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Survey Report on
Political Prisoners'
Camps in North Korea



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National Human Rights
Commission of Korea

**Survey Report on
Political Prisoners' Camps in North Korea**

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National Human Rights Commission of Korea

Survey Report

On

Political Prisoners' Camps in North Korea (PPC)

This **Survey Report on the Political Prisoners' Camps in North Korea (PPC)** was prepared and submitted in December, 2009 thanks to the Grant of Human Rights Survey Report of National Human Rights Commission of Korea

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I. Introduction

1. The need for and objectives of the research

The political prisoners' camps (PPC) in North Korea represent a core issue of human rights violations in North Korea. PPC represent the most serious violations of human rights, perhaps unparalleled in world history, in terms of the number of victims, the nature of processes leading to detention, length in time of the camps' existence, charges against the detainees and horrendous living conditions. Nevertheless, no systematic and objective survey and study of PPC has been made available to date. This has been largely due to a policy of strict information control by North Korean authorities, thereby preventing not only foreign researchers but ordinary people in North Korea, as well, from even approaching the camps. Furthermore, North Korea has maintained PPC in remote areas, hidden from the gaze of the outside world. The rigid control and operation of PPC have not only prevented escape by victims in the camps, but also effectively blocked information from reaching the outside world.

To date, the information about PPC has been limited to the testimonies of a small number of witnesses of former prisoners and those who worked there. Conclusions drawn from the testimonies of this small number of witnesses suggest that the level and extent of human rights violations in PPC have been gravely serious.

North Korea's most serious human rights violations occur with the greatest frequency in the detention facilities. Such facilities fall under various bureaucracies: the police, the State Security Agency (SSA), labor training camps, prisons for minor offenses, ordinary prisons and PPC. It is believed that the violations of human rights are particularly severe in PPC, given the fact that they are operated in secrecy.

According to testimonies collected to date, a total of ten such camps have operated since the foundation of the North Korean government. Currently, it is believed that five to six PPC are in operation in North Korea, frequently undergoing relocation, integration or division of the facilities. The total number of inmates in all PPC is estimated to be approximately 150,000 to 200,000. The number of North Koreans continuing to arrive in South Korea with some level of experience in detention at PPC is steadily increasing and their independent testimonies provide an important source of information needed for the objective and accurate study of human rights violations in PPC.

The objective of this survey report is to present an overall and systematic analysis of PPC on the basis of in-depth interviews with North Korean witnesses in respect to the nature of human rights violation in PPC, the degree to which they are systematic, and the analysis and assessment of changes since the 1990s.

2. Comments on/ evaluation of earlier research studies

Systematic studies that focus exclusively on PPC are not readily found in earlier Korean studies on North Korean human rights violations. Some studies of a limited nature on PPC were carried out by international human rights organizations. In Korea, however, the subject was only treated as part of an extensive review of the human rights situations in North Korea. Attempts have been made only in recent years for an exclusive study of PPC. The present survey will review earlier studies and examine information from the testimonies of North Korean defectors that have been increasing over the past decade.

1) Information from testimonies of North Korean defectors in PPC

It is documented that the first testimonies about the PPC were provided by Kang Hyong-sun, a former North Korean State Security Agency (SSA) official, who surrendered to South Korea in 1979 and Kim Yong-jun who surrendered in 1982. However, they did not have actual experience in PPC and the information they provided was based on indirect sources, such as acquiring the knowledge at training sessions or visits to the camps. Nevertheless, their accounts constituted the shedding of new light on the existence of such camps in North Korea.¹

The first reliable information about PPC was made available from former PPC prisoners or those who were actually involved with the operation of PPC, whose arrival in South Korea occurred in the 1990s. Kang Chul-hwan and Ahn Hyok who arrived in South Korea in 1992 published a book describing their life as a prisoner in PPC No. 15, Yodok Camp, South Hamkyong Province of North Korea, a high-security camp (Revolutionary Zone)². The information about the realities of PPC became public when Ahn Myong-chul, former guard at PPC No. 22 at Hweryong and PPC No. 13 in Onsong, North Korea, disclosed the horrendous condition in these PPC in a book he published in 1995³.

Thus, detailed testimonies pertaining to the conditions in the PPC have become available as the number of North Korean defectors arriving in North Korea has increased in the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st Century. In fact, the annual number of North Korean defectors arriving in

¹ Total Control Zone, a Product of Fascist Dictatorship, Chosun Daily, 13 Apr.1982, pp2

² Religious Service of a Great King, Kang CH/AH, Vol.1-3, 1993, Hyangshil, Seoul

³ "They Are Crying," Ahn Myong-chol, 1995, Chonji Media, Seoul

South Korea that was about 10 before 1990s has increased to over 100 in 1990s and the same figure increased to 1,000 to 3,000 since 2000. The increased number of North Korean defectors arriving in South Korea has naturally increased the number of North Korean defectors with experience in PPC in North Korea.

As an example, Lee Yong-kuk published an account of his experiences as a prisoner during 1995-1999 at PPC No. 15⁴, as did Shin Dong-hyuk, believed to be the first prisoner from a maximum-security zone (total control zone) PPC No. 14 at Kaechon, South Pyongan Province. Additionally, Kim Yong-sun published her account⁵ of PPC No. 15 in January, 2009, including information about the maximum-security zone in Yongpyong-ni in the same camp. Additionally, information has become available about the high-security zone in the Camp No. 18 by Kang Myong-do⁶ and an informant⁷ from North Korea. Today, a number of testimonies are available about the 'high-security zone' of PPC No. 15 from former prisoners including Kim Tae-jin, Chung Kwang-il, Kim Wun-chol and many others.

While the testimonies about PPC in North Korea are increasingly available on the basis of personal experience and their accusations, information that is analytical and systematic regarding the historical background, mode of operation and characters of PPC remain largely limited. Testimonies to date have concentrated on disclosing the degrading treatment of prisoners, making it difficult to ascertain the overall aspects involved with the PPC. However, the well documented books published by Kang Chul-hwan, Ahn Hyok and Shin Dong-hyuk provide valuable and reliable information on

⁴ "I was a Body Guard of Kim Jong-il," 2002, Shidae Jongshin, Seoul.

⁵ "I Was a Friend of Kim Jung-il's Wife," 2009, Seoul Munhwa, Seoul

⁶ "Pyongyang Dreams Asylum," pp 218-236, Chungang Ilbo Co., 1995

⁷ "Imjin-Gang " No. 2 (2008), pp 16-55, First Series of Editor's Note, "Inside Story of PPC No. 18 - Testimony by a Former Prisoner

life experienced in PPC for which there are 10-20 former witnesses, both maximum-security camp (total control zones) and high-security camp (revolutionary zones), which contributes to the overall study of the PPC.

The present survey is primarily based on testimonies of former prisoners, camp officials, guards and those who have visited such camps at least once. The testimonies adopted for this survey are shown in table 1-1.

Table 1-1

**Testimonies of North Korean Defectors with Experience in PPC
(already published)**

Classification	Witness	Type of Experience	Period of Experience	Contents of Witness	Witness Data
Camp Officials and visitors	Kang Hyong-sun	SSA/Training of State Politics Defense	1976-1977 (SSA Training)	Size of PPC	Interview Article Chosun Daily, pp.1,2, Apr. 13, 1982
	Kim Yong-jun	SSA Agent Visit to PPC 12	May, 1962 Sept, 1978	Exterior control, Onsong No.12	Interview Article Chosun Daily, pp.1,2, 13 Apr. 1982
	Shin Yong-man	NK spy in Japan Visit to PPC No. 12	Spring, 1972	Conditions of PPC No. 11	Interview Article Chosun Daily, pp.1,2, 13 Apr. 1982
	Ahn Myong-chul	Camp Guard, Camps No.11,13,22, 26	Jul 1987- Sept. 1994	Situations in PPC No. 13 and 12	"Maximum-security Camp," many other interview reports
	Choi Dong-chul	Camp Guard, PPC No.11	Mar 83-Feb 86	Life, defection of prisoners in PPC No.11	Interview report Monthly Chosun Apr. 96
	Kim Sung-chol	PPC No. 23 Visits 3 times	1987-1988	Life in PPC No.23	Monthly "Freedom Public Views", Mar-May, 2003

Former Prisoners Experienced PPC as Prisoners	Shin Dong-hyuk	Born at PPC No. 14	1982-Jan. 2005	Life of Prisoners at PPC 14	"PPC Appearing in Outside World" and other interview reports
	Kim Yong-sun	Prisoner, PPC 15	Oct. 1970-Jan 79	PPC 15 at Early Stage	"I Was Friend of Kim Jong-il's Wife
	Kang Chol-hwan	Prisoner, PPC 15	Aug. 1977 – Jan. 1979	Life of Prisoners at PPC 15	"Religious Service of a Great King," & other interview reports
	Ahn Hyok	Prisoner, PPC 15	Nov. 1987-Feb. 1989	Life of Prisoners	"Religious Service of a Great King," & other interview reports
	Lee Yong-kuk	Prisoner, PPC No. 15	Jan, 1994 Jan, 1997	Life of Prisoners	"I Was a Bodyguard of Kim Jong-il"
	Kang Myong-do	Prisoner, PPC No. 18	1992 1994	Life of Prisoners	"Pyongyang Dreams Asylum"
	Kim Yong	Prisoner, PPC 14 & 18	Aug. 1993 Sep 1998	Life of Prisoners	Interview, Monthly Chosun, May, 2000
	Kim Tae-jin	Prisoner, PPC 15	1988 1992	Life of Prisoners	Many interview reports
	Kim Un-chol	Prisoner, PPC 15	2000 2003	Life of Prisoners	Testimony, "Life & Human Rights," Autumn, 2006
	Kim Su-chol	Prisoner, PPC 15	2000 2003	Life of Prisoners	Press Conference, Daily NK, 22 Nov 2005 (NKDB)

2) Survey Reports with Analysis of PPC

Survey reports on the political prisoners' camps in North Korea have been published by human rights organizations in Korea and abroad and have included recommendations for the improvement of human rights situations in North Korea. Most reports have dealt with the issue of PPC as part of overall human rights situations. A survey report exclusively on the issue of PPC has been extremely rare.

The first report on the PPC was published in 1988 by Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee and Asia Human Rights Watch⁸. The report contains information that about a total of 12 PPC were in existence, including four maximum-security camps created in 1982 and some 115,000-150,000 political prisoners were detained in these camps.

Amnesty International published exclusive reports on PPC successively in 1993 and 1994, announcing 49 names, believed to be detained in PPC and six others who remained nameless, and officially requested the North Korean authorities for their whereabouts⁹. The reports had a great impact on the international community. North Korea has attempted to respond to the international concern about the human rights situations in North Korea by allowing access to some detention facilities of North Korea. However, the issue of human rights violations in North Korea has, since mid 1990s, focused primarily on North Korean defectors in China while the international concern with the PPC has relatively decreased and surveys and research about PPC has become less active.

⁸ "Human Rights in North Korea," by Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee and Asia Watch, pp 115-119, translation by Song Chol-bok and others, Koryowon, Seoul, 1990.

⁹ Amnesty International, Summary of Amnesty International's Concerns on North Korea (London:Amnesty International, 1993). AI Index: ASA 24/03/93.; Amnesty International, North Korea: New information about political prisoners (London: Amnesty International, 1994). AI Index: ASA 24/05/94.

In 2000s, David Hawk, the US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea published a report¹⁰ "The Hidden Gulag" in 2003 on PPC and other detention facilities in North Korea on the basis of in-depth interviews with six former PPC prisoners. The Committee has upheld the international concern by publishing a report in 2007, bringing the 2003 report in the context of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and making recommendations for international organizations.

London-based Christian Solidarity Worldwide published a report in 2007 that clearly documented the practice of human rights abuse and crimes against humanity in North Korea and called for the inauguration of an international commission of enquiry and action by the UN¹¹. The report is under plan for translation into Korean by the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB).

In Korea, NKDB, the Life Funds for North Korean Refugees, a Japanese NGO based in Tokyo, and Helping Hands-Korea published a book in English in 2003, a collection of testimonies and first-hand witness accounts by former prisoners and guards of PPC.¹² The North Korean Gulag, an NGO in Seoul, announced details of 617 who were the prisoners at PPC or missing in its report published in 2004¹³.

In October, 2009, Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, announced the results of a survey on the basis of questionnaires from a total of 1,346 North Korean defectors hiding in 11 provinces in China during the period

¹⁰ David Hawk, *The Hidden Gulag* (Washington D.C.: US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), 2003)

¹¹ Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), "North Korea: A Case to Answer, A Call to Act" (London: CSW, 2007)

¹² Kim Sang Hun and others, "Are They Telling Us the Truth?" (Tokyo, NKDB, Life Funds for North Korean Refugees and Helping Hands Korea, 2003)

¹³ North Korean Gulag, "Forgotten Names," Seoul, Shidae Jongshin, 2004

August, 2004 to September, 2005, and an additional 300 North Korean defectors in South Korea in November 2008. According to the survey, 55% of the respondents in China stated that they had knowledge of human experimentation taking place in North Korea and 5% had witnessed to infanticide. 7% of the respondents in South Korea also confirmed their personal witness to infanticide in North Korea. 51% of the respondents in South Korea had witnessed public execution and the 60% of the respondents in China had personally witnessed torture that had resulted in death while in North Korea. In general, the survey demonstrated once again the degrading treatment of prisoners and the grave extent¹⁴ of human rights abuse to which North Korean defectors are subject when they are victims of forced repatriation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) by Chinese authorities.

Additionally, the Korean Bar Association publishes survey reports on North Korean human rights situations on regular basis. Analysis of testimonies related to PPC can be found in the North Korean Human Rights white papers published by NKDB and Korea Institute of National Unification (KINU). In particular, the white paper by NKDB presents information with statistical analysis regarding prisoners and human rights violation cases. Additionally, the Citizen's Alliance for North Korea Human Rights and other North Korean Human Rights organizations including the North Korean defectors' organizations also publish testimonies of PPC in North Korea.

3) Studies on PPC

Exclusive studies on PPC are extremely small in number and limited studies have been carried out by a small number of researchers. The studies include review of the political implication and character of such camps, review of the role of PPC in the North Korean systems oppressing residents and comparison of PPC with the concentration camps of USSR of the past.

The study by Huh Man-ho and Ogawa Haruhisa has explained the political implication of PPC through its analysis of the political background of the process of setting up PPC in relation to political systems of North Korea. It is noted, however, that the study's impact is limited by the small number of witnesses as related to PPC in the study, which comprises the study's main foundation, as well as the excessive focus on the cases of human rights violations against prisoners who have limited understanding of the overall structure of the PPC in North Korea. Huh Man-ho (2002)¹⁵ has asserted that PPC are the product of the power struggle by Kim Il-sung and Kim Jung-il and class struggle of North Korea. He noted that PPC were set up following the instruction from Kim Il-sung that revisionists and class enemies must be annihilated to the third generation of the offender. He also traces the establishment of the PPC to the establishment of the Residents Re-registration System and official adoption by the Party of the 'Absolute Leadership' Ideology. His conclusion is of particular importance in that he made it clear that the system of PPC in North Korea is important means of maintaining political power.

¹⁵ Huh Man-ho "Political and Social Changes in North Korea and Human Rights: a Study of Political Camps," "Study of Peace" vol. 27, Taegu, Peace Institute, 2002, Kyongbuk Univ., pp. 30-53.

Ogawa Haruhisa, former Professor of Tokyo University,¹⁶ noted that PPC were established during the process of modifying the Juche Ideology. The Juche Ideology was a creative ideology at its initial stage but in 1967, in support of the adoption of Kim Il Sung's absolute leadership, Juche Ideology underwent modification, opponents were arrested and detained in PPC and, as a result, North Korea has become a state of one party dictatorship, secret police and PPC of the most cruel form, a symbol of totalitarianism. The study by Ogawa, in conformity with the study of Huh Man-ho, has made it clear that PPC have been maintained as a means of suppression of people¹⁷.

Huh Son-haeng (2008)¹⁸ presented a systematic description of the realities of human rights violations in the operation of PPC and expounded on the function of PPC in the North Korean system of suppression of people on the basis of interviews with a large number of hidden witnesses. His study is outstanding in that it tracks development of PPC by period and by individual pcc,beyond the limit of a simple observation. However, his study has not explained in what way the fact of detention of political prisoners was effective for the suppression of people.

¹⁶ Ogawa Haruhisa, "Inter-relationship between Juche Ideology and Political Prisoners' Camps," *Tongillo*, May Issue, 2000, pp.24-31

¹⁷ The study by Huh Man-ho and Ogawa Haruhisa on the Institution and Progress of Political Prisoners' Camps was introduced at an international human rights conference on North Korea, organized by the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights.

¹⁸ Huh Son-haeng, "A Study on the System and Reality of NK Human Rights Violation-the Case of PPC," paper submitted for Master's Degree, 2008, Korea University.

Oh Kyong-sup (2005)¹⁹ attempted to present analysis of the characteristic of PPC in North Korea through comparison between Gulags of the USSR and PPC of North Korea. He indicated that the purpose of operation of Gulag by the USSR was for mobilization of labor to increase production while the purpose of PPC in North Korea was for political tool for terrorism to eliminate political opponents. His analysis has indicated that the conditions and treatment of prisoners in Gulag was considerably better than in PPC and the Gulag was disbanded after the World War II whereas the system of PPC has been strengthened and still continuing. The study is challenged for its conclusion that the only purpose of Gulag in USSR was mobilization of labor force and the study has failed to review concentrations camps in other communism countries.

The present survey study has referred to the following reports and research data on PPC:

¹⁹ Oh Kyong-sup, ““A Study on the System and Reality of NK Human Rights Violation—the Case of PPC,” paper submitted for Master Degree, Korean University, 2005

Table 1-2

Principal Reports and Papers, Home & Abroad, on PPC

	Subject	Author	Published	Date
Papers Published in Korea	Co-relation between Juche Ideology and PPC	Ogawa Haruhisa	May, Monthly Tongjillo	2000
	Political/Social Changes and Human Rights, the Case of PPC	Huh Man-ho	Peace Institute, Kyongbuk Univ.	2002
	Study on Structural Reality of Human Rights Violations in NK, the Case of PPC	O Kyong-sop	Paper Submitted for Master's Degree, Korea Univ.	2005
	A Study on Effectiveness of PPC for the Control of People	Huh Son-haeng	Paper Submitted for Master's Degree, Institute, Public Policy, Sogang Univ.	2008
Survey Reports Published in Korea	Names Forgotten		North Korea Gulag Democracy Network	2004
	NK Human Rights White Paper, 2009 (Annual)	Yoon Yeo-sang & others	NKDB	Each Year
	NK Human Rights White Paper, 2008		The Korean Bar Association	Each Year
	NK Human Rights White Paper, Annual.	Lee Kum-sun & others	Korean Institute of National Unification	Each Year
Reports Published Oversea	Annual Human Rights Report, Amnesty International		Amnesty International	Each Year
	Annual Human Rights Report, Human Rights Watch		Human Rights Watch	Each Year
	Annual Human Rights Report, State Department, USA		US Department of Labor	Each Year
	Ali Lameda: a Personal Account of the Experience of a Prisoner of Conscience in the DPRK	Ali Lameda	Amnesty International	1979
	Human Rights in DPRK		Minnesota Lawyers Association and others	1988
	Summary of Amnesty International's Concern on North Korea		Amnesty International	1993
	New Information about Political Prisoners		Amnesty International	1994
	The Hidden Gulag	David Hawk	HRNK	2003
	Concentrations of Inhumanity	David Hawk	Freedom House	2007
	North Korea: a Case to Answer, a Call to Act		Christian Solidarity Worldwide	2007

3. Contents and Scope of Survey

The present survey intends to present overall situations of PPC on the basis of analysis of realities of PPC.

Table 1-3

Outline of Survey

Classification	PPC Survey
Survey	Questionnaire: Realities of punishment of prisoners and knowledge of PPC (322 people) Interview: 17 people experienced in PPC, including witnesses to disappearance
Study of Documents	1. Comparison with earlier surveys (19 important testimonies and 22 reports)
Major Contents of Survey	Survey on the Reality of PPC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operation of PPC - Judiciary process of political prisoners - History and reality of human rights of PPC prisoners in respect of clothing, food, house, family life, health, medical service, forced labor, education for children, human rights of woman prisoners and etc. Contents about Disappearance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey on cases of disappearance forced by govt. organizations - Survey about knowledge of whereabouts of victims of forced disappearance by witnesses

1) Survey of Political Prisoners' Camps (PPC)

(1) Scope and Content of Survey

For the purpose of systematic analysis of PPC, detailed survey was carried out for the 17 people interviewed on their demographic background, the process of arrest and detention, location and present conditions of the PPC and cases of human rights violations during the period of their detention in PPC. Questions asked include:

First step questions were about the demographic and social background and basic identification of the witness. Questions asked about the name, gender, date of birth, date of arrival in South Korea, place of birth and residence in North Korea, level of education in North Korea, employment and type of work in North Korea, marital status in North Korea, family in North Korea, date of the last defection from North Korea, present state of physical and emotional health, present address, present family and present employment.

