shin and Choi to produce films that matched or exceeded the caliber of those made in South Korea.

Research conducted by “the Investigation Commission on Missing Japanese Probably Related to North Korea (COMJAN)” found a suspicious trend in the disappearance of several Japanese nationals. The victims had special expertise in telecommunications, printing, and physics. An anonymous Japanese government official mentioned that although these potential abductees each possessed skills of interest to North Korea, their skills alone were not sufficient to constitute a significant threat. However, as former Korean People’s Army Reconnaissance Bureau Lieutenant Kim Guk-seok confessed, it is not always necessary for the abductees to have “complete knowledge” of certain skills, just enough to guide the regime in stealing or buying critical materials from foreign sources.⁴⁰ These mysterious vanishing experts may have been abducted to help print counterfeit money, tap electronic networks, or conduct covert industrial espionage.

COMJAN concluded that some abductions were conducted to obtain

³⁶ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell The Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005). 126.

³⁷ Ibid. 136.

³⁸ Ibid. 72.

³⁹ Ibid. 66.

⁴⁰ Kim, Guk-Seok. *Rachi Higaisha ha Ikiteiru* (Koubunsha, 2004), 22-24. Kim Guk-Seok was a KPA Lieutenant when he defected to South Korea. It is known that his father was a war hero, which implies that he comes from a very high social class (seongbun) in North Korea.

industrial expertise. Pyongyang’s history of abducting foreigners for their expertise started as early as the Korean War.

North Korean Objectives Supported By Abductions

The abduction and detention of foreign citizens against their will is the result of plans carefully designed and implemented by the Korean Workers’ Party (KWP) for various objectives. There have been numerous studies by Japanese abductee rescue movement leaders, South Korean NGOs, and prominent South Korean journalists that explore the reasons why the North Korean leadership has pursued its policy of abduction.⁴¹ No one can be certain that the world will ever understand all of the reasons why North Korea pursued such a detestable policy. What is known is that abductees have been used in certain specific ways. Some were foreign teachers for training North Korean spies to operate in their homelands. Some served as spies themselves on behalf of Pyongyang. North Korean abduction policy can be seen as having promoted the following objectives:

1. Finding South Koreans and others who could be sent back as spies;
2. Infiltrating foreigners in countries where they could carry out North Korean espionage goals;
3. Training North Korean agents who could operate overseas;
4. Stealing identities and registration documents;
5. Finding foreign spouses for foreigners serving Kim Jong-il’s regime;
6. Obtaining advanced technology, unique skills, and labor;
7. Eliminating witnesses of North Korean espionage activities (e. g., landing commandos);
8. Promoting propaganda efforts;
9. Intimidating and silencing those perceived to be working against the regime’s interests.

⁴¹ The most notable are Cho Gab-Je of Monthly Chosun, Kazuhiro Araki from COMJAN, Tsutomu Nishioka and Yoichi Shimada from NARKN. Professor Yoichi Shimada, Vice Chairman of the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea (NARKN) described six reasons why North Korea abducts foreign citizens during his testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on International Relations on April, 27, 2006: (1) to eliminate hapless witnesses who happened to run into North Korean agents in action, (2) to steal victims’ identities and infiltrate agents back into the countries concerned, (3) to force abductees to teach their local language and customs to North Korean agents, (4) to brainwash them into becoming secret agents, (5) to utilize abductees’ expertise or special skills, and (6) to use abductees as spouses for unusual residents in North Korea, especially to lone foreigners.

CHAPTER 5:

The Institutional Apparatus that Conducts Abductions

Four Espionage Departments within the Korean Workers Party Carried Out the Abductions

The abductions of foreign nationals covered by this study were carried out by agents acting under the direction of four key Departments of the Korean Workers' Party (KWP). These four KWP Departments have managed and supervised external espionage—that is, secret activities aimed at achieving the regime's objectives in South Korea and in foreign countries.¹

The organizational structure of North Korea's agencies, like that of most governments, changes from time to time—names of offices change, personnel in those offices change, and locations of the offices change. The responsibilities of an office one year may be transferred to another the next, just as personnel are also sometimes transferred. In North Korea, some responsibilities have actually moved when key personnel moved from one agency to another. For example, in 1997, when Kang Gwan-ju, a relative of Kim Jong-il who had been Director of the United Front, moved to a senior position in the External Coordination Department, he took his responsibility for managing relations with the *Chongryon* with him to his new office.²

Not surprisingly, the North Korean regime seeks to obscure certain aspects of its activities, and keep secret who holds certain responsibilities. This is especially true when the task assigned to an office is one that is considered illegal by most members of the international community. Kim Jong-il has restructured agencies and titles frequently, as well as changing senior staff in charge of these departments, in order to promote obscurity; among other reasons, this keeps the espionage agents themselves from building power bases and prevents external targets from tracking North Korea's internal operations.³

Nevertheless, for most of its history, there have been four secret espionage agencies serving the North Korean regime and they have had a relatively consistent structure from the initial years of Kim Il-sung's dictatorship through 2009.

How the Korean Workers Party Organized Its External Espionage Efforts

The Korean Workers Party Secretariat (of which Kim Jong-il, since 1997, has been General Secretary) had over twenty departments, and four dealt with espionage: (1) the Research Department, also known as the Investigations Department; (2) the External Coordination Department, also known as the Foreign Liaison Bureau; (3)

¹ Ahn, Myong-Jin. *Kita Chousen Rachi Kousakuin* (Tokuma Shoten, 1998), 30.

² Kim Yong Hun, "Study Group, the Core of Chongryon," *Daily NK*, Dec.18, 2009.

³ Hwang, Jang-Yop. *Kyouken ni Obieruna* (Bungei Shunju, 2000), 178-179.

the Operations Department; and (4) the United Front Department.⁴ All, of course, reported directly to Kim Il-sung, and after his death, Kim Jong-il.

Since all four departments were housed in the Korean Workers Party Central Committee's Building Number 3, the "Third Government Office Building (GOB)" is sometimes used by Japanese analysts as a way to refer to the entire operation responsible for abductions. The KWP's Building Number 3 itself is located in Chonsung-Dong, Moranbong-kuyok, Pyongyang, and serves as the headquarters of North Korea's espionage agencies. The Operations Department and the External Coordination Department managed the actual infiltrations and kidnapping. The Research, or Investigations, Department coordinated agents' work inside foreign countries. During the time when this Department was referred to as "Office 35," it was located in the KWP Central Committee's Building on Changgwang Street in Pyongyang.⁵

1. KWP Research Department, also known as the Investigations Department

The main role of this agency, which for a time was moved and called "Office 35," was to infiltrate operatives into foreign countries and gather intelligence. It orchestrated the abduction of a number of foreign citizens, including the two prominent South Koreans, film star Choi Eun-hee and director Shin Sang-ok. Agents Kim Hyon-hui, who bombed the KAL flight 858, and Yoshimi Tanaka, a member of the Japanese Red Army *Yodo-go Group* who was arrested in Thailand for carrying counterfeit money, worked for this Department.⁶ Chang Su-il, another spy who worked for this Department, disguised himself as an Arab-Filipino, successfully infiltrated South Korea and taught at a university in Seoul as an adjunct professor. Chang sent intelligence to North Korea during the twelve years that he worked as a teacher, from 1984 until 1996, when he was arrested, tried, and convicted of spying.⁷

Ho Myong-uk, who was appointed director of the office in 1997, had a leading role in the 1984 abductions of Shin Sang-ok and Choe Eun-hee, the bombing of KAL flight 858, and other overseas operations aimed at South Korea and Japan.⁸ His organization is now under control of the newly created Reconnaissance General Bureau.

The Research Department has been implicated in a range of operations from information theft and terrorist acts to counterfeiting currencies, drug dealing, illegal weapons procurement, and establishing ties with foreign mafias. Several hundred agents are said to belong to this Department, including a number of female

⁴ Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 63-70.

⁵ HRNK interview with a former senior employee of GOB 3, February 25, 2011.

⁶ Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 63-70.

⁷ Jeon, Pu-eok. *Kitachousen no Spy Senryaku* (Koudansha, 2002), 147-171.

⁸ Joseph S. Bermudez Jr., "A New Emphasis on Operations Against South Korea," 38 North, U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, June 11, 2010, p. 9. Online at: www.38north.org.

agents. According to Hwang Jang-yop, the highest ranking North Korean defector to date, the Research Department conducted espionage in Japan, Europe, and the countries of the Middle East, even though its principal objective was to penetrate South Korea.⁹

Former operative Ahn Myong-jin said the Research Department operated Pong-Hwa University, an advanced training center that is known for its short-term spy training courses. Unlike the long-term initial training given agents at the Kim Jong-il Political-Military University, training here generally lasts less than 2 years.¹⁰ The facility is operated jointly with the External Coordination Department and trains MPS personnel as well.

2. KWP External Coordination Department or Overseas Liaison Department

The External Coordination Department supported Kim Il-sung in managing and reeducating South Korean abductees... and is believed to have set up the methods and procedures for handling abductees.

The External Coordination Department is known to have over 450 active agents and is the oldest of the four espionage departments. This department and its personnel appear in documents dating back to the 1950-53 Korean War. The External Coordination Department supported Kim Il-sung in managing and reeducating South Korean abductees during the Korean War and is believed to have set up the methods and procedures for handling abductees.¹¹

The External Coordination Department is also involved in sending agents on missions to South Korea in order to organize North Korean partisans, and carrying out abductions and terrorist attacks against anybody viewed as a threat to the regime. The Department runs the many *Guest Houses* and training compounds where abductees are told to live and train under strict surveillance. The External Coordination Department works with

the *Chongryon*, along with the Yakuza (the Japanese mafia), and the Chinese and Russian organized crime syndicates. The Japanese Red Army *Yodo-go* hijackers, while in North Korea, were trained by this department.¹²

Based on the testimony of Megumi Yao, the wife of a member of the *Yodo-go* hijackers, the Independent Revolutionary Party Founding Preparation Committee

⁹ Hwang, Jang-Yop. *Kyoken ni Obieruna* (Bungei Shunju, 2000), 179-181.

¹⁰ Ahn, Myong-Jin. *Shin Shogen Rachi* (Kosaido Shuppah, 2005), 30-32.

¹¹ Lee, Te Ho. *Oryoukuko no Fuyu* (Shakai Hyouron Sha, 1993), 34-38.

¹² Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 64-66 and Takazawa, Koji, *Shukumei* (Shinchousha, 1997), 349 and Yao, Megumi, *Shazai shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 169.

was created by Kim Il-sung and managed by the KWP External Coordination Department's 56th Division, which received orders directly from Kim Jong-il himself.¹³ The *Yodo-go Group* was placed under the supervision of the 695 Unit of the External Coordination Department in the early 1970s.¹⁴ The *Yodo-go Group* had significant influence within the KWP External Coordination Department. Kim Il-sung placed great personal trust in the group's leader, Takamaro Tamiya,¹⁵ and gave his son Kim Jong-il the responsibility to oversee their operations. The group eventually became fully integrated into the structural organization of the KWP.

In the second half of the 1990s, when the External Coordination Department's international notoriety grew due to its illicit activities, the department changed its name to the more innocuous "Social and Cultural Study Department." But after a period of trying to use that label, the Department reverted to its original name.

3. KWP Operations Department

The Korean Workers Party Operations Department is comprised of over three thousand agents who work at various training compounds and spy bases across the country.¹⁶ It is considered to be the largest and most central department within Building 3. Its responsibilities include the execution of espionage activities, meaning that its operatives support, protect, and carry out assassinations as well as the abductions of important figures.

The Department's spy bases are split into two categories depending on their fields of mission, the Land Division and the Sea Division. Land Division bases are located at Sariwon and Kaesong. Sea Division bases are located at the ports of Haeju, Wonsan, Chongjin, and Nampo.¹⁷

This Department also runs the Kim Jong-il Political-Military University, the military and espionage training school where former agents Kim Hyon-hui and Ahn Myong-jin studied. They were instructed by abductees, including Megumi Yokota. Ahn also reported seeing Hasuike Kaoru, Shuichi Ichikawa, and Takeshi Terakoshi at the University (see satellite image).¹⁸

Ahn revealed what it is like to study and train at the Kim Jong-il Political-Military University. The former operative was a member of the 25th class to graduate

¹³ Yao, Megumi. *Shazai shimasu* (Bungeishunju, 2002), 169.

¹⁴ Moreover, according to Japanese journalist, Koji Takazawa, who has interviewed the *Yodo-go* Group numerous times, the group was managed by the KWP *Yodo-go* Group Special Division. Judging from this detailed information, it might be that the group first trained in the 695 Unit and then was assigned to the 56th Division, which changed its name to the *Yodo-go* Group Special Division.

¹⁵ Takazawa, Koji. *Shukumei* (Shinchousha, 1997), 349.

¹⁶ Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 67-69.

¹⁷ Ibid. 68. See also Bermudez, "A New Emphasis on Operations Against South Korea," 38 North, SAIS, June 11, 2010, p. 10.

¹⁸ Ahn, Myong-jin. *Shin Shogen Rachi*, (Kosaido Shuppah, 2005), p. 122.

from the University.¹⁹ He explained that every year roughly 150 individuals are formally admitted as students. The first six months of training at the university were considered a trial probationary period. Due to the rigors of the training only 80 to 90 students usually advance beyond the first six months; the others are deemed unfit for further training. Ahn's class was reduced to 87 students by the time the formal courses started.²⁰ The Kim Jong-il Political-Military University puts those students who make it through an elite espionage education course that lasts for 5 years and 6 months. Only 64 students remained in Ahn's class by the time of graduation. 16 of the original number had actually died during training.²¹

Based on Ahn's testimony, if we are to assume that a possible maximum of 90 students every year are able to graduate from the Kim Jong-il Political-Military University, and each graduate could be expected to serve as an agent for 40 years, the KWP would currently have 3,000-3,600 agents working for the Operations Department. This number does not include those who graduate from other spy training schools and work for other KWP Departments. This estimate tends to corroborate Kim Jong-il's boast that he had a "3,000-strong" espionage force.²²

4. KWP United Front Department

The Korean Workers Party United Front Department works together with foreign supporters, including governments and international organizations, in an effort to create a worldwide united front to promote the DPRK's objectives for national unification. Their agents are in charge of facilitating official diplomatic negotiations with South Korea and other foreign nations through forums such as the North-South Korean Economic Cooperation Talks and the North-South Separated Families' Reunion Meetings. The Department is also responsible for the dissemination of propaganda. The United Front Department stands out from the other three departments because its operations are sometimes public and official, as indicated by the presence of their agents at public conferences.²³ However, as is typical for North Korean intelligence services, the agents' real names are generally kept secret.

The Department is also known to manage relations with the *Chongryon*, using a network of local Koreans in Japan called the *Gakushu-Gumi*. After being recruited in 1961 at the age of nineteen, Han Gwang-hee found out that the *Gakushu-Gumi* was actually a North Korean-directed entity with links to the chain of command in

¹⁹ Ahn, Myong-jin. *Shin Shogen Rachi* (Kosaido Shuppan, 2005), 32.

²⁰ Ibid., 32.

²¹ Ibid. 32.

²² Ahn Myong-Jin personal interview with Yamamoto. October 28, 2009. Ahn was appointed to work for the Operations Department after graduating from the university, but, disappointed with the position he had been assigned, decided to defect to South Korea.

²³ Hwang, Jang-Yop. *Kyouken ni Obieruna* (Bungei Shunju, 2000), 179.

the KWP's Third GOB, intended to control and manage *Chongryon*. Every entity belonging to *Chongryon*, from schools and credit unions to business councils, was led by members of the *Gakushu-Gumi*. In each prefecture, these elite groups were managed by an instruction committee supervised by the Central Committee in the *Chongryon* Tokyo Headquarters. Being a *Gakushu-Gumi* member was considered equivalent to being a KWP member. Within the KWP Third GOB, the United Front Department *Chongryon* Instructions Division is said to have been in charge of managing the *Gakushu-Gumi* networks in order to control the overall activities of *Chongryon*. In other words, the *Gakushu-Gumi* members in Japan worked directly for the KWP United Front Department.²⁴

While the United Front Department had the task of managing relations with the *Chongryon*, its responsibility to do so was apparently not exclusive. According to Han's testimony, a former *Chongryon* senior official, operatives in the four departments are regarded as the most dedicated and elite individuals in North Korea, but the United Front Department's operatives are considered to have the least amount of political clout among them.²⁵ The four departments usually operate independently, and pursue their own methods of influencing members of the *Chongryon*. In recent years, the External Coordination Department has gained more influence over the *Chongryon* than the United Front Department, probably because of Kang Gwan-ju's reassignment to the External Coordination Department.

Assets and Personnel from the Reconnaissance Bureau of the Korean People's Army Probably Assisted in the Abductions

The Korean People's Army's Reconnaissance Bureau is likely to have played a leading role in supporting the operations conducted by the four KWP Departments, since it had the military assets to infiltrate and conduct covert operations in Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong. The Reconnaissance Bureau gained worldwide notoriety as a result of the Rangoon bombing attempt to assassinate then South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan during his visit to the capital city of Yangon on October 9, 1983. The plot resulted in the deaths of 21 people and the wounding of 46. While President Chun survived, the blast killed the presidential chief-of-staff; another senior presidential assistant; the deputy prime minister who also served as minister of economic planning; three cabinet members including the foreign minister; 3 deputy ministers; and the South Korean ambassador to Burma; as well as four Burmese nationals. It wounded 32 others.²⁶ The Reconnaissance Bureau has also been identified as responsible for numerous naval incursions, infiltrating espionage agents into South Korean territory through the use of midget submarines

²⁴ Han, Gwang-hee. *Waga Chousen Soren no Tsumi to Batsu* (Bungeishunju: 2002), 145.

²⁵ Ibid., 146.

²⁶ U.S. Congressional Research Service. *North Korean Provocative Actions, 1950-2007*. 20 April 2007. By Hannah Fischer. Available from: www.fas.org.

and speed boats.²⁷ It is worth noting, however, that defector Hwang Jang-Yop said that the responsibility for the Rangoon bombing should be attributed to the KWP Operations Department, not the KPA Reconnaissance Bureau.²⁸ The Bureau comprises 120,000 personnel, including a special operations unit, the “8th Special Military Corps,” an infantry brigade, the 907th Military Unit, the 448th Military Unit, and the *Nampo* Special Operations Naval Unit.²⁹

North Korean agents are able to infiltrate foreign territory by ship. According to Lee Sang-Chol, a former DPRK operative who infiltrated South Korea numerous times,³⁰ an average of twenty operatives boarded spy ships disguised as normal fishing boats. The infiltration ship is usually a metal boat weighing about 80 tons, equipped with four North Korean-made “Rashibo Engines,”³¹ each with an output of 1,100 horse power. These boats achieve a maximum speed of around 47 to 60 knots (54 to 69 mph). They also carry two radar systems with a range of between forty and a hundred miles.

After arriving near the shores of a foreign territory, the mother ship anchors itself at a safe place and dispatches from its stern a smaller speed boat containing five operatives selected from the original twenty, one man to steer the boat, an engineer, a radio operator, and two elite operatives who will actually infiltrate into the foreign territory. This smaller boat weighs about 5 tons and cruises at a maximum speed of 50 knots (58 mph), with three 275 horsepower U.S.-made engines built by OMC: Outboard Marine Corporation.³²

If the boats are to infiltrate into heavily guarded areas, such as South Korean shores, the North Korean operatives are known to arm them with machine guns or rocket-propelled grenade launchers. In several high-profile cases, North Korea has also used much stealthier “midget submarines” or a half-submarine vehicle.³³ Once the smaller speed boat comes close to shore, the operatives set out, either by swimming, inflatable rubber boat, or even an underwater scooter, depending on the location. They then communicate via radio with local operatives or collaborators who await them on the shore.³⁴

There was cooperation between various offices in conducting missions overseas. “Escort agents” were well-trained in infiltration (putting someone in another place) and exfiltration (getting someone out of another place) techniques

²⁷ Jeon, Pu-Eokg. *Kitachousen no Spy Senryaku* (Koudansha, 2002), 213, 218.

²⁸ Hwang, Jang-Yop. *Kyouken ni Obieruna* (Bungei Shunju, 2000), 180. It may be that one gave the orders; the other carried them out.

²⁹ Jeon, Pu-Eokg. *Kitachousen no Spy Senryaku* (Koudansha, 2002), 213, 218.

³⁰ Eya, Osamu. *Tainichi Bouryaku Hakusho* (Shogakukan, 1999), 6-25.

³¹ Ibid. 12-13. The engine is manufactured at the Ra-jin Shibo Factory, which is shortened to “Rashibo.”

³² Ibid.7. The U.S.-made engines were sold and bought in Hong Kong.

³³ Ibid. 44-52.

³⁴ Ibid. 6-39.

and combat tactics. Once the escort agents delivered their espionage operatives or agents to their destination, they would be met on-shore by an operative, usually from the External Operations Department, who conducted operations in the foreign territory. This person’s mission was to escort the infiltrated agent to his area of operations and make appropriate contact with operating cells in country, who was likely to be working for Office 35.

The successful infiltration of two operatives requires at least twenty support personnel, as well as several local coordinators. According to Lee Sang-chul, the operatives involved in these missions can be classified into two distinct categories:

1. Guidance Operatives: These operatives are responsible for landing in the foreign territory, coordinating with local supporters and bringing targets in or out to sea. They are considered to be elite members able to adjust to any environment.

2. Commando Operatives (also known as “escort agents”): These operatives are responsible for guiding and protecting the Guidance Operatives once they have entered foreign territory and specialize in the tactics and techniques of infiltration and exfiltration. After arriving near foreign shores via spy ships, the Commando Operatives either remain on the mother ship, watching for patrols, or separate from the mother ship on a smaller speed boat to come closer to land and deliver the two Guidance Operatives. Commando Operatives include pilots, engineers, and radio operators.

As noted earlier in this report, parts of the internal security apparatus also *competed* in carrying out Kim Jong-il’s policy directives on abductions. While serving as a State Security Department (SSD) officer, Mr. Kwon Hyuk (alias),³⁵ was aware of the high-level policy order promulgated “in the mid-to-late 1970’s” that authorized kidnappings to find trainers for North Korean operatives and agents who were to be infiltrated to South Korea. He recalls that this policy order actually generated competition among North Korean intelligence and security agencies and military units--they sought to gain favor by kidnapping the best foreign personnel to conduct what he recalls was termed “*innamhwa*” training. “*Innamhwa*” roughly translates as “South Koreanization,” or “Southernization.” This training has been referred to as “localization,” designed to teach infiltrators in the language and way-of-life of local inhabitants so that the operatives could escape detection after infiltration.

In the early 1980’s, Kwon met and became friends with a Japanese man who had been given the Korean name of Kim Myong-ho. He taught Japanese language and culture to members of the 62nd Brigade. Kwon remembers the pronunciation of the Japanese man’s real name as “Oyasuki.” After a number of years, Oyasuki was sent to work at the vinalon fabric-manufacturing factory in Hamhung City. Kwon

³⁵ Kwon worked at Unit 5454 and on the brigade staff of the Korean People’s Army 62nd Brigade, a Reconnaissance Bureau special operations unit located in Chongbong-ni, Koksan county, North Hwanghae Province. HRNK interview, February 18, 2011.

was invited to attend Oyasuki's wedding to a Japanese woman in Hamhung, and since he was as a member of the SSD, he was able to travel anywhere in North Korea and attended the wedding. He could not recall the woman's name when HRNK interviewed him in Seoul in February, 2011, but it is quite possible that defector Kwon had come to know two Japanese abductees.

After His 2008 Stroke, Kim Jong-il Reorganized his Espionage Agencies

On February 25, 2009, Kim Jong-il ordered a major restructuring referred to as "the 225 Instructions." Several departments were separated from the KWP and transferred to the Korean People's Army, reporting to the National Defense Commission (NDC).³⁶

A former director of the Operations Department from 1989-2009, General O Kuk-ryol, was put in charge of the newly created "Reconnaissance General Bureau," which combined the KWP's Operations Bureau and Office No. 35 with the Ministry of People's Armed Forces Reconnaissance Bureau. This suggests that, at the highest levels, the regime has adopted a more aggressive policy focused on South Korea, creating an organization that is more structured under the military command and control rather than under the lesser expertise of political officers in the KWP.

Two parts of the new RGB—the former Operations Department and the Reconnaissance Bureau—have substantial maritime capabilities for infiltrating intelligence agents into South Korea and Japan. This new organizational structure is headquartered in Pyongyang and has six bureaus: Operations, consisting primarily of the former KWP Operations Department; Reconnaissance, which is primarily the Army's former Reconnaissance Bureau; Foreign Intelligence, which is based on the former Office 35; two other bureaus that collect human and electronic intelligence; and a sixth that provides logistical and administrative support for the entire organization.³⁷

New Trends in North Korea's Overseas Espionage Efforts

What has become clear is that Kim Jong-il's 2002 apology has not ended North Korea's abductions of foreign citizens. North Korean foreign intelligence operations since 2000 include a more militarily aggressive strategy involving clandestine military operations in neighboring countries. Recent abductions have been carried out inside China by North Korean military personnel—border guards—and have focused on those persons helping North Koreans to defect. For example, in January 2011, photographs at the border show that border guards are now armed with long-

³⁶ Eya, Osamu, "Go nin Kikoku no Shikakenin Fukken de Futatabi Ugoki dasu Megumi san Shibou Kosaku" SAPIO magazine, Shogakukan, December 16, 2009, 106.

³⁷ Joseph S. Bermudez Jr., "A New Emphasis on Operations Against South Korea," 38 North, U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, June 11, 2010. Online at: www.38north.org/?p=920. Pp. 4-10.

range sniper rifles.³⁸

The 2000 abduction of Pastor Kim Dong-shik was executed by North Korean State Security Department personnel in China. His detention and death appear to have occurred at a *military* installation—People's Army Camp 91, a garrison in Sangwon on the outskirts of Pyongyang.³⁹ The capture of two female American journalists at the border in 2009, again under the authority of the State Security Department, further confirms that the regime has adopted a more diversified approach to abductions and hostage-taking, using North Korea's internal security apparatus in place of its foreign intelligence apparatus. The 2009 reorganization militarized North Korea's foreign espionage structure, and it was followed by a number of aggressive actions—capturing the American journalists, the March 2010 sinking of the South Korean Navy corvette *Cheonan*, assassination attempts against the former KWP Secretary defector Hwang Jang-yop, and unprovoked artillery attacks on Yeongpyeong Island in November 2010.⁴⁰ This portends a new style of provocative threats to North Korea's neighbors, including China, that may prove even more effective and threatening to international security than North Korea's espionage activities of past decades.

³⁸ "N.Korean Border Guards Kill 5 Defectors." Chosun Ilbo (English). January 11, 2011.

³⁹ Kim, Yong Hun. "Pastor Kim Dong Shik Abducted, Now Dead for Refusing to Deny Jesus." Daily NK. May 8, 2007.

⁴⁰ For an excellent analysis of the implications of this restructuring, see Joseph S. Bermudez Jr., "A New Emphasis on Operations Against South Korea," 38 North, U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, June 11, 2010. Online at: www.38north.org/?p=920.

Chapter 6:

Those Left Behind Were Also Victims

Loved Ones Could Not Account for the Missing

When 13-year-old Megumi Yokota suddenly disappeared on November 15, 1977 on her way back from playing badminton, her parents were inconsolable. They reported their child missing to the police immediately, and the Niigata Prefecture Police began a massive search that continued day and night.¹ From the neighborhood where the Yokotas lived, it took less than three minutes to walk to the shores of the Japan Sea.² To cover the lengthy shorelines of Niigata, the local police called in support from the two adjacent Prefectures and even brought in underwater squad teams to search between the concrete tetra-pods for the body of the child. Takio Matsumoto, who was Chief of Niigata Central Police Station and in charge of the search for Megumi recalled in an interview later that they were expecting all kinds of possibilities from simply a teenage runaway to kidnapping, sexual abuse, or murder.³ Former Police Chief Matsumoto's failure to find the girl would haunt him the rest of his life.

Despite their best efforts, the police were unable to find a single clue to Megumi's whereabouts. After a weeklong search, the local police decided to publicize the investigation, placing Megumi's photo and name in all local Niigata newspapers. One national newspaper, Mainichi, contained a short article on her disappearance.⁴

After the search, police called the Yokotas whenever a dead young girl's body was found. Her mother would sometimes be asked to provide dental records of Megumi's teeth marks to see whether they matched. She recalls that while biking to the police station, she was unable to stop her legs from shaking from fear that this time the dead girl might really be Megumi. Every year the Yokotas were asked to view photos of unidentified young female corpses to see whether any were Megumi. At first Sakie would accompany Shigeru, but after the second year, Sakie could not bear the experience and asked her husband to go alone.⁵

Megumi's parents thought about her every day. After her disappearance, they kept their house door unlocked and left lights on just in case Megumi came back. Whenever they heard cars drive by at night, Sakie would rush out of the house to check if her daughter had come home. Shigeru would often pause when he saw a young girl about Megumi's age, and sometimes burst into tears. Sakie learned to control her tears because she knew that when she cried, Shigeru would follow. A year became five years and then ten, and their feelings became empty and hollow. Although Sakie

¹ Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea (AFVKN). *Kazoku* (Kobunsha: 2003), pp. 40-42.

² Ishidaka, Kenji. *Koredemo Shira wo Kirunoka Kitachosen* (Kobunsha: 1997), pp. 139

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 140-142

⁴ AFVKN, *Kazoku* (Kobunsha: 2003), p.40.

⁵ Ishidaka, Kenji. *Koredemo Shira wo Kirunoka Kitachosen* (Kobunsha: 1997), p.27



Megumi Yokota's mother comforts Kim Yong-nam's mother at a hearing.

never lost hope, she always doubted she would ever see Megumi again.

This traumatic feeling of emptiness is described by many victimized families. It was how they feel when they cannot pinpoint who was responsible for the disappearance of their family members. One abducted child's parents said that "if your child came up dead, you could mourn as well as bury them. Maybe in ten or twenty years, while your grief may never go away, it may ease a little. However, when your child disappears, not knowing why, where, or how they are doing, this slowly eats at your soul; there is never a sense of rest."⁶

The story of the mother of Yasushi Chimura, who disappeared just four months before his wedding in July 1978, was especially tragic.⁷ Toshiko Chimura had been a healthy woman who farmed every day, but after her child disappeared without a trace, she became ill from the shock. In 1982, four years after Yasushi vanished, she collapsed from high blood pressure caused by mental distress. A surgical treatment left her with trouble speaking and partial paralysis. She was unable to walk by herself.⁸ She waited for her son to return for over twenty years, not knowing whether he was dead or alive, and finally passed away at age 74 on April 6, 2002. Six months later her son was finally released by North Korea, after the summit between Kim Jong-il and Prime Minister Koizumi, along with four other

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.27-28

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.150

⁸ AFVKN, *Kazoku*, (Kobunsha, 2003), pp. 145-175

Japanese abductees.

Upon his return, Yasushi Chimura learned of his mother's recent death and burst into tears, "Why couldn't you wait until I returned... If only I could have returned earlier."⁹

The situation was similar for the parents of Kaoru Hasuike who was abducted in 1978. Kaoru's father walked along the shores of Kashiwazaki City for endless hours every day. He carried a long bamboo stick to poke along the shoreline looking for dead bodies. He continued to search, knowing he could never rest without seeing his son again.

Toru Hasuike, Kaoru's older brother, recalls helping out in the search for his brother when someone suggested Kaoru might be in the Sannya area of Tokyo, where many runaways went to find jobs. His mother went to search the Sannya district, worrying that her son might have run away because of problems his parents simply had not noticed. She took a photo and asked strangers whether they had seen him. Even though they also visited every pachinko parlor in Nagoya City, this did not produce any leads, since Kaoru was in North Korea.¹⁰

Sometimes Toru would advise his mother, "we should think of him as already dead,"¹¹ hoping that would keep her from suffering so much pain.

How Family Members Learned About North Korea's Role in the Abductions of Their Loved Ones

There were a few early indications of North Korea's connection to the abduction of innocent foreign nationals, but it took many years for the entire picture of North Korea's clandestine actions to come to light.

As early as September 20, 1977, the Ishikawa Prefecture Police arrested an ethnic-Korean named Lee Akiyoshi who helped a North Korean agent, Kim Se-Ho, abduct a Japanese citizen named Hiroshi Kume from the port of Ushitsu City. Lee acted under orders from the North Korean agent and when arrested, confessed his involvement in the plot. The Ishikawa Prefecture Police were commended with the National Police Agency's Chief Secretary's Award for pursuing this case, and the Kume case became the earliest publicized case of a Japanese having been abducted by North Korea.¹² But it appeared to be an isolated incident.

The police were reluctant to release very much information about Kume fearing disclosure would jeopardize future investigations.¹³ Lee was detained for only 23 days and set free because there was insufficient evidence to indict him.¹⁴

⁹ Ibid., pp.145

¹⁰ Hasuike, *Dakkan Dai Ni Shou*, (Shinchousha, 2005), p. 90,91

¹¹ Ibid. 92

¹² Ibid. pp.41-67

¹³ Ibid. p. 42,43

¹⁴ Lee was also considered a victim of being threatened by the North Korean operatives to cooperate against

On January 7, 1980, *Sankei Shimbun* newspaper published what is considered to be the first article in national media regarding North Korea's abductions.¹⁵ The article came little over a year after the 1978 disappearances of the three Japanese couples from the shores of Japan (July 7, 1978 Yasushi Chimura and Fukie Hamamoto, Fukui Prefecture; July 31, 1978 Kaoru Hasuike and Yukiko Okudo, Niigata Prefecture; and August 12, 1978 Shuichi Ichikawa and Rumiko Masumoto, Kagoshima Prefecture). The article, written by Mr. Masami Abe, discussed the mysterious disappearances, explained that the situations were very similar and suggested "a foreign intelligence organization" might be involved.¹⁶ However, Abe was unable to conclude North Korea had been involved, since the evidence was inconclusive, critical information was unknown or undisclosed by local police, and few people would have believed North Korea would so boldly commit such crimes.¹⁷ The cases were soon forgotten.¹⁸

When North Korean terrorist agent Kim Hyon-Hui was arrested by South Korean police after planting the bomb on the KAL flight, her interrogation provided a clearer picture of North Korean operations. Among other things, she mentioned that she had been taught by a language teacher, a Japanese citizen who went by the name Lee Un-Hye. Lee's real name was Yaeko Taguchi, who had been abducted by North Koreans on June 29, 1978, when she was 22 years-old.

While Kim's testimony had little impact on the Japanese public, one person who was energized by the revelation was Tatsukichi Hyomoto, a staff member for Upper House Diet Member Atsushi Hashimoto. Hyomoto linked the case with the case of the three couples in the report from *Sankei Shimbun*. He visited the places where the couples had disappeared, and asked local police to submit investigation records regarding their disappearances. Hyomoto later said, "I had 100% confidence that the North Koreans were involved in this. The Japanese Police seemed to have much more confidence in this based on material evidence that they would not disclose."¹⁹

Hyomoto prompted his boss, Diet Member Hashimoto, to question Seiroku Kajiyama, then Chairman of the Public Safety Commission, about the disappearance of these couples. In a Diet hearing on March 26, 1988, Kajiyama replied:

"There is strong evidence to suggest that the series of mysterious disappearances that have taken place since 1978 is the result of abductions instigated by North Korea. It is extremely difficult to verify the truth of the matter, but taking into consideration the seriousness of the incidents, I think that we must do everything possible to

his will.

¹⁵ Araki, Kazuhiro, ed., *Rachi Kyushutsu Undou no 2000 Nichi* (Sousisha: 2002), p. 22

¹⁶ Abe, Masami. "Abekku Sankumi Nazo no Jyohatsu." *Sankei Newspaper* (Morning Edition: Front Page), January 7, 1980.

¹⁷ Ishidaka, Kenji. *Koredemo Shira wo Kirunoka Kitachosen* (Kobunsha: 1997), p. 134

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. 135

investigate the facts.”²⁰

This was the first public statement made by a Japanese government official linking North Korea to the cases of disappearance. Still, the Japanese media was indifferent and the issue faded away once again. The Yokotas and the other abductees’ families would have to wait until 1997 for real progress.

The Truth Came Out Inadvertently Almost Twenty Years After the Abductions

Not all facts can immediately be put into their larger context. The Yokotas’ understanding of what happened to their daughter could have changed if they had been present when a reporter named Ishidaka interviewed a South Korean intelligence officer in Seoul on June 23, 1995. Over dinner, the South Korean and Ishidaka talked about a range of issues concerning the North Korean economy and politics. When the discussion turned to defectors, the Korean official mentioned a former North Korean agent who had defected in 1994. This agent had said he knew a young Japanese girl who had been abducted around 1976 or 1977 when she was thirteen-years-old. The former agent also mentioned the girl had been on her way back home from school after badminton practice.

Unbeknownst to either man, the South Korean intelligence officer’s account explained Megumi Yokota’s disappearance. Overwhelmed and unsure of what to do with this information, Ishidaka first requested an interview with the defector himself. This was denied because the former operative had not been publicly identified.²¹ After a year and a half, Ishidaka decided to mention the story of the young girl in the 1996 edition of a relatively obscure magazine, *Gendai Korea*. He selected this magazine because he knew that knowledgeable experts on North Korea read it, and he was hoping to receive additional tips from readers regarding the case. The magazine’s publisher and president, Mr. Katsumi Sato, had worked for the Japanese Government office on the Returnees Project and was interested in and sympathetic to those who might be trapped inside North Korea.

A coincidence then occurred that caused a turning point in the world’s knowledge of North Korea’s abductions. Publisher Sato happened to mention Ishidaka’s article at a conference he attended in Niigata City on December 14, 1996. The moment he described the details of the abduction of a 13-year-old Japanese girl after a badminton lesson, several people in the crowd yelled at the same time “that must be Megumi!” “My god, Megumi is alive!”²² The room was suddenly flooded with excitement. Mr. Sato told the crowd, “I understand that she is in North Korea.”²³

²⁰ Yokota, Sakie. *North Korea Kidnapped my Daughter*. (Vertical, 2009), p. 87 and 136.

²¹ Ishidaka, Kenji. *Koredemo Shira wo Kirunoka Kitachosen* (Kobunsha: 1997), p.18-19.