Second step questions were about how the witness was experienced in PPC (about detention and work in the PPC). Questions were asked about the details of judiciary process and charges such as preliminary interrogations, trial and the procedures of detention, name of PPC, period of detention, whether or not family was informed, type of work in the PPC and process of separation (defection).

Third step questions were about general information such as the location of PPC. Questions were asked about the details of the location/official title, information about when the PPC was set up and history of expansion/closure of the PPC, management and system of security (including number of guards), facilities for administration and work, size of the PPC and deployment and organization of work units, number of prisoners and characters (charges against them), possibility of release and process of release and, etc.

The fourth step questions were about the present operation system. Questions were asked about the details of operational and management system of the PPC, control and management of prisoners (systems of control and surveillance of prisoners and etc.), rules and regulations for management and prisoners, facilities related to punishment of prisoners, and size and

history of operation of the PPC in the past and present, characters and latest development of the PPC and etc.

The fifth step questions were about history of human rights of prisoners. Questions asked include 1) realities of clothing, food and accommodation: rations of daily provisions such as clothing and food and standard of shelters, 2) realities of life of family: whether or not families remain integrated, whether or not marriage or delivery of babies authorized and etc., 3) realities of health and medical care: diseases and the standard of medical service and treatment of patients, 4) realities of forced labor: hours and intensity of work and production facilities, 5) realities of education of children: process of education and curriculum, whether or not children are forced to labor and etc., 6) realities of control of prisoners: restriction of movement, surveillance and organization of prisoners, rules and punishment of prisoners, process and severity of punishment and etc. and 7) realities of human rights of woman prisoners: whether or not sexual abuse for woman prisoners and etc.

Table 1-4

Questions for In-depth Interviews with Witnesses Experienced in PPC

Classification	Items for Survey on PPC
Demographic/Social Background	Name, gender, date of birth, date of arrival in South Korea, place of birth/residence/education/type of work & witness's role/marital status/family in North Korea, date of last defection from North Korea, present status of physical and mental health, present address, present family relation, present employment and etc.
Process of experience of PPC (prisoner or PPC officials)	Judiciary process such as arrest, preliminary interrogation, and trial, charges against prisoner, period of detention, whether or not family was informed, type of work and the witness's role, process of beginning/end of detention and etc.
General Items of PPC	Location/official name of the PPC, history of PPC including division or merger, operator and security system (size of staff), control and labor facilities, size of PPC, organization of prisoners, number and type by charges against prisoners, possibility and process of release and etc.
Operation of PPC	Operational system, security and management systems for prisoners, rules and regulations for camp authorities and prisoners, facilities for punishment and etc. Size and operation of the PPC, past and present, type of prisoners by charges against prisoners, latest development and etc.
Human Rights of Prisoners, Past/Present	Present situations of ration of such provisions as clothing, food and other daily items, family life, health and medical service, forced labor, facilities for work, treatment of products, education of prisoners' children, public/secret execution, torture, brutality and etc. Sexual violence on female prisoners, treatment of old people, children and etc.

The questions asked for this survey were intended for all respondents, including witnesses directly experienced in PPC, guards, camp officers and their families. As level of their experience differs, however, some questions were asked only to the applicable respondents and some questions were waived from the respondents who refused to answer or were nervous with revealing identification or with particular situations.

(2) Scope and Content of Survey on Disappearances

This survey also contains cases of missing persons who are believed to have some connection with PPC. For this purpose, questions were also asked about cases of disappearance during the in-depth interviews under the present survey. The survey of witnesses to disappearance was conducted at the same time with the survey on PPC.

Questions were asked about witness to missing persons, occurrence of missing cases, the circumstance under which a person was missing and witness's understanding of the missing case to 17 persons through in-depth interview and 322 North Korean defectors who arrived in South Korea in 2009. In-depth interviews were focused on the family of the missing persons or witnesses to the case of disappearance. The results of the analysis of in-depth interviews is presented in integration with PPC as the two subjects are linked.

For the purpose of survey on cases of disappearance, the researchers of the present survey obtained completed questionnaire from 322 North Koreans who arrived South Korea in 2009. Main questions asked were as follows:

Firstly, questions were asked about demographic/social background and identity of the respondent. The questions included name, gender, date of birth, date of arrival in South Korea, place of birth and residence in North Korea, level of education in North Korea, employment and type of work in North Korea, marriage status, families in North Korea, the date of last defection from North Korea, present physical and emotional health, present address, present family relation, present job and etc. The questions about disappearance cases were added to the questionnaire intended for survey on PPC. Therefore, the results of demographic and social background are same with PPC.

Secondly, the questions were related to cases of disappearance forced by the government organizations. Major questions were about clarifying whether it was a case of witness or hearsay, witness to disappearance by period and frequency of hearsay (circumstance and process of disappearance, reaction by the family, impact on the family, the circumstance of witness such as name of victims, organization responsible for the disappearance or perpetrator, timing and place of disappearance, charges against the victim).

Thirdly, the questions were about recognition and reality of cases of disappearance. Questions were focused on the activity that caused disappearance, the organization responsible for disappearance and pattern of disappearance, recognition by the related residents about whereabouts of the victim, the impact of disappearance on the neighbors, reactions by neighbors, the connection between disappearance and PPC and etc.

In North Korea, as the cases of disappearance are in the form of banishment or arrest in secrecy that it is extremely rare to identify any witnesses. Accordingly, in case of survey on disappearances, information

obtained from questionnaire is important and results of in-depth interviews were only partly utilized. As the disappearance is in close connection with those cases of repatriation from China, information obtained from in-depth interviews were used as necessary and adequate.

Table 1-5
Survey on Disappearance (Questionnaire and Interview)

Classification	Items Surveyed for Disappearance
Socio-Demographic Background and Personal Identification	Name, gender, date of birth, date of arrival in South Korea, place of birth/residence/education/type of work and role of witness/marital status/family in North Korea, date of the last defection from North Korea, present conditions of physical and mental health, present address, present family, present employment and etc.
Cases of Disappearance	Witness or hearsay of disappearance, witness to disappearance by period, frequency of hearsay, victim of disappearance, the organizations or perpetrators responsible for disappearance, when and where of disappearance, process of final disappearance including charges against the victim, response from the family, impact on the family, circumstance of witness and etc.
Knowledge of Disappearance	Acts causing disappearance, perpetrator/method of disappearance, knowledge of residents on the disappearance, impact on neighbors and their reaction, impact on the family of victim, connection of disappearance to PPC

4. Method of survey

For the overall analysis of PPC within the purview of this survey, a variety of methods were employed, e.g. in-depth interviews, questionnaires, personal visits and research on a wide variety of documents. As the objectives of the survey include investigation of reality, analysis of cases and presentation of recommendations, attempts were made to employ rational methods to achieve these objectives. Accordingly, the present survey was carried out on the basis of reviewing the earlier testimonies by North Korean defectors and papers on the PPC and detailed questions were designed in consideration of the issue of forced repatriation and papers published. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews were carried out on the basis of questionnaires especially designed for the purpose of the survey as follows:

1) Analysis of documents

Related data were collected domestically and abroad²⁰ for the survey and included, among others, overall analysis of earlier records of those North Koreans experienced in PPC (both victims and perpetrators), victims of forced repatriation, testimonies, surveys and research reports. The most recent data were collected to review any evidence of progress by North Korea to observe international human rights instruments it has acceded to. Similar cases in other countries, such as within the former Soviet Socialist bloc, were reviewed for the purpose of comparison.

²⁰ Yoon Yeo-sang, "Analysis of Documents on North Korean Human Rights," NKDB, Seoul, 2008.

2) Questionnaire for defectors

A comprehensive survey was conducted on the basis of experience, witnesses and knowledge of the PPC from a total of 322 defectors who arrived in South Korea in 2009. Questionnaires, specially designed for the purpose, were used and interviews on the basis of the questionnaire were carried out by expert researchers with experience in interviewing North Koreans.

A total of 322 North Koreans participated in the questionnaire survey on the subject of real conditions inside the PPC. A breakdown by gender of the total number of 322 respondents shows that 262 were women, (representing 81.4%) and 60 were men (representing 18.6%), the survey sample of women to be more than four times greater than men. The imbalance of gender in the sample reflects the same pattern and proportion of arrivals in South Korea of North Koreans. Accordingly, it is assumed that the present survey was unavoidably influenced by this gender imbalance in arrivals.

Table 1-6

The Year of Last Defection of Respondents

Last Defection from NK	No. of Defectors	Percentage (5)
1990s	42	13.3
2000-2005	115	36.5
2006-2009	158	50.2
Sub-total	315	100.0
No Response	7	
Total	322	100.0

Mindful of the fact that 50% of the respondents defected from North Korea after 2006, the present survey appears to reflect a very recent view of human rights in North Korea. A review of the respective years in which the respondents last defected from North Korea reveals that those who last defected from North Korea in the 1990s amounts to only 13.3%, while those who last defected from North Korea between 2006-2009 amounted to 50.2%. Further review of such details shows that those who last defected were 53 (16.5%) in 2008 and 63 (19.6%) in 2009, adequately reflecting the current situation in North Korea.

Table 1-7

Respondents by Province

Province	No. of Respondent	Percentage (5)
Kangwondo	10	3.1
Yanggangdo	31	9.6
Chgangdo	1	0.3
South Pyongan	6	1.9
North Pyongan	4	1.2
Pyongyang	5	1.6
South Hamkyong	28	8.7
North Hamkyong	228	70.8
South Hwanghae	3	0.9
North Hwanghae	6	1.9
Total	322	100.0

An analysis of the respondents by location of residence in North Korea shows that 228 (70.8%) were from North Hamkyong Province, the highest of all, followed by Yanggang Province with 9.6% and South

Hamkyong Province with 8.7%. The analysis shows extremely low figures for such other areas as Kangwon Province, Hwanghae Province and Pyongyang City. The analysis shows that defectors are most commonly from areas along the China/North Korea border.

Table 1-8

Respondents by Ages

Ages of Respondents	No. of Respondent	Percentage (5)
High-Teens (18-19)	4	1.3
20s	82	27.2
30s	120	39.2
40s	71	23.5
50s	16	5.3
60s	6	2.0
70s	3	1.0
Sub-total	302	100.0
No Response	20	
Total	322	100.0

The breakdown by age shows that the age groups between 20-40 represent the largest with 90%, showing a considerably low rate for teenagers and below as well those over age 50. The reason for the high rates of respondents in the economically productive group is that those under 20 were mostly excluded from the survey.

3) In-depth interviews with North Korean defectors

The present survey is mainly based on face-to-face in-depth interviews with 17 North Korean defectors who have some experience with PPC. Witnesses were selected from those who had their experience with PPC after 2000. However, selected interviews also include such testimonies that are of particular importance or were not previously disclosed.

The in-depth interviews were conducted based on a questionnaire, previously designed and developed by NKDB. Information was obtained systematically regarding real and actual conditions of the operation of PPC, the background and process that led to the witness' detention in PPC, and the collection of data regarding the human rights conditions of prisoners in PPC. The North Koreans with experience in PPC were identified through the existing network of NKDB, the network of North Korean defectors, cooperation with the network of government organizations involved in the process of investigations of North Korean defectors upon their arrival in South Korea, as well as visits to Hanawon, the national orientation institute for North Korean defectors, and locations of witnesses. Interviews were conducted by experienced researchers from NKDB.

4) Consultations and workshops

As the present survey is intended for a comprehensive and analytical report of PPC, disappearance, analysis abroad and the level of North Korea's compliance with international human rights instruments, advice was sought from professional researchers on PPC, disappearance, the North Korean legal code and international laws. Advice given to us and the results of the survey were evaluated through private interviews with experts. The results of the evaluation were made public for comments and suggestions through the process of two open meetings and five separate workshops. Consultation with experts was maintained on a constant basis and the final results from this evaluation process have been reflected in this survey report.

II. Survey of Political Prisoners' Camps (PPC)

1. Concept of PPC and Analysis of Witness Testimonies

1) Survey Concepts and Current Condition within PPC

Generally speaking, the PPC is a camp, geographically separate and alienated from mainstream North Korean society, for the purpose of detaining and mercilessly punishing the accused offender of political crimes, as well as his/her family. However, to date, no provisions have been found in any laws or judiciary processes of North Korea specifying the title, authority to establish and/or operate a PPC. Accordingly, the concept, operation and actual conditions of PPC can only be ascertained based on the testimonies of witnesses who have personally experienced or had some contact with a PPC.

PPC is a place where political prisoners are detained, however the North Korean definition of political prisoner is ambiguous. Under varying circumstance, political prisoners can be defined on the basis of arrest, charges brought against the prisoners, as well as the government branches involved.

Generally, political prisoners are handled by the State Security Agency (SSA), which determines the severity of a prisoner's punishment and operates the detention facilities. Therefore, all cases handled by the SSA are considered to be political offences. Prisoners under SSA investigation, together with the family of the offender, are recognized as political prisoners. Accordingly, political prisoners in North Korea are not necessarily prisoners of conscience. All surveys on PPC must be carried out with this in mind until such a time that the North Korean authorities announce clear and detailed

criteria for political prisoners and non-political prisoners. For example, PPC No. 18 in Pukchang is, in fact, operated by the North Korean police, not by the SSA, and is considerably distinct from those PPC under the control of the SSA. However, similarities in the investigative process, punishment and classification of offenses strongly suggest Pukchang should be included as a PPC. Attention is required for further clarification and definition of PPC.

It should be noted that PPC is a term used in Korea. North Koreans refer to such a facility in several ways: a 'control center,' a 'maximum-security camp' (total control zone) or an 'off-limits zone.' Within the PPC, the camp is officially referred to in military parlance as "000 Unit." This survey commonly uses the general term "PPC," but also uses the term 'control center' or Kwalisoh in connection with testimonies by North Korean defectors.

PPC's can be generally categorized into two types. The first is the 'maximum-security camp' or 'total control zone,' in which prisoners are detained for life. The second category, the 'high-security camp,' or 'revolutionary zone,' consists of detention areas from which prisoners are released after having served a set prison term. All five PPCs under the operation of the SSA today are maximum-security camps with the exception of one section of Yodok PPC, which is operated as a high-security camp.

In the absence of official and clear guidelines as to distinctions between maximum or high-security camps, an analysis of the mode of arrest and the charges brought against the prisoners reveals that the high-security camp can be said to be reserved for offenders of a less serious nature. In other words, it appears that the maximum-security camp is reserved for those prisoners who are alienated from mainstream society for life, while the high-security camp is populated by prisoners who are released after having served a set prison term. In both cases, however, the prisoners are not tried in a court

of law. Interviews have also revealed that cases occur in which prisoners are transferred from a high-security to a maximum-security camp and vice-versa.

The information about PPC until now has been collected and made available through the interview of witnesses who have experienced life within PPC, as well as via related surveys. However, the number of witnesses has been relatively small and most of them were drawn from the Yodok PPC. Information on the overall management and conditions of PPC is extremely limited. The in-depth interviews that constitute this survey include 17 witnesses, whose experience range from PPC No.'s 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18 and 22, thereby contributing significantly to the overall understanding of conditions in the PPC, both past and present.

The existence of PPC has been recognized for decades, but exact locations, size, scope, purposes and camp titles have come to light only recently. Locations of PPC have been confirmed by testimonies of North Korean defectors and satellite photographs. In the light of the above, it has been confirmed that the PPC system has been in operation since the late 1950s. Often undergoing an evolution that frequently included a launch of operation, relocation, division and integration with other facilities over the years, the PPC system at present consisted of six locations, including the PPC in Pukchang. The total number of PPC on record exceeds 10 but at present we are convinced that five PPC are operating under the management of the SSA, including PPC No. 14 in Kaechon, No. 15 in Yodok, No. 16 in Hwasong, No. 22 in Hweryong and No. 25 in Susong and, additionally, another one, PPC No. 18 in Pukchang that are under the control of the police. The total number of prisoners in all these PPC is estimated at approximately 200,000.

Table 2-1

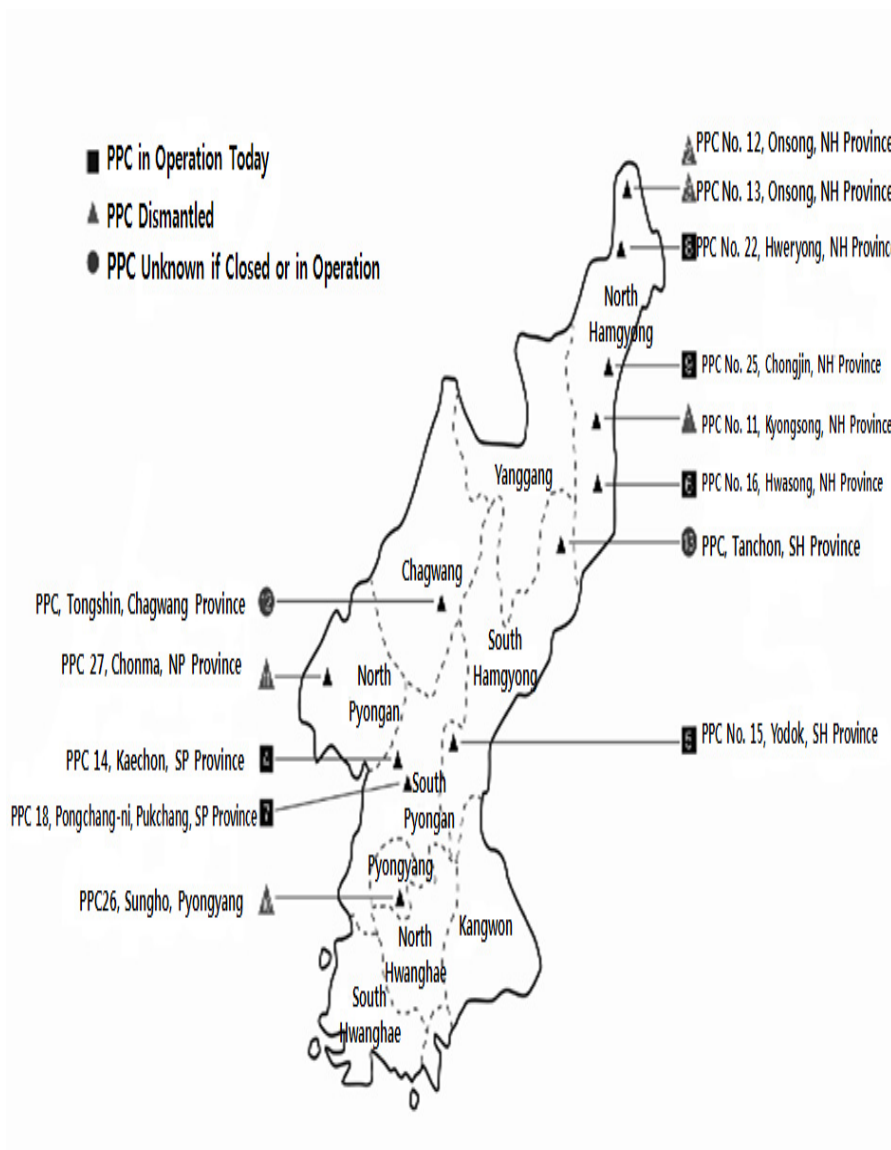
Location and Current Operational Function(s) of PPC²¹

Title	Location	No. of Prisoners	Type of Prisoners	History
No.11	At the base of Kwanmo Mt.(Peak), Chuwul-li, Kyongsong, North HMK	Over 15,000	Offenders	Closed in October, 1989
No.12	Changpyong-ni, Onsong, North HMK	Over 15,000	Offenders and families	Closed sometime between 1980-9; one witness places date at Oct.'91
No.13	Tongpo, Punggye, Pungchon in Onsong, North HMK	Over 20,000	Offenders and families	Closed in 1990-92
No.14	Wedong and five related valleys, Kaechon, South PYAN	Over 50,000	Offenders and families	Currently in operation
No.15	Yongpyong, Pyongjon, Limsok, Taesuk, Kuwul in Yodok, South HMK	Over 50,000	Offenders and families	Currently in operation; includes a maximum-security camp
No.16	Hwasong, North HMK	Over 20,000	Offenders and families	Currently in operation
No.18	Pukchang, South PYAN	Over 10,000	Offenders and families	Currently in operation by police, includes a maximum-security camp; under consideration for reclassification
No.22	Areas of Chungbong, Naksae & Kulsan, Hweryong, North HMK	Over 50,000	Offenders/families	Currently in operation; est'd in 1973 and expanded in 1990
No.25	Susong, Songpyong, in Chongjin, North HMK	Over 5,000	Offenders	Currently in operation, at Susong Prison
No.26	Sungho, Pyongyang	Small scale	Offenders	Closed in Jan.' 91 PP prison
No.27	Chonma, North PYAN	Over 15,000		Closed in 91
Unkn own	Tongshi, Jagang	Over 17,000		Details unknown
Unkn own	Tanchon, South HMK	Over 10,000		Details unknown

²¹ Huh Son-haeng, "Effectiveness of PPC on the Suppression of People," Paper for Master Degree, Public Policy Graduation School, Sogang Univ. p.40 (table 6), some information added/supplemented.