²² Ibid., p.23

²³ Araki, Kazuhiro, ed., *Rachi Kyushutsu Undou no 2000 Nichi* (Sousisha: 2002), p.11

After this conference in Niigata, the Yokotas’ lives changed. On January 21, 1997, Hyomoto, the staff aide mentioned above who worked for a Diet Member, called Mr. Yokota to inform him that Megumi might have been abducted by North Korea, citing Kenji Ishidaka.²⁴ The Yokotas hastened to meet the Japanese journalist,²⁵ hoping that their daughter Megumi might still be alive and that they could someday see her again.

On January 23, 1997, Ishidaka told the Yokotas of his conversation with the South Korean intelligence officer two years earlier. This information seemed “to set them free from the feelings of loss and emptiness they were suffering for so long.”²⁶ He could see the glimmer of hope growing inside them. Though this information was still only part of the picture, they at least had something to live for. The same day, Diet member Shingo Nishimura questioned the Japanese government about abductees. This was the first time that Megumi Yokota’s case was specifically raised in the Diet. The Yokotas were encouraged to fight harder to bring attention to their daughter’s case.

At this point, Japanese police started to release some information about the disappearances to the media. Supporters of the families of the missing criticized the police for not having investigated the abductions thoroughly, and for not disclosing all they were presumed to know. At the same time, pro-Pyongyang groups like the *Chongryon* criticized the police and claimed that the abduction cases were “fabrications.”²⁷

The Yokotas Formed and Led the Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea (AFVKN)

The Yokotas were an ordinary middle class couple in their 60s, but their devotion and perseverance inspired a huge movement that won the attention of the Japanese public, and eventually their government.

It took courage. Considering the potential dangers for Megumi, who was assumed to be living in North Korea, they had to consider the consequences of disclosing her name. They ultimately decided to raise the issue publicly, believing that if they showed resolve, and confronted the regime with the knowledge about its actions, North Korea would not harm Megumi.²⁸ On February 3, 1997 national Japanese newspapers and magazines, such as Sankei Newspaper and *Aera* started simultaneously reporting on this case, using Megumi’s name.

Another North Korean who had defected had knowledge of Megumi.

²⁴ Yokota, North Korea Kidnapped my Daughter, p. 86.

²⁵ Yokota, Shigeru and Sakie, *Megumi Techo* (Kobunsha: 2008), pp. 249

²⁶ Ibid., p. 30

²⁷ Ibid. p. 42, 43

²⁸ Ibid., p.37

Former North Korean spy Ahn Myong-jin had talked to a Japanese journalist named Hitoshi Takase earlier about the young girl's story. When asked whether they would fly to South Korea to meet the former agent, the two promptly answered, "we would fly at once."²⁹ Any information, however small, was priceless to them. The Yokotas flew to Seoul to hear what Ahn knew.

Ahn told the Yokotas he had seen Megumi several times between 1988 and 1991, when he was a student at Kim Jong Il Political and Military University. One of his instructors, Mr. Chung (he did not know his first name), told Ahn that he had abducted Megumi from Niigata during the mid-1970s.³⁰ Chung also told



Sakiko Wakabayashi, Juko Mori, Toru Ishioka, 1980

Ahn he had infiltrated Japan numerous times, and on one of the trips after the abduction he had seen a missing persons flyer with Megumi's picture on it. Chung took it back with him to North Korea as a souvenir.³¹ Ahn did not know many details of Megumi's life in North Korea, but he told the Yokotas that he had heard she lived near the university, and that she was probably not allowed to venture out often. However, he assured them she likely lived in relative comfort by North Korean standards because she was very important to the regime as an instructor of Japanese language and culture.³²

When they returned home, they took the bullet train from Tokyo to Niigata to meet other families whose loved ones had been victims of abduction. It had been fourteen years since they had lived in Niigata, a place they never wanted to see again until this day. Shigeru had been relocated by his company to its headquarters in Tokyo,³³ and Niigata brought back painful memories of their precious daughter having suddenly disappeared from the face of the earth.³⁴

This time, however, they were filled with hope and resolve. They met the parents of Kaoru Hasuike, Hidekazu, 65, and Hatsui, 70, whose son had been abducted in July 1978 together with his girlfriend Yukiko Okudo on the same shores of Niigata where Megumi was taken.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Yokota, *North Korea Kidnapped My Daughter*. 103-106.

³¹ Ibid. 111-112.

³² Ibid. 108.

³³ It is known that the company postponed this decision of transfer numerous times in the past based on consideration. Yet the Yokotas recall how heartbreaking it was to leave the old house even though it was 6 years after the disappearance and the building would be torn down after they moved.

³⁴ Ishidaka, Kenji. *Koredemo Shira wo Kirunoka Kitachosen* (Kobunsha: 1997), pp. 137-140.

There Was Strength in Numbers for the Families of the Abductees

The Hasuikes had heard of their guests Shigeru and Sakie Yokota and observed the media attention Megumi's case had recently received. They had also received some attention when Kim Hyon-Hui testified in 1988 about the Japanese abductee who turned out to be Yaeko Taguchi. At the time, some people wondered whether she might have been Yukiko Okudo, the girl who disappeared with their son Kaoru Hasuike.³⁵ The national media had asked the Hasuikes for interviews, but the reporters' questions were often rude, inconsiderate, and painful. At one point, the media attention became too overwhelming and the Hasuikes declined all interviews thereafter. The attention given Megumi's case, however, was different, and the Hasuikes hoped they could work together to develop a plan of action.

The moment the Yokotas stepped into their house, the two couples formed a bond immediately. Hidekazu and Hatsui too were experiencing the unimaginable pain of loss that they could not discuss with anyone. Yet seeing Shigeru and Sakie, they could talk freely without holding back. By meeting with other family members who shared similar experiences, the Yokotas started the group of families that would later become the core of the Japanese abducted victims' "Rescue Movement."

On March 25, 1997, eight families met in Tokyo to form the Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea (AFVKN). Many had not even heard each others' names, but after sharing stories of their suffering and shedding lots of tears, they quickly united, and recognized they were all in a struggle together. Although Mr. Yokota was 64 years old, he was the youngest father among the group. He was elected the President of AFVKN.³⁶



Shigeru and Sakie Yokota

The founding family members were: Shigeru and Saki Yokota— parents of Megumi Yokota; Hidekazu and Hatsui Hasuike— parents of Kaoru Hasuike; Tamotsu Chimura— father of Yasushi Chimura; Yukou Hamamoto— older brother of Fukie Hamamoto; Shoichi Masumoto— father of Rumiko Masumoto; Kenichi Ichikawa— older brother of Shuichi Ichikawa; Akihiro and Kayoko Arimoto— parents of Keiko Arimoto; and Koichi Hara— older brother of Tadaaki Hara.

A month after AFVKN was formed, Shigeru and Sakie Yokota held their

³⁵ Hasuike, *Dakkan Dai Ni Shou*, (Shinchousha, 2005), p.98.

³⁶ Yokota, Shigeru and Sakie, *Megumi Techo* (Kobunsha: 2008), pp. 249, 250

first outdoor petition drive in Niigata. There was a petition in support of bringing the abduction issue to an early resolution. With microphones in their hands and handmade banners, Shigeru and Yokota started out nervously, but as they saw people signing the petition, they became more confident. They worked with a small grass-roots organization based in Niigata led by Harunori Kojima. In October 1997 that organization joined together with other local support groups to form the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea (NARKN). Katsumi Sato, publisher and President of *Gendai Korea* at that time, served as Chairman of NARKN. This organization has continued to be the main support group for researching the cases of the abductees to this day. The current Chairman is Tsutomu Nishioka.



Prime Minister Koizumi with Kim Jong-il, September 17, 2002

In Spite of Grass Roots Strength, Government Support was Slow to Develop

The Rescue Movement faced many hurdles. First was the overall reluctance and hesitation of the Japanese government to raise the abduction issue directly with North Korea. From the perspective of the families, considering the advanced age of AFVKN members, a day lost meant a greater possibility that family members would never be reunited. The movement was also discouraged when the Red Cross of North Korea denied that the abductions had ever taken place.³⁷ The North Korean organization said: “It has been proven that the persons identified by Japanese sources do not exist within our territories, and have never entered nor resided in the country in the past.”³⁸ Even Japan’s Red Cross seemed unwilling to provide assistance, on grounds it “did not have the means to send in or get involved in areas where humanitarian values are not respected.”³⁹

The perceived lack of cooperation from the National Police Agency was another issue that troubled the families. It refused to provide materials from its investigation of the missing family members’ cases. It classified such material as

³⁷ Araki, Kazuhiro, ed., *Rachi Kyushutsu Undou no 2000 Nichi* (Sousisha: 2002), p.145

³⁸ AFVKN, *Kazoku* (Kobunsha: 2003), p. 407-408.

³⁹ Ibid. p.41.

“confidential due to investigative reasons.”⁴⁰

Progress came on April 15, 1997 with the formation of a bipartisan Caucus in the Diet to support the rescue of abducted Japanese victims. This level of new attention was followed by a series of measures adopted by the Diet to investigate and develop a resolution on the issue. Members of the Diet worked closely with the major grassroots organizations AFVKN and NARKN and created a Caucus to Rescue the Japanese Abducted victims, soon thereafter (in 1999) another organization named the Association of Representatives to Rescue the Japanese Nationals Abducted by North Korea.⁴¹ After the Yokotas and the grassroots support groups had gathered over 1 million signatures, the Government of Japan became more attentive. On April 17, 1998 Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi met with the families, received the signatures, and promised to do his best to help.⁴²

Something that had started with a few pieces of information acquired by a Japanese journalist given to a courageous set of parents, became a powerful political movement. They began to collect, analyze, and monitor every bit of available information regarding international disappearances that might be connected to North Korea.

In spite of everything that the families accomplished, if it were not for the 2002 Japan-DPRK Summit between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Chairman Kim Jong-il, the evidence abduction cases might have been questioned forever. On September 17, 2002, Kim Jong-il admitted to Prime Minister Koizumi that North Korea had in fact engaged in the abduction of Japanese citizens.

Calling the abduction issue “a vital matter directly linked to the lives and safety of the Japanese people,” Prime Minister Koizumi issued the following statement after their meeting:

Chairman Kim Jong-il honestly acknowledged that these were the work of persons affiliated with North Korea in the past and offered his apologies, expressing his regret. He stated that he would ensure that no such incidents occur again in the future. I intend to arrange for meetings with family members of those surviving and to do my utmost to realize their return to Japan based on their will.⁴³

Kim Jong-il’s personal culpability, of course, is clearly established; he has been involved in systematically planning and executing abduction policy, and even met two abductees on their arrival in North Korea.

Koizumi’s trip is remembered primarily for Kim’s startling admission of guilt and apology for his government’s systematic abduction of foreign citizens,

⁴⁰ Hasuike, *Dakkan Dai Ni Shou*, (Shinchousha, 2005), p. 125-126.

⁴¹ Ibid. pp.241-243. See also Yokota, *North Korea Kidnapped My Daughter*, p. 132.

⁴² Hasuike, *Dakkan Dai Ni Shou*, (Shinchousha, 2005), p. 130

⁴³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA), “Opening Statement by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi at the Press Conference on the Outcome of His Visit to North Korea,” September 17, 2002. Available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/pmv0209/press.html.

but it was not without a cost. During the Summit, Japan agreed to a “Pyongyang Declaration,” including an apology from the Japanese government for inflicting tremendous suffering on the people of Korea during colonial rule and an agreement to establish diplomatic relations with DPRK that required Japan to increase economic cooperation as a form of restitution.⁴⁴

We may never know all of the reasons why North Korea pursued its policy of abduction of foreign citizens, and we may never understand why, on September 17, 2002, Kim Jong-il confessed to such a dastardly policy. It is likely he believed the admission would pave the way for payment by Japan of \$10 billion in war reparations—the possibility had been discussed. Although four Lebanese abductees had been sent back to their homes in 1979, Japan became the first nation to elicit an official apology regarding the abductions.⁴⁵

What the families had feared and the world had questioned was, of course, known for years by many officials in North Korea. North Korea had invested considerable effort in lying--denying its involvement in abductions. They had gone to the trouble of getting *Chongryon* and the North Korean Red Cross organization to deny charges of North Korea’s engagement in abductions. The evidence that compelled Kim Jong-il to admit to the abductions came from information originally gathered not by any government entity or international organizations, but by private citizens. These individuals, some of them defectors from North Korea, some of them relatives of those who disappeared, have tenaciously sought to learn the truth about North Korea’s role in the abductions. Even the tiniest scrap of information or witness testimony has become important when carefully combined with the other evidence gathered by organizations devoted to this issue. Because of the power of facts and persistence, on September 17, 2002, Kim Jong-il decided he had to admit to North Korea’s nefarious acts against innocent individuals.

North Korean Propaganda Gave a Different Spin to the Announcement

Clips of Koizumi’s visit to Pyongyang were broadcast on North Korean television. They made no mention of the regime’s abductions, but said that residents in North Korea who had their roots in Japan would be allowed to return. American military deserter Jenkins had a sense that the announcement might have something to do with his wife Hitomi Soga, whom he knew to be a victim of abduction. Trying to learn more, Jenkins tuned a hidden radio to Voice of America. Jenkins and Soga could not believe what they heard, since the report revealed that North

⁴⁴ Yoshinori Kaseda, *The DPRK’s Diplomatic Normalization with Japan*, in Tae-Hwan Kwak and Seung-Ho Joo ed., *North Korea’s Foreign Policy Under Kim Jong Il* (Ashgate: 2009), p.216

⁴⁵ It is worth keeping in mind that when the DPRK government returned the four Lebanese, they never released any official apology. The Lebanese government is also reluctant to discuss the incident. However, several Lebanese media, such as the Daily Newspaper “El Nahar,” November 9, 1979, have reported on it in depth.

Korea had pursued a systematic series of abductions since the 1970s. The list of abductees’ names that North Korea provided to Japan included a female name that the Japanese government had never known was an abductee, the name “Soga.” The radio broadcast the next day had more information on Mrs. Soga and also reported that she was married to the U.S. Army deserter Jenkins. Jenkins advised his wife that she should be prepared because the KWP was going to come for her, which they did the very next day.

Workers Party personnel took Soga to meet with the North Korean Red Cross. The Red Cross staff told Jenkins that since she was a very loyal and submissive citizen, they had decided to grant her the gift of allowing her to visit Japan. Without revealing that she had heard of this from the radio, Soga expressed her excitement by saying that she was surprised and that the offer was wonderful.⁴⁶ Soga safely returned to Japan in October 2002 with the four other Japanese abductees.

Japan is still pressing North Korea to investigate further and provide accurate information on the twelve victims whose whereabouts remain unknown.

Kim Jong-il’s Admission Was A New Wound, Not a Healing

While Kim Jong-il’s admission regarding the abductions has done much to bring worldwide attention to the issue, Japan is still pressing North Korea to investigate further and provide accurate information on the twelve victims whose whereabouts remain unknown. Pyongyang provided specific but misleading information about the twelve abductees Japan asked about. It claimed that eight had died. Of these eight, seven had supposedly lived and died in different areas of North Korea, but their death certificates were all issued by the same hospital. Their reputed causes of death were unusual, arousing further suspicion. Two of the victims supposedly died of gas poisoning, while the rest allegedly fell victim to automobile accidents, suicide, or drowning at shallow beaches. Only two had relatively plausible causes of death, a heart attack (Rumiko Masumoto) and hepatic cirrhosis of the liver (Tadaaki Hara).

The date North Korea originally identified for Megumi Yokota’s death was changed after scrutiny. Megumi’s doctor and her ex-husband initially explained that she ‘died’ in 1993, but after Japanese media reported that Megumi was seen alive after 1993, they changed the year of her death to 1994. Megumi’s ex-husband called it an ‘illusional mistake.’ In June 2006, more than three years after he had handwritten the facts of the case, a Japanese organization questioned the authenticity of his handwriting. Confronted with this, he confessed that his letter had actually been

⁴⁶ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell The Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), p. 181

written by someone else⁴⁷

The remains of two abductees were provided, but this raised additional questions. Two sets of remains were returned and identified as the remains of Kaoru Matsuki and Megumi Yokota, but forensic examinations in Japan concluded they were not the remains of these individuals. The Government of Japan filed a diplomatic protest over these irregularities.⁴⁸

MOFA dispatched an investigation team to Pyongyang from September 28 through October 1, 2002 to account for the eight whom North Korea said had died and also to look into others whom North Korea denied were abductees. The results, as the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs would later admit, yielded “many inconsistent and dubious points.”⁴⁹

Pyongyang repeatedly denied that Mrs. Soga’s mother Miyoshi Soga had ever entered North Korea. Hitomi Soga, who was returned to Japan in October of 2002, knew that her mother Miyoshi had been abducted with her, even though they were not allowed to see each other in North Korea. North Korea also denied that Yutaka Kume ever entered North Korea, yet one of his abductors confessed to working with the North Korean agent Kim Se-Ho to abduct him.

Tsutomu Nishioka, the Vice Chairman of the National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea, (NARKN), believes that Pyongyang deliberately fabricated the circumstances of the deaths of certain abductees in an effort to undermine the testimony of several North Korean operatives who had defected, most notably Kim Hyon-Hui and Ahn Myong-jin. Nishioka believes that North Korea chose Taguchi’s death as August 10, 1986 to discredit Kim’s and Ahn’s witness testimony. By claiming Taguchi had died at that time, Kim Jong-il’s culpability for the bombing of the Korean airliner was obscured.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Headquarters for the Abduction Issue, Government of Japan. “Points of Contention with the North Korean Position.” Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea. <http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/mondaiten/index.html> (accessed April 27, 2011).

⁴⁸ BBC News. “Japan-N Korea Kidnap Row Hots Up.” BBC News. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4123277.stm> (accessed April 27, 2011).

⁴⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA). “Abduction of Japanese Citizens by North Korea.” 2010. Pamphlet accessible at: http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/n_korea/abduction/pdfs/abductions_en.pdf.

⁵⁰ The testimony of Kim and Ahn are corroborative. After the Korean Airlines flight 858 bombing in 1987, North Korean agent Kim Hyon-Hui confessed to South Korean investigators that Japanese abductee Yaeko Taguchi was forced to become her Japanese language teacher. Ahn Myong-Jin told that while Kim Hyon-Hui had been criticized by the leadership for confessing her secret mission to the South Koreans, her language teacher Lee Un-He (Yaeko Taguchi) was not punished. Taguchi was instead moved to another facility, not purged, and she was reportedly seen as recently as 2010 near the headquarters of the Foreign Liaison Bureau.



Cabinet Secretary Nakayama departing the plane with the abductees in 2002.

To conduct negotiations for the release of the returned abductees’ family members still in North Korea, Koizumi visited Pyongyang again on May 22, 2004. In addition to returning with eight family members from North Korea to Japan, he requested that Pyongyang restart investigations into the fate of the eight abductees who were reported to have died and the two citizens, Miyoshi Soga and Yutaka Kume, both of whom Pyongyang claimed never entered the country. Japan also offered to provide 250,000 tons of food aid and \$10 million worth of medical products. While the family members were released to go to Japan, Pyongyang never conducted a credible investigation into the cases of those whom it claimed had died.