Drawing 2-1

Political Prisoners' Camps in North Korea (PPC) Past and Present



The old PPC were closed due to (1) their location being disclosed to the outside world, (2) the construction of vital facilities nearby, or (3) the PPC's integration with other similar facility for administrative purposes. Information pertaining to the opening, relocation or closure/integration of PPC is generally drawn from witness testimonies. However, the relatively small number of available testimonies has limited our understanding of the finer details of PPC operation. A number of testimonies relate to closure of many PPC in the past, however, provide no information about any case of release of prisoners in large numbers. Some prisoners may have been released during the process of PPC closure but it appears that most, if not all, were transferred to another PPC. In summary, the overall size of individual PPC may have been reduced at times, but the system has largely remained unchanged over the years in terms of the size and capacity of PPC.

2) Analysis of Witnesses to Realities within PPC

The present survey, for the most part, is based on the analysis of testimonies by witnesses with personal experience in PPC. The survey was also designed to reflect current conditions of PPC through the interviews of 10-20 new witnesses, including 5-10 new witnesses who were experienced in PPC after 2000 and 5-10 new witnesses with experiences in PPC before 2000. These new testimonies have been added to testimonies already published.

As the witnesses in South Korea with experience in PPC after 2000 were extremely small in number, identification of the witnesses has been difficult. Nonetheless, interviews were carried out with the required number of new witnesses for this survey.

For this survey, a total of 17 witnesses, eight men and nine women, were interviewed from a variety of PPC including No.'s. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18 and 22, covering the period of 1965-2006 and reflecting a balance by gender. They are former prisoners, camp guards, SSA officers and related family members. The identities of respondents, with the exception of those whose identities have already been published, have not been disclosed in this survey in the case the witnesses who desired to remain anonymous or out of fear of human rights violation of a third person by disclosing the identity of the witnesses.

Despite obvious constraints in finding suitable witnesses, in consideration of the size, type of PPC, gender and experience, time of arrest and length of detention, the number of respondents in this survey appears quite substantial for analysis of the overall conditions of PPC in comparison with previous surveys and reports.

As the scope of this report was not only to survey realities within the PPC but also the degree of knowledge of PPC and its impact on the residents in North Korea, this survey involved a process that included a questionnaire and direct in-depth interviews with witnesses. Therefore, in addition to the 17 witnesses with actual experience in PPC, questionnaires, specifically designed for this survey were collected from 322 North Korean defectors who have arrived in South Korea after 2009. The results were then merged with interview findings.

Table 2-2

Witnesses to Realities within PPC

Location		Witness	Experience	Age at the Time of Experience	Period of Experience
PPC No. 11 (Kyongsong, North HMK)		Ahn Myong-chol	Guard	10s-20s	Jul. '87-Nov.'87
PPC No.'s 12 and 13 (Onsong, North HMK)		A 08	SSA Officer	20s-50s	1967-1992
PPC No. 14 (Kaechon, South PYN)		Shin Dong-hyuk	Family member of Prisoner	Birth-20s	1982-Jan.2005
PPC No. 15, High-security Camp (Revolutionary Zone)	Ipsong-ni, Yodok, South HMK	A 05	Family Detention	40s	1976-1980
		A 11	Family Detention	10th	1976-1980
		Kim Yong-sun	Family Detention	30s-40s	Oct. 1970-Jan. 1979
		Kang Chul-hwan	Family Detention	1-10	Aug.77-Feb. 87
	Taesuk-ni (offender)	A 12	Offender	20s-30s	1994-1997
		A 10	Offender	50s	1995-1998
	Kuwup-ni (Sorimchon)	A 04	Offender	20s	2002-2005
		A 06	Offender	30s	2003-2006
Yongpyong-ni	Kim Yong-sun	Family Detention	30s-40s	Oct. 1970-Jan.1979	
PPC No. 18, Soksan-ni, Pukchang, South PYN		A 01	Family Detention	Birth-early teens	1972-1984
		A 09	Family Detention	Birth-30s	1975-2000
		X Myong-oh	Family Detention	20s-30s	1994-2000
PPC No. 22, Chungbong-dong, Hweryong, South HMK		A 02	SSA Family		1994
		Ahn Myong-chul	Camp Guard	10s-20s	1990-1991 1992-1994
Others		A 03	SSA Family	20s	1994-1995
		A 07		30s	Friend of family of officer, PPC No.15

2. Location, Imprisonment and Process of Release

1) Location and Size of PPC

Ahn Myong-chol, former PPC guard, has provided us important information on the location, size and the processes of consolidation and separation of functions with respect to PPC No.'s 11, 13 and 22. The location, closure and relocation of PPC 11 and 13 have been confirmed by Ahn. His information includes details of location, size and the relevant branch of government administering PPC No. 22.

Witness A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 for an extended period of time, has given us detailed information in respect to the timing of establishment, division, size and the relevant government branch responsible for camp management of PPC No.'s 12 and 13.

“PPC 18 at Pukchang was created before PPC 13 at Chongsong, North Hamkyong Province. I was told by camp officials of Pukchang PPC that their PPC was created 3 years before ours. I was told that the PPC at Chongsong was set up around April of 1964. PPC 13 was divided into two camps in 1975. The number of prisoners when I first arrived in PPC No. 13 was 5,000. The number increased to over 20,000. The large prisoner population increase was the main cause of the PPC being divided into PPC No.'s 12 and 13. What existed there already was simply split for the purpose of administration.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

According to the testimony, PPC No.13 was set up in 1964 after the PPC at Pukchang²², and appears to have been split in 1975 to create PPC No. 12. The information attributes the split of PPC at that time to the sudden increase in the number of prisoners but fails to explain why the number of prisoners suddenly increased. It is assumed that purges and deportations were carried out in a large scale in the wake of Kim Jong-il taking over the political power in the mid 1970's.

“PPC No. 13 originally encompassed the areas of Pungchon-ni, Punggye-ri, Tongpo-ri (where the PPC headquarters was located) and Chongpyong-ni of Chongsong County. When PPC No.13 was split, Changpyong-ni and Chungsan-ni became PPC No. 12. It was only for the purpose of administration. As a result, the greater part of Chongsong County was encompassed by the PPC, and the small remaining area of the county was consolidated into Onsong County. I think this was in 1975 or so. In the beginning, PPC No. 13 in Chongsong County came under the heading of Army Unit No. 3579, the Korean People's Guard. The new PPC No. 12 was given the title of Army Unit No. 3578. It was known as a Control Center to the outside but was a military unit internally.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

The PPC in North Korea are known as Kwalisoh (Control Center) to the North Korean residents, but carry an internal official title, such as Military Unit No. 000 or People's Guard. Often the PPC are referred to by numbers and locations, such as PPC No. 14, Kaechon Control Center, and PPC No. 15, Yodok Control Center. It is understood that the purpose of separate names is to cover up the presence of PPC to the outside world and, at the same time, to maintain military nomenclature for the PPC.

²² The witness states that the PPC in Pukchang was set up in 1961. However, it is generally believed that Pukchang PPC was set up in 1958.

“There were over 5,000 prisoners in PPC No. 13 in 1967, which then increased to over 20,000 by 1990. PPC No. 12 was a bit smaller than PPC No. 13. I think the number of prisoners in PPC No. 12 was around 15,000. The number of prisoners increased because anyone categorized as a revisionist along with their entire immediate family and relatives were brought there. PPC No. 12 was closed in October, 1991 and PPC No. 13 was closed in the fall of 1992. When prisoners began to be relocated, those officials facing imminent retirement were instructed to stay in the post until the end of 1992 to assist the process of prisoner relocation. PPC No.’s 12 and 13 were closed on instructions from Kim Il-sung who feared that the PPC might be detected by the outside world. PPC No. 12 and 13 were near from the North Korea/China border and railroad. The PPC in Hweryong (22) is deeply hidden inside a mountain. Most prisoners from PPC No. 12 and 13 were driven to PPC No. 22. PPC No.22 was established later than PPC No. 12 and 13, in 1975 or 78.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

The information concludes that PPC No. 12 and 13, rather near to the border with China, were closed for fear of detection by the outside world. Prisoners in PPC No.’s 12 and 13 were relocated to PPC No. 22 in Hweryong. It is confirmed that PPC No. 22 was expanded in 1990 to accept the prisoners from PPC No. 12 and 13. Camp officials and guards retiring at that time settled in the areas that formerly were occupied by PPC.

“I retired from the service in October, 1992 when PPC No. 13 was closed. At that time, large number of officials retired and remained in the areas for living after retirement. The best houses were occupied according to rank of retiring officials. In the beginning, the PPC was under the control of the 9th Bureau of the Police

Headquarters. The 7th Bureau was responsible for the management of prisons. The operation of PPC came under the control of the State Security Agency (SSA) as of 1975. Before the closure of PPC No. 13, inspection team arrived from the Central Committee of the Party and SSA. Thus, there was a government inspection before the closure of the PPC. They conducted a thorough investigation into all aspects of the PPC, such as prisoners, property, facilities and equipment and the results of production. A certain tonnage of corn was sent to the Grains Control Office of Chongsong County and livestock sent to the Farm Management Committee of Onsong County. There were several hundred cows and tens of thousands of pigs that were all carried away. It took over a year to transport all the livestock. Everything inside the PPC was carried away. After all the prisoners were sent away, soldiers were mobilized to dispose of dead bodies and eliminate evidence of graves.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

The testimony makes it clear that PPC had been under the control of the police in the beginning, but control had shifted to the SSA (7th Bureau) as of 1975. The testimony further clarifies that the entire process and operation of closing/integration of a PPC was under the responsibility of the SSA, confirming that the SSA is responsible for the direct control and operation of PPC.

Shin Dong-hyuk, former prisoner from PPC No. 14 in Kaechon, provides us with detailed information pertaining to the location (Wedong-ni, Kaechon, South Pyongan Province), the official title (PPC No. 14, Kaechon) and the process of separation from the PPC at Pukchang. He further estimated the number of prisoners in the Kaechon PPC to be about 50,000. Former prisoners were not in a position to tell us about facts of the entire camp as their movement had been limited to the areas of their work

assignments. Nevertheless, most former prisoners provide information relating to an entire PPC on the basis of what they were told as well as their own experience. However, their information largely coincides with the estimate of the number of prisoners at PPC on the basis of the satellite photos.

PPC No 15 at Yodok is comprised of both a maximum-security zone and a high-security zone. Information is most abundant for the high-security zone of the camp since over 20 former prisoners from the high-security zone have successfully defected to South Korea. The Yodok PPC is divided to 5-6 areas (valleys) for control. It seems that each valley has a separate and independent operational system. Some areas were expanded during the process of construction. Construction on Sorimchon began in 1999. The Yodok PPC today includes 5-6 villages in Yodok County and appears to be a high-security camp with the exception of Yongpyong-ni which is a maximum-security camp. The survey reveals a total of approximately 50,000 prisoners in the camp.

“I was told that Sorimchon was created in about 1999 and I am sure that at least one hundred people have died since then. When I first arrived there, women prisoners already there told me that they had built the road as well as the control sub-station. After my arrival, the road conditions were not good and I did a lot of hard work on road construction.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“The PPC at Yodok in which I was detained is in Kunchon-ni, Yodok County, and South Hamkyong Province and was officially called Sorimchon District. A prisoner by the name of Kim told me that she had actually been engaged in construction work of Sorimchon around the year 2000.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“I learned the name of PPC in which I was detained as PPC No. 15. I learned it after my arrival there. I don’t know why it was called No. 15. Everybody simply said it was ‘PPC No. 15.’” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“There are about 20 areas in the county of Yodok, South Hamkyong Province, where the Yodok PPC is located. The Yodok PPC encompassed the five areas including Kuup-ni, Ipsok-ni, Yongpyong-ni, Pyongchon-ni and Taesuk-ni, representing one third of the entire county. Its official title was High-security Zone, Control Center No. 15, Yodok County, South Hamkyong Province.”(Kang Chol-hwan, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15)

“Unit 7 was the center of Camp No.15. It was in Ipsok-ni. It included a shop, a clinic and schools and everything else. I watched as the prisoners who were detained there in the 70’s were all transported to the maximum-security zone at Yongpyong-ni. We were told that conditions in the maximum-security zone are much worse. The prisoners who were sent there were all landlords, capitalists, their children and other wicked elements. So there were only new arrivals in Ipsok-ni.” (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“PPC No. 15 is located in the Yodok County, South Hamkyong Province, a mountainous area, with Maengsan on the west, Taehung County of South Pyongan Province on the north, Kumya County of South Hamkyong Province to the east and the County of Kowon of South Hamkyong Province to the south. Its official title is Yodok Control Center No. 15, South Hamkyong Province (PPC). I was detained at the Ipsok-ni area most of the time.

On record, it was called Unit 2915, Korean People's Security Guard, but it was also called Control Center No. 15. This Yodok PPC originated from the radio speech by Kim Il-sung to all members of the Party in July, 1969." (Kim Yong-sun, former prisoner from Ipsok and Yongpyong-ni, PPC No. 15)

"I did not know where I was. I heard the name of Yodok for the first time from people there after my arrival. I also learned that I was in Taesuk-ni. I did not know the official name of it. I remember reading a sign, "Taesuk-ni Farm, Yodok County." Some people said it has a military title but I have never read it anywhere. I learned from the families of the prisoners that they had lived in Ipsok-ni in the beginning and had been there over 10 years. I guess they were there before 1985. A prisoner by the name of a Kim remembered Kang Chul-hwan in Ipsok-ni. The prisoner said he and his father were detained there because of the offence by his paternal uncle. I spent a lot of time with them as we were in the same work unit. His father made carts for cows. In South Korea, I asked Kang Chul-hwan if he knew the man I met in the Yodok PPC. Kang said he remembered him. I don't know how old the Taesuk-ni facility is. All I know is that the families of prisoners in Taesuk-ni were relocated and settled elsewhere in July of 1995. I think I was told that half of them were released and the other half were sent to other places such as Yongpyong. I learned this later. When they were released, some families and the Koreans from Japan I know were resettled somewhere in Kowon County, together with former SSA officials who escorted them to the new location of settlement on their release." (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

PPC No. 18, located in Pukchang, South Pyongan Province, under the control of Police Headquarters, was clearly distinct in administration from PPC under the control of the SSA. Further study is required to determine if the camp can be recognized as a PPC. The camp No. 18 in Pukchang remained in the same location after a section of it was moved and relocated somewhere upstream of the Taedong River to make a new PPC in Kaechon. Lately, many areas were returned to local government and some prisoners were relocated to the Pongchang area. The present survey reveals that the process and situation were distinct by areas.

“When PPC No. 18 was partially closed, there remained some 80 families that were not to be released. I was told that PPC No. 18 could not be totally closed as part of its purpose was the detention of formerly high ranking officials dispatched at any time from Pyongyang or Kangwon Province, a location to detain high ranking officials in future. The 80 families did not have records of serious crimes. They were, rather, from families so impoverished that they could not bribe officials for release. In North Korea, being poor is a crime and being unable to bribe is a sin. PPC No.’s 14 and No. 18 face each other across the Taedong River. Public trials and execution took place behind the tile factory where I used to work in PPC No. 18 and these were watched by the entire prisoner population of PPC No 14 from the other side of the river. PPC No. 14 has only farms. When it was closed in the beginning of 2007, the 80 families that were not released were transported to Mujindae. The two guard posts, Chaktong and Songni, were closed. The tile factory, part of the construction unit and where I’d worked, the planning and draftsmen office, the cement and pottery factories, the liquor factory and elderly prisoners’ unit were all moved over to No. 14. Roads disappeared and new barbed wire was set up. Barbed wire was also set up in the

valley of the 2nd unit of Pongchang-ni Village. I was told that No. 14 would encompass the entire area of Pongchang-ni. There was a place called No. 12 inside a valley, on the right side of No. 14, and the other side of Taedong River from No. 18. Wonpyong-ni is the name of the village.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“We lived in the Popi area, Soksan-ni, Pukchang County, South Pyongan Province, prior to 1984. Newly arrived people lived in the areas of Paektan, Tukchang, Kalkol, Myonghak and Chamsan. Then, many people were released after 1984. After that, there was a big change in the situation. In 1991, entire areas were removed from restriction. In the Tukchang Control Center where I lived, there was a prisoner release in 1984 and once more in 1985. Those of lesser crimes were released and allowed to meet their relatives. Those prisoners of serious crimes were all sent to Pongchang.” (A 01, witness from PPC No. 18)

“The control area in Tukchang, Pukchang County, South Pyongan Province, adjoins Kaechon County on the west and Tokchon County on the north. I passed two barbed wires and the first place I arrived was a mine inside the Suan valley, gloomy and dismal like hell. There are many PPCs but PPC No. 18 is the only PPC under the control of the Prison Bureau, People’s Police, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. In 2006, there were a number of problems including a few escape attempts from PPC No. 18. As a result, PPC No. 18 was relocated to Omok Valley, Sunchang-dong, Yongwon-ni, Kaechon County, South Pyongan Province, during a 5-day period, 21-25 August. The new place was a natural prison surrounded by tall mountains.” (O Myong-o, former prisoner from PPC No. 18)

Recent testimonies related to PPC No. 18 reveal that part of PPC No. 18 was removed from restriction and some of the prisoners were transferred to PPC No. 14. PPC No. 18 was then moved to Sunchang-dong, Kaechon County. However, the available information from these testimonies fails to confirm whether it was a case of a complete or simply a partial relocation of PPC. 18.

“No. 22 sits in a wide basin and is twice the size of No. 13. At that time (1990-91), No. 22, the Control Center at Hweryong, was the largest of all PPCs. This place was Unit 2209, Korean People’s Security Guard, under the control of the 7th Bureau, SSA.” (Ahn Myong-chul, former guard from Camp No. 22)

“No. 22 includes the areas of Chungbong (incorporated in 1981), Sawul and Haengyong. You must take a train from Hweryong bound for Hakpo Mine (Sechon Workers’ District). From there you must go about 6 kilometers further into a valley. The village for camp officers’ families is in Chungbong-ni. This was originally a normal area. When I was a small boy and in the 4th year grade in primary people’s school, the Chungbong Mine became a control district and many prisoners arrived in cargo trains. They were dispersed and settled in several districts such as Sawul and Haengyong. Lately, a resident in Hweryong told me that No. 22 has been relocated.” (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

PPC No. 22 has generally been regarded as the largest PPC in terms of scale and number of prisoners. Lately, some witnesses testify that part of it has been relocated. Further information is required for a final determination of the current status of PPC No.22.

2) Number of Prisoners and the Process of Closure and Consolidation

It has been recognized that there are six PPCs and the number of prisoners in those PPCs is estimated to exceed 200,000. In detail, there are over 50,000 prisoners at PPC No. 14 in Kaechon, over 50,000 at PPC No. 15 in Yodok, over 20,000 at PPC No. 16 in Hwasong, over 50,000 at PPC No. 22 in Hweryong and over 5,000 at PPC 25 at Susong. Insufficient information on the latest developments regarding the relocation and reorganization of PPC No. 18 in Pukchang has made it difficult to assess the number of prisoners there. There appear to be changes in the number of prisoners by period of incarceration. However, insufficient information at present has made it difficult to assess number of prisoners by this variable.