Captive Foreigners Were Urged Not to Leave Even When they Had the Opportunity

Considering how to deal with an offer of freedom presents a dilemma to those trapped in North Korea. The world’s media were surprised when on May 22, 2004, Jenkins and his two daughters met with Prime Minister Koizumi and declined to go to Japan. Jenkins’ memoirs, however, explain the behind-the-scenes discussion with senior DPRK officials where they threatened him over the consequences of accepting Koizumi’s offer and going to Japan.⁵¹

Jenkins arrived at the *Guest House* three hours before Koizumi. While he was waiting, senior officials whom he had never seen before told him that the U.S. would charge him for desertion and if he were not executed, he would be put in jail for life. They said his wife and two daughters would be miserable in Japan.⁵² He took such threats seriously; he believed that there might be two cars heading out from the guest house with his family “riding in a different car.” Jenkins believed he and his daughters would never get out of North Korea.⁵³

Accordingly, Jenkins declined Koizumi’s offer. Koizumi, understanding the situation, proposed another idea, suggesting he could meet Soga in a third country. Jenkins agreed to that idea and it was through a meeting in Indonesia with his wife and daughters on July 9, 2004 that he finally managed to express that they wanted to live together in Japan.⁵⁴ He arrived in Japan on July 18, 2004—39 years, 6 months, and 4 days after he defected to North Korea.⁵⁵

Despite the North Korean officials’ threats that the U.S. would execute Jenkins for desertion, he merely served 30 days at a U.S. base in Japan. He was granted permanent residency in Japan in 2008.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell The Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 200.

⁵² Ibid. 202-203.

⁵³ Comments by Charles Jenkins on HRNK draft report, March 2011.

⁵⁴ Jenkins, Charles. *To Tell the Truth* (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005), 212.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 223.

⁵⁶ “Jenkins Gets Permanent Residency,” *The Japan Times Online* (English). July 16, 2008.



Sakie Yokota met with President George W. Bush in 2006.

Not Surprisingly, the Japanese Government Has Taken the Lead in Bringing this Issue Before the International Community

Because many of the known victims of forced abductions were Japanese, the Government of Japan formed a special office within the Cabinet and issued the following policy statement in 2006 (as summarized in current GOJ documents):

The Japanese Government reiterates its demand that North Korea fully recognize Japan's determination to resolve this issue and to immediately and decisively work to bring about a swift resolution to abduction cases.

1: The Japanese Government will continue to call resolutely on North Korea to ensure the safety of all abductees, to allow them to return immediately to Japan, to reveal the facts behind the abductions, and to hand over those who carried out the abductions.

2: The Japanese Government has implemented a series of measures against North Korea, including a freezing of humanitarian assistance (announced December 28, 2004), the banning of the Mangyongbong-92 passenger ferry from entering any Japanese port (announced July 5, 2006), the prevention of fund remittances and transfers related to North Korean missile programs to North Korea (announced September 19, 2006), the prohibition of all ships of North Korean registry from entering Japanese ports, and an embargo on all imports from North Korea (announced October 11, 2006). The Japanese Government will consider implementing further measures, in accordance with the future stance adopted by North Korea.

3: The government of Japan will continue to implement strict legal measures.

4: The Japanese government, led by the Headquarters for the Abduction Issue, will be in the forefront of efforts to gather and analyze information on this issue, and to promote without delay an examination of measures to resolve the issue. It will also further enhance its efforts to raise the awareness of the Japanese people regarding the abduction issue.

5: The Headquarters for the Abduction Issue will continue to promote every effort to study and investigate other cases in which the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea cannot be ruled out. These cases include the so-called "missing Japanese probably related to North Korea." If studies and investigations identify other cases of abductions, the Japanese government will raise such cases with North Korea.

6: To resolve the issue, the government of Japan will further strengthen its international collaborative efforts in multilateral forums such as the United Nations, and through

close cooperation with concerned countries."⁵⁷

Bilateral Japan-North Korea talks went in fits and starts in the years following 2002. After a long hiatus, the issue was addressed again in bilateral meetings between Japan and North Korea held in Beijing in June 2008. At the Beijing talks, North Korea again promised to reopen investigations into the fate of abducted Japanese citizens. And again North Korea sought something in exchange. Japan agreed, subject to progress in the reinvestigations, to drop a ban on travel between the two countries and allow humanitarian aid to resume. This lifted some of the sanctions that had been placed on North Korea after 2006. *Washington Post* reporter Blaine Harden commented that "One particularly painful shipping sanction, which was imposed in 2006 after the North tested missiles in waters near Japan, banned a ferry that ethnic Koreans in Japan had used to send money to the cash-starved North."⁵⁸

The Japanese Foreign Minister explained that North Korea's willingness to address the issue in 2008 showed they acknowledged the kidnapping issue had not been resolved. Japan's Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura described it as somewhat encouraging: "With North Korea's promise to reinvestigate, the process of resolving the abductions problem has resumed. It's a certain amount of movement forward, but it is not overall progress."⁵⁹

The repeated North Korean pledges to re-investigate can be taken as an admission that more information is available that could be revealed, but as this report goes to press, North Korea has still not provided any additional credible information on the fate of the abductees.

The Family Organizations in Tokyo and Seoul Have Reached Out to Form a Broader International Coalition

Efforts to find additional information about likely North Korean abductions have continued after the 2002 Koizumi visit. The National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea, (NARKN) sent then Vice Chairman Tsutomu Nishioka to interview family members of other nations' citizens who had disappeared in circumstances suspiciously related to North Korea. The abduction issue had now gained nationwide attention, and more citizens from all over Japan demanded to know if their cases of missing family members were also cases of abduction by North Korea.

The 2002 admission actually gave some new strength to the cause of investigating North Korea's abductions. On January 10, 2003 Kazuhiro Araki,

⁵⁷ Excerpt from the website of the Headquarters of the Abduction Issue, Government of Japan, <http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/shisei/housin.html>

⁵⁸ Blaine Harden, "N. Korea Agrees to Reexamine Abductions," *Washington Post*, June 14, 2008, at A8.

⁵⁹ Norimitsu Onishi, "N.Korea Yields Slightly on Abductions," *N.Y. Times*, June 14, 2008, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/14/world/asia/14japan.html>.

previously of NARKN, established an independent research arm called the “Commission on Missing Japanese Probably Related to North Korea” (COMJAN).⁶⁰ COMJAN’s objectives are very broad—it seeks to investigate any cases of missing persons that may possibly be related to North Korea, investigates any missing Japanese whose families have turned in a request to search for them or whom COMJAN has independently received information on; it gathers information from North Koreans who have escaped North Korea; it proposes policies to the Japanese government regarding the investigation of missing Japanese, counsels families who have turned in the requests to COMJAN, produces and transmits short radio programs to North Korea and pursues other means to get information in and out of North Korea.⁶¹

While these issues still remain of intense interest in Japan, the movement has expanded its activities to the international arena. AFVKN, NARKN and concerned members of the Diet have traveled to meet and raise the awareness of leaders, experts and supporters in Washington, New York and the West Coast of the United States, annually since 2001. The enactment of the North Korea Human Rights Act of 2004 by the U. S. Congress was very encouraging for the Japanese movement because it included language that called for the resolution of abduction cases of all foreign victims:

SEC. 3. FINDINGS. In addition to infringing the rights of its own citizens, the Government of North Korea has been responsible in years past for the abduction of numerous citizens of South Korea and Japan, whose condition and whereabouts remain unknown.⁶²

Since 2005, members of the Japanese interest groups and family members of the missing have participated in North Korea Freedom Week every Spring, organized by the Washington DC-based North Korea Freedom Coalition.

It was during the 2006 North Korea Freedom Week that Sakie Yokota was given the opportunity to tell her story before a hearing of the US House of Representatives’ Foreign Relations Committee’s Subcommittee for Asian and Pacific Affairs.

During the same visit, she was invited to meet with President George W. Bush on April 28, 2006. After meeting Mrs. Yokota, President Bush said, “I have just had one of the most moving meetings since I’ve been the President here in the Oval Office.”⁶³

During her first visit to Japan after becoming Secretary of State, in February

⁶⁰ Shigeru and Sakie Yokota, *Megumi Techo*

⁶¹ See COMJAN’s website, <http://www.chosa-kai.jp/indexeng.htm>.

⁶² North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, Pub. L. No. 108-333, 118 Stat. 1287 (2004).

⁶³ United States White House. “President George W. Bush welcomes Mrs. Sakie Yokota...” Welcome to the White House. http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/04/images/20060428-1_p042806pm-0188jpg-515h.html (accessed April 27, 2011).

2009, Hillary Clinton arranged her schedule to meet with families of Japanese abductees and reassured them that she attaches “great importance to the abduction issue” and said that “it’s important that their plight not be forgotten.”⁶⁴

South Korea has also taken steps to increase public awareness of the plight of those abducted to North Korea. Through the diligent efforts of KWAFU, the South Korean National Assembly passed a law honoring the wartime abductees in March 2010. This law provided the first official recognition that South Koreans were in fact abducted to North Korea during the Korean War. It recognizes that all of those who disappeared during the war cannot be considered automatically to have been defectors to the North. The law authorized the South Korean government to investigate the status of abductees, repatriate them, and exchange information about them with the North Korean government. The law came into force on September 27, 2010 and the Committee for Investigation of Wartime Abduction Damage and Rehabilitation was created under the Prime Minister’s office in December of 2010.

As this report has explained, family members, friends, volunteers and governments across the globe have expended great effort to gather accurate information to account for those who may have been abducted and bring them home. This is not merely a Japanese issue, although the Japanese cases are among the most violent and are clearly very important. The Japanese families’ groups AFVKN and NARKN have reached out to KWAFU in South Korea and have formed the International Coalition to Resolve the Abduction by North Korea. Coalition members from Thailand, Romania, the US and other nations have formed a larger support group to strengthen international ties as well as to promote international awareness and support. They hold conferences every year that broaden the public’s awareness of these crimes committed by North Korea against the citizens of at least twelve nations. It is through this type of international cooperation and coordination that the lives of captives in North Korea may be saved, and abducted persons may be able to return to their homes. Without such international pressure, the fate of the captives will never be known.

⁶⁴ Glenn Kessler, “Clinton to Meet Families of Abducted Japanese: U.S. Emphasis on Seizures by N. Korea in ‘70s, ‘80s Accompanied by Peace Outline for Pyongyang,” *Washington Post*, February 14, 2009, available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/02/13/AR2009021303141.html?nav=emailpage>.

CHAPTER 7:

The Legal Implications of North Korea's Abductions

Since 1950, the North Korean regime, which for the legal analysis in this chapter will be referred to by its formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), has followed a policy of abduction and enforced disappearance, surreptitiously abducting and indefinitely detaining foreign nationals despite clear international legal mandates against such practices.¹ The basic human rights of those abducted or detained unlawfully and secretly inside North Korea are protected by several major international treaties as well as customary international law. In addition, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states are protected by international law.

Through the reports of escaped abductees and former operatives presented in this report, it is clear that North Korea abducted foreign nationals from other countries, held them against their will and without due process of law, forced them into marriages, forced them to work for the North Korean government, prohibited contact between them and their families, and subjected some of them to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, and death.

One method of abduction involved sending North Korean operatives into a foreign country, physically attacking and forcibly taking a foreign national, and transporting him or her by boat to North Korea. Once in North Korea, abductees, like detainees, were often confined to small areas, often inadequately fed, indoctrinated in North Korean teachings, and forced to perform specific tasks for the regime, such as teaching languages to North Korean espionage operatives, marrying other foreign abductees, promoting propaganda efforts, and committing abductions themselves. Most often, abductees and detainees are held *incommunicado*, without access to their families or the consular agents representing their home countries, and without any effective means to challenge their detention or seek judicial recourse.

International law, defined as “the body of rules and principles of action which are binding upon civilized states in their relations with one another,”² has two primary sources—treaties and custom.³ As explained below, the DPRK has explicitly

¹ For purposes of this chapter, “abductee” means a foreign national taken from one country to the DPRK by force or fraudulent persuasion. See Blacks Law Dictionary (8th ed. 2004). The DPRK also engages in the practice of detaining foreign nationals already inside the DPRK by deception, persuasion or force. These victims are referred to as “detainees.” Unless specifically noted, the analysis as to the DPRK's violations of international law relates to both detainees and abductees.

² J.L. Bierly, *The Law of Nations: An Introduction to the International Law of Peace*, 6th ed. (1963).

³ B. Hernandez-Truyol & S. Powell, *Just Trade*, “Global Concepts” 15 (2009). See also Statute of the International Court of Justice, art. 38, June 26, 1945, 33 U.S.T.S. 993 (setting forth four sources of international law: (1) international conventions; (2) international custom; (3) general principles of law recognized by civilized nations; and (4) treatises authored by “the most highly qualified publicists”).

⁴ Douglas J. Sylvester, *Customary International Law, Forcible Abduction, and America's Return to the “Savage*

consented to most of the obligations and rights at issue through its ratification of several relevant international treaties. Customary law consists of widely accepted state duties and privileges that are followed out of “a sense of mutual obligation.”⁴ Customary law applies to the DPRK, as well as all other nation-states, whether or not they have explicitly accepted such obligations. However, while these principles are considered binding international law, absent a treaty or international convention, there is no easily judicable way for states to enforce these rights.

The DPRK's practice of abducting and secretly detaining foreign nationals violates numerous international agreements to which the DPRK is a party, including, but not limited to, the United Nations Charter,⁵ the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁶ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,⁷ and the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages.⁸

Many of the rights violated by North Korea, while encapsulated in these and other international agreements to which the DPRK is party, are also considered customary international law to which all countries are bound. In particular, North Korean actions violate numerous provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.⁹

North Korea's Actions Have Violated International Conventions

Article 2 Paragraph 4 of the U.N. Charter provides that all states shall “refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state” and Article 2 Paragraph 7 prohibits states from “intervene[ing] in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.”¹⁰ Nevertheless, the DPRK has routinely entered the territory of other sovereign nations and forcibly abducted the nationals of

State,” 42 Buff. L.R. 555, 576 (1994).

⁴ U.N. Charter, Oct. 24, 1945, 1 U.N.T.S. 16 [hereinafter U.N. Charter], available at <http://www.unhcr.org/ref-world/docid/3ae6b3930.html>.

⁵ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Dec. 16, 1966, 999 U.N.T.S. 171 [hereinafter ICCPR], available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>.

⁶ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Dec. 16, 1966, 993 U.N.T.S. 3 [hereinafter ICESCR], available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm>.

⁷ International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages, G.A. Res. 146 (XXXIV), U.N. GAOR, 34th Sess., Supp. No. 46, at 245, U.N. Doc. A/34/46 (1979), entered into force June 3, 1983.

⁸ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, G.A. Res. 217 (III) A, U.N. Doc. A/RES/217(III) (Dec. 10, 1948) [hereinafter UDHR], available at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>.

⁹ U.N. Charter, *supra*, note 5, art. 2(4), 2(7). Article 2(1) of the U.N. Charter codifies the concept of sovereign equality. The DPRK was admitted as a U.N. member-state on September 17, 1991, and is a signatory to the U.N. Charter, which is itself an international treaty. Among the U.N. Charter Principles that are particularly relevant to this discussion are: Principle 1: “The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members;” and Principle 4 “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.

¹⁰ U.N. Charter, *supra*, note 5, art. 56.



Megumi Yokota at Kim Jong-il Political and Military University

another state, in clear violation of both of these principles. Furthermore, Article 56 of the U.N. Charter requires that all members take action, in cooperation with the U.N., to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people—an obligation which the DPRK's abduction policy obviously ignores.¹¹

Perhaps the DPRK's most striking international legal violations are those of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ("ICCPR").¹² The ICCPR, a multilateral U.N. treaty to which the DPRK acceded in 1981, enshrines what are considered fundamental civil and political freedoms.¹³ The ICCPR sets out certain fundamental standards of human rights which signatories are obligated to respect. These include prohibitions on torture, forced labor and arbitrary detention; the provision of fair judicial process; freedom from arbitrary detention; freedom of movement, expression and religion; and the protection of privacy, children and families.¹⁴ Many of the rights under the ICCPR are also considered customary international law and some of them—such as the rights to due process and freedom from torture—are considered *jus cogens* or nonderogable rights, meaning they cannot be derogated even in times of war.¹⁵

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ("ICESCR"), another multilateral convention to which the DPRK is a party, guarantees among other rights, the right to "freely determine [one's] political status, and freely pursue [one's] economic, social and cultural development," the right to work, the right to favorable work conditions, and the right to the highest standards

¹¹ The DPRK's abduction practice also violates the domestic laws of North Korea and the countries from which foreign nationals are abducted. However, these domestic laws are not the focus of this analysis.

¹² The DPRK attempted to withdraw from the ICCPR in 1997; however, the U.N. refused to acknowledge the withdrawal stating that the ICCPR provides no mechanism for withdrawal. See United Nations Treaty Collection, Status of Treaties, ch. IV, no. 4, Status of ICCPR, available at http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtsg_no=IV-4&chapter=4&lang=en (last visited July 11, 2010).

¹³ The following ICCPR articles are particularly relevant to this discussion: Article 6, The right to life; Article 8, The right to be free from servitude and forced labor; Article 9, The rights to liberty and security of person; to be free from and able to challenge arbitrary arrest or detention; Article 10, The right to humane treatment when detained; Article 12, The right to freedom of movement; Article 14, The rights to due process and fair trial; Article 17, The right to privacy; Article 18, Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; Article 19, Freedom of opinion and expression; Article 22, The right to freedom of association; Article 23, The right to freedom of marriage. ICCPR, *supra*, note 6.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Restatement (Third) of the Foreign Relations Law of the United States (1987), § 702, § 702 cmt. n. See also *R. v. Evans and others, ex parte Pinochet* (no. 3), [1999] 2 All E.R. 97, 6 BHRC 24, at 153 (H.L.) (appeal taken from Q.B.) (U.K.); 11 Louis-Philippe F. Rouillard, *Misinterpreting the Prohibition of Torture Under International Law*, 21 Am. U. Int'l L. Rev. 9, 22 (2005); James Thuo Gathii, *Torture, Extraterritoriality, Terrorism, and International Law*, 67 Alb. L. Rev. 335, 341 (2003).

¹⁵ ICESCR, *supra*, note 7, arts. 1, 6, 7 & 12.

of mental or physical health.¹⁶

In 2001, the DPRK acceded to the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages ("ICATH"), which prohibits seizing or detaining "another person in order to compel a third party, namely a State . . . to do or abstain from doing any act as an explicit or implicit condition for the release of the hostage."¹⁷ Under this Convention, there is a legal distinction between the taking of a hostage and the indefinite detention of such person. The DPRK has, in the past, abducted people in order to gain leverage in diplomatic negotiations with foreign powers.¹⁸ However, most known instances of hostage-taking on the part of the DPRK occurred prior to the DPRK's accession to this Convention in 2001. Because the DPRK cannot be held to have violated this treaty based upon its actions prior to acceding to this convention, this treaty is not likely applicable in the context of most North Korean abductions.

North Korea Has Also Violated Customary International Norms

North Korea's practice of abducting foreign nationals, and indefinitely and secretly detaining them, also violates numerous customary legal principles, including the civil and political rights of individuals to be free from arbitrary detention and afforded fair judicial process, not to mention the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nations from which victims have been abducted. One source of customary international law is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("UDHR"), which was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1948 in the wake of World War II and the Holocaust.

By its own terms, the UDHR represents "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations."¹⁹ While not a binding international agreement, the UDHR is largely considered to represent a statement of the most fundamental freedoms and rights, considered customary international law. Like the ICCPR, the UDHR sets forth many important individual human rights, such as the right to liberty, and freedoms from arbitrary detention and compulsory labor.²⁰ The UDHR

¹⁶ ICATH, *supra*, note 8, art. 1(1).

¹⁷ See, *supra*, Chapter 3, pp. 17–21.

¹⁸ UDHR, *supra*, note 9, at Preamble.

¹⁹ *Id.* The most relevant UDHR rights and protections include: Article 3: life, liberty and security of person; Article 9: freedom from arbitrary detention; Article 12: freedom from arbitrary interference with privacy, family, and home life; Article 13: freedom of movement/freedom to leave any country; Article 16: free and full consent of spouses to marriage; Article 20: compelled association; Article 23: free choice of employment, and just and favorable conditions; and Article 27: free participation in cultural life. See *id.*

²⁰ It is a generally accepted notion that one state cannot arrest, seize or detain individuals inside another state without the host state's consent. See Restatement, *supra*, note 16; at 432(2) cmt. b; Leila Nadia Sadat, *Ghost Prisoners and Black Sites: Extraordinary Rendition Under International Law*, 37 Case W. Res. J. Int'l L. 309, 323 (2006). Such illegal abductions, when carried out repeatedly and systematically threaten not only the lives and human rights of the individuals abducted but they endanger international peace and security. See Question

is considered part of the “International Bill of Rights”—an informal title which denotes the significance of the rights enshrined in this document. The vast majority of these rights exist irrespective of the documents in which they are encapsulated, and are customary international law. As such, North Korea is obligated to recognize and protect these rights, even where it has not explicitly consented to such obligations. Nonetheless, North Korea has explicitly consented to most of the rights enshrined in the UDHR through its joining the United Nations and through its accession to treaties such as the ICCPR and the ICESCR.

North Korea is obligated to recognize and protect these rights, even where it has not explicitly consented to such obligations.

In addition to the human rights discussed above, the DPRK’s abduction practice also violates the customary international norms of “sovereignty” and “territorial integrity.”²¹ Multiple international and regional treaties and declarations, including the U.N. Charter, recognize the concepts of sovereignty and territorial integrity, confirming these concepts as customary norms.²² All U.N. member states are sovereign equals and are bound to respect the sovereignty of other nations. Sovereignty protects a nation’s right to be free from intervention and intrusion by other states.²³

Under international law, there are two generally recognized ways in which a person can be legally extradited to another country: written agreement or friendly cooperation.²⁴ Absent formal agreement or friendly cooperation, the surreptitious arrest and transport of an individual across borders can be characterized as an “enforced disappearance.” An enforced disappearance

Relating to the Case of Adolf Eichmann, S.C. Res. 138, U.N. Doc. S/4349 (June 23, 1960); *Ocalan v. Turkey* [GC], no. 46221/99, § 93, ECHR 2005-IV.

²¹ For example, the Convention of the Rights and Duties of States maintains that “[n]o state has the right to intervene in the affairs of another.” Convention of the Rights and Duties of States Adopted by the Seventh International Conference of American States art. 8, Dec. 26, 1933, 165 L.N.T.S. 19; *see also* Declaration on Friendly Relations, *supra*, note 22; Charter of the Organization of American States arts. 14, 20, April 30, 1948, 119 U.N.T.S. 3; Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe arts. III–IV, August 1, 1975, *reprinted in* 14 I.L.M. 1292; Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States, GA Res. 103, U.N. Doc. A/36/51 (Dec., 9 1981).

²² *See* Stephen D. Krasner, *Problematic Sovereignty* 10 (Stephen D. Krasner ed., 2001); Chris Brown, *Sovereignty, Rights and Justice* 79 (2002).

²³ *See Ocalan v. Turkey*, no. 46221/99, § 90, ECHR (Mar. 12, 2003).

²⁴ Douglas J. Sylvester, *Customary International Law, Forcible Abduction, and America’s Return to the “Savage State,”* 42 Buff. L.R. 555, 579 (1994). The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances defines enforced disappearance as “the arrest, detention, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the State or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the State, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of the law.” International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, A/RES/61/177 (Dec. 20, 2006), *available at* <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/47fdfaeb0.html>.

is defined as a situation in which persons acting without legal authority abduct an individual and then refuse to acknowledge the person’s detention, placing them outside formal legal protection.²⁵ While generally disappearances take place within the boundaries of individual states, they can also occur across borders. In addition to offending principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, enforced disappearances and clandestine abductions are particularly egregious abuses of individual rights. In fact, the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances identifies forced disappearances as crimes against humanity.²⁶ Although the DPRK has not ratified the Convention, which came into force in December of 2010, the prohibition against enforced disappearances is considered *jus cogens* under international law, meaning that the DPRK is bound by the principle even if the DPRK does not actually accede to the agreement.²⁷

It is clear that North Korea has engaged in practices that violate multiple international treaties and customary norms. These are enumerated below:

Trespassing and Abducting Foreign Nationals

As part of its abduction policy, DPRK operatives have illegally entered other states, abducted foreign nationals, made arbitrary arrests and detained foreign nationals for prolonged periods of time. One illustration of the DPRK’s policies has been its repeated abductions of South Koreans at sea. For example, in 1970, Lee Jhe-Gun, a South Korean fisherman, along with the 27 other crew members from his fishing vessel were captured at sea by DPRK officials and transported to North Korea.²⁸ The case of Yun Jong-su, and the 32 other fisherman aboard the same boat, is another example. They were abducted at sea and forcibly transported to North Korea.²⁹ Yun only escaped in 2008 after more than 30 years in North Korean captivity, having to leave his crewmembers behind.

Still another example was the experience of Kaoru Hasuike—a twenty-year-old college student—and Yukiko Okudo—his twenty-two-year-old girlfriend—who were taken from a beach in Japan on July 31, 1978. The pair were forcibly abducted by North Korean operatives, tied up, gagged and put in two large bags, where they

²⁵ Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court art. 7, July 17, 1998, 2187 U.N.T.S. 90 (“The widespread or systematic practice of enforced disappearance constitutes a crime against humanity as defined in applicable international law and shall attract the consequences provided for under such applicable international law.”).

²⁶ Global Concepts, *supra*, note 3, at 16. However, customary norms or principles, even those which have attained *jus cogens* status, when not enshrined in binding treaties or international documents are inherently difficult to address because there is no easy, judicable way to enforce these rights against other countries, such as North Korea.

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ *See* “Man flees N Korea after 33 years,” BBC.com (June 8, 2008), *available at* <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7444413.stm> (last visited July 29, 2010).

²⁹ *See, supra*, Chapter 3, for more details.

remained until they were transferred to a small boat, and then to a larger boat, upon which they were drugged, and, ultimately, transported to North Korea. These two Japanese nationals were then held in North Korea for twenty-four years.³⁰ The abductions of Kaoru Hasuike and Yukiko Okudo—examples of how the DPRK carries out violent abductions abroad—illustrate the broad legal implications of North Korean abductions.

Analyzed in the context of international law violations, these types of abductions can be analyzed in three distinct phases—(1) the unlawful intrusion into the territory of a sovereign state, (2) the surreptitious, often forceful, abduction and transport of the foreign nationals from one state to North Korea, and (3) the prolonged detention of foreign nationals against their will.

First, the DPRK, without permission, enters the territory of another sovereign state and conducts paramilitary activities on that state's soil—a violation of state's sovereignty and territorial integrity—principles recognized by the U.N. Charter and considered customary international law. Because two states are considered sovereign equals, a state's law enforcement or military officers may only exercise their powers within the territory of another state with that other state's consent.³¹ The International Court of Justice (“ICJ”) has recognized sovereignty as customary international law,³² and the ICJ's predecessor court recognized that it is a violation of sovereign rights to conduct police operations in the territory of another state without approval.³³ Moreover, the U.N. Security Council has declared that entering the territory of another state to abduct a person offends international stability, stating, “abductions, if repeated, may endanger international peace and security.”³⁴ When the DPRK trespasses into the territory of another sovereign state to abduct foreign nationals, it violates the sovereignty of that other nation, as well as its responsibility to the entire international community, by failing to honor the U.N. Charter and its obligations under customary international law.

Second, the abduction and transfer of foreign abductees to North Korea is conducted without the permission of the government from which they are taken—arguably, an illegal extradition amounting to an enforced disappearance, which is defined, generally, as a situation in which persons abducts individuals outside the framework of the rule of law.³⁵ Such enforced disappearances or clandestine abductions offend not only principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, but constitute particularly egregious abuses of individual rights. As noted above, the

³⁰ See Restatement, *supra*, note 16, at § 432.

³¹ See *Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua* (Nicar. v. U.S.) 1986 I.C.J. 14, 49–50 (June 27).

³² S.S. *Lotus* (Fr. v. Turk.) 1927 P.C.I.J. (ser. A) No. 10 (Sept. 7).

³³ *Question Relating to the Case of Adolf Eichmann*, S.C. Res. 138, U.N. Doc. S/4349 (June 23, 1960); see also *Ocalan v. Turkey* [GC], no. 46221/99, § 93, ECHR 2005-IV.

³⁴ Sylvester, *supra*, note 26, at 579.

³⁵ See, *supra*, Section III(B).

Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court identify systematic enforced disappearances as crimes against humanity.³⁶

The DPRK's secret abduction and prolonged detention of an individual, when conducted to suit the means of the DPRK and not in accordance with established principles of law, constitute a severe deprivation of civil liberties—most obviously, the right to be free from arbitrary arrest and detention and freedom of liberty. The ICCPR states that “[e]veryone has the right to liberty and security of persons . . . [and] [n]o one shall be deprived of his liberty except . . . in accordance with such procedure as are established by law.”³⁷

Further, as the experience of abductees Hasuike and Okudo illustrates, the DPRK also employs forcible and brutal means to acquire abductees. Such tactics include beating or knocking abductees unconscious, restraining them inside small, dark containers—such as the bags in which Hasuike and Okudo were restrained before being transferred to a boat—and drugging abductees to ensure they are submissive. These practices amount to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, violations of the ICCPR to which the DPRK is party.³⁸ Inhuman treatment is defined as “an act which, judged objectively, is deliberate and not accidental, [and] which causes serious mental or physical suffering or injury or constitutes a serious attack on human dignity.”³⁹ The DPRK abduction practice is most certainly “deliberate and not accidental.” Further, the practice of drugging abductees, physically abusing them, and restraining them in small, dark containers is the type of treatment that, viewed objectively, would cause “serious mental or physical suffering.” Cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment of prisoners or detainees is clearly prohibited, and this prohibition is nonderogable, even where it does not rise to the level of torture.⁴⁰ The obligation to treat detainees humanely applies whenever a state has custody or control over an individual, even when conducting activities outside of the state's territory.⁴¹

Deprivation of Due Process Rights

Japanese abductees Hasuike and Okudo were held for 24 years by the DPRK during which time they were subjected to continuous violations of their rights under

³⁶ ICCPR, *supra*, note 7, art. 9(1).

³⁷ *Id.* at art. 7.

³⁸ *Prosecutor v. Delalic et al.* (1998) Case No. IT-96-21-T (ICTY, Trial Chamber), at para 551.

³⁹ ICCPR, *supra*, note 7, art. 4(2).

⁴⁰ See, e.g., Hugh King, *The Extraterritorial Human Rights Obligations of States*, 9(4) *Human Rights Law Review* 521–556 (2009) (citing examples of extraterritorial application of the ICCPR by the Human Rights Committee and other bodies).

⁴¹ Due process refers to the “conduct of legal proceedings according to established rules and principles for the protection and enforcement of private rights, including notice and the right to a fair hearing before a tribunal with the power to decide the case.” *Black's Law Dictionary* (8th ed. 2004), “due process.” Due process rights are those rights, such as to life and liberty, and property, that are so fundamentally important as to standards of fairness and justice. *Id.* at “Due Process Rights.”

the ICCPR, including their due process rights.⁴² In particular, Articles 9, 14 and 15 of the ICCPR describe the basic due process rights that should be accorded to all persons. These rights relate to the basic standards of fairness that govern the arrest, trial and detention of individuals.⁴³ For example, Article 9 requires that everyone arrested be informed of the reasons for arrest, promptly brought before a tribunal, and permitted to challenge one's arrest or detention.⁴⁴ Article 9 of the ICCPR requires that an arrested person be brought before a judge "promptly," without an unreasonable delay. Article 14 lays out the right of everyone to a "fair and public hearing by a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal established at law."⁴⁵

While there is no explicit definition of "unreasonable delay," detaining an individual for even a week without judicial oversight is considered unreasonable by international tribunals.⁴⁶ Most abductees and detainees, including South Koreans Yun Jong-su and Lee Jhe-gun, were held for years and were never granted the opportunity to challenge their detention before "an independent and impartial tribunal."⁴⁷ Moreover, the vast majority of DPRK abductees, including those detained from within the DPRK, or abducted from another country, still remain in the DPRK. In that sense, the rights of these individuals under the ICCPR continue to be violated so long as they remain in the custody of the DPRK. Indefinitely detaining abductees, *incommunicado*, amounts to a prolonged arbitrary detention and a deprivation of due process rights, in violation of the ICCPR as well as customary law.⁴⁸

Deprivation of Rights to Privacy and Freedom of Movement, Association, Thought, Conscience and Association

One former detainee, Charles Jenkins, a U.S. Army deserter who entered the DPRK voluntarily but was prevented from leaving, remained under the control of the DPRK for almost 40 years. After his release, Jenkins wrote a memoir detailing his life under the control of the DPRK. Initially, he and three other army defectors were

⁴² ICCPR, *supra*, note 6, arts. 9, 14 & 15.

⁴³ *Id.* at art. 9(1)–(3).

⁴⁴ *Id.* at art. 14(1).

⁴⁵ See, e.g., *Cetinkaya and Caglayan v. Turkey*, no. 3921/02, § 40, ECHR (Jan. 23, 2007) (finding that detaining a person for six days without any judicial oversight is unreasonable); *Murray v. U.K.* [GC], no. 14310/88, § 58, ECHR (ser. B) at 300-A (Oct. 28, 1994); *Baz and Others v. Turkey*, no. 76106/01, § 26, ECHR (Mar. 5, 2007); *Ozcelik v. Turkey*, no. 56497/00, § 30, ECHR (Feb. 20, 2007); *Saracoglu and Others v. Turkey*, no. 4489/02, § 38, ECHR (Nov. 29, 2007); *Buldus v. Turkey*, no. 64741/01, § 16, ECHR (Dec. 22, 2005); *Demir v. Turkey*, ECHR 21380/93, § 41, ECHR (Sept. 23, 1998); *Brogan and Others v. U.K.*, no. 11209/84, § 62, ECHR (ser. A) at 145-B (Nov. 29, 1988); *Ocalan v. Turkey* [GC], no. 46221/99, § 93, ECHR 2005-IV.

⁴⁶ *Id.*

⁴⁷ ICCPR, *supra*, note 6, arts. 9 & 14.

⁴⁸ *Id.* at art. 12 ("Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence; Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own."); art. 22: "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others . . .").

housed together. They were also kept under constant surveillance. This experience is emblematic of the DPRK's policy of routinely segregating foreign abductees from North Korean society, confining their movements to a limited area (i.e., within a housing compound) and their interactions to a limited number of DPRK workers and other abductees. This practice violates the ICCPR freedoms of movement and association, and, arguably, also the obligation to treat all persons detained "with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person," as required by Article 10 of the ICCPR.⁴⁹ Moreover, subjecting detainees to constant surveillance, even in their own "homes" (or housing complexes), is an invasion of the right to privacy, as protected by Article 17.⁵⁰

The regime also puts abductees through a "re-education" process, where abductees undergo intense training in the ways of DPRK culture and government and are forced to swear loyalty to the DPRK and its leader, Kim Jong-il. Abductees that fail to conform or perform adequately are disciplined by DPRK workers. This "re-education" process is reportedly intense and emotionally jarring. It impacts the physical and psychological well-being of abductees, and most certainly denies abductees their right, under the ICESCR, to the highest standards of mental or physical health.⁵¹ Furthermore, forcing abductees to swear allegiance to the DPRK and renounce other allegiances contravenes the rights to freedom of thought, conscience, opinion, expression and association, which are protected by Articles 18, 19, and 22 of the ICCPR.⁵²

Forced Labor

Article 8 of the ICCPR states that "[n]o one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour."⁵³ However, the DPRK routinely forces abductees to work for the government in a variety of roles, denying abductees their right to earn a living by work which is freely chosen. For example, Yaeko Taguchi, a 22-year-old Japanese mother of two who was abducted from Tokyo in 1978, was forced to teach Japanese language and culture to a DPRK female operative, who subsequently carried out the bombing of a Korean Air Lines flight, killing 115 passengers. U.S. Army deserter Jenkins was also forced to teach English to DPRK soldiers and to translate foreign radio programs. The practice of compelling abductees such as Taguchi and Jenkins to work for the DPRK violates their right to be free from compulsory labor

⁴⁹ *Id.* at art. 17 ("No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family . . .").

⁵⁰ ICESCR, *supra*, note 7, at art 12.

⁵¹ ICCPR, *supra*, note 6, at arts. 18, 19 & 22.

⁵² *Id.* at art. 8.

⁵³ *Id.*

*Abductees
undergo
intense training
and re-education*

under the ICCPR, as well as customary law as defined in the UDHR.⁵⁴

Forced Marriages

In many instances, the DPRK forces or compels abductees to marry each other. For example, Megumi Yao, a Japanese student who travelled to the DPRK in 1977, intending to study there for a few months, was abducted and detained in the DPRK for more than seven years.⁵⁵ During this time, she was forced to marry another Japanese citizen—Yasuhiro Shibata, a member of the Japanese Red Army terrorist group who had been granted asylum by the DPRK. Yao reported that she was regularly beaten and raped by Shibata, and ultimately gave birth to a child while under the control of the DPRK. Three other Japanese women abductees were also forced to marry members of the Red Army, within days of Yao's forced marriage.

Article 23 of the ICCPR provides that “[n]o marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of the intending spouses.”⁵⁶ The DPRK's practice of compelling or coercing marriage among abductees or detainees violates Article 23, and also impinges on the rights to privacy and freedom of family life, as protected by Article 17. Yao's treatment at the hands of Shibata, who was working as an operative for the DPRK, while in the custody of the DPRK also violates her right to be free from torture and inhuman treatment.⁵⁷ Rape constitutes torture under international law when condoned by the government or carried out with the knowledge of government officials. A 1992 Report of the U.N. Special Rapporteur on torture found that “rape or other forms of sexual assault against women in detention were a particularly ignominious violation of the inherent dignity and the right to physical integrity of the human being, [and] they accordingly constituted an act of torture.”⁵⁸

Torture and Inhuman Treatment

Some foreign abductees detained by the DPRK are tortured and others are sometimes killed. In 1968, the DPRK captured 83 U.S. Navy personnel of the U.S.S. Pueblo, and detained and tortured them for 11 months before releasing them into U.S. custody. Further, one of the naval officers was killed in custody.⁵⁹ In a more

⁵⁴ See, *supra*, Chapter 3.

⁵⁵ ICCPR, *supra*, note 6, art. 23.