It must be noted that the present estimate of number of political prisoners may not agree with the actual number in view of the extremely restricted access to the maximum-security camps by both insiders and outsiders and the high probability of existence of smaller PPCs yet unknown to us. Examples of the information available for the assessment of number of prisoners at each PPC from the testimonies are as follows:

“There are about 3,000 prisoners at Tongpo Mine, 80 prisoners at the food factory, 120 women and 20 men prisoners at the clothes factory, about 50 prisoners at the mechanics workshop, 10 prisoners at the livestock farm, 10 prisoners at the butchers unit and 6 prisoners at the power transformer station. Additionally, there were some 300 prisoners in the construction unit. There were three other sections, 60 prisoners at each section. There were 5 units of workers at each village. There was an SSA officer, a chief worker and an inventory clerk at each work unit.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“The Control Center is comprised of a headquarters village, No. 1 Valley, No. 2 Valley, No. 3 Valley, No. 4 Valley and No. 5 Valley. There are about 100 houses for SSA officers’ families in PPC No. 14, two families at each house for a total of 200 SSA officers’ families. Four prisoners’ families lived in a house and there were 160 families in my village. On average, each prisoner’s family was a mother and a child, two persons per each family. Additionally, there are a large number of factories and the total number of prisoners was estimated to be 70,000 to 100,000 by many prisoners. But my estimate is about 50,000.” (Shin Dong-hyuk, former prisoner from PPC No. 14)

“I do not know the size of the entire population but there were at least 200 prisoners in the 1st Company and 2nd Company I was with.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“There were offices for administration, houses for SSA officers (in charge of security), and a dining room, a hall with a capacity of 200 people, a clinic and a plaza inside the wall and surrounded by barbed wire. There was a ward for patients, men and women’s toilets at the other side of the plaza. Additionally, there was a ward for outpatients, a separate patients’ ward for the 1st Company and 2nd Company. Half of the patient’s ward for the 2nd Company was for women. The patient’s ward was a single storey made from earthen bricks with tiles on the roof. There was a mountain behind and around the patient’s wards and there were guard posts at the peak of the mountain. The maximum-security camp could be supervised from a considerable distance, from the top of the mountain. I was told that a high-security camp used to be inside that maximum-security camp. At that time, there were 150 male patients at the 1st Company Ward and 25 women patients.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“At that time, there were 50 to 60 families at each work unit. The 7th Unit was larger. The 7th Unit was the central area of the PPC with a school, clinic and a shop. All prisoners come to the 7th Unit on Sundays. The distance from 5th Unit to the 7th Unit is 8 kilometers. Units from 1 to 4 have a different shop. They use the shop at the central area. The administration office is located at the 1st Unit. There was a shop. We used to receive supplies from the shop. The Koreans from Japan were concentrated in a separate location. I did not pay very much attention to their area and I don't know anything about them. There was an SSA staff member at each work unit. They carry a gun. We cannot speak to each other and have time together.” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“The concentration center is comprised of five villages including Kuup-ni, Ipsok-ni, Yongpyong-ni, Pyongjon-ni and Taesuk-ni. It is a very wide place as it encompasses one third of the entire Yodok County. Kuup-ni, Ipsok-ni and Taesuk-ni are a high-security camp where prisoners of less serious political crimes are detained, such as those who attempted to defect to other countries, those critical of the North Korean system, those returned from other countries and who've shared facts about foreign countries with their families and others, and those who came from Japan or who surrendered to North Korea from South Korea. Unmarried offenders are held at a singles' quarters and families are separated and settled in a family sector. The family sector was also divided between North Koreans and the Koreans from Japan. There were 1,300 single offenders, 9,300 North Korean families, 5,900 families from Japan in the high-security camp. There were a total of 50,000 prisoners in the entire area of Camp No. 15.” (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“They made five villages a concentration camp including Yongpyong-ni, Pyongjon-ni, and part of Kuup-ni, Ipsok-ni and Taesuk-ni. I was in the Ipsok-ni sector. When I was at Yongpyong-ni, the number of prisoners exceeded 5,000.” (Kim Yong-sun, former prisoner from Yongpyong-ni, PPC No. 15)

“There were less than 250 prisoners in Taesuk-ni including the three independent platoons. Prisoners were released and new prisoners arrived all the time.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“Unit 1 was for families, Unit 2 (also called Company) was for single offenders and Unit 3 was for both families and singles. Additionally, there was a General Unit that was merged with Unit 2 after July of 1995 when the family sector was relocated. In Taesuk-ni, there were both single offenders and families. Then, in July 1995, the entire family unit was relocated elsewhere. I was told that some families were released. In April, 1994, there were a total of over 500 prisoners including single offenders and families together. I remember that there were about 120 prisoners in 50 families from Unit 1 and part of Unit 3. The others were all bachelors. When families moved away in July 1995, about 300 bachelors remained. There were still 200 bachelors in April, 1997.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“I will explain to you about the villages in Control Center No. 18 in detail. There were villages of Sang-ni, Suan, Pongchang, Saemaul (a new village constructed for the families of camp officials) and Hyonmaul (a village for the families of camp officials) and an administration office at each village. Only one administration office

served the two villages of Saemaul and Hyonmaul of the camp officials. The size of villages is large by the standard of a farm village but small by the standard of a county. There were 1,200 families in the Yongdong sector alone. Pongchang is the largest in size and Yongdong, Suan and Sangni were smaller in the same order. I think the entire number exceeds 20,000. The Tukchang Mine is very large. There were 6,000 to 7,000 prisoners assigned to each shaft and there were an additional 300 prisoner in the open shaft. So, there were also additional 20,000 prisoners.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“In 1994, when Tukchang sector was broken off and attached to the local government, 60% of the area was cut away from the sector. Nevertheless, there were 15,000 prisoners remaining in the Yongdong sector and, additionally, there were many factories such as a motor pool, and similar facilities. So, the entire population exceeded 50,000. In 2006, Pongchang had restrictions lifted. The systems in the control center fell into a state of confusion after the relief operation in 2000 in the wake of march of suffering and food shortage. But 100 families were driven to Kaechon without any due consideration of them” (O Myong-o from Camp No. 18)

The PPC are divided according to the nature of detention: offenders only, offenders and their families together, or families separately, according to the severity of crimes committed. However, further information is required for more precise assessment of these situations as the available information is not sufficient and some testimonies are conflicting. Testimonies available to this date are cited in the above table, 2-1.

North Korean authorities have continued to establish new camps, relocate others, close or expand PPC over the years in order to avoid detection from outside world or based on a change of operational purpose. Even though detailed information is not available about the procedures and reasons for these processes, the present survey confirms that there are six PPCs in North Korea today. In the absence of a drastic decrease in the number of prisoners at PPC by period, relocation or closure of a PPC must be correlated with the expansion or establishment of a new PPC. It is regretted that precise information for tracking the movement of prisoners is extremely limited to date.

3) Process and Circumstance of Arrest

The survey that explores the experience of being arrested in North Korea reveals that the level of harshness during arrest seems to apply to offenders and their families alike. Offenders are mostly arrested at their work site. Some are, however, arrested at home or en route to an official trip or at another 'third location.' All arrests on record are arbitrary, carried out by members of the SSA or agents of related organizations, without an arrest warrant or an explanation as to why he or she is arrested.

Most family members of offenders are arrested at home with few exceptions; a few are arrested at the work site or on school grounds. The arrest is carried out without arrest warrant or any explanation, as in the case of the offender. The victim is often told to come to the office to answer some questions or simply told that the victim will be arrested because a member of the family is already under arrest. In case of the arrest of family members, related government agents typically rush into the home of victims at daybreak and arrest the entire family with maximum surprise.

Arrest is carried out mostly by SSA officers, but in some cases by the police. There was a case in which a victim was without awareness of who was the arresting authority.

Most offenders are detained at the PPC following preliminary interrogation and the process of investigation by SSA or a related organization. In case of family members, some cases are recorded in which they, too, were investigated, but in most cases family members of the offender are directly transported to a PPC immediately following arrest without any process of investigation. The survey reveals that families are detained at a PPC without a clear understanding of the cause of arrest or charges brought against them.

The survey on SSA agents and guards who worked at various PPC reveals that they were sent to the PPC under orders from the government and it was not their choice. The survey further reveals that the North Korean authorities select the camp officers or guards on the basis of songbun (class status) and family background as well as a security consideration of keeping the PPC operation absolutely secret, i.e. the probability of their future minimal contact with people outside the country. The survey reveals that Witness A08, who worked at PPC No.'s 12 and 13 over a 20 year period as an SSA officer, was selected to work at the PPC because he was an orphan without any family.

Table 2-3

The Process of Detention of Prisoners at a High-security PPC

Name	Crime	Preliminary Investigation by SSA	Detention during Investigation	Trial	Duration of Detention	Family Informed/Not Informed
A 04	Attempt to defect to S. Korea(meeting S Koreans and criticizing NK leaders)	Nov. 2001-Feb 2002 (for 2 mo.'s)	SSA Cell, Manpo City SSA	No	3 years Sorimchon, PPC No. 15	No
A 05	Husband opposed hanging leader's Portrait	No preliminary investigation	-	No	3 years PPC No. 15	Entire family arrested
A 06	Attempt to defect to S. Korea	Jan-May, 2003	Detention Cell, Onsong County SSA	No	3 years PPC No. 15	My father observed my escorted departure from RR stn.
A 10	Traitor (Spying for Russia)	Feb,95-June 96	8 th Bureau, SSA	No	3 years PPC No. 15	No
A 11	Objection to holding portrait of NK leader	None	N/A	No	3 years PPC No. 15	Entire family arrested
A 12	Attempted Defection from N. K	Nov.93-Apr. June, 94	SSA cell, Shinuiju City and Onsong County	No	3 years	
Kim Yong-sun	Disclosure of personal secret of NK leader	Jul-Sep., 1970-	SSA Hotel, Pyongyang City	No	No Information	Entire family arrested
Kang Chul-Hwan	Spy charge brought against grandfather	None	N/A	No	No knowledge	Entire family arrested

"I was assigned to Chongsong (Control Center or PPC) after graduation from my university. After graduation, I was asked if I would be interested in the Ministry of Police. I was sent to that ministry in Pyongyang and to the Chongsong Control Center. I was told at that time that I was being sent there because I was an orphan. I was in Pyongyang for about 15 days. I was interviewed at the 9th Bureau of the Ministry of Police and given instructions about my duty. I received my uniform. I had never been previously to Chongsong County, North Hamkyong Province. A man with the title, Chief of Politics, Chongsong Control Center, came and picked me up and took me to the Control Center. This is how I was assigned to a Control Center." (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

The survey reveals that family members of those offenders arrested are usually not informed about the arrest, with the exception of those offenders whose families are also arrested. One isolated case was recorded in which the offender met his family just before detention at a PPC. If a person is detained at a PPC, he or she is treated as a missing person to the family, thereby causing serious problems for the family and sometimes disintegration of the family unit. Sudden disappearance of a family member following an arrest for a crime is generally interpreted by the family that the victim has been sent to a PPC and information about the whereabouts will not be available.

4) Criminal Charges Brought against Prisoners

The survey conducted on the crimes of former prisoners matched the survey results of North Korean defectors. According to the survey, charges pertaining to political crimes are of the following nature: making remarks about political matters, defection from North Korea or an attempt to go to South Korea, and anti-government activities. This survey is supported by testimonies from former prisoners.

As Table 2-3 shows, charges against prisoners mostly consist of remarks on politics, criticism against regime leaders and attempted defection from North Korea. Some of them were arrested based on guilt by association. It must be noted that Table 2-3 is based on interviews of former prisoners from PPC No. 15, Yodok only a high-security camp. The survey produces a somewhat different result when prisoners from maximum-security PPC and PPC No.18 are included. In a high-security PPC, the rate of single offenders without family members is high, while the rate of family detention is high in maximum-security PPC. Shin Dong-hyuk from PPC No. 14 and former prisoners from PPC No. 18 (A01, A09 and O Myong-o) were all detained by the system of guilt by association for the political activities of their grandparents, such as defection to South Korea, not because of their own alleged offense.

Accordingly, large numbers of PPC prisoners continue to serve prison terms without any knowledge of charges against them, with the exception of those offenders who are detained for specific offenses they have committed.

Table 2-4

**Political Crimes Requiring Detention at PPC
(Database Information from NKDB)**

Classification	No. of Case	Effective Rate	Total Rate
Political Offense	402	48.3	36.5
Criminal Offense	21	2.5	1.9
Economic Offense	24	2.9	2.2
Border Violations	67	8.0	6.1
Miscellaneous Offense	14	1.7	1.3
Guilt by Association	297	35.7	27.0
Others	7	0.8	0.6
Sub-Total	832	100.0	
Unknown	269		24.4
Total	1101	100.0	100.0

A survey, on the basis of database information²³ from North Korean Human Rights Archives (Archives) under the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, Seoul (NKDB), on the charges against the prisoners at various PPC reveals that guilt by association represented 35.6% of all charges. The most frequent charge was political offenses, representing 48.3%. The rate of unknown cases was quite high, at 24.4%. It is believed that most

²³ An analysis of a total of 11,206 cases of human rights violations in North Korea recorded in the main database of the Archives

of unknown cases represent guilt by association. Therefore, in reality, the total percentage of offenses that involve guilt by association will be very high. The witness A01 from PPC No. 18 testifies:

“My father was married and brought to the Control Center with mom. He did not commit any crime and I was told that he was brought there because of the activities of my grandfather. We didn’t know precisely why my father was there and why I was born there. We were settlers.²⁴ I never considered myself the son of a criminal. I did not know that I was the son of a criminal.” (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

Former prisoners offer a variety of charges as causes for other prisoners to be detained at the PPC on the basis of their own experience. Further study would be needed to determine whether their information suggests the actual character of PPC in which they were being detained or individual perceptions.

“Political prisoners arrive at No. 22. Their entire family is brought if Kim Il-sung was very angrily criticized. The prisoners at No. 22 are not like ordinary workers. Generally, they were high-ranking and intelligent. Mostly, they are senior party members, B.A. or Ph. D degree holders. They are all here for the mistakes they made in their speeches.” (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

“I was brought here because my husband made a comment during his office conference to the effect that it is acceptable for a father to appoint his son to succeed him, but holding his son’s picture aloft is not appropriate when the father is still alive. That statement became a problem at his office. Because of it, he was brought here straightaway. The entire family was also brought here” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“In Chongsong, there were many former landlords and their families, including children. When the People’s Army was pushed to the north and Hwanghae Province was occupied by the South Korean Army during the Korean War, many former landlords and their children returned to claim or sell their lands, etc. When the People’s Army regained the areas, the NK government decided to eliminate and apply dictatorship to the former landlords. I was told this is why Chongsong was created in April, 1964 to relocate landlords and their

²⁴ Prisoners in PPC are called ‘settlers.’ “Settlers removed from restriction” are those

who completed their prison term but still stays in the same place even after release.

children from Pyongyang, Shinuiju, Hamhung and Hwanghae Province. Later, many prisoners under the category of revisionist also arrived. Many children of revisionists were studying overseas at that time but they were also all brought here. During the period of purge in 1985-6, many anti-party revisionists arrived at this PPC from Pyongyang.” (A03 from PPC No. 13)

“My family was detained at a PPC because my grandfather defected to South Korea without the knowledge of my grandmother. We did not do anything except being related to that grandfather who had defected to South Korea. Many prisoners were taken here for things that happened 20 or 30 years ago. At the time of the Shimhwajo case, many people were brought to the Control Center including high ranking government officials. When they arrived, there were a lot of people and furniture in their car.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

As in the examples above, survey results reveal that most prisoners in PPC are those who: made imprudent remarks concerning Kim Il-sung and his son (political statements), those who are victims of power struggles and purges, those accused of being South Korea supporters, landlords, capitalists and their families through guilt by association.

- 5) The Process of Investigation, Trial and Mode of Transport before Detention
 - (1) The Process of Preliminary Investigation.

North Korean law provides a step-by-step process pertaining to preliminary procedures in the course of a criminal investigation. All details and criteria for the preliminary investigation, such as the method, period of detention and responsible government organizations, are clearly specified in the Criminal Code and Criminal Action Law of North Korea. North Korea law specifies that the period of preliminary investigation should be (but not exceed) six months and such an investigation is to be conducted by the investigative department of the government. This survey conducted through in-depth interviews reveals that all suspects arrested in connection with crimes were made subject to preliminary investigation and the period of investigation was mostly between two and five months in duration, less than the prescribed six months, with the exception of Witness A10, who was investigated for 18 months. The period of preliminary investigation is prescribed by the law but it appears that in some cases the provision is not always respected.

The survey shows that the offender is subject to at least some form of the prescribed steps of preliminary investigation, but the alleged offender's families, who are arrested under the system of guilt by association, are directly transported to PPC right after arrest, completely skipping the process of preliminary investigation.²⁵ Survey results indicated that this was not a situation unique to Yodok PPC but also for other PPC as well, including PPC No.'s 14 and 18.

The responsibility for conducting preliminary investigations is divided between SSA and the police. Survey results indicate that all PPC prisoners interviewed underwent preliminary investigation by the SSA. This shows that the SSA is involved in the entire process of investigation from the beginning for a criminal case under its mandate. The in-depth interviews show that PPC prisoners underwent preliminary investigations in SSA jails, SSA hotels or during detention by the Preliminary Investigation Bureau of SSA.

The process of preliminary investigation in North Korea is for the purpose of investigating and confirming the commission of a crime. The survey reveals clearly that human rights of detainees are severely violated as the preliminary investigation is accompanied by torture, violence and duress. The survey also makes clear that victims are forced to make false statements and confessions in order to end the excruciating investigation as soon as possible. This is confirmed by survey information obtained from interviews.

"My father went to work with lunch box in the morning but did not come home in the evening. I was told he was arrested. There was no such thing as a preliminary investigation or any other investigation and he just simply disappeared." (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"They were very crafty when investigating me. They told me that they knew that my mother and brother were in South Korea. When I replied that I had no idea where my mother was, they were angry and called me a wicked element and continued interrogation without lunch. I was interrogated over 20 times. They used violence as I refused to confess. The investigation ended after an SSA officer had a final round of interviews with me." (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

"When my father was arrested, there was no such thing as a preliminary investigation and, in fact, the entire family was carried away at dawn with him. I was told by my father that once he was

²⁵ There are cases where a member of the family is interrogated to prove the guilt of the offender. In general practice, however, families are sent to PPC without any process of investigation.

called by the SSA to confirm if he'd made a certain remark. There was no attempt to corroborate whether he'd made the remark, and we were all pushed out at dawn. I was able to carry only a bowl and some rice." (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"My grandparents were successful with a plating business in Japan but came to North Korea in August of 1977, and settled down in Pyongyang. When the wave of arrests of Korean families from Japan began, we were arrested and detained in PPC No. 15. At that time, we were kicked out of our home at 4 o'clock in the morning by SSA officers who shouted at us, "Why are you so slow? Didn't I tell you to be quick to pack up your things and get in the vehicles outside?" There were two trucks, engines running, in front of our house. My father, his youngest brother, my grandmother and my 8-year old sister were all pushed into the truck. We were told by the SSA Section Chief, by the name of Jon Jae-kun, that my mother would join us later with the remaining furniture. We never heard anything from her since. We passed through downtown Pyongyang, Kangdong, Songchon and Yangdok. Then, we crossed over Wolwanglyong Pass and arrived at PPC No.15, Yodok." (Kang Chul-hwan, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15)

The SSA as illustrated by examples above, is in charge of conducting the preliminary investigation of the suspect to be sent to PPC. In general, the preliminary investigation is carried out within a period of six months. In case the preliminary investigation is not completed within six months, the preliminary investigation deadline is not respected and the investigation may continue over an extended period of time. The survey reveals that no information whatsoever is provided to the prisoners regarding the procedures of preliminary investigation, e.g. when it might be concluded. The survey also reveals that the process of preliminary investigation is reserved for the offender only, not for the families of offenders who are sent to the PPC directly without the process of preliminary investigation. It is found that sometimes wives are spared through a process of divorce before her husband is sent to PPC. Information has been insufficient to determine whether: (1) such divorce was forced or voluntary, (2) whether or not the rule applies to all wives and what the criteria are if it is not for everyone, (3) and what the process and procedures for such a divorce actually are.

(2) Absence of Trial and the Process of Transfer

The survey on the offender's right to trial and the process of transfer of the suspect to PPC disclosed that none of the prisoners in various PPC were officially tried in a court of law. To obtain an understanding of the process and procedures of how a judicial decision is made and how the prison term is

decided, testimonies are needed not only of former prisoners but also from officials who worked for the relevant government branch and have experience in making such decisions. Unfortunately, to this day, no such testimony has been available. Those that carry out this function are special officers of the SSA and none have been known yet to have defected to South Korea.

Accordingly, the survey on the process of detention in the PPC was carried out only based on the testimonies by former prisoners. The analysis of data and information available today suggests that the SSA is fully in charge of making decisions and prisoner transfer to the PPC.

The survey shows that the SSA is in charge of conducting preliminary and formal investigations, as well as making final decisions regarding the detention and the length of prison terms in accordance with its internal procedures and processes. A study of testimonies shows that the preliminary investigation is concluded when the suspect signs his statement and acknowledges it in the presence of the investigator and his superior (Bureau Chief or his deputy). The final decision on the fate of the one being investigated is made by the senior officer. The suspect is sometimes informed of the decision or transferred to PPC without such information.

However, in the absence of public information on the entire process leading to detention in a PPC, rules and laws prescribing such punishment, little information is available on the criteria and legal grounds for such punishment. It is regretted that the present survey has failed to obtain data and information to shed light on the practice and related situations. Simply, It is deduced that such legal specifications are strictly restricted and used internally only by the SSA and other related government organizations.