⁵⁶ *Id.* at art. 10.

⁵⁷ U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1992/SR.21, para. 35, Report by the Special Rapporteur, P. Koojimans, appointed pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1985/33, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1986/15 (February 19, 1986).

⁵⁸ The treatment of these U.S. sailors violated the Geneva Conventions that protect prisoners of war and military members of one country who are captured by the military members of another country during times of conflict. See Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Aug. 12, 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 135. The DPRK was not a party to the ICCPR in 1968.

⁵⁹ *Han Kim and Yong Seok Kim v. DPRK*, Civ. No. 09-6489, (U.D.C. November 23, 2009).

recent case, U.S. legal permanent resident Kim Dong-shik was kidnapped near the Chinese border in 2000, where he was assisting DPRK refugees.⁶⁰ After refusing to cooperate, Kim was sent to a penal labor camp, where he was tortured, and starved; it is reported that he died a year after his kidnapping due to malnutrition and lingering damage from his torture. U.S. Army deserter Charles Jenkins recalled that he was violently beaten on several occasions over the course of seven years, by a fellow deserter at the direction of a DPRK instructor. On one occasion, the fellow deserter punched Jenkins repeatedly, until he was barely conscious and his face streamed with blood.⁶¹

Article 7 of the ICCPR prohibits all forms of torture, or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.⁶² As previously noted, intentionally subjecting a detainee to acts that cause “serious mental or physical suffering or injury or constitute a serious attack on human dignity” amount to inhuman treatment. The violent beating of Charles Jenkins, at the behest of a DPRK official, amounts to cruel or inhuman treatment. By itself, the one occasion upon which Jenkins was beaten so severely that he nearly lost consciousness, and also suffered injuries that led to significant bleeding, most certainly amounts to “serious physical suffering or injury.” Moreover, this pattern of physical abuse was repeated, resulting in seven years of physical and mental suffering; even under the most lenient of interpretations, this continual abuse most certainly rises to the level of cruel and inhuman treatment.

As explained previously, the prolonged, *incommunicado* detention of Jenkins and the majority of foreign abductees and detainees amount to an arbitrary deprivation of liberty. Further, some abductees such as Kim Dong-shik are killed, which amounts to the arbitrary deprivation of life. Article 6 Paragraph 1 of the ICCPR protects the right to life and prohibits the arbitrary deprivation of life: “In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance with the law in force at the time of the commission of the crime and . . . can only be carried out pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court.”⁶³ Giving aid to DPRK refugees located in China hardly amounts to the “most serious” of crimes, and Mr. Kim's sentence was certainly not imposed “pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court.”

As has been demonstrated, the DPRK has engaged in a systematic practice of forcibly abducting and secretly detaining foreign nationals, and subjecting them to treatment that denies the most basic human rights. Such practices are flagrant

⁶⁰ Charles R. Jenkins, *The Reluctant Communist: My Desertion, Court-Martial, and Forty-Year Imprisonment in North Korea*, (University of California Press: Berkeley, 2008).

⁶¹ ICCPR, *supra*, note 6, art. 7.

⁶² *Id.* at art. 6(2). “Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.” *Id.* at art. 6(1).

⁶³ Unfortunately, none of these methods have shown to be particularly persuasive on North Korea.

violations of the ICCPR and numerous other treaties to which the DPRK is a party, as well as violations of customary international law. The committee for Human Rights in North Korea therefore sets forth in the next two chapters legal as well as non-legal measures to address such violations, publicize their scope and apply pressure on the DPRK to release those who are held in detention and allow them to return home.

A Few Legal Actions Can Be Pursued to Deal with Abductions

The most efficacious avenues of state intervention typically involve domestic measures, political pressure, and diplomatic persuasion tactics, such as trade embargoes, import/export tariffs or U.N. resolutions.⁶⁴ As one illustration, several non-governmental organizations, including the U.S. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, have previously recommended inserting a provision into the annual U.N. General Assembly resolution on the DPRK to create a commission of inquiry to examine crimes against humanity committed by the DPRK, which would include foreign abductions.⁶⁵ Alternatively, a state may consider instituting judicial action against the individual abductors for violations of those states' domestic laws. There may be, however, some barriers to such action, including diplomatic immunity and issues of sovereignty, particularly when the officials are high-ranking government or military officers. Further, even when such actions are brought they are of limited effect because the perpetrators are most often no longer located within the territory where the judicial action is pending—thus, a state would need to seek the extradition of these abductors (which the DPRK would not likely grant) or try them *in absentia*. The benefit of such actions is not that they effectively punish or sanction the perpetrators or the DPRK; rather, it is that they draw attention to pervasive nature of the DPRK's abductions policy.

The DPRK has engaged in a systematic practice of forcibly abducting and secretly detaining foreign nationals, and subjecting them to various practices that deny them the most basic human rights and civil liberties. These practices are flagrant violations of the ICCPR and numerous other treaties to which the DPRK is a party, as well as violations of customary international law. The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, therefore, recommends a number of international and domestic mechanisms to publicize the scope of these violations and apply pressure on the DPRK to permit those who have been taken to return home and

⁶⁴ See DLA Piper LLP (US) & Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, *Failure to Protect: The Ongoing Challenge of North Korea* 1 (2008), available at http://www.dlapiper.com/files/upload/NK_Report_F2P_North%20Korea_Sep19_08.pdf (last visited July 29, 2010); and David Hawk & Freedom House, *Concentrations of Inhumanity* 65 (2007), available at http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/53.pdf (last visited July 29, 2010).

⁶⁵ 28 U.S.C. § 1605, *et seq.* (2008).

to account for captives who have died in detention. These are outlined in the next Chapter.

Americans Can Pursue Legal Remedies Against State Sponsors of Terrorism

In the United States, victims of terrorism, kidnapping and torture and their families who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents may bring civil actions against sovereign states that are listed as state sponsors of terror by the U.S. State Department.

Such a right at first glance seems to be at odds with the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of 1976 (FSIA), which provides for sovereign immunity under which foreign states are generally immune from the jurisdiction of courts of the United States subject to specific exceptions.⁶⁶ As originally enacted, the exceptions to immunity under the FSIA included cases in which a foreign state had waived its immunity and those involving commercial activities of a foreign state with a nexus to the United States.⁶⁷ The FSIA was the American codification of the U.N. Convention on sovereign immunity and is based upon the “restrictive theory” of state immunity which holds that foreign states are immune from jurisdiction relating to their “public acts” (*acta jure imperii*) but were not immune from jurisdiction for their “private acts” (*acta jure gestionis*).⁶⁸

However, in 1996, following the infamous Achille Lauro cruise ship hijacking in which an American citizen was brutally murdered by Palestinian gunmen on the high seas, Congress enacted an additional “terrorism exception” to the FSIA, whereby it lifted the sovereign immunity of designated foreign state sponsors of terrorism in civil actions brought by American citizen victims and their families for terrorist attacks carried out by such foreign states or for which the foreign state had provided material support and resources.⁶⁹ The act, known as the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, allowed for lawsuits to be brought for terrorism against officials, employees and agents of such State Department designated foreign states.⁷⁰ The operatives and agents must, however, be acting within their official capacity and pursuant to a regime's formal policy in order for an American citizen to prove his claims against them. Initially, the law was viewed by the courts as merely a jurisdictional device allowing American citizens to bring lawsuits in federal courts for attacks and acts of torture which occurred outside the U.S. and plaintiffs had to allege common-law causes of action such as wrongful death, assault, battery

⁶⁶ See *id.* at § 1605.

⁶⁷ See, United Nations Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property, Dec. 2, 2004, G.A. Res. 59/38, 59th Sess., Supp. No. 49, U.N. Doc. A/59/49, (2004).

⁶⁸ See 28 U.S.C. § 1605A

⁶⁹ 28 U.S.C. § 2244(d) (2008).

⁷⁰ 28 U.S.C. § 1605A(a)(1).

and infliction of emotional distress. However, in 2008 Congress enacted the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, which created a new federal cause of action for American citizens injured in terrorist attacks or acts of torture carried out by designated foreign state sponsors of terrorism.

As it stands today the law provides that:

A foreign state shall not be immune from the jurisdiction of courts of the United States or of the States in any case not otherwise covered by this chapter in which money damages are sought against a foreign state for personal injury or death that was caused by an act of torture, extrajudicial killing, aircraft sabotage, hostage taking, or the provision of material support or resources for such an act if such act or provision of material support or resources is engaged in by an official, employee, or agent of such foreign state while acting within the scope of his or her office, employment, or agency.⁷¹

The Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991 defines torture as, any act, directed against an individual in the offender's custody or physical control, by which severe pain or suffering (other than pain or suffering arising only from or inherent in, or incidental to, lawful sanctions), whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on that individual for such purposes as obtaining from that individual or a third person information or a confession, punishing that individual for an act that individual or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, intimidating or coercing that individual or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind.⁷²

The effectiveness of the "terrorism exception" to the FSIA is restricted by the discretion of the State Department as to which countries are designated as state sponsors of terrorism and which regimes are removed from the list and can no longer be sued. In recent years, the list has been significantly diluted regarding acts carried out by the DPRK, which, was removed from the list in 2008.⁷³ Removing North Korea from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list effectively closed the door on further lawsuits under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act ("FSIA").⁷⁴

Several victims successfully brought actions against the DPRK in the past. For example, the family of Reverend Kim Dong-shik, who was abducted in 2000, brought an action in the District Court for the District of Columbia against the DPRK.⁷⁵ As this report goes to print, the case is pending.

⁷¹ 28 U.S.C. § 1350 3(b)(1) (2008).

⁷² Helene Cooper, "U.S. Declares North Korea Off Terror List," NY Times (Oct. 12, 2008) available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/13/world/asia/13terror.html>

⁷³ 28 U.S.C. § 1605A(a)(2)(A)(i)(I)(2010).

⁷⁴ Han Kim and Yong Seok Kim v. DPRK, Civ. No. 09-6489, (U.D.C. November 23, 2009).

⁷⁵ *Massie v. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, Civ. No. 2006-0749 (D. D.C. Dec. 30,

At least three other lawsuits were also initiated against the DPRK while they were on the list and within the six-month time limit after removal from the list:

In 2006, former crew members of the U.S.S. Pueblo sued the DPRK for kidnapping, torturing and illegally imprisoning them in 1968. The DPRK failed to answer the complaint and the court subsequently entered a default judgment against the DPRK.⁷⁶ The court then held a trial to determine damages for the plaintiffs and awarded them a total of \$65,850,000 to compensate them for their past and future pain and suffering.⁷⁷

As a state sponsor of terrorism, the DPRK is also liable for providing material support or resources to another foreign state for an act of torture, extrajudicial killing, aircraft sabotage, or hostage taking that resulted in personal injury or death.⁷⁸ The Puerto Rican victims of a 1972 terrorist attack at Israel's Lod Airport (currently Ben Gurion International Airport) sued North Korea for providing material support to those responsible for the attack—the Japanese Red Army and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.⁷⁹ Again, the DPRK failed to respond to the complaint and the court awarded the plaintiffs a combined \$78 million in compensatory damages and \$300 million in punitive damages to be divided equally.⁸⁰

On April 9, 2009, the victims of Hezbollah rocket attacks also brought suit in the United States for damages related to support the DPRK provided to Hezbollah.⁸¹ As this report is going to press, the case is still pending.

In addition to the "terrorism exception" to the FSIA, U.S. citizens and non-U.S. citizens also have recourse against individual terrorists, terrorist organizations and torturers (as they are not sovereign states and thus are not protected by the FSIA) through U.S. courts. However, such actions, potentially brought under the Torture Victims Protection Act and/or the Alien Torts Claims Act in most cases will not be a viable means of redress, since gaining personal jurisdiction over the defendants is often impossible. It requires the victim of a terrorist attack or torture to catch the individuals or organization that injured him, while they are physically in the U.S.

In 2006, former crew members of the U.S.S. Pueblo sued the DPRK for kidnapping, torturing and illegally imprisoning them in 1968.

2008).

⁷⁶ *Id.*

⁷⁷ 28 U.S.C. § 1605A(a)(1).

⁷⁸ *Calderon-Cardona v. DPRK* Civ. No. 2008-1367 (D. P.R. July 16, 2010).

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ *Id.*

⁸¹ *Kaplan v. Hezbollah*, Civ. No. 2009-646 (D. D.C. June 7, 2010) (denying plaintiff's motion for default judgment and granting in part plaintiff's motion to complete service of process on Hezbollah by publication).

and personally serve court papers on them. In only a small handful of instances have terror or torture victims successfully accomplished this.



Yaasushi Chimura embraces his father after arrival in Japan in 2002.

Chapter 8:

Conclusions and Recommendations

The reports of former operatives of the North Korean regime and the testimony of escaped abductees are corroborative. In most cases, these reports could not have been fabricated. The reports came from people who in many cases had no common bond, and could not have known each others' statements, most of which were secured and hidden from public view within police reports and classified documents. These reports often tell of the same victims, events, and circumstances from remarkably different perspectives—as different as former spies are from former captives.

Yet the truth has emerged. It has emerged from thorough, exhaustive research and investigations from objective private researchers before any government's analysts pieced together all the facts and before North Korea's Supreme Leader admitted his regime's past treachery. This is not an issue where government councils, or those of the international community, have initiated inquiries, brought complaints or proposed solutions in the first instance. It is an issue that was first raised only by the loved ones of those who disappeared. The power of their persistence continues to drive every attempt to resolve this heinous abuse of human rights by one regime against the citizens of other nations.

There is no question that North Korea has engaged in the following practices:

(1) trespassing into foreign territory to monitor and identify targets for abduction; (2) abducting foreign nationals from their home countries or while they were traveling abroad in third countries; (3) detaining foreign nationals against their will for long periods of time; (4) depriving abductees and detainees of basic due process of law; (5) severely restricting the movement of abductees and invading their rights to privacy and freedom of thought, conscience, religion, opinion, expression and association; (6) forcing abductees to work on behalf of the North Korean regime; (7) forcing abductees into marriages; and (8) subjecting abductees to physical abuse and, in some instances, torture and death. These are violations of international law but the victims and their families, indeed even their nations, have few legal measures available to hold North Korea accountable for its crimes.

Captives trapped in North Korea have no way to pursue their rights on their own behalf. This report has made it clear that they are under constant surveillance and constant pressure to adhere to the regime's demands. They cannot speak for themselves, and even when they are allowed to appear publicly they are forced to parrot the regime's demands.

Therefore it is incumbent on concerned people around the world to develop creative solutions and pursue all international and domestic mechanisms they can find to publicize the scope of these crimes and urge North Korea to respect the

rights of its captives.

Through sanctions or other means we should seek to enable those forcibly held to return home. We must persuade the North Korean regime to account for all abductees or foreign detainees who remain alive or have died in detention. In the event of abductees who may have died, certainly including the 82,959 taken during the Korean War, and the 93,000 Korean residents in Japan who were lured to return after the War, the North Korean regime should be held to a high standard of accountability. It is inconceivable that a government that monitored the daily lives of these individuals would not have specific and accurate information regarding their deaths. The authorities in North Korea should make every effort to permit the pertinent gravesites to be visited by loved ones and remains returned when requested.

It falls to the nations whose citizens' rights have been violated to seek redress from North Korea on behalf of the victims. While the crimes committed cannot be undone or the years forcibly spent in North Korea erased, steps can be and should be taken to ensure:

- that the regime's practice of abduction and forced detention of foreigners is permanently ended;
- that full verifiable information be provided to foreign governments about their citizens held in North Korea and to family members about their relatives held in North Korea;
- that persons abducted or detained and held in North Korea be allowed the freedom to leave and join their families abroad;
- that persons abducted or detained who choose to remain in North Korea be allowed to maintain contact with their families abroad, visit them, and be free from persecution if they choose to return to North Korea;
- that family members be allowed to visit the grave sites of abducted or detained persons and be presented with the remains of their relatives, if they request them; and
- that restitution be made to those who have been victims and their need for resettlement in their homelands be addressed with compassion and dignity.

Nations Should Pursue Bilateral Negotiations Directly with North Korea

The government of Japan's efforts to win the release of citizens who it believed were abducted by North Korea met with some limited results on September 17, 2002, when Kim Jong-il admitted to Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi that North Korea had abducted Japanese citizens. As is frequently the case, Kim's reason for these actions may never be known, but it inspires a great deal of conjecture. Perhaps he thought it would put the troublesome issue to rest. He may well have believed that it would pave the way for Japanese payment of war reparations to North Korea; a figure of \$10 billion was discussed. Perhaps he believed that releasing the American military defector, Charles Jenkins (who was married to a Japanese abductee, Ms. Soga), would result in punitive measures by the United States against him, creating public indignation in Japan and causing problems in the US-Japan alliance. In fact, however, Kim's admission did none of these things. Instead, it strengthened Japanese resolve and engendered international opprobrium.

North Korea's admission may also be seen as an acknowledgment that its abductions are criminal offenses in violation of international norms and legal principles. It may reflect North Korea's understanding that they are unacceptable to the international community.

Yet the North Korean regime did not provide credible information about the rest of the Japanese known to have been abducted. When it returned the remains of two Japanese, the remains did not match the DNA of the abductees. The government of Japan has accordingly continued to press North Korea for an accurate accounting. At the Second Japan-North Korea Summit Meeting in 2004, North Korea promised that it would reopen the investigation into the cases of abductees. In 2008, at Japan-North Korea Working Level Consultations, the North Korean government again pledged to carry out the investigation into the abduction of Japanese citizens. North Korea and Japan agreed to terms for carrying this forward, in particular the setting up by North Korea of an investigation committee to cooperate with Japan, but North Korea has not, to date, created a body to investigate abductions. Only highly questionable information has been provided about those who were never returned.

A foundation, nonetheless, exists for Japan's continued negotiating efforts to resolve the abductions issue. North Korea has been made aware that its relations with Japan will not normalize until it provides an accounting and Japan for its part is prepared to provide political and economic concessions if the abductions are resolved. One benefit North Korea achieved after the Koizumi summit was that Japan relaxed some of its sanctions on North Korean trade and shipments (primarily

*North Korea
has been made
aware that its
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accounting...*

of fish) into Japanese harbors, as discussed in Chapter 6.

Other governments whose citizens were abducted or detained have occasionally produced results through negotiations. After Lebanese government protests in 1979 against the holding of Lebanese women in North Korea, the North Korean government allowed the women to return.¹ To achieve this, Lebanon reportedly agreed to refrain from actively publicizing the issue, and accepted that no compensation would be awarded to the victims. Former United States President William J. Clinton successfully interceded with North Korea in August 2009, in a private capacity, on behalf of two American journalists held against their will, and the two were released.² Three American Christians have entered North Korea on proselytizing missions and have been returned after the intervention of prominent Americans.³ South Korea also managed to obtain the release of its citizens on numerous occasions, often without formal official intervention. Such cases raise the suspicion that returned abductees were trained to conduct espionage on behalf of the North, but even trained agents tend to renounce the North when they arrive in the South. The North's actions to return South Koreans should always be encouraged. In 2010, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the release by North Korea of four South Korean fishermen, and a national of the United States (in 2009 and 2010, respectively) as "positive decisions" with respect to "humanitarian concerns."⁴

Whether North Korea responded to governmental protests and publicity or sought economic or political advantage will remain a subject of debate, but what is evident is that international pressure and intercessions have, in fact, produced some results. North Korea, after apologizing for abducting Japanese, appears to have halted its Japanese abductions. Foreigners continue to be abducted from China, seemingly because they are thought to be engaged in helping North Korean refugees. North Korea has also not released all the foreigners it reportedly holds nor provided conclusive information about their fate or whereabouts. In ratifying the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages in 2001, North Korea asserted that it would not engage in disputes over its compliance in arbitration between states or in cases brought before the International Court of Justice.