“Before I was sent to PPC Yodok, someone came from SSA Headquarters and asked me to confirm my statement and ink my fingerprint on the document. That was my statement for self-criticism. The papers were this thick (10 cm). I was forced to fingerprint the entire statement page by page. Then, he told me, “Don’t try to escape. Do good job there.” About a week later, they gave me winter clothes, the clothes of other women in the cell as I did not have clothes for winter. Then, I was sent to PPC Yodok (No.15). Later, I learned from my family that they knew nothing about my fate. (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“When they sent me to Yodok, there was no trial, absolutely nothing! Do you know what happened to me? The preliminary investigator gave me this much paper and told me to read it one day. When I was leaving, they told me to sign it. A few days later, I was taken to the office of the Bureau Chief. The chief and other senior officers came in and told me, “You, Prisoner No. 00, stand up!” I stood up. The Bureau Chief read my paper and said you are sentenced to

three years in the high-security camp, including the two years for preliminary investigation. Therefore you are staying your last year at the Yodok Control Camp. His implication was that I should be grateful to him.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

No judges, lawyers nor official trial were involved in all these proceedings. Some prisoners were informed of the decision by the SSA investigator and his superior. There were cases where the prisoner was transferred to a PPC at the same time of arrest, with or without any notice of a determination of his/her case. In general, however, the suspect is asked to sign the statement and informed of the decision. Nevertheless, most families are detained without trial and notice of a decision.

Some prisoners at the high-security camp of Yodok were informed of the decision and period of detention to be served. However, little documentation is available at present to confirm the situation with prisoners at maximum-security camps in the absence of testimonies²⁶.

“In the evening of one day in 2003 my investigator told me, “You are going tomorrow.” When I asked him, “Where am I going?” He replied, “To spend three years at a high-security camp in order to clean up your brain. Then, you are going to be all right.” There was no such thing as a trial.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“My investigator once told me that the investigation was almost over. He said, “Someone from the Central Office will come. Just tell him what you have told me. If you start to tell him anything else, your stay here will be prolonged.” Sometime later, a man from the Central Office dressed in civilian clothes came and showed me my papers and asked me if I confirmed the statement as true. The statement said that I intended to live in China. I said that I went to China intending to stay briefly, and then return to North Korea after finding the whereabouts of my mother. My proposed revision was accepted and I inked my fingerprint on all the pages. There was no trial. One day, the cell guards told me, “Get ready! You are going now.” So, I obeyed him. I asked them where I was to go. They didn’t tell me. Then I was taken to Yodok.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

²⁶ To this date, Shin Dong-hyuk is the only officially recognized former prisoner from a maximum-security camp of North Korea. As he was born in the camp, he is not in position to testify on his admission to the PPC.

As above, it is clear that SSA makes all the decisions in the process of preliminary investigation/investigation and detention in the PPC. However, the SSA internal process of discussion and final decision-making, if it is other than completely arbitrary, is not known at this time.

“Of course, there was no trial for me since I was innocent anyway. There was no trial or judicial proceeding of any kind---not once! Not even a rubber-stamp trial or a single visit by a lawyer or anything like that-- even for my father who was the actual suspect! In the case of my father, they spent six months for the preliminary investigation and the final determination was made by the police and the 2nd Economic Committee, not by a court of law. It was a political purge. Would you expect to have a lawyer or court action for a political punishment in North Korea? My father was deprived of his post and duty in the Party and was simply sent to a PPC. That was the end of whole thing. We were not the exception and we came to learn that no prisoners in the PPC had received any form of a fair trial.” (O Myong-o from PPC No. 18)

It has been established that PPC No. 18, unlike other PPC, is under the control of the police. However, it is not known, due to insufficient information, in what way it is distinct from other PPC that come under SSA control. It is not known, for example, if any unique type of offenders is sent to PPC No.18. In the case of O Myong-o, his testimony makes it clear that the decisions for arrest and detention at PPC were made by the police and his father’s employer, the 2nd Economic Committee, but he fails to provide information on the actual decision-making process. As PPC No. 18 was under the control of the National Police Ministry, it appears clear that decisions were made by the police. It is assumed that offenders accused of economic crimes, rather than political crime, are sent there but so far we are without information on the criteria for detention in PPC No. 18.

No information is available on the SSA internal process for decision-making, e.g. at which level, or who makes the decision, and if the Party organization or court are involved and exert influence. Information is also not available on (1) the criteria of detention at the PPC, (2) differences between maximum-security camps and high-security camps, (3) criteria for punishment of an entire family, (4) duration of detention, and (5) which PPC is chosen for detention.

Analysis of the information on the decision-making process, criteria and the organization making the decision is important for the survey of operation and definition of the character of the various PPC. Nevertheless, the information is not available at present as the testimonies available until now are from former prisoners, guards and supervisors, not from any officials who were actually involved with the process. Further information would be pending until new data and testimonies become available on the issue. On the other

hand, the survey shows that when a decision is made for detention at a PPC, transportation to that PPC is arranged by the same organization.

As the rate of prisoners born in PPC is substantial, it is meaningless to ask them about their arrest, investigation and trial proceedings. Accordingly, new chapters may be added to the survey in future to treat the issue of the difference between the family and the offender and criteria for application of the practice of guilt by association. There were cases in which the former prisoners were confused and mistook the final interview with the investigator and his superior as a trial, a consequence of general ignorance of North Koreans regarding court proceedings. Most North Koreans have never seen court proceedings with participation by judges, prosecutors, lawyers, the plaintiff and the suspect. Accordingly, their understanding of court proceedings is meager, at best.

6) The Process of Admission to a PCC

It appears that the process of admission to PPC is not much different by individual PCC. The SSA or relevant investigative organization is responsible for bringing the prisoner to the entrance of the PPC, at which time the PPC authorities take over the prisoner for the purpose of admission to the PPC. The process of admission to the maximum-security camp is not known in the absence of testimonies concerned. In case of admission to a high-security camp, a prisoner is authorized to keep his/her belongings except certain restricted items, which are kept in the management office. The prisoners spend the first 15 or 30 days in an orientation to camp life before being assigned to a work unit.

“The purpose of the Control Center is to detain prisoners for life. Once admitted, no one can leave it. It is a secret area and no one can enter or leave it.” (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

“Prisoners are sent to Yodok High-security Camp to be cleansed of their transgressions through hard labor. I spent my first 15 days at the orientation unit. Some prisoners arrive there undernourished and are given attention for recovery from undernourishment while in the orientation unit.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“We arrived there by train. When we left the train at a nearby railway station, we were led to a small hotel. One of our arms was tied to a small desk inside, leaving us with the use of one arm only. We stayed there for about half a day until a coal truck arrived. We traveled for about three hours in the back of the truck, accompanied by a SSA officer, and arrived at the main guard post of

Yodok Control Center. It was three or four o'clock in the afternoon. We continued by car and arrived at a SSA officers' village and signed papers there. There was a wall in front of the guard post with a watch tower and guards. We passed four more guard posts in the next 30 minutes and observed walls and barbed wire. This was the Control Center in which I was to be detained." (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

"Because you guys are...political prisoners, you must be re-educated here for three years. If you die here, your family will continue to remain under your criminal record. So, you must leave here alive. If you do a good job here, you may be released at the end of three years. If not, your detention here may be prolonged." (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"On the way to Yodok, we passed through Hwasong. There we met people from Yanggang Province and a man by the name of Park OO from Chongjin. We went to Yodok together by car. At Hwasong, they released me from my restraints and allowed me to sit in the front seat of a truck. My family arranged for an SSA officer connected to a mine to bring me a blanket, clothing, soap, a toothbrush, toothpaste and food for two days. This SSA officer accompanied me to Hwasong. The next day, a senior SSA officer called three of us to his office, one by one. He told me to stay at the Control Center for two years and to maintain good behavior while there. He told others to stay three years. In reality, I was there for three years. I noted that no prisoners were being released after just two years. I concluded I would be there for three years. Detention for three years was a kind of standard. But there were some prisoners, with poor work records, who stayed there for five years." (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

"We continued on our way for a long time and eventually arrived at our destination. There was a line drawn on the ground by white sand and barbed wire on the line. No guard box. The place looked ghastly with two searchlights projecting beams as far as 200 meters ahead and armed guards all around. A colonel told the guards something and the big gate bristling with barbed wire opened and our car passed. On the right side, there were black buildings with steep roofs. They were, I learned later, psychiatric patients' wards, solitary cells, where prisoners who cannot move are detained. On the barbed wire, there was a sign reading, "Unit 2915, Korean People's Security Guard." I did not imagine, not even in my wildest dreams, that this was the Yodok PPC. Until I arrived at the gate, I didn't have the slightest idea that I would become a prisoner myself at a PPC." (Kim Yong-sun, former prisoner from Ipsok, PPC No. 15)

In the maximum-security camps, prisoners are deprived of their rights as North Korean citizens, but in the high-security camp, the prisoners keep their citizen's rights. It was surveyed that the prisoners surrender their citizen's certificate to the PPC office on arrival and get it back upon release. Some Workers' Party members kept their party membership certificate while in PPC but others surrendered it to the authorities of the PPC. It seems that offenders are deprived of Party membership but family members are allowed to retain the membership, in which case they are allowed to keep the Party membership certificate while in PPC. The rate of deprivation of former status was high for those prisoners who had formerly been military personnel, members of the SSA and the police force, the survey found. This situation was limited to the high-security camp. On the other hand, the situation appears quite different in the maximum-security camp, in which all prisoners were deprived of their North Korean citizenship.

In light of the fact that prisoners in the Yodok High-security Camp actually participated in elections, the prisoners' rights as citizens appear not to have been totally suspended during their detention in the PPC.

"When I was sent to a Control Center, no one asked me if I wished to divorce. The entire family was sent there unconditionally. On arrival at the Control Center, we were told, "This is a high-security camp and you can go home if you perform well for three years here. In the morning of the day of admission to the Control Center, we packed our provisions such as blankets and clothing, with the exception of the items belonging to the government. We were told to carry some food. I drew money from my bank account and bought dry fruit, candy and cooking oil from the shop. Because I worked at the shop, I was able to buy anything if I had money. Our cargo arrived separately. During the admission process, I was allowed to keep my Party membership card but my husband had his card confiscated. I don't know who was allowed to keep it and who wasn't. Eventually, I had my party membership card also confiscated but received it again when I was released. They kept my television set. They told me that I could get it back on my release. But they did not give it back to me when I was released. I participated in election while I was there. Of course, we must participate in an election." (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"I was admitted to the Control Center as part of a group of seven. I kept my Party membership card and it was not confiscated all the time I was there. But there were many prisoners who were deprived of their Party membership cards. Of the seven prisoners detained under the same charge, some of them had their Party membership cards confiscated and others did not. I do not know what constituted the difference. Those who were deprived of their Party membership felt very depressed about it. Many former military

personnel and former members of the SSA or police were mostly deprived of their Party memberships and were badly treated. I spent my first 30 days in the unit of new arrivals.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

The Yodok PPC and Pukchang PPC No. 18 are both high-security camps. However, it was surveyed that there are some differences in the process of admission to the respective PPC, in part due to differences in the organizational management of each camp. In the case of PPC No. 18, all prisoners surrender their citizenship cards to the camp authorities and their cards are replaced with a new citizenship card that have a different color code for blood type than ordinary citizen cards.

“The residents in the Control Center have their citizenship cards replaced with a new one that shows blood type in black in the back corner of the card. The blood type is in red for the ordinary citizen’s card. When the prisoners are released, they receive new citizenship cards that shows blood type in red as in the ordinary card. (O Myong-o, former prisoner from PPC No. 18)

7) Process of Release and Defection

Testimonies from prisoners of PPC No. 15 have made up the bulk of those analyzed for this report in light of the fact that prisoners are released only from the High-security Camp of Yodok. Testimonies from former prisoners from PPC No. 18 are also included. It is known that there have been a number of attempts by prisoners to escape from PPC and the case of success is extremely rare. Shin Dong-hyuk, the former prisoner from PPC No. 14, is the only one who arrived in South Korea. As a result, the information on the process of defection is very limited. Shin Dong-hyuk from PPC 14, Kaechon, successfully passed through electrified barbed wire benefitting from the sacrifice of another prisoner who perished from electrocution on the barbed wire.

“Certainly, there were two prisoners who ran away from Camp No. 13 in the year of 00. While the prisoners were at work in the downtown area of Chongsong, two of them escaped.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

There are cases of escape attempts, if not many, and some of them were successful as the foregoing testimony shows.

“Many prisoners have been released since 1984. There were some changes since that time. I don’t know who made the difference. In 1991, all prisoners were released at my camp and new prisoners arrived from Pongchang. If a house became vacant in my

camp, then a new prisoner, favored by authorities, arrived to take the house. If not favored at PPC No. 18, the prisoner was sent to Pongchang. And then, from 1991, the released prisoners were sent back to Pongchang when they committed a crime again. At that time, those prisoners of less severe crimes were authorized to meet their relatives. Those prisoners of more serious crimes were all sent to Pongchang.” (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

Shin Dong-hyuk testifies that the PPC No. 14, from which he successfully escaped, was in the area that included Kaechon and Pongchang before 1983. The PPC was relocated upstream on the Taedong River and the areas that used to be PPC No. 14 became a new PPC, No. 18 at Pukchang, under the control of the police. At that time, during the process of the majority of prisoners being sent up north to PPC No. 14 at Kaechon, many prisoners were released or remained in the same location, to be reorganized as PPC No. 18.²⁷ The testimony by A01 stating that many prisoners were released after 1984 coincides with the same period of time.

“I was released after the year 2000 and became a free man. In fact, I should have been released when my father died. But, this did not happen and I wasted my life there for over 20 years. Many prisoners who were in the Control Center No. 18 for nearly 30 years were released in 2000. Prisoners were released twice a year, on 16 February and 15 April. I did everything possible to be included in the list of released prisoners and offered the supervisor a pig as a bribe. This means that bribery was widely in practice as everyone tried to bribe officials. Release from here does not mean a return to their home town. If released, they are reassigned to a farm or factory in other areas. Prisoners are released on 16 February, 15 April and the anniversary of 27 July. For those prisoners to be released on 16 February, for example, a list of 2-6 selected prisoners arrives in the camp office in envelope from a higher office in November of the preceding year for comments by immediate supervisors on the basis of performance records of the prisoners. The immediate supervisors of the selected prisoners will submit their comments to the Administration Committee of the Control Center. Cases of the selected prisoners and entire family, if a family is selected, are reviewed by the Committee. On 15 February, all the selected prisoners are assembled in the Cultural Hall. The selected prisoners take seats in front and approximately 250-300 prisoners watch the release process from seats behind. This seating arrangement is such for the purpose of showing other prisoners that release is possible for them, too, if they obey camp officials faithfully and be good.”

²⁷ Shin Dong-hyuk, p.34, “NK Maximum-security Camp Out to the World.” NKDB, Seoul, 2007

“Before the camp meeting begins, the camp officials make sure that the number of families to be released has been checked and is correct. When the meeting begins, the Administrative Director, Executive Party Officer and the Security Director take their seats on the stage. Then the presiding officer reads the good performance reports of prisoners scheduled to be released, creating the impression that the prisoners will be released on the basis of good performance and due to the beneficence of the leader. Three prisoners scheduled for release, with the worst social background, are selected for speaking onstage. Then the camp meeting proceeds with three prisoners, selected from the group of prisoners not being released on the day, to come up to the platform for a separate session. After that, prisoners not on the release list are ordered to leave the meeting room, leaving only the prisoners soon to be released behind. These prisoners are compelled to swear that they will not leak information related to the Control Center to their relatives and outsiders after release. Only when this pledge is extracted is the camp meeting brought to a close. However, they are not sent to their homes directly after this meeting. Instead, they are forced to do some work at a mine and help miners. The following day the prisoners must go through a ritual of cordially offering a bouquet of flowers in front of a memorial table of leaders, then, offer a bribe to the camp official in their respective unit office. (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

According to testimonies from former prisoners from PPC No. 18, prisoners were selected and released twice or three times per year on fixed days. The entire prisoner population in a particular sector was released in 1991. During the process, prisoners with serious crimes were transferred to Pukchang. Survey results indicate that some prisoners in Pukchang with good family background were transferred to PPC No. 18. This shows that a major camp reorganization took place in PPC No. 18 during 1991. During the process of camp reorganization, some prisoners were sent to Pongchang's maximum-security camp, while some prisoners charged with less serious crimes were transferred from Pongchang to Camp No. 18, revealing that exchanges of prisoners by sectors and camps did take place.

Thus, it appears that, in the case of PPC No. 18, individual prisoners were released and in some cases, prisoners from an entire sector were released. In this process, prisoners charged with more serious crimes were excluded from release and sent to the PPC at Pongchang, a camp with stricter security measures in place. The survey makes clear that prisoners were not released based on the termination of their prescribed detention term; rather, their release was determined during the period of their detention at the camp on the basis of their work/behavioral performance. In cases of prisoners released from the PPC at Pukchang, some were released because their detention term expired or on the basis of good performance records during the term of detention.

At Yodok PPC, unlike at Pukchang PPC, prisoners were released when their term had expired on the basis of review of their performance at the camp on expiration of detention term. It appears that those prisoners with long term indefinite detention terms are released on the basis of their family background, type of crimes and apology for the crime and performance record during the detention period in the camp. Release of prisoners and announcement of release are made on a fixed date of the calendar year. Released prisoners are sent to their hometowns or to assigned locations after signing an affidavit pledging non-disclosure of conditions and their experiences in the PPC.

"We were interviewed by someone from the headquarters of the Control Center when we were released. Then, we signed a statement at the SSA sub-station. The statement was to the effect that I would not disclose anything I witnessed or heard in the camp, nor the location of the camp nor any of the people I had met in the camp. My travel pass and food ration coupon issued on release stated that I was a worker at Military Unit. No. so-and-so." (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

"I think there were approximately five or six families being released at the same time as mine. They were all from different places. I remember that there were two families, including my family, from Pyongyang and the others were from other areas. The release takes place once a year and all the prisoners whose detention term has expired are assembled at one location. No explanation was given as to why we were assembled. When we were there, they called our names, one by one, and we began to realize that we were undergoing the release process. They simply told us, "You are going out tomorrow." The assembly for release was not frequent. The next day, a truck arrived for us and our bags. I left the place after signing a paper saying that I would never speak about the camp once I was outside." (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"One day in 1997, a car arrived and the supervisor told me that I was going home because of my good behavior there. So, I said good-bye to him and took the truck which was only for me. (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

"The Chief Political Officer of the SSA came up to us. When he approached, I guessed someone was going to be released. When he arrived, all the prisoners scheduled for release were assembled at an administrative office and the prisoners were asked to sign an affidavit promising that they would not speak to anyone outside about the Control Center. We inked our fingerprints on the

affidavit. Then, normally, he would tell the prisoners when they were to be released, e.g. tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. We suddenly became a member of mainstream society when we inked our fingerprints to the affidavit. We stopped working and freely walked around. Normally, prisoners are released first thing the next morning. When I was released, I was released with a woman from Kangwon Province. Her name was 00. She was young. I used to see this young girl at work. She was there for two years. The two persons detained with me at the camp were not released at that time. One of them had her detention term extended by one year. I don't know what happened to the other woman by the name of Park 00" (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

"In January, 1979, I was told to pack up my belongings all of a sudden. I was confused for a moment and struggled to comprehend what the "packing up" referred to. At the same time and almost immediately, I sensed that maybe I was to be released. I thought I was not going to be executed and then what should be afraid of? Including the period of investigation, I was detained for nine years and several months altogether. I was not worried about being sent to another location because the camp at Yongpyong-ni, in which I was detained, was the worst of the camps. All our family signed the affidavit with tears in their eyes and used all ten fingers to ink the affidavit." (Kim Yong-sun, former prisoner from Yongpyong-ni, Camp No. 15)

"In 1987, it was generally understood that, under the guise of interviews, secret investigations were actively being carried out to detect further information about families of Koreans from Japan. Everybody was cautious when speaking and the dread of further punishment was widespread in the villages where Koreans from Japan were detained. My grandmother had a long interview with an SSA officer, during which time she had to answer so many questions about her family. Questions probed who her relatives were in Japan, what kinds of businesses they were engaged in, which town in Korea her family originated from, when they emigrated to Japan and etc. One day we were told to be neatly dressed up and to assemble in the hall of Work Unit No. 1 at 8 o'clock in the morning on the 26th of February, the birthday of Kim Jong-il. At the meeting, names were announced of prisoners to be released under the kind benevolence of the beloved leaders. At that time, the names of Song Ok-son and her four family members were announced for release. Ten long years of detention were coming to an end. We fingerprinted in ink an affidavit prepared by the SSA agreeing that we would not disclose the secrets of the PPC and would accept the consequence of re-arrest if we failed to abide by this solemn pledge of silence. We were given residents' certificates and passed through the iron gate, then the main gate in a car." (Kang Chol-hwan, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

8) Period of Detention and the Possibility of Release

It is known that prisoners are released upon the expiration of their term of detention at PPC No. 15 at Yodok, a high-security camp. However, no prisoners are released from any other PPC that are categorized as maximum-security camps. As in the case of PPC No. 15 at Yodok, it has also been established that prisoners are released upon expiration of their detention terms from PPC No. 18 at Pukchang, a facility under the control of the police. It is concluded that, with the exception of PPC No. 18 at Pukchang, which is under police control, prisoners are released only from PPC No.15 at Yodok.

Most PPC are maximum-security camps in which prisoners are detained for life and terms of detention carry little significance. It has been revealed that prisoners have terms of detention only in the PPC No. 15 at Yodok. Other than a few exceptions, former prisoners from PPC No. 15 at Yodok were not aware of their detention terms when they were admitted. Prisoners who'd been sentenced to relatively short terms of detention, three years or so, were aware of their detention terms but those prisoners detained for extended periods of time, e.g ten years, were ignorant of this grim fact when admitted to the PPC.

The survey makes clear that most single offenders without family at the Yodok High-security Camp were given three-year detention terms and released upon expiration of their terms. Interviews indicated that their detention terms were often extended by one year or more in cases of the violation of rules and regulations of the camp. However, those prisoners that were accompanied by their families or who were not told the length of their detention terms at admission to the PPC were detained for periods longer than three years. It appears that offenders of less serious offenses are sent to PPC No. 15 without family members for a detention term of three years while offenders of more serious offenses are sent there accompanied by families and detained for much longer periods of time. The situation appears to be same at PPC No. 18 at Pukchang.

3. The Internal Control System of PPC

1) Operational Responsibility and Security System

In the absence of official information as to the governmental organization responsible for the operation of PPC, the only related information available for verification is the testimonies of North Koreans.

The information available to date reveals that a PPC can detain up to 50,000 people, depending on the size of each PPC, and the 7th Bureau of State Security Agency under the Secretariat Bureau of Central Committee of the Workers' Party (Organization Bureau of the Central Party) is responsible

for arrest and control of the prisoners. It was ascertained that PPC under the control of the 7th Bureau of SSA, are comprised of the Camp Superintendent, the Political Department, the representative office of the State Security Agency, the Administrative Department, the Security Department, the Supply Department, etc.²⁸ However, the present survey shows that the control and organization of each PPC varies depending on its size as well as the era in which it was established.

However, as discussed in previous sections, PPC No. 18 at Pukchang is under the control of the police. Witness A08, an SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 for more than 20 years testifies that in the beginning, PPC were under the control of the 9th Bureau of the Ministry of Police but in 1975 the operation of the PPC system was entrusted to the 7th Bureau of the State Security Agency.

The PPC's security guards are in charge of security in the PPC, which includes the protection of camp facilities, prevention of escapes, and arresting defectors from the camp. All PPC are inaccessible to outsiders and are generally located deep in the mountains to make access difficult from outside. All PPC are surrounded by barbed wire, guard posts and other devices to make access from the outside and defection from inside extremely difficult. The security systems of PPC appear to be uniform but some differences are noted in terms of number of guards and security equipment. Further details of this situation appear in the following testimonies.

“There were about 200 control officers in the camp headquarters alone. They would total some 500 officers if the number were to include the officers assigned to each village, mines and factories inside the camp. They all operate in three shifts. The Camp Superintendent is responsible for the entire operation of the Camp and there are departments for political matters and administration. There are 10 sections under the Administrative Department. There is a Court Section under the Political Department for conducting trials. Military troops alone are tasked with guarding the outside of the camp. There are two lines of barbed wire fences with boards studded with poisoned nails between the barbed wire. There is a battalion force of security guard. Guard posts are positioned in such a way as to command views of the entire areas within the sight of guards. In the flat areas, the distance is quite far between guard posts but very short, less than 50 meters, if any obstruction limits visibility between posts. Guards patrol very frequently with dogs.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“There was an embankment, five meters wide, two meters

²⁸ Korea Institute of National Unification (KINU), “North Korean Human Rights White Paper,” (2009, Seoul), p.101

high and 800 meters long, between the village for single offenders and the village for families. PPC No. 13 was relatively close to China and mainstream North Korean society. The distance from Chongsong Village was about 10 minutes by car. There were checkpoints on all streets. In the political prisoners' family village (Pungchon Sector), there is a building used for interviews by SSA staff which carried out the function of a sub-SSA station. Halfway up the mountain, there were cement batteries, 20 meters high and 30 meters in circumference. There were stores for guns and quarters for guards, surrounded by a bullet-proof wall inside. Between the batteries, there were four anti-aircraft machine guns." (Ahn Myong-chul from Camps No.'s 11, 13 and 22)

As above, PPC No. 13 had been a large-scale camp with approximately 500 SSA staff at the time it was dismantled in the early 1990's. The external security regime was very tight because of its close proximity to both North Korean mainstream society and China.

"The various work units were comprised of farms and factories and SSA officers were assigned to them. One SSA officer was given responsibility for three work units. For the purpose of the camp's security, temporary guard posts (mobile posts) were located at intervals of 50 meters. I can't be sure that there were guards at every guard post. A large guard facility was located at the entrance of the camp." (Shin Dong-hyuk, former prisoner from Camp No. 14)

Shin Dong-hyuk, who successfully escaped from PPC No. 14, has given us information on the security system inside the camp but was unable to provide much information about the security system outside the camp. His testimony reflects the peculiarity of the camp in which prisoners are restricted in their areas of work.

"The barrack building we lived in was surrounded by a cement wall with barbed wire attached to the top of it. In the beginning, our living quarters were located relatively close to the main gate by car. The area was monitored by cameras. Among male prisoners, a system existed where prisoners monitored the movement of each other. In the case of female prisoners, a platoon chief was tasked with monitoring them. Generally, we were watched by SSA officers at the gate both day and night. They watched people coming in or going out during the daytime. Watches were set for possible defectors at night." (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

"SSA officers were responsible for maintaining control of the camp. The barbed wire near our living quarters was about two meters high. There were five or six lines of electrified wires with one carrying 220 volts in the middle. The lines of electrified wires were

perhaps 60-70 centimeters wide. The camp areas inside the guard posts were under the control of SSA officers.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“I was told that a regiment force of guards was assigned to the entire security area of Camp No. 15. They told me that ambush units were placed even on the summit of the mountain, so there would be no chance for escape. Furthermore, the entire surrounding area was covered by steep mountains, making it difficult to run away. All the nearby villagers were keen to keep watch and submitted reports (of unusual activity) to the SSA on a daily basis. So there was no chance. Many prisoners were shot to death during escape attempts.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“There were five SSA officers in my area. There was one SSA officer each for the 1st Unit, 2nd Unit (Company), 3rd Unit and General Unit, as well as a driver. The General Unit was integrated into the Company later. There were section chiefs. The political officer came to us once a month. Normally, he was in civilian clothes. Exceptions to this would be public executions or occasions of addressing prisoners in the general meeting hall. Then he would be dressed in a military uniform” (A 12, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni, Camp No. 15)

“Three SSA officers were responsible for watching us. The security system was so strict that we were literally bound. The camp was surrounded by barbed wire and there was a battery every 200 meters. Wooden poles sharpened at the tip were driven into the ground outside the barbed wire to prevent escape. In fact, the system was designed to cause all the prisoners to hate and watch one another. So, there was no chance for escape. In this way, the SSA was able to maintain an extremely strict security system.” (Kim Yong-sun, former prisoner, Yongpyong-ni, Camp No. 15)

“Altogether, there were some 1,000 guards for the security of Control Center No. 15 under the command of the 7th Bureau, SSA. There were two watchtowers within my view; about seven to eight meters high and two guards with machine guns were posted at each tower. The guards were armed with AK automatic rifle and hand grenades. Each watchtower was surrounded by walls, two to three meters high, with barbed wire all around for a seemingly endless distance. The guard system in Control Center No. 15 was very tight. Barbed wire could be seen on hills and mountains, three to four meters high. Walls, two to three meters high, with electrified barbed wire on top, could be seen in lower elevations. In high mountains, traps were set around the barbed wire. Sharp pointed sticks were driven upright in the bottom of the traps. There were watchtowers at

intervals of a kilometer along the barbed wire. The watchtowers were always manned by guards equipped with a machine gun, their eyes always alert.” (Kang Chul-hwan, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“There is no barbed wire in No. 18, but nobody escaped. Nobody could escape. Where could he go when mountains are all around and checkpoints are posted on all the roads coming out from the mountains? Of course, one could try to follow along the top of the mountain range and find a way out of the mountains. However, no prisoners were bright enough to do so. Of course, they also feared the horrendous punishment if caught trying to escape. I have never witnessed an escape attempt. Every prisoner fears that he might be sent to a worse place due even to any “wrong remarks” he might make. So, I never saw any prisoner make an outspoken comment. There are many Control Centers worse than this one. All the prisoners feared that.” (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

A witness from the PPC No. 18 testifies that, unlike any other PPC, no barbed wire could be seen in PPC No. 18. The testimony appears to be due to the fact that barbed wire is set up beyond the perimeter of, outside the main gate, and not normally seen from within the camp.

“Tall barbed wire is set up very densely in Pongchang-ni, PPC No. 18. The security troops come from PPC No. 14 and there’s a lot of barbed wire, even located at the tops of mountains, and this extends to Sang-ni. Whether or not the barbed wire is electrified, I don’t know. At No. 18 camp, young male police guard the camp.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“There were few cases of escape attempts as the prisoners concerned were detained there without any knowledge of why they were arrested. But, they could not get past the barbed wire fences. Once, I watched the setting up of barbed wire fences and the work was so shocking and murderous. Electrified barbed wire was installed all around and deep ditches were dug directly beneath the barbed wire fence. Sharp spear-like poles were sunk very close together and pointed upright from the bottom of the trench. Hidden snares designed to catch wild boars are also set so that anyone attempting to escape will have his arm caught by one of these hidden snares. A wooden board is hidden and connected to a clever release device using thin ropes and attached to nearby trees close to the barbed wire fence. Heavy stones placed on the platform fall on prisoners attempting escape when the device is triggered. So, no one can escape from the Control Center.” (O Myong-o from No. 18)

There may be some differences in PPC security systems depending

on various geographic conditions. As testified by witnesses, all PPC are equipped and surrounded by a variety of formidable devices to prevent escape and camps are reported to be under constant watch by guards.

2) Internal Control System, Control of Prisoners and Method of Control

The internal control system is basically uniform in all PPC. Some differences are noted in respective PPC and by sectors (valleys) in the same PPC. It is observed that the differences are in relation to the characteristics and size of the PPC involved.

All PPC are characterized by reliance on the SSA for internal control, guard units for external security, work supervisors (unit general chief, unit chief, platoon leader, control committee members, etc.) and prisoners. There is a camp superintendent. There are systems of internal operation and control of prisoners for production at each PPC. There are operational committees for the control of prisoners and the management of production (high-security camp). The committees are comprised of a chairperson, inventory clerks, junior level executive secretaries, an employment union chairperson, a chairperson for youth workers, and telephone operators, all of whom are prisoners.

Some of the main disguising characteristics of the PPC are the systems of (1) surveillance of prisoners by prisoners, (2) system of informants and (3) control of prisoners by prisoner-supervisors, as appointed by the camp authorities. To maximize the workforce and ensure loyalty of the prisoners, the Camp Superintendent and SSA officers select and appoint prisoners to be platoon leaders, company commanders, unit chiefs, senior unit chiefs²⁹ (titles vary by PPCs). They are given the responsibilities to supervise production and control other prisoners. Accordingly, instructions are given to prisoners by these prisoner-supervisors who have the prerogative to beat and torture them. Therefore, prisoners find themselves in conditions of competition with other prisoners to monitor and inform on the transgressions of other prisoners for the purpose of being selected by SSA officers to supervise other prisoners, e.g. the position of unit-chief. SSA officers prefer to commit brutality in an indirect way by using a unit chief or platoon leader to carry out the "dirty work" of meting out violence to the prison population.

²⁹ In the PPC, with the exception of SSA officers and guards under the command of the Superintendent, unit chiefs, senior unit chiefs and inventory clerks are all prisoners. They are loyal to SSA officers, monitoring and controlling fellow prisoners.

Thus, a small force of SSA officers and guards at each PPC manage to control hundreds of thousands prisoners, maximize production and operate the camp systems smoothly by enforcing a system of prisoners monitoring other prisoners. The following testimonies provide details of such systems and situations:

“An SSA officer is assigned to several work units in every factory. There is only one SSA officer for every three work units. For the purpose of controlling prisoners, the SSA officer directly appoints a senior unit chief to oversee all work units of the work site. The Camp has a strict system of chain of command with the SSA officer at the top, then a senior unit chief and the work unit chief third in order. In the garment factory where I worked there was only one senior work unit chief for 2,500 prisoners. The senior work unit chief and work unit chiefs under him were all male. In the garment factory, there were no guards. There was an SSA officer and a senior work unit chief and the work unit chiefs that were under him. In fact, a single SSA officer was in full control of 2,500 prisoners by using selected prisoners to control other prisoners.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14, Kaechon)

“A platoon leader in the camp neither works nor takes a turn on guard duty. All he does is check the number of prisoners. They have a good life there. Certain long-term prisoners with a good work record and without a history of complaining are normally appointed as platoon leader or a guard. Platoon leaders are appointed by SSA officers-in-charge and guards are selected by the SSA sub-station. Prisoners who formerly were high ranking officials from Pyongyang are normally appointed as guards, chiefs at a threshing floor or an independent work project. Prisoners who’ve quarreled with other prisoners or disobeyed the platoon leader are sent through the process of self-criticism. The Control Committee holds meetings for self-criticism by prisoners on ad hoc basis and these are typically attended by the SSA officer. While I was there, the meetings were scheduled every other day. There is something called a 10-day meeting. The prisoners here include former members of the Employment Union, Working Youth Union or Party members. Prisoners must continue meeting schedules of their former organizations, even in this camp. Meetings focused on ideological struggle are held frequently. You have no chance to avoid punishment for any mistakes you make. The meetings are compulsory and, above all, you must be extremely careful to control your tongue, saying something wrong. Don’t say anything about what you have seen or heard to others; what happened at the work site or passing on rumors. You will be called to give account to the SSA officer and be given punishment for any faults.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

At the high-security camps, PPC No. 15, Yodok, and No. 18, Pukchang, prisoners, even after their detention at the PPC, prisoners are expected to continue their obligations as members of organizations to which they belonged prior to arrest, such as the Employment Union, Youth Working Union or the Workers' Party. In the maximum-security camps, however, prisoners are not required to continue their duties as members of such organizations because these prisoners are deprived of their rights as citizens.

"There is a company commander under the control of the SSA officer in the sector of single offenders and one work unit chief and many sub-division work unit chiefs under him in the family sector. There is a system of five prisoners per unit to watch each other to prevent escape. Everyone is watching everyone else. This is all done in secret. We are often called to the SSA officer to give him information in writing about other prisoners. There is no particular benefit for doing this. This is very hard. After you have come home (after the day's work), you are not authorized to walk around. You cannot visit your neighbors. In fact, even though no one is watching us, no one moves around. It would be a real disaster if anyone should find out that you were moving around at night. We had a meeting for checking routine activities of prisoners .I remember having a problem due to reading underneath a weak lamp light. This meeting is held according to sub-divisions of a work unit. There were 11 Party members and we had a separate meeting for Party members only. Prisoners holding Party certificate were supervising other prisoners. They all came from different regions. I don't know all the locations they came from." (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"The Control Committee meetings were attended by the company commander, junior level party secretaries and work unit chiefs. Junior level party secretaries are those who had previous experience in supervising others before their arrest. Inventory clerks or warehouse supervisors were also included. They were prisoners themselves but were supervising other prisoners. Prisoners were routinely disciplined through daily conduct-checking meetings at the office of the Control Committee every 10 days as well as once a month. If normal discipline didn't work, prisoners were sent to a punishment chamber, a facility within the camp. The discipline meetings are conducted every 10 days by a junior organizational committee chairman (This organizational structure in the camp reflected the same system of organizations outside society such as Party cell, Women's Union, Employment Union and Young Workers Union). The monthly meeting is conducted by an SSA officer." (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“Two SSA officers worked in shifts at the SSA office of the Control Committee. But, with the exception of the SSA officers, the chairman of the committee and other workers were all prisoners. It was simply like that. There were many SSA officers but they were elsewhere and not many of them were seen at the work sites. I saw many SSA officers outside our sector. Taesuk-ni is situated most deeply inside the camp. At night, prisoner-guards visit us every hour and turn on the light to check the number of prisoners. There are five guards and they are well-treated.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“I reported to Work Unit No. 7 every morning. My report included the number of prisoners who reported for work that day and the number of children who went to school. There is an aide under the work unit chief. The aide does the work of a clerk. He makes sure that everyone is at work. If a prisoner is missing from the work site, the entire unit is mobilized to search for him and work does not resume until they find him.” (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“The SSA sub-station is staffed by a section chief, party leader and SSA officers, each responsible for overseeing the work of four work units. The Camp Superintendent, Director of the Political Department or their deputies visited the office once or twice a month. The Control Committee was comprised of the chairperson, an inventory clerk, a junior level party secretary, chairperson of the employment union, a young workers committee chairperson and telephone operators. They have different offices and take daily instructions from the SSA sub-station to pass on to every work unit and report the feedback to the sub-station every day. Every work unit has a chief, a clerk and a dormitory dean. The dormitory dean is responsible for security and there are three other guards assisting the dormitory dean. All work is carried out in accordance with instruction from the Control Committee. All prisoners must obey the SSA officer unconditionally. There were three sub-platoons of six persons each in a platoon. A camp regulation stipulates that six persons in a sub-platoon must act collectively at all times. None of the prisoners take the regulation seriously and they all keep moving for work at will. Prisoners proceed to the work site by company collectively, but they work at the site by platoons. Newcomers are accommodated at an orientation facility to be informed of camp rules and regulations and to recover from a state of undernourishment sustained during the prior investigations. They are given light work at the SSA sub-station, a greenhouse or a vegetable farm for a month. Normally, they learn the length of their detention terms through conversations with an SSA officer during this period and are coerced to swear that they will not speak to other prisoners about their career experience.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“When I was at the Ipsok-ni, all the work unit chiefs were under the control of the SSA officer in charge. There was a supervisor at the engineer battalion and an SSA officer was the battalion commander who was discharged from the military service. Under him were a clerk and company commanders. SSA officers often interviewed prisoners for the purpose of issuing a warning or punishment by sending the prisoner concerned to a punishment cell in the prison. At Yongpyong-ni as well, there was an SSA officer and a supervisor under him. Prisoners were taken to a punishment cell under the charge of reactionary spy activities for any slightly suspicious activity. The clerk and sub-division work unit chiefs spy on the prisoners. Prisoners must always be very cautious with what they are saying. At Yongpyong-ni, the discipline meetings are replaced by ideological struggle meetings during which prisoners are encouraged to beat each other.” (Kim Yong-sun, former prisoner from Ipsok, Camp No. 15)

“When we were at work in the camp, we were organized by a unit of five prisoners and there was a chief at each unit. There is a supervisor above all unit chiefs. The supervisor directed the work by prisoners and inspected the progress of work against the work quota.” (Kang Chul-hwan, former prison from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“Each village office has 12 sectors, with a chief assigned to each sector. Each sector is made up of four people’s units, with unit chiefs assigned accordingly. Instructions arrive from the village office for the sector chief, who in turn passes instructions on to the people’s unit chiefs. Prisoners have to be on night-vigilance or security duty every night rotated in shifts. So, a prisoner can expect to be on night vigilance duty every 2-3 nights. Such duty is not based on hourly assignments. You stay near a fire and watch residents all night. You have to watch the comings and goings to the houses within your responsibility, e.g. who slept at the prisoners’ houses, as a basis for a report to the sector chief the following morning. Daily reports are submitted to the village office, then up the chain to the control chief. This system of surveillance makes life very hard for everyone.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“Life in the Control Center causes everyone to suspect everyone else. You have to be extremely cautious with what you are saying to anyone, even though you may be on quite friendly terms with someone. They just may be spies for the SSA or police. Police and SSA officers at different times took me to their offices and said such things as, ‘all the sons-of-bitches here are landlords, members

of the capitalist class or supporters of South Korea. So, you must report to me immediately anything that seems suspicious.' The surveillance system here was of such a nature that whenever I spoke to anyone, I became very careful and nervous. The best policy here is to use rough and foul words and act like a fool." (O Myong-o from Camp No. 18)

There appears to be a variety of systems to control prisoners in the PPC. However, basically, the systems involve surveillance, punishment and creating competition among prisoners to inform on one another for reward. A common practice is monitoring fellow prisoners by the use of 'secret agents' and the use of collective punishment. Kang Chun-hwan testifies, as follows, in this context:

"Food is so scarce in the Control Center that spies abound; everyone spying on everyone else, in the food factories particularly. It is not a question of keeping yourself clean of missteps. If you happen not to be liked by someone, you will find yourself accused, for example, of having a few beans in your pocket. Teachers encourage children to spy on other children, holding out a reward for the recruited 'spy' of a one-time reduced daily work quota, or by heaping praise on the compliant child in front of other children for his/her lofty revolutionary spirit, etc. A child must not only finish his/her own daily quota of work, but also make sure other children have finished their work. If a child takes time to rest during work duty, he/she may not only be very severely scolded with harsh words, but badly beaten as well. In the process, children who don't meet work expectations prolong the working hours not only for themselves, but for the other children of the same work unit as well. This system of collective punishment has the underlying objectives of motivating everyone to watch and hate everyone else, as well as promoting greater efficiency in the workplace. (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

The method of making prisoners compete with each other by offering incentives is an appeal to the basest instinct of a human being. Survey results show that camp authorities control the prisoners and make them compete with each other through the use of raise/lowered food rations, hours of sleep or even the opportunities for sexual intercourse through the process of granting permission to marry as an incentive. The dehumanization process prisoners are subjected to is enhanced by forced competition for more food, more sleep and satisfaction of sexual needs.

3) The Supervisor; Rules and Regulations for Prisoners

Within the PPC, internal rules and regulations are strictly enforced to enhance smooth operation. PPC rules and regulations clearly illustrate the kind of life prisoners live in the camp as well as how strictly the prisoners must observe them.

The rules and regulations of the PPC can be divided into those pertaining to the PPC operators and others that the prisoners must observe. The survey reveals that PPC rules and regulations for administrators prohibit them from having any private contacts and/or emotional involvement with prisoners. Rules and regulations for prisoners appear to vary according to the PPC, but generally they are harsh and more severe than those pertaining to personnel operating the PPC.

Shin Dong-hyuk, former prisoner from the maximum-security camp in Kaechon, Camp No. 14, has provided us with 10 basic rules and regulations for all prisoners, as follows:

1. Prisoners must not escape. 2. More than three prisoners may not congregate at one time. 3. Prisoners must not steal. 4. Prisoners must obey the SSA officers at all times. 5. Prisoners must immediately report to PPC authorities the sighting of strangers or any suspicious person. 6. Prisoners must monitor other prisoners and immediately report any of their suspicious actions. 7. Prisoners must exceed work quotas. 8. Male-female individual contact is strictly forbidden outside the worksite. 9. Prisoners must acknowledge and thoroughly repent of mistakes. 10. Prisoners are subject to immediate execution by gunshot for violations of rules and regulations of the Control Center.

Each rule above has three to five supplementary rules and, therefore, the actual number of rules exceeds 50. The chilling consequence of immediate execution for a violation of rules and regulations reflects the extraordinary severity and rigidity of the rules and regulations in the PPC.

Shin Dong-hyuk writes in his book that he and his classmates had to memorize camp rules and regulations at school. A child could not go home from school if a failure to memorize the rules occurred.³⁰ Regulations by PPC are as follows:

“Whenever a prisoner encounters a guard or SSA officer in the camp, the prisoner must stop his/her work and acknowledge the

³⁰ Shin Dong-hyuk, “NK Maximum-security Camp Coming to Outside World,” Seoul, NKDB, camp rules and regulations in detail appear pp.58-62.

authority by dropping to his knees with eyes downcast, or by giving a deep bow in which the back is in 90 degrees to stiffened legs. Prisoners are mercilessly beaten or taken to a punishment chamber for violating this rule.” (Ahn Myong-chul, former guard from PPC No. 11, 13 and 22).

“I don’t remember rules that you specifically had to memorize, but there were many rules one had to follow. When you arrive at the PPC, you would hear about them in the orientation class. You would also hear this kind of information from other prisoners or SSA officers upon arrival at the PPC, as well as during disciplinary meetings. There should not be any involvement between men and women. Women would sometimes leave food intended for certain men. The woman would be punished for this, if caught. When detected, she would be denied a meal, given hard work or called up to the platform for public criticism at a disciplinary meeting.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“There is a system in a unit whereby three prisoners must always act collectively. For example, when you use a toilet, all three prisoners in the same unit must go together. No prisoner can go to a toilet alone. One of the three in the same unit would be a spy on the others. I never spied on anybody else. But I assumed there was a spy in my unit and I never confided in anyone even though we might’ve been close in some ways.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“PPC rules and regulations demand that you must not speak to anyone here about your career and experience before your arrest. In addition, you will surely be sentenced to death if you attempt to run away (from the PPC).” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

Kang Chul-hwan explained the rules and regulations of Yodok PPC pertaining to the prohibition of suicide, of greetings between prisoners and rules at work. Details are:

“First, let me tell you about the prohibition against suicide. Pae Chong-chol was my desk-mate in the prison schoolroom. One day, he was absent from school because his father, Pae Yong-sam, had killed himself. He killed himself in Limsan Valley and left a will saying that he could no longer bear the pain of a guilty conscience, knowing that his family was suffering because of his failings. The SSA officers declared that my classmate’s father was a reactionary who had betrayed his fatherland and people by killing himself. Consequently, the prison term of his bereaved family members was

prolonged by a number of years. In the camp, not only does the prisoner who committed suicide get branded as a traitor, but his/her entire family is likewise branded and the prison term of the bereaved family is prolonged by five years. The SSA officers made all kinds of efforts to prevent suicides, but the incidence of suicide in the camp never decreased. There were cases of suicide every month. Normally, prisoners hung themselves, but some prisoners drank poison (lye). The lifeless body is picked up and carried away to an unknown location without informing the family. They bury the victim of suicide directly beneath the dirt roadway. The road is then made flat again as before. The purpose of this bizarre practice is to make it impossible to find the burial site again. They call it "flat burial" and it leaves no sign whatsoever of the burial. All prisoners who commit suicide are buried 'flat' so that no one will be able to find where the prisoner is buried. Once, an unmarried offender ran away during a wood-cutting detail on the mountainside. Search parties failed to find him for three days. It was discovered later that he killed himself by simply lying down in a remote area, deep in the mountain forest. He was found dead just like that. He took off his shoes, simply lay down on his back and gave up the ghost."

Secondly, let me tell you about the rule of prohibiting greetings between prisoners. The rule says that all prisoners, whether an offender or family member of an offender, are not allowed to even say "hello" to another prisoner.

Thirdly, let me tell you about the rules laid down for the workplace. Roll call is held at 5:30 every morning. Reporting late three times is considered equal to one day's absence from work and the prisoner is deprived of one full day of meals. You must accomplish without fail your daily work quota as instructed by the chief of a five-person work unit. There is a study session at the end of every work day and an ideology lecture twice a week. The study sessions and ideology lectures are essential elements of education for personal reform and promoting the spirit of the revolution. (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15)

"When you first arrive at the camp, you take classes for safety rules, etc. by sectors for safety rules, etc. Then, all prisoners are pushed into an underground tunnel that turns out to be a mine. There are 10 rules in the camp including one that forbids prisoners from speaking to anyone outside (the PPC) and about the duty of protection of the Leader. It is made clear to the prisoner that he will be re-arrested again for a violation of those rules. Since I was sent there when I was only a small child, I cannot remember all the rules. They read those rules to me when I was being released. I understood that theft and murder were among violations of rules there." (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

4) The System of Prisoner Punishment and Related Facilities

Each PPC has its own system for the punishment of prisoners. No official documents are available that outline neither this system nor its facilities. However, certain aspects of the above, and some idea of the extent to which such punishment goes, are revealed in detail by the present survey on the basis of testimonies by witnesses from the PPC. The survey shows that PPC prisoners are arrested and investigated at facilities for such purposes if caught (or suspected) of violating camp rules. Depending on the findings of the investigation, prisoners can be punished in various ways: public execution, transfer to another PPC, detention in a PPC internal prison, hard labor, reduced food rations, etc. The process of prisoner punishment is covered in detail by the survey, as follows:

(1) The Process of Disciplinary Punishment

Camp authorities conduct investigations into alleged violations by prisoners of camp rules and regulation and punish them. The underlying rationale of this process is control of the prison population through terror and maintaining the efficient operation of the camp. The survey shows that arrest and investigation are carried out immediately and merciless beatings and tortures are commonplace during the investigative process. Investigations are carried out in the investigative section of the SSA office in the camp. Public executions are conducted following a public trial and in front of a large number of prisoners. By terrorizing the prisoners in this way, camp officials attempt to deter the recurrence of certain infraction of rules and regulations. There are no trials, however, in the instance of other type of punishment; final decisions regarding the degree of punishment are made by SSA officers.

However, the witness from Camp No. 13 testifies that the prisoner is openly tried if the punishment is heavier than a mere lock-up. It is to be understood that the witness was a former SSA officer in the camp, so there could have been a limited number of cases determined by trial during his period of service. However, no testimonies by former prisoners made any reference to any such judicial trial in the camp. Thus, participation or intervention in the process of punishing prisoners by any outside organization has not been confirmed. Under the current circumstances of this survey's results, it is concluded that prisoners are disciplined and punished in the PPC in accordance with internal processes and decisions by PPC camp authorities.

(2) The Nature and Degree of Disciplinary Punishment

The present survey reveals a variety of punishments, depending on the nature of the charge brought against the prisoner. These punishments include public execution, secret execution, transfer to a maximum-security camp, internal imprisonment, hard labor, reduced meal rations, open criticism, delayed release and conversion of sentence to life imprisonment (in the case of high-

security camps). Transfer to a maximum-security camp can be applied to prisoners charged with a serious offense. Internal imprisonment, added labor, reduced meal rations are applied to relatively less serious offenses. Cases of prolonging prison terms or converting an existing prison terms to a life sentence are common. No meaningful differences are found regarding the severity of punishment differentiated by respective camps. In particular, all witnesses testify to the practice of public and secret executions.

(3) Type of Crimes Punished

The most frequent crimes committed in PPC include attempted escape, disobedience to SSA officers, acts of violence, unsanctioned sexual relationships among prisoners, remarks made about the outside world, complaining, stealing, failure to accomplish work quotas, and loss of camp tools.

In most cases, prisoners are publicly or secretly executed as a punishment for escape attempts. The survey confirms the most serious offense in the PPC is an attempt to escape. The survey shows that prisoners charged with making comments about the outside world, complaints and protestations of treatment, as well as unsanctioned sexual relationship with other prisoners normally result in the transfer of the prisoner to a maximum-security camp or internal PPC incarceration for an extended period of time. Prisoners charged with failure to accomplish work quotas, theft, loss of tools, etc. are subject to a relatively light punishment of hard labor assignments, reduced meal rations or humiliation at a self-criticism meeting. Survey results indicated that prisoners charged with relatively light infractions can, at times, also receive heavy punishment, such as an extended lock-up, or sustaining bodily injury, such as partial amputation of fingers, if the prisoner's mistake results in a heavy loss or the impact on the PPC is deemed serious.

(4) Type and Function of Confinement Facilities at PPC

Survey results indicate that all PPC have facilities for internal confinement. In the absence of a uniform title, they are variously referred to as: 'junior prison,' jail, detention cell, training unit, secret prison, etc. by different camps. These facilities are divided in two types: confinement with cruel and forced labor, and detention without hard labor. Terms of confinement appear to be rather short, usually one to two months. However, one testimony referred to a case of confinement with a period in excess of one year. Survey results from PPC No. 14 at Kaechon, in particular, indicate facilities exist respectively for in-depth investigation and confinement; brutality and torture are practiced over an extended period of time.

Conditions are reported to be so horrendous and prisoners so cruelly treated at these confinement facilities of the camp, that the incidence of death among victims is very high. The confinement system of the camp plays an important role in terrorizing the prisoners to maintain PPC discipline.

Table 2-5

Comparison of Severity of Punishment by Camps

Classification	Camp No. 13 Maximum-Security Camp	Camp No. 14 Maximum- Security Camp	Camp No. 18	Camp No. 22 Maximum- Security Camp	Camp No. 15 Ipsok-ni, family Sector High-Security	Camp No. 15 Taesuk-ni, Single Offender Sector H- Security	Camp No. 15 Sorimchon, Single Offenders, High-security	Camp No. 15 Yongpyong Maximum- security Camp
Process for Punishment	Trial for serious crimes Judiciary Section, Political Department in charge of public execution	Open Trial only for Public Execution		Internal imprisonment without trial	Open Trial only for Public Execution Internal imprisonment without trial	Open Trial only for Public Execution Internal imprisonment without trial	Open Trial only for Public Execution Internal imprisonment without trial	
Secret Execution	Yes, up in the mountain		Yes	Yes, secret execution site up in the mountain	unknown	unknown	unknown	Secret Execution Assumed
Public Execution	Yes. Secret Execution preferred for fear of ill- feeling by prisoners	Yes. Mother and brother of the witness publicly executed	Yes. Execution by firing squad or hanging	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes. Only in case of attempt for defection	
Failure to Accomplish Work Quota	Added Labor (Boarding House/work site)	Reduced food ration and violence			Collective Sleep at propaganda hall and starting work early next morning	Violence, reduced food ration and added labor	Violence and reduced food ration	Added labor for punishment
Stealing	Added Labor (Boarding House/work site)	Severe Violence at Will			Added Labor (Boarding House/work site)	Internal Imprisonment	Internal Imprisonment	

Classification	Camp No. 13 Maximum-Security Camp	Camp No. 14 Maximum- Security Camp	Camp No. 18	Camp No. 22 Maximum- Security Camp	Camp No. 15 Ipsok-ni, family Sector High-Security	Camp No. 15 Taesuk-ni, Single Offender Sector H- Security	Camp No. 15 Sorimchon, Single Offenders, High-security	Camp No. 15 Yongpyong Maximum- security Camp
Sexual Relation	Added/punishment labor (sleeping at boarding house or work site)	Missing after Disciplinary Meeting		Missing	Internal imprisonment	Internal imprisonment	Internal imprisonment only for women	
Remarks on the Outside World	Preliminary investigation at the jail, open trial and transfer to Susong Prison					Internal imprisonment	Badly beaten and Internal imprisonment	Secretly executed
Complaints	Preliminary investigation at the jail, open trial and transfer to Susong Prison					Internal imprisonment	Internal imprisonment	
Attempt for Defection	Open or secret execution after open trial	Public execution after open trial			Open Execution	Open Execution	Open Execution	
Type/Function of Incarceration Facilities	Jail for imprisonment of prisoners, preliminary investigation before trial	Secret prison, political prisoners' prison for imprisonment of prisoners	Jail and prison for punishment of prisoners	Jail for imprisonment of prisoners	Jail for imprisonment of prisoners	Jail for imprisonment of prisoners	Jail for imprisonment of prisoners	

Details drawn from testimonies regarding the internal system of disciplinary punishment at PPC are as follows:

“If an SSA officer is found to have engaged in sexual relations with a political prisoner, the SSA officer concerned is discharged from service and the political prisoner involved is executed. In 1992, an SSA officer, by the name of Choi Chol-su, in charge of the Work Unit 3 at Sawul Sector, was discovered to have had sexual relations with a political prisoner who then became pregnant. He was banished to a mine and the female prisoner was secretly executed. There are cases in which the life of the prisoner is spared if she has some unique added value to the camp (e.g. in case she was a secret agent). Prisoners committing less serious offenses are punished with additional hard labor. In the case of a mine, prisoners are kept underground in the tunnels during the period of punishment. So, this gives them the opportunity to breathe outside air less than once a week, working with half of the normal food rations.” (Ahn Myong-chul, former camp guard from PPC No.’s 11, 13 and 22).

“If a prisoner commits a crime, he/she is sent to the Susong Prison. When the prisoner’s prison term expires, the prisoner comes back to the camp. There is no such thing as permanent release. There are trials. There are internal courts. The courts are under the control of the political department and there are judges also. They are all SSA officers. The trials are public. Preliminary investigations take place in the jail. The jail is in Tongpo Sector. Perhaps, there are around five jails. Prisoners are kept there during the entire period of preliminary investigation. They stay there until their trial. After trials, they may be pardoned or sent to Susong Prison. The camp is already a very difficult place for prisoners. It is much worse in the jails. That’s why the prisoners dread them. When a prisoner is released from the jail, he is in such bad shape that often the prisoner cannot walk home alone. Someone from the family must come to bring the victim home. No woman can marry before the age of 27 nor a man before the age of 30. They are punished if they have sexual relations before marriage. In cases of punishment for sexual relations, offenders are sent to the most difficult work sites. They may be given tasks such as pushing trolleys in underground mine tunnels or digging irrigation ditches at camp farm site. They cannot come home, but stay at a makeshift shelter to continue their work duty at night. That’s really a dreadful punishment.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“The camp is controlled and operated by violence. Perhaps, the work we do in the camp may be less strenuous than in ordinary prisons. In the camp you can even marry or be allowed to take a rest if your performance record is good. The camp is different from a prison in terms of its system of operation. In the camp, you are not directly supervised by guards but by the work unit chief, who makes you work hard.” (Shin Dong-hyuk former prisoner from PPC Camp No. 14)

“A severe punishment for us was a reduced meal ration, that is, half an ordinary meal. The system to control a school goes like this: a captain is selected from each class, appointed by the teachers. We were frequently beaten by the teacher, but also by the class captain under orders by the teacher. In upper middle school, as in primary school, there is a student chief for each grade and a captain in each class. The chief and captain are smart children and appointed by the teachers. The chief and captain are beaten by teachers if the rest of the children do not perform well. So the chiefs and captains beat children very hard and they are given the right to do so by the teachers.

“I was tortured in a torture chamber of a secret prison. I was stripped, my legs were handcuffed and my hands were tied with a rope. I was lashed to a bar near the ceiling and hung by my legs and hands. Someone started a charcoal fire and brought it just under my back, which hovered above the floor. I felt the heat at my waist and shrieked. I instinctively struggled hard to avoid the flames. They would move the fire to follow my desperate attempts to get out of the way, and kept burning me. Then, my torturers pierced me with a steel hook near my groin to stop my writhing. After the torture, they left me in solitary confinement for about 20 days. Once that period was over, they started to give me three meals a day.” (Shin Dong-hyuk, former prisoner at PPC Camp No. 14)

“For any wrong remarks you would make, SSA officers would beat you badly, then you’d be jailed. Or your meals would be denied. Prisoners would get hard labor details added to their daily work quota, be made a target of criticism by other prisoners, or humiliated at disciplinary meetings attended by all prisoners.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“At work, SSA officers yell at prisoners, but do not beat them. The company commander would beat prisoners. He is forced to be tough with them to accomplish the work quota. One day, a prisoner was called by a SSA officer and put in jail. Nobody knew why. Prisoners are normally jailed for about a month. The prisoner is dragged like a dog from the jail when released. It was said that, in the

jail, prisoners would be given three spoons of grain at each meal and forced to remain in a crouched position, without any movement. All prisoners who had been to jail died shortly afterward. (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“You are punished for violating camp rules, failing to accomplish your work target, failing to return at a given time, taking a stroll at night, etc. Types of punishment included being denied a meal for the offender or possibly for everyone in the company. Once, ox carts were on fire and all prisoners who were nearby put out the fire. Very strangely, the ox carts caught on fire again and were destroyed. Then, all prisoners were given additional work duty of felling three trees. We had such poor meals at that time. I didn’t see any jails there but I saw prisoners being taken to jails in another valley. I didn’t know what the charges against them were. There were cases where prisoners were released from this additional hard work for doing good work.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“Prisoners are sent to jails for talking about their life before arrest, saying something they shouldn’t have said, complaining about the work and camp systems, as well as failure to ‘reform one’s self.’ Prisoners are also sent to jails for denouncing North Korean society or having sexual relations with another prisoner. In the camp, there are jails. Kum XX was sent to a jail for talking about her meeting with someone from Yongpyong while collecting wild plants up on the hill. XX Shin-ho (born in 1954) was in jail for about a month for not obeying an SSA officer.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“Prisoners are normally arrested during meetings, such as an ideological struggle session, for having said something wrong. They were taken to a jail in the SSA office of Camp No. 15. The SSA building is located at a distance of 100 meters from the main gate. Few prisoners would survive detention in that jail. Prisoners are forced to beat each other prisoners at the ideological struggle session. Prisoners are arrested during the session or based on tips from a spy. Prisoners are shackled when taken to the place from which no one returned alive.” (Kim Yong-sun from Ipsok and Yongpyong, PPC Camp No. 15)

“The most common punishment in the camp is beating. All prisoners are beaten for any given insignificant mistake. Prisoners are sent to jails for more serious crimes. The jail is for detention and punishment of prisoners, who violated camp regulations, stole something, secretly fell in love with another prisoner, or disobeyed SSA officers. Stealing corn or vegetables on the farm are the most

common cases. Some prisoners are sent there by SSA officers for emotional reasons. Normally, they are jailed for about a month. The jails are located in a corner of the village designated for the families of SSA officers. Jails are very small with iron bars and a corridor between cells for guards to patrol and watch the prisoners. Prisoners here are forced to crouch on bended knees from 5 o'clock in the morning until midnight. They can only stretch their legs during the times for meals and using the toilet. Having to crouch on bended knees all day long without any exercise for a month can make any strong man almost crippled.” (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

“Deep inside the camp is situated a special sector for a hellish prison. Prisoners there are called “students of reform” and serve prison terms from six months to as long as one to two years. Prisoners have their heads shaved on arrival. The objective of prison in the camp is to break the more rebellious prisoners in the camp. In the prison, work is so hard and food so little that conditions seem ideal to kill people. After two months, any healthy and strong prisoner shrinks down to only skin and bones.” (X Myong-o from PPC Camp No. 18)

“There is a work unit in the Popi Sector. Prisoners there are from a high-security PPC. That is a labor training center and there is a wall. Prisoners living inside the wall do farm work and other hard labor such as splitting and carrying stones. They are prisoners from a PPC who have committed some kind of crime while there, such as having sexual relations with a woman, stealing and breaking tools at work.” (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

As above, survey results indicate that PPC are equipped with special detention and punishment facilities for prisoners who have violated internal regulations. The extent of punishment revealed is sufficiently severe to endanger the life of prisoners.