¹ One of the two subsequently went back to North Korea to be with her family.

² Cha, Victor. "What Do They Really Want? Obama's North Korea Conundrum." *The Washington Quarterly* 32:4 (October 2009), p. 127.

³ Hunziker who was released after an appeal by Bill Richardson in 1996, Robert Park who was forced to express "sincere repentance" on North Korean television and then released in February, 2010, and Aijalon Gomes whose return was arranged by former President Carter in August, 2010. As this report goes to press, a fourth may be in North Korea.

⁴ U.N. General Assembly, *Report of the U.N. Secretary-General: Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, U.N. Doc. A/65/391, 24 September 2010, paragraph 21.

North Korea Should Be Re-listed on the State Department's List of State Sponsors of Terrorism

Countries determined by the U. S. Secretary of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism are designated as state sponsors of terrorism pursuant to three laws: section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act, section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act, and section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act. Taken together, sanctions resulting from designation under these authorities include restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance; a ban on defense exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions.⁵ A major implication of inclusion on the list is that it lifts "the diplomatic immunity [afforded state organizations and diplomats] to allow families of terrorist victims to file civil lawsuits in US courts."⁶ As mentioned in the previous chapter, suits have been brought in United States courts against North Korea for acts of terrorism, but the ability to do so is dependent on North Korea being listed on the U. S. State Department's list of terrorism-sponsoring nations. Other victims of North Korean abductions and their families will not have this legal remedy, unless North Korea is re-listed.

North Korea was initially included on the list partly because of its role in abductions, the bombing of KAL 858 and for harboring of the Japanese Red Army Yodo-go hijackers. Numerous U.S. government officials have specifically and publicly condemned North Korea for these actions, including Secretary of State Madeline Albright, then-National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Vice President Dick Cheney, and President George W. Bush.⁷ President George W. Bush, nevertheless, removed North Korea from the list on October 11, 2008, largely in hopes of encouraging North Korean compliance on nuclear matters.

The Japanese government and abductees' families' organizations from South Korea and Japan were strongly opposed to North Korea's removal from the list, arguing that *holding* abductees is a continuing, persistent act of terror.

Concerned Governments Should Form A Coalition of Governments on the Abduction Issue

There is a need for all governments concerned with this issue to institute a common approach and share information about known cases of abductions, potential cases of abductions, and circumstances under which captured foreigners find themselves. A coalition of concerned governments should jointly and bilaterally request a full accounting of all individuals abducted to or forcibly detained in North Korea as well as the immediate release of those who are still held.

⁵ US Department of State, "State Sponsors of Terrorism," www.state.gov/s/ct/c14151.htm

⁶ www.state.gov/documents/organization/31944.pdf

⁷ Niksch, Larry. *North Korea: Terrorism List Removal*. U.S. Congressional Research Service. (RL30613). January 6, 2010.

Heretofore, the abduction issue has frequently been thought of as a “Japanese issue,” in spite of the huge numbers of South Koreans abducted. But the issue is not merely a Korean or a Japanese issue; information now available shows that the problem clearly is an *international* one. Organizing a coalition should not prove difficult. The following 14 nationalities have been abducted or detained:

American
Chinese
Dutch
French
Guinean
Italian
Japanese
Jordanian
Lebanese
Malaysian
Singaporean
South Korean
Thai
Romanian



Megumi Yokota and Kim Yong-nam in Pyongyang, August, 1986.

The Lebanese abductees claimed to have seen 28 other foreign women in North Korea from unidentified countries in Europe and the Middle East.

The abductions issue has become better known in recent years and sentiment against North Korean violations has increased. A record 106 states voted in 2010 in favor of the General Assembly’s resolution on North Korea’s human rights situation, which calls upon North Korea, *inter alia*, to resolve the abduction issue and ensure “the immediate return of abductees.”⁸ Nonetheless, states that opposed the resolution (a total of 20) or abstained (57) include some of the very states whose citizens were abducted or detained – China, Guinea, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. Governments in the coalition should approach these states to point out to them that their own nationals have been affected and that these states should be holding North Korea accountable. In December 2009, at the UN Human Rights Council’s “Universal Periodic Review,” Indonesia called on North Korea to give due consideration to unresolved abduction cases and speed efforts to resolve them. As this report recounts in Chapter 1, the Indonesian embassy in Pyongyang did not help Chinese abductees who sought asylum at the embassy in 1978. Indonesia also abstained on the General Assembly’s resolution in 2010, so its willingness to

⁸ U.N. General Assembly, Resolution A/RES/65/225, 21 December 2010, operative paragraph 2.

address the issue at the UPR demonstrates that some countries are beginning to be more concerned about the North Korean abduction issue; hopefully, this trend will continue. Indonesia should be encouraged to join a coalition to seek North Korea’s attention on this issue.

An International Coalition Should Call upon North Korea to Take Specific Actions

The International Coalition we envision would call upon North Korea to do the following:

Provide a Full Accounting of those Abducted and Detained. Refusal to account for the fate of missing persons or inform their families about their whereabouts condemns these families to a prolonged state of anxiety. For their health and well being, they need to know whether their children, parents, grandparents, and brothers and sisters are alive. A complete accounting by North Korea should encompass: 1) all those directly abducted, 2) those lured to North Korea and then held against their will, and 3) those who chose to go to North Korea and were then prevented from leaving. An accounting would include the following information about each individual—their name, age, nationality, the circumstances and date of their arrival in North Korea, where they reside or did reside, with whom they live or lived, the work they were engaged in or currently do, whether they were, or are, paid for their work, whether they married, whether they had children, where their children currently reside, and if those abducted or detained are still alive, their state of health, and if no longer alive, when and how they died and where their remains can be found.

Facilitate the Reunification of Families. Those abducted or detained by North Korea should be allowed to depart the country and reunite with family members in their countries of origin as quickly as possible. Should they prefer to remain in North Korea, they should be allowed to visit with their relatives and their relatives allowed to visit with them. They also should be able to stay in contact with their governments through their embassies in Pyongyang. Such steps comply with internationally accepted principles of law, including international human rights standards that North Korea has officially accepted.

In the past, the government of North Korea has allowed visits in North Korea, albeit circumscribed, between North and South Korean families separated by the Korean War. Indeed, the 2010 UN General Assembly resolution on the human rights situation in North Korea welcomed “the recent reunion of separated families across the border,” and expressed the hope for “further reunions on a larger scale and regular basis.”⁹ The North-South Agreement of 1992 provided for visits and

⁹ U.N. General Assembly Resolution A/RES/65/225, last preambular paragraph, 21 December 2010.

reunions between North and South Koreans.¹⁰ Such provisions, accepted by North Korea for South Koreans, should be extended to encompass *all* foreigners, Korean and non-Korean, who were taken to North Korea against their will. By joining the United Nations, North Korea had to accept the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights agreements, which establish that the family is the fundamental unit of society and entitled to protection by the state.¹¹

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), an organization with a long history of experience in family reunifications, should be enlisted to work with North Korea. The ICRC has an office in Pyongyang, and the North Korean government should be urged to cooperate with it in resolving the cases of abducted or detained foreigners.

Return the Remains of Deceased Abductees. The North Korean government should be called upon to return the remains of foreigners who were abducted or forcibly detained. North Korea has already acknowledged its responsibility in this area when it returned the remains of two Japanese in 2002 and 2004. However, as the Japanese government discovered, North Korea did not in fact return the remains of the people it claimed to. A coalition of governments should therefore insist that North Korea return the remains of all abducted foreigners or forcibly held foreign detainees who have died in North Korea. This would be the only way to provide closure for their families. Until such time as remains are returned, the grave sites should be protected and respected, including being marked and maintained, and family members should be given the right of access to the grave sites of their deceased relatives. Again, the International Committee of the Red Cross' office in Pyongyang should be brought in to help.

Observe the Right of Freedom of Movement. Foreigners in North Korea should be able to leave the country if they choose and not be restricted from doing so. North Korea ratified international human rights treaties that provide for the right of everyone "to leave any country, including his own"¹² and should be urged to amend its laws and criminal code in accordance with this provision. The U.N.'s Human Rights Committee, which oversees enforcement of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), has pointed out that North Korean laws are "incompatible" with the Covenant's freedom of movement provisions

¹⁰ The North-South agreement provided that "South and North Korea shall permit free correspondence, movement between the two sides, meetings, and visits between dispersed family members and other relatives, promote their voluntary reunion, and take measures to resolve other humanitarian issues." See Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between South and North Korea. DPRK-ROK, Chapter 3, Art.17, signed 13 December 1991, effective 19 February 1992. Available at: <http://www.international.ucla.edu/eas/documents/korea-agreement.htm>

¹¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 16 (3), December 10, 1948.

¹² See Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 13 (2), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Art. 12 (2, 3).

and has called upon North Korea to "eliminate" requirements of administrative permission to travel abroad and exit visas for foreigners to leave the country.¹³ U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his 2010 report on human rights in North Korea also underscored that North Korean restrictions on travel are "in clear violation of the country's obligation" under the ICCPR.¹⁴

Attention also should be paid to the harsh punishment meted out to North Koreans who flee to China and are forcibly returned to North Korea. Such practices, which violate international human rights and refugee standards, are directly related to abductions. Since North Korea considers it a criminal offense for its citizens to leave the country without permission, it has gone on to abduct South Koreans and other foreigners in China who help North Koreans when they cross the border. The Chinese government has abetted these practices by insisting that all North Koreans who flee to China are economic migrants who should be forcibly returned even though when returned to North Korea they are harshly punished. China also directly intervenes to discover, capture, and return North Korean refugees. Furthermore, China has abetted North Korean practices by denying access to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which has asked to determine the status of North Koreans in border areas. A coalition of governments, together with the United Nations Secretary-General should protest China's denial of entry to UNHCR. Were UNHCR able to offer protection to North Koreans in China, the North Korean practice of abducting foreigners in China who help North Koreans might be reduced or come to an end. The U.N. Secretary-General in 2010 for the first time called on China ("neighboring countries") to provide protection to those fleeing North Korea to seek asylum and urged countries providing asylum to engage closely with UNHCR.¹⁵

Foreign Embassies Must Be Mindful of their Responsibilities to Give Asylum to Abductees

When two abducted Lebanese women managed to enter Kuwait's embassy in Belgrade in 1979, officials from Kuwait helped the women to return to Lebanon. However, when abducted foreigners entered foreign embassies in Pyongyang, the embassies failed to provide help. The Russian government, for example, said it could not help American detainees who made their way into the embassy, and the Indonesian government declined to provide asylum to the Chinese women in 1978.

¹³ U.N. Human Rights Committee, *Second Periodic Report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on its Implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/PRK/2000/2 (2000), available at [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/2847aadfc262cfe0c12569e40057e41a/\\$FILE/G0041814.pdf](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/2847aadfc262cfe0c12569e40057e41a/$FILE/G0041814.pdf)

¹⁴ U.N. General Assembly, *Report of the U.N. Secretary-General: Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, U.N. Doc. A/65/391, 24 September 2010, paragraph 19.

¹⁵ *Id.*, at paragraph 88.

Of course, if foreign governments were to try to help abducted or detained persons in North Korea, they would face tremendous obstacles. To begin with, they would pay a high political price, possibly the rupture of relations. They would also find it almost impossible to get the foreign abductees or detainees out of the country, even if the embassy were able to give the person a new passport and nationality. There are several well known cases in Communist countries of persons seeking and being given asylum in Western embassies during the Cold War. Admittedly, North Korea is a more difficult place to deal with today.

However, given the desperate plight in which those abducted or detained find themselves in North Korea, embassies should consider making joint intercessions to the North Korean government to indicate that the holding of foreigners against their will violates international law and puts foreign embassies in an untenable position.

The International Community Should Pursue A Broad Range of United Nations Actions on Behalf of the Abductees and Captives Held in North Korea

North Korean practices violate multiple international treaties and customary norms, making it important for individuals and states to use the UN human rights procedures. One avenue is to bring the issue of abductions to the attention of the U.N. Human Rights Committee, the treaty body that oversees enforcement of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).¹⁶ North Korea has ratified this treaty, but not the Optional Protocol that would allow individual abductees to make complaints.¹⁷

The recommendations of the Human Rights Committee, while not legally binding, can exert pressure on states to comply with the ICCPR by increasing international awareness of the human rights violations committed. The Committee issues reports on state parties' compliance and North Korea is obligated to submit reports detailing its implementation of ICCPR obligations.¹⁸ Other state parties may also submit reports to the Human Rights Committee, commenting on North Korea's compliance, and NGOs can submit information as well.

In its most recent "Concluding Observations" (2001), responding to North Korea's 2000 report,¹⁹ the Human Rights Committee expressed many human

¹⁶ U.N. Human Rights Committee Website, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/>.

¹⁷ Were North Korea to ratify the first Optional Protocol to the ICCPR ("First Protocol"), the Committee would be able "to receive and consider . . . communications from individuals claiming to be victims of violations of any of the rights set forth in the [ICCPR]."

¹⁸ U.N. Human Rights Committee, *Second Periodic Report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on its Implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/PRK/2000/2 (2000), available at [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/2847aadfc262cfe0c12569e40057e41a/\\$FILE/G0041814.pdf](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/2847aadfc262cfe0c12569e40057e41a/$FILE/G0041814.pdf).

¹⁹ The DPRK's 2000 report to the Human Rights Committee was its first in seventeen years.

rights concerns regarding North Korea, although it did not specifically mention the abductions issue.²⁰ Information therefore should be provided to members of the Committee so that the Committee's next report will address abductions. North Korea owes a new report to the Committee (due January 1, 2004).²¹

Another U.N. body active on North Korea is the Human Rights Council, an intergovernmental body which was established by the General Assembly to address situations of human rights violations around the world.²² The Council has regularly adopted resolutions (as did its predecessor body, the Commission on Human Rights) on the human rights situation in North Korea, including expressing concern about abductions.²³ It has also appointed a "Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the DPRK,"²⁴ whose reports have drawn attention to the abductions issue. Governments and NGOs should make sure that the *operative* paragraphs of Council resolutions, not just the preamble, mention the abductions and demand an accurate accounting. In addition, every four years the Human Rights Council conducts a Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the state of human rights in each U.N. member state.²⁵ At the review of North Korea in 2010, the DPRK was urged to resolve the abduction issue and put an end to kidnapping and enforced disappearances.²⁶ U.N. member states, Chile and Japan, specifically called upon North Korea to "put an end to enforced disappearances" and "resolve the abduction issue as soon as possible, including ensuring the immediate return of Japanese and other abductees."²⁷ The

²⁰ The report focused primarily on issues such as the independence of the judiciary, severe abuses carried out by law enforcement officers (including torture, and inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners), forced labor, restricted movement within North Korea, and restricted rights of assembly. Abduction is not specifically mentioned, but there is a section on allowing foreigners to leave the country that can pertain to holding people against their will, see *Concluding Observations of the Human Rights Committee: Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, U.N. Human Rights Committee, 72nd Sess., paras. 8–25, U.N. Doc. CCPR/CO/72/PRK (2001), available at [http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/CCPR.CO.72.PRK.En?opendocument](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/CCPR.CO.72.PRK.En?opendocument).

²¹ *Id.* at para. 30.

²² U.N. Website, U.N. Human Rights Council, The Human Rights Council, available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/> (last visited July 29, 2010).

²³ See U.N. Human Rights Council, Resolution A/HRC/RES/13/14, Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 25 March 2010, preambular paragraph 6.

²⁴ The past Special Rapporteur was Vitit Muntarbhorn and the current one is Marzuki Darusman.

²⁵ U.N. Website, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Universal Periodic Review, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRmain.aspx> (last accessed July 29, 2010).

²⁶ The following were the two recommendations made to North Korea: [1] Set a concrete time frame and take concrete actions in order to resolve the abduction issue as soon as possible, including ensuring the immediate return of Japanese and other abductees (recommendation made by Chile); and [2] Put an end to kidnapping and enforced disappearance of persons, whatever their country of origin (recommendation made by Japan). See Report of the Working on the Universal Periodic Review: Democratic People's Republic of Korea, ¶ 91, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/13/13 (Jan. 4, 2010), available at http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session6/KP/A_HRC_13_13_PRK_E.pdf (last visited July 29, 2010).

²⁷ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Democratic People's Republic of Korea, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/13/13, paragraph. 91, 4 January 2010, available at http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session6/KP/A_HRC_13_13_PRK_E.pdf (last visited July 29, 2010).

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Secretary-General, and a coalition of governments should follow up with the government of North Korea so as to promote compliance with the recommendations of the UPR. The embassies in Pyongyang of governments that made specific recommendations should make joint intercessions to the North Korean government about its compliance.

At the U.N., individuals and NGOs may report cases of disappearances to the U.N. Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances,²⁸ and

cases of arbitrary detentions to the U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.²⁹ To date, nine cases of disappearances have been brought to the Working Group on disappearances, eight related to the abduction of Japanese nationals and the ninth concerning the disappearance of a woman at the border between China and North Korea. The North Korean government responded to the nine cases but provided insufficient information, according to the Working Group. It called upon North Korea to ratify the 2007 International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and accept the competence of its implementing body on disappearances.³⁰

In order to ensure the safety of those willing to testify before U.N. working groups, and to encourage them to come forward, it is important for the international community to create a protective environment. As already mentioned, without the testimony of former abductees, it would be impossible to know any aspect of this issue. The accumulated testimony of the abductees and detainees may prove instrumental in the rescue of other foreigners who are still held captive. Therefore, it is crucial that witnesses be well protected and that they be encouraged to meet with others who have suffered such crimes in order to work together and plan joint programs.

At the U.N. General Assembly, which adopts each year a resolution on human rights in North Korea, several NGOs, including the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, recommended inserting in the resolution a provision creating a commission of inquiry to examine crimes against humanity committed by the DPRK.³¹ The mandate of such a commission would include abductions

²⁸ See U.N. Website, Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, How to report a case of disappearance, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/disappear/communications.htm> (last accessed July 29, 2010).

²⁹ See U.N. Website, Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Individual Complaints, Urgent Appeals, Deliberation, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/detention/complaints.htm> (last accessed July 29, 2010).

³⁰ U.N. General Assembly, Report of the UN Secretary-General: Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, U.N. Doc. A/65/391, 24 September 2010, paragraph 36.

³¹ See DLA Piper LLP (US) & Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, *Failure to Protect: The Ongoing*

and other crimes and could lead to consideration of the North Korean case by the International Criminal Court.

Other Remedies, Beyond the UN, Should Continue to Be Pursued

Victims and advocates should continue to exert pressure on countries such as the Republic of Korea and Japan to tackle the abductions issues domestically by investigating all abductions fully and indicting anyone found to be responsible, even if those individuals are no longer within that country's territory. It is important for both governments to document and publicize the nature and extent of the abductions, in order to keep pressure on the DPRK to take responsibility for its actions, to provide information on the whereabouts of abductees and reunite them with their families, and to raise awareness within the international community of the scope of these crimes.