5) Operational Reality and Functions of the Work Unit

The PPC were designed to be self-supporting and are managed with the same intent. Accordingly, there exists a variety of farms and factories in the PPC that are operated by prisoners under a work unit system. The work unit's size and mode of operation varies by the type of work unit, e.g. farms, factories, etc. The survey shows that a work unit is comprised of between 10 to 100 prisoners; the work unit is the basis of controlling and administering work and life in the camp. The following testimonies show the various modes of operations of such work unit by camps:

“The clothing factory was located in Valley No. 2 with about 2,000 female prisoners and about 500 male prisoners. There were 12-13 work units. It is estimated that there were about 2,000 – 3,000 prisoners altogether. Work was divided by type: for repairs, transportation, cloth cutting, sewing, boiler and electrical maintenance. In the repair unit there were workers for electric motors, sewing machines, etc., as well as electricians, with 40 prisoners at each unit. All work units worked in two shifts; repair work was carried out even at night. There were approximately 1,000 sewing machines. There were cutters also. Each work unit is normally divided into 4-5 sub-units with each sub-unit holding some 20-30 prisoners for a total of 100 to 150 prisoners per each work unit.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from PPC Camp No. 14, Kaechon)

“I was assigned to the 2nd Company. There were both men and women in the company and the 3rd platoon was for women. In the beginning there were 21 women and later the number of women became very small. When I was released there were only 5 women. In about 2004 or so, the platoon for women prisoners was divided into two platoons, the 3rd Platoon and 4th Platoon, to pit the women into competition with one another to produce more work. Sometime later, they combined the two platoons into one again. We were at the work site by 7 o'clock in the morning, working until 6 or 7 o'clock in the evening, and much later sometimes. We worked at a farm growing corn, potatoes, beans, etc. But the work was much harder than outside the PPC. We had to do farm work in accordance with regulations and textbooks. They demanded that the work be in accordance with ‘Juche Ideology Farming.’ We had to be careful to keep weeds out and used our hands to spread human manure to each plant. If you don't accomplish your work quota, your meals are reduced to half. I was engaged in farming and raising livestock.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

"We get up, take physical exercise, clean the camp and take breakfast at 7 o'clock. Then we start work (assignments are given by platoon first, then by individuals within the platoon). The lunch break is from 12:00 to 13:00 hours. In winter, work ends at 5 o'clock in the evening and at 8 o'clock in summer. If progress in the work is satisfactory, prisoners are given a 10-minute break at 3 o'clock but no break at all if the work progress is not considered satisfactory. There were about 20 prisoners in each platoon and the 1st and 2nd platoons were for men and the 3rd Platoon was for women. Most women worked at the threshing floor. All of us did farm work, mostly corn, but beans were grown also. (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

"They were Koreans from Japan in work units 1 to 4. They produced candies and sweets. They were far away from us and we couldn't meet them. We had no time to go and see them. We were not allowed to talk with other prisoners there. We simply should not talk to each other. That's all. We all planted corn; they made our life very hard with work. There were offenders' family members laboring in 5 to 9 work units. They were needed for farm work. Single male offenders were in the 7th Unit. Single female offenders were in the 9th Unit. (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"In the 1970s, I worked in the General Unit within the work company. We made tools and furniture. We considered it odd that we received instructions for the production of furniture from the SSA sub-station. I think they sold the products we made for their own profit, to line their own pockets." (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

"I was assigned to a dry kiln in the Engineering Battalion. We were drying all kinds of raw wood and timber. I worked in the processing of timber and lumber production. Prisoners worked here 12 hours per day, and there were both day and night shifts. At Yongpyong-ni, I was the chief of the 7th Work Unit. There were 8 sub-units, numbered 1 through 8, for the raising of livestock, the growing of orchids, cigarette production, etc. I was engaged in all kinds of farm work. Later, I was the chief of a technical work unit and the chief of a sub-unit, as well." (Kim Yong-sun, Ipsok and Yongpyong, PPC Camp No. 15)

Drawing 2-2

Type of Work by Work Units

1 st unit	2 nd unit	3 rd unit	4 th unit	#	5 th unit	6 th unit	7 th unit	8 th unit	9 th unit
	▲		▲		▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
The sector for Koreans from Japan (factories for snack food are located in the same sector)				Off Limit	Farm, Family sector	Farm, Family sector	school, shop, hospital, sector for single offenders, sector for families	farm, Family sector	farm, sector for single woman, sector for families

Work Unit No. 2 at the camp included a food factory, a sheep farm, bridge construction work, stores, a work site for less strenuous labor, forestry, etc. Each work unit was managed in accordance with camp regulations. (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

“There was a camp headquarters, a guard battalion and jails in Haengyong Sector (Haengyong-ni). There was a bunkhouse in the mine sector for single offenders. There were farm families in the Kulsan Sector. There were farm families also in the Chungbong Sector. There was a SSA officers’ family village nearby. There was the Family Hall, a 3-storey building with accommodation facilities, as well as a hospital in the same sector. There were farm families in both Naksae and Namsok Sectors. Nearby, there was an isolated ward for mental/hepatitis patients and a secret execution site. There were farm families also in Sawul Sector. The food factories in PPC No. 22 were operated by young girls between the ages of 20 and 30. Girls chosen for these factories had to be favored by SSA officers, attractive, susceptible to flattery and not known to be talkative. Food factory buildings had two floors with a pond in the center of the building complex, beautiful like a park. The mines were not equipped with safety measures and prisoners were at risk of accident at any time. The under-ground tunnels were without protective brace supports and some miners were killed almost every day. Miners used primitive tools, such as shovels and picks, and were forced to work like a mole. When loading coal onto a tall tram, prisoners had to climb up to the edge of the tram with coal buckets. They often lost their balance and fell into the tram and soon disappeared into the coal pile. The tunnel was just like something a mole would dig, and there would only be enough space for a prisoner to lie down on his back and chip

away at the coal. Women were also forced to work like men. The gender ratio of prisoners working in a mine was 5:5. (Ahn Myong-chul from PPC Camp Nos. 11, 13 and 22)

6) Production Facilities, the Work Site, and Treatment of Products

The PPC network is a self-supporting system and produces a variety of industrial items, and maintains a livestock industry, as well. The PPC operate mines and factories, taking advantages of local geographical conditions and markets. Products are consumed internally as well as exported to society outside the PPC. This is an illustration of how the PPC contribute, in a substantial way, to the North Korean economy. In other words, PPC operation not only serves the political and social purposes of controlling the population and social order, but also has a real economic purpose. Production facilities, the magnitude and items of production by PPC are shown below.

Table 2-6

Production Facilities, Size of Operation and Purpose of Producton

Classification	Major Production Facilities & Work Site	Purpose of Products
Camp No.13 (Chongson, North Hamkyong Province)	Farm: corn, sugar beets and peppers grown at the villages of Pungchon, Punggey and Tongpo, Live Stocks: several thousand pigs, several hundred cows, chickens and goats and sheep pasture	Corn: to Grain Management Office in Chongsong Peppers: to other PPC Pig: to Pyongyang (40 pigs butchered per day)
	Factory: clothing for export (120 women, 20 men) , food (80 prisoners) such as liquor, sweets, soy bean sauce & paste	Clothing for export, food to Pyongyang
	Coal Mine: 3,000 prisoners	Internal use
	Others: 300 prisoners in construction unit, 50 in maintenance unit, 10 in butchery unit, 6 in power transformer station and 60 in drawing unit	
Camp No. 14 (Kaechong, South Pyongan Province)	Farm: 2,000 prisoners in 12 work units in the headquarter village, valley Nos. 1-5 Live Stocks: pigs in 6 sectors (2,000 prisoners, 800 pigs and goats in valley No. 1	Corn: consumed within PPC Pigs: 50 pigs butchered twice each for sales outside the PPC
	Factory: soy bean paste, etc. (over 2,500 prisoners), military uniform (2,500 prisoners), tyre, cement (500 prisoners), papers, glass, potteries (jars, bowls, etc.)	Clothing: for army Food, tyre, cement and etc.
	Coal Mine: 3,000 prisoners	
	Others: in 1998, there was a power plant construction work (5,000 prisoners from valley Nos: 4-5	Internal purpose
Camp No. 15, Ipsok-ni High-Security Camp Family Sector	Food Factory: liquor, soybean sauce/paste, candy and sweets	Internal consumption
	Lime Stone Quarry	
	Farm: corn and etc.	
	Others: forest work unit, sheep pasture, light labor work unit	
	Factory for filtered cigarettes	Mostly sold to outside the PPC by SSA officers

Classification	Major Production Facilities & Work Site	Purpose of Products
Camp No. 15, Taesuk-ni, High-Security Camp, Family Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Corn, ducks and pigs * Engineering Unit - furniture, engineering/farm tools, chop sticks, etc. * Coal mine, oil extraction, power plant, threshing floor and etc. * Maintenance unit, sheep feeding platoon, single women unit (250 prisoners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Corn: consumption within the PPC * Ducks and pigs for SSA officers * Tools for PPC consumption, furniture for SSA officers, chop-sticks sold to outside PPC by SSA, Production supplied to the central party since 2007
Camp No. 15, Sorimchon, High-security Camp, Family Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Farm work unit (corn, potatoes, bean), small duck farm for work by weak prisoners, 10 pigs, 1,000 chicken, noodle (1 prisoner), collection of mushrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corn, potatoes and beans for consumption within the PPC Livestock for supply to SSA officers Mushroom for sales outside the PPC
Camp No. 15, Yongpyong, Maximum-Security Camp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work sub-units 1 to 8, for farming, livestock, orchards, cigarettes 100 chickens 	
Camp No. 18, Pukchang, South Pyongan Province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coal mines at Pongchang, Suan, Hanyong, Yongdung, Sangni, Ahchon, etc. Factory: Cement, bricquets, pottery, roof tiles, liquor and etc. Forestry management office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumption within the PPC & supply to outside the PPC
Camp No. 22, Hweryong, North Hamkyong Province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm: corn, water melon, melon, vegetables (peppers and potatoes) Orchard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply to other PPC and Pyongyang
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food factory: liquor, cooking oil, soybean sauce and paste, candy, sweets and cigarettes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply to Pyongyang
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coal mine 	

(1) PPC No. 13, in Chongsong

PPC No. 13, which has now been closed, used to grow corn and peppers in the farm areas, as well as raise pigs, cows, chickens and goats. The camp also operated a clothing factory (for export), a food factory (liquor, soy-bean sauce and paste, candy, etc.) and the coal mine in Tongpo. The PPC managed an additional construction work unit, a stock-breeding farm, a power transfer sub-station, etc. Of the products made in PPC No.13, corn, peppers and meat were transported outside the camp. The clothing produced here was for export and enjoyed a reputation for good quality. The food produced here was shipped to Pyongyang because of its superior quality. Coal produced here was also shipped outside the camp. Liquors produced here, including a local vodka, were made of sugar beets grown within the camp and the final product supplied directly to Pyongyang.

(2) PPC No. 14 in Kaechon

PPC No. 14 in Kaechon has agricultural production (corn, peppers, etc.), livestock farms (pigs, goats, cows, etc.), and a farm dedicated to producing livestock feed. Various factories produce soybean paste, clothing for the production of military uniforms, vehicle tires, cement, paper, glass sheets, pottery, etc. PPC No.14 also manages a number of teams to operate engineering, repair and construction projects, as well as a power transformer sub-station, etc. Part of No. 14's agricultural production is consumed in the camp and the remaining portion is transported outside the camp walls. A significant proportion of peppers and pigs are shipped out for non-PPC use. In particular, PPC No. 14 operates large-scale factories to produce items important for national industry. The level of industrial production is considered quite high here. Clothing and food factories are also very large with 2,500 prisoners at work, respectively; the clothing factory produces military uniforms. Production of important items, such as tires and cement, is also carried out in large volume. The camp also produces daily items such as paper, glass, pottery, etc. The survey indicated that Camp No. 14 operates most of its production independently using the power supply from its own power plant without reliance on the mainstream North Korean power supply grid.

(3) PPC No. 15 in Yodok

PPC No. 15 has different sectors, such as Ipsok-ni, Taesuk-ni, Sorimchon and Yongpyong-ni, all of which seem to have their own independent systems of production. Survey results suggest that the production rates of agriculture, livestock and forestry are higher than mines and industrial operation in comparison with other PPC. One likely explanation is that this facility, being a high-security camp, has a limited industrial production capacity.

PPC No. 15's major areas of production include agricultural products, (e.g. corn, potatoes, soybeans, other vegetables, and fruit), livestock (pigs, goats, chickens, ducks and geese), forestry products (lumber, mushrooms), and filtered cigarettes. The food factory system produces liquor, cooking oil, soybean paste and sauce, various types of candy, noodles, etc. Other production units mentioned by those surveyed include those that manufacture filtered cigarettes and cut limestone. There is also a threshing floor for grain, an engineering work unit for the production of furniture, engineering tools, and chopsticks, and a power transformer station. It has been ascertained that surplus products from these various production units, after internal consumption by camp residents, are supplied to other parts of North Korea including Pyongyang

(4) PPC No. 18 in Pukchang

The majority of products from PPC No. 18 come from mines and factories, rather than from farms for agriculture and livestock. Apart from the relatively insignificant area in this camp devoted to farms for agriculture, forestry products and liquor factory, there are large coal mines (in Pongchang, Suan, Hanyong, Yongdong, Hanjae, Sang-ni, Anchon, etc.), factories for the production of cement, anthracite briquette(for cooking & heating), pottery, roof tiles, etc. Accordingly, in PPC No. 18, (together with PPC No. 14), the ratio of products from mines and factories is much higher than agriculture and livestock. Surplus products are supplied to North Korean society outside camp walls.

(5) PPC No. 22 in Hweryong

PPC No. 22 operates mines (due to its geographic proximity to mineral resources), farms for the production of cigarettes, corn, red peppers, potatoes, watermelon and sweet melon, fruit orchards, as well as food factories for the production of liquor, soybean oil, paste and sauce, various types of candy, etc. Excess production is supplied to the outside society. The camp has a reputation for good quality products from farm and factories that are reserved for shipment to Pyongyang.

Detailed observations of production and its distribution by the PPC on the basis of testimonies are as follows:

“There was an office with the title, Department of Agricultural Production that handled all agricultural products in the camp. This is a gigantic office. We produced sugar beets totally for the production of liquor. The entire volume of liquor produced here was packed and sent to Pyongyang. The liquor called Vodka was known to be very tasty. We butchered 40 pigs daily and shipped the pork to Pyongyang. Any pigs weighing 90 kg.’s or over were butchered, frozen and shipped out by train. The pigs were plucked and their cataracts removed and frozen without removing skin and toes. Then, prisoners would eat cataracts removed from pigs. The liquor, soybean sauce and paste as well as candy are all shipped to Pyongyang. I don’t know how they are distributed but the products from this camp are of such a good quality that, I guess, they are all for senior Party members. Clothing from the factory here is designated for export and shipped away to unknown locations.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“There were roughly 100 houses in the SSA officers’ village at Camp No. 14. Two families shared a house and that means that there were some 200 SSA officers’ families in the camp. There were mines and work units for repair and construction as well as factories for the production of various foods, cement, pottery, rubber, paper, clothing. In the clothing factory, for example, there were six work units for repair work, transportation, cutting, sewing, maintaining the boiler

system and electric work. In the repair work unit, some repair workers worked on motors and others on sewing machines. There were electricians. Each work unit had about 40 prisoners. All prisoners were divided into two shifts and repair work was carried out even at night. There were some 1,000 sewing machines. In the clothing factory, there were cutters.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from PPC Camp No. 14, Kaecheon).

“There we learned how to survive and we were aware that we were producing for the SSA officers. I was told that they were selling mushrooms at the market outside the camp. At first when the camp just started, the food was so scarce and prisoners became so desperate that they ate grass in the hills. The prisoners who stayed here for a long time told us this.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“During the autumn in our sector, we threshed corn with machines and we put the entire corncobs with husks into the machines. Noodles are also produced by a machine, a very efficient machine. We raised livestock, like pigs, for SSA officers. There were over 10 pigs and more than 1,000 chickens. There was a pumping station. We harvested corn for internal camp consumption. We collected acorns, mushrooms and firewood. They gave us a bag that we had to fill. Pork and chicken were earmarked for SSA officers and gifts for officers at a higher level.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“Each company is surrounded by wall. I remember there being a Control Committee, threshing floor, a warehouse, a chicken farm in the village of Taesuk-ni. There was not a single free villager. I was told that all the SSA officers were from Pyongyang. There were factories also. Oil is also pressed there. They say the camp produces everything in the manner of a rearguard base. I remember a power plant also. I saw it once and prisoners from the Science Department were working there. I was told that there used to be a shop, but there wasn't any shop while I was there. The camp produces a lot of materials, including rice, minerals and livestock. SSA guys usually take them away.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“There were cornfields, pens for ducks and pigs. Pigs were raised by prisoners from the family sector. (When the family sector was closed, the pigpen was also closed.) The general work unit has a daily provision company. They made chopsticks and farm tools there. Work Units, 1-3, were for farming; the general work unit, staffed by single offenders and their families, was responsible for having farm tools ready for the farm work. This unit also manufactured furniture for the families of SSA officers. All grains harvested in the fall are stored in the central warehouse and threshed at threshing floors for distribution to all prison families. Ducks were raised for the needs of SSA officers. There was a shop that could hardly be called a shop. It offered a very small quantity of oil, soy bean sauce and paste on holidays. You couldn’t find work clothes or shoes in the shop. There was a greenhouse to culture flowers for SSA officers. SSA officers carried away chopsticks by car. They ate pigs and ducks and sold the surplus in the outside market; everything else was consumed in the camp. Each work unit had three to four platoons. In addition, there was a ‘sideline platoon’ for livestock. Livestock attached to each work unit was for the SSA officer in charge. Rarely, a SSA officer would tell us on a holiday, ‘You guys take the pig.’ Then, prisoners ate pork.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“I recall the Engineering Battalion and Control Committee in Ipsok-ni. The battalion had a total of six companies. There were units for furniture and painting. There was a dry kiln. Furniture made from dried camp lumber was sent to Pyongyang. Work units were comprised of sub-units and normally there were about 15 prisoners from eight families in a sub-unit. At first, I didn’t know who other members in the same sub-unit were and where they were from. A work unit was comprised of about 40 families. The camp at Yongpyong-ni had recently opened when I was assigned there. There was a Control Committee. There were work units for farming, cigarettes and fruit growing. The rice produced here was consumed by the SSA and guards. The surplus was shipped out of the camp for SSA elsewhere. They carried away all the good cigarettes, fruits and vegetables from the camp. Each work unit was subdivided into 10 sub-units with up to 100 workers per sub-unit. There were about 400 prisoners who were the families of offenders. There were over 5,000 prisoners in the 10 work units.” (Kim Yong-sun, Ipsok and Yongpyong, PPC Camp No. 15)

“First, it is the food factory nearest the village of work-unit No. 2. My youngest uncle, a graduate of a science college in Pyongyang, was working there as a senior technician. His job was to test the alcohol content and taste-test the liquor. He was caught eating something, and that resulted in him being beaten on the spot, kicked out of this job and transferred to the forest work unit, which was notorious for its extremely hard work. There are so many spies in the food factory that no one can speak to anyone else safely other than basic communication needed to carry out the assignment. Their bodies are thoroughly searched for any hidden food, both during work hours and before exiting the building.

Secondly, it is pasture area for goats. To look after goats as they graze keeps prisoners excused from hard work during hot summers and cold winters, both day and night.

Third, work at the bridge construction warehouse. This involves warehouse work where construction materials are kept. Some prisoners work there.

Fourth, the less-strenuous