Other states may also consider instituting judicial action against the individual North Korean abductors for violations of their domestic laws. Of course, barriers to such action include diplomatic immunity and issues of sovereignty, particularly when the officials are high-ranking government or military officers. States would also have to seek the extradition of abductors or try them *in absentia* (since it is unlikely they would continue to be in the states concerned). The benefit of such actions is not that they would necessarily punish or sanction the perpetrators or the North Korean government but that they would draw attention to the pervasive and criminal nature of the DPRK's abductions policy and practices.

In Japan, continued educational efforts are needed to raise awareness among the Japanese public about the plight in North Korea of ethnic Koreans from Japan as well as Japanese married to these Koreans. A Japanese law adopted in 2006 and further amended in 2007 provides for awareness-raising activities to better inform the public about abductions and calls for measures to protect and support North Korean defectors in Japan, in particular the Japanese spouses of Koreans who migrated to the DPRK, Korean residents from Japan, who later settled in the DPRK but who now wish to come back to Japan, and DPRK nationals seeking asylum in Japan.³² The U.N.'s Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in North Korea supported Japan's expansion of its educational, occupational and psychological support systems to enable such persons to be equitably and sustainably integrated into society and proposed channels to help those who returned to Japan to reunite with their families

Challenge of North Korea 1 (2008), available at http://www.dlapiper.com/files/upload/NK_Report_F2P_North%20Korea_Sep19_08.pdf (last visited July 29, 2010); and David Hawk & Freedom House, *Concentrations of Inhumanity* 65 (2007), available at http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/53.pdf (last visited July 29, 2010).

³² U.N. Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Vitit Muntarbhorn, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/10/18, 24 February 2009, paragraph 76.

The accumulated testimony of the abductees and detainees may prove instrumental in the rescue of other foreigners who are still held captive.

left behind in the DPRK.³³

In the event of a Collapse of the Regime or Political Instability in North Korea, Abductees Must Be Rescued

Since Kim Jong-il's 2009 stroke, the North Korean regime has rushed to put in place a succession plan, recognizing that its hold on power is fragile. The possibility of an upheaval in the political structure cannot be ruled out, and it may be accompanied by violence and widespread deprivation. The most severely disenfranchised people in North Korea are at the greatest risk in such circumstances. Opening up the gulags and providing for the inhabitants there is accordingly a critical priority in the event of the collapse of government in North Korea. Many of the abductees of the 1950s and 1960s, especially the Korean War victims and the Korean Residents who returned from Japan, are likely to be living in the gulags today, and care must be taken to attend to their welfare. The abductees of the 1970s and later were often taken for their linguistic training ability, and may be living in areas near North Korean training facilities, as we point out in Chapter 3. These abductees are intermingled with operatives of the North Korean regime and are in special danger in the event of political collapse. The United States and the Republic of Korea have already engaged in military planning exercises for certain contingencies in North Korea; China is said to be engaged in similar exercises. In planning for collapse scenarios, the militaries of these nations, peacekeeping forces of the United Nations, and NGOs that may be called upon in the event of humanitarian crises should all be aware of the special circumstances of North Korea's captives and strive to help them to survive, escape, and return home.

It is also possible, as predicted by Kim Kwangjin in his report "After Kim Jong-il,"³⁴ that a leader or group of leaders might emerge who have an understanding of the errors and excesses of the Kim regime. If a new North Korean government emerges from the succession, it may seek to establish better ties with the outside world. The International Community must be flexible enough to recognize the benefits of such a turn of events, and encourage such new leadership with conciliatory gestures. But how can the bona fides of such new leadership be tested? It would be difficult to expect a new group of leaders to make decisions that would be politically charged and immediately destabilizing, such as a decision to halt the nuclear program, open nuclear facilities for unannounced inspections, or foreswear Kim Il-sungism. New leaders could be expected, however, to account for the captive citizens of foreign nations. There should be little domestic opposition to such a move, yet it could be a

³³ *Id.* at paragraph 76.

³⁴ The Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, "After Kim Jong-il: Can We Hope for Better Human Rights Protection," (HRNK, Washington, DC, October, 2009). Available online at www.hrnk.org.

very reassuring signal for concerned nations around the world. The treatment of the abduction issue, therefore, could be the most important signal new leadership could send to indicate its new foreign policy.

Until that day, thousands of people from at least fourteen nationalities remain captive in North Korea with very little hope of returning to the lives they once enjoyed. They are the ones whose lives were taken—taken from them in every way imaginable, even if they remain alive. They were taken from their homes, their families, their rights, and their freedom.

Quick Reference Guide to Individuals Mentioned in this

Country of Nationality	Name (Gender)	Date (Age) and Location of Disappearance	Current Whereabouts	Circumstance of Disappearance and Notes
China			All may be alive in North Korea	News reports estimate 200 Chinese (many of ethnic Korean background) have been abducted by North Korea.
France	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	One of two French women seen by Lebanese women at North Korean spy institute
France	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	One of two French women seen by Lebanese women at North Korean spy institute
France	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	Lured by a North Korean agent who pretended to be a wealthy heir and proposed marriage. On the way to their honeymoon, the French woman was abandoned and taken to a Guest House in North Korea.
France	Chantal Sobkowitz (f)	1991	Deported from North Korea 1992	French national of Polish heritage. She was a Christian missionary who went to North Korea to translate a book.
Guinea	Alieu Niang (m)	1982	Returned to Guinea in 1987	Sent by Guinean government to study agricultural technology at Wonsan Agricultural University in North Korea; detained for 5 years.
Italy	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	One of three Italian women seen by Lebanese women at North Korean spy institute
Italy	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	One of three Italian women seen by Lebanese women at North Korean spy institute
Italy	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	One of three Italian women seen by Lebanese women at North Korean spy institute
Japan	Chung Ki-hae (m)	June 24, 1960 Japan	May be alive in North Korea	Part of the Chongryon Returnees Project
Japan	Takeshi Terakoshi (m)	May 11, 1963 (13) Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan	"Rescued" fisherman, returned to Japan in 2002; decided to return to North Korea to be with his family	Taken or rescued while fishing at sea with 2 uncles
Japan	Kenzo Kozumi (m)	1961	May be alive in North Korea	Identity stolen by North Korean operative
Japan	Soto-o (m)	May 11, 1963 Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan	North Korea claims he died	Taken while fishing at sea; uncle of Takeshi Terakoshi
Japan	Ko Kang (f)	June, 1974 (3) Saitama, Japan	May be alive in North Korea	Son of a Chosen Soren leader; brother of Ko Kyong-mi

Japan	Ko Kyong-mi (f)	June, 1974 (7) Saitama Japan	May be alive in North Korea	Daughter of a Chosen Soren leader; sister of Ko Kang
Japan	Yutaka Kume (m)	September 19, 1977 (52) Ushitsu, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan	May be alive in North Korea	Abducted by Kim Se-ho; disappeared off the coast; victim of identity theft
Japan	Kyoko Matsumoto (f)	October 7, 1977 (24) Tottori Prefecture, Japan	May be alive in North Korea	Disappeared on way to knitting school
Japan	Meagumi Yokota (f)	November 15, 1977 (15) Niigata City, Niigata Prefecture, Japan	Allegedly went to mental hospital; North Korea claims she died March 1993; May be alive in North Korea	Married Kim Young-Nam, his daughter Mye-gyong still in North Korea
Japan	Minoru Tanaka (m)	June, 1978 (28)	May be alive in North Korea	Abducted sometimes while travelling from Japan to Europe
Japan	Yaeko Taguchi (f)	June, 1978 (22)	North Korea claims she died in a car accident; May be alive in North Korea	Korean name: Lee Un-Hae; Kim Hyon-Hui's Japanese teacher; allegedly married Tetsuki Hara
Japan	Yasushi Chimura (m)	July 7, 1978 (23) Wasaka Bay, Obama, Japan	Returned to Japan after 2002 Summit	
Japan	Fukie (née Hamamoto) Chimura (f)	July 7, 1978 (23) Wasaka Bay, Obama, Japan	Returned to Japan after 2002 Summit	
Japan	Kaoru Haseulike (m)	July 31, 1978 (20) Kashiwazaki City, Japan	Returned to Japan after 2002 Summit	Abducted while walking on shore with Yukiko Okudo
Japan	Yukiko (née Okudo) Haseulike (f)	July 31, 1978 (20) Kashiwazaki City, Japan	May be alive in North Korea	Abducted while walking on shore with Kaoru Haseulike
Japan	Shuichi Ichikawa (m)	August 12, 1978 (23) Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan	North Korea claims he died from a heart attack while swimming and drowned September 4, 1979	Husband of Rumiko Masumoto
Japan	Kumiko Masumoto (f)	August 12, 1978 (24) Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan	North Korea claims she died from a heart attack August 17, 1991	Wife of Shuichi Ichikawa
Japan	Miyoshi Soga (f)	August 15, 1978 (46) Sado City, Japan	May be alive in North Korea	Mother of Hitomi Soga
Japan	Kaoru Matsuki (m)	May, 1980 (26) Europe	North Korea claims he died in a car accident August 23, 1966	Abducted by Togo-go group as a Japanese tourist in Europe

Japan	Toru Ishioka (m)	May, 1980 (22) Europe	North Korea claims he died in a gas accident November 1988	Marrried to Keiko Arimoto; abducted by Yodo-go group as a Japanese student in Europe
Japan	Tadaaki Hara (m)	June, 1980 (43) Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan	North Korea claims he died from hepatic cirrhosis June 19, 1986	Worked in a needle shop in Japan; victim of identity theft; allegedly married Yasuko Taguchi in 1984
Japan	Keiko Arimoto (f)	July, 1983 (23) London, England	North Korea claims she died in a gas accident November 1988; May be alive in North Korea	Marrried Toru Ishioka; abducted by Yodo-go group (collaboration of Kim Yu-Chol, Megumi Yao, Kimihiro Abe) as a Japanese tourist in Europe
Japan	Sakiko Wakabayashi(f)		Lives in North Korea	Arranged marriage to Yodo-go hijacker
Japan	Yoriko Mori (f)		Lives in North Korea	Arranged marriage to Yodo-go hijacker
Japan				92,000 Korean Residents in Japan Went to North Korea 1950-1984 as part the The Resident-Korean Returnees Project
Japan				17 Japanese abductees are listed by GOJ as attributable to North Korea
Japan				100 Japanese are listed by MARKIN as possible abductees
Jordan	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	Seen by Choi Eun hee from December 1978 to spring 1979; may have engaged in spy activities
Lebanon	Samia Kabbra (f)	July, 1978 Beirut, Lebanon	Escaped via Kuwait Embassy in Belgrade 1979	Abducted seeking business opportunities
Lebanon	Naima Kassir (f)	July, 1978 Beirut, Lebanon	Escaped via Kuwait Embassy in Belgrade 1979	Abducted seeking business opportunities
Lebanon	Haifa Skaff (f)	July, 1978 Beirut, Lebanon	Returned to Lebanon after Lebanese government intervention	Abducted under business pretenses
Lebanon	Siham Shirateh (f)	July, 1978 Beirut, Lebanon	Returned to Lebanon after Lebanese government intervention; returned to NK to be with family there	Abducted under business pretenses; Married US deserter Jerry Parrish
Macau	Hong Leng-leng (f)	July 2, 1978 Macau, China	May be alive in North Korea	Denied asylum by Indonesian Embassy
Macau	So Hio-chun (f)	July 2, 1978 Macau, China	May be alive in North Korea	Denied asylum by Indonesian Embassy
Netherlands	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	Seen by Lebanese women in spy institute; lured to Hong Kong but arrived in Pyongyang
Netherlands	Unknown (f)		May be alive in North Korea	Seen by Lebanese women in spy institute; lured to Hong Kong but arrived in Pyongyang

Romania	Dolna Bumba (f)	1978 Italy	North Korea claims she died of cancer in January 1997	Romanian artist lured to Hong Kong but sent to North Korea; married James Dresnok; had 2 sons
Malaysia	Yeng Yoke-Fun (f)	1978 (22) Singapore	May be alive in North Korea	2 men claiming to be Japanese requested an escort company to send 5 ladies for a party, after which these 5 ladies disappeared
Malaysia	Yap Me Leng (f)	1979 (22) Singapore	May be alive in North Korea	2 men claiming to be Japanese requested an escort company to send 5 ladies for a party, after which these 5 ladies disappeared
Malaysia	Seetoh Taih Thim (f)	1980 (19) Singapore	May be alive in North Korea	2 men claiming to be Japanese requested an escort company to send 5 ladies for a party, after which these 5 ladies disappeared
Malaysia	Margaret Ong G (f)	1981 (19) Singapore	May be alive in North Korea	2 men claiming to be Japanese requested an escort company to send 5 ladies for a party, after which these 5 ladies disappeared
Singapore	Diana Ng Kum Yim (f)	1978 (24) Singapore	May be alive in North Korea	2 men claiming to be Japanese requested an escort company to send 5 ladies for a party, after which these 5 ladies disappeared
South Korea	Kim Yong-kyu (m)	Between 1950-1953	Returned to South Korea as a spy for North Korea, but was arrested	Korean War abductee
South Korea	Lee Jhe gun (m)	May 29, 1970 South Korea	Defected to China on August 18, 1998; allowed to return to South Korea on July 23, 2000, with help of NGO workers (Korean War Abductees' Family Union)	Fisherman
South Korea	Kim Young-nam (m)	1978 (16) Gunsan, South Korea	Lives in North Korea	Abducted while playing on beach; husband of Megumi Yokota
South Korea	Choi Eun-hee (f)	January 12, 1978 Hong Kong	Escaped in 1986 via US Embassy in Austria	Movie star
South Korea	Shin Sang-ok (m)	July 19, 1978 Hong Kong	Escaped in 1986 via US Embassy in Austria	Film Director
South Korea	Ko Sang-moon (m)	June, 1979 Norway	May be alive in North Korea	South Korean teacher, taxi driver drove Ko to the wrong Korean embassy
South Korea	Lee Chae-hwan (m)	1967 Austria	May be alive in North Korea	Student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
South Korea	Um Kook-jae (m)	January, 1967 Near Beek Ryung Island in Yellow Sea	North Korea claims he died in Chonggiling Prison Camp, 2008	Crew member of SK fishing vessel Dong Jin 27
South Korea	South Korean Exchange Student 1	1980/90s Europe	May be alive in North Korea	Exchange student in Europe

South Korea	South Korean Exchange Student 2		80s/90s Europe	May be alive in North Korea	Exchange student in Europe
South Korea	South Korean Exchange Student 3		80s/90s Europe	May be alive in North Korea	Exchange student in Europe
South Korea	South Korean Exchange Student 4		80s/90s Europe	May be alive in North Korea	Exchange student in Europe
South Korea	Ahn Seung-moon (m)		July 7, 1995 Southern China	May be alive in North Korea	Pastor
South Korea	Kim Dong-shik (m)		January 16, 2000 Yanji, China	Tortured to death FEBRUARY 2001 (died age 54), buried in District 91 military training base in Sangwob-ni near Pyongyang	South Korean Pastor, a permanent resident of the United States
South Korea					
South Korea					
Thailand	Anocha Panjoy (f)		May-June 1976 Macau, China	May be alive in North Korea	82,959 Korean War abductees 3,824 Post-Korean War abductees
TOTAL					180,108
Other Captives in North Korea					
American Military Defectors					
USA	Larry Abshier (m)		May 28, 1962	Died from heart attack July 11, 1983	US Army deserter; first husband of Anocha Panjoy
USA	James Dresnok (m)		August 15, 1962	Lives in North Korea	US Army deserter crossed DMZ to North Korea
USA	Jerry W Parrish (m)		December 6, 1963	Died August 25, 1996 in North Korea	US military officer crossed DMZ; married Lebanese Saham Shraiteh
USA	Charles Jenkins (m)		January 4, 1965 (24)	Allowed to visit Indonesia in 2005, then went to Japan with his daughters; lives in Japan	US Army deserter crossed DMZ to North Korea
USA	Joseph T White (m)		August 28, 1967	North Korea claims he drowned while swimming across the Chonochon River on August 22, 1985	US Army deserter crossed DMZ to North Korea
Yodo-go Hijackers and other Pro-North Koreans					
Japan	Shiomi Takaya (m)		March 30, 1970 (Japan)	Lives in North Korea	Leader of Red Army Faction; Yogo-do group
Japan	Kintaro Yoshida (m)		March 30, 1970 (Japan)	North Korea claims he died in 1985	Yogo-do group

Japan	Takeshi Okamoto (m)		March 30, 1970 (Japan)	North Korea claims he died	Yogo-do group; attempted to escape
Japan	Yasushiro Shibata		March 30, 1970 (Japan)	Lives in North Korea	Yogo-do group; later married Megumi Yao
Japan	Tamiya Takamaro (m)		March 30, 1970 (Japan)	Lives in North Korea	Leader of Red Army Faction; Yogo-do group
Japan	Megumi Yao (f)		February, 1977 (22)	Arrested in Japan as a North Korean spy; Now lives in Japan with 2 daughters	Student advocate of Juche who recruited Japanese citizens for Pro-Pyongyang events; visited North Korea via offer from a North Korean operative
Japan	Sakiko Wakabayashi(f)		Wanted in disappearances of Toru Ishioka and Kaoru Matsuki	Lives in North Korea	Arranged marriage to Yodo-go hijacker
Japan	Yoriko Hori (f)		Wanted in disappearances of Toru Ishioka and Kaoru Matsuki	Lives in North Korea	Arranged marriage to Yodo-go hijacker
Known Pledges, Abduction Attempts by North Korea					
South Korea	Yoon Jung-hee (f)		July 30, 1977 (33) (Zagreb, Yugoslavia)	Lives in Paris, France	Actress; Wife of Paik Kun-woo
South Korea	Paik Kun-woo (m)		July 30, 1977 (31) (Zagreb, Yugoslavia)	Lives in Paris, France	Violinist; Husband of Yoon Jung-hee
Japan	Undisclosed 1 (m)		August 15, 1978 (28) Takaoke City, Japan	Attempted abduction	Fiancé of Unnamed 2
Japan	Undisclosed 2 (f)		August 15, 1978 (21) Takaoke City, Japan	Attempted abduction	Fiancée of Unnamed 1
American Defectors Negotiated by North Korea					
USA	Evan Hunziger (m)		August 24, 1990 (26) China-North Korea Border	Committed suicide one month after returning to the United States	US Congressman Bill Richardson negotiated his release on November 24, 1990
USA	Euna Lee (f)		March 17, 2009 China-North Korea Border	Lives in the United States	Former US President Bill Clinton negotiated her release on August 5, 2009
USA	Laura Ung (f)		March 17, 2009 China-North Korea border	Lives in the United States	Former US President Bill Clinton negotiated her release on August 5, 2009

USA	Robert Park (m)	December 25, 2009 China-North Korea border	Lives in the United States	Released on February 5, 2010
USA	Aljolan Gomes (m)	January 25, 2010 China-North Korea Border	Lives in the United States	Former US President Jimmy Carter negotiated his release on August 27, 2010
American Civilians Detained in North Korea				
USA	Jun Young-su	November, 2010	Detained in North Korea	North Korea has issued very few details regarding his capture or his condition



Satellite image of Pyongyang viewed by showing where abductees have worked and lived, and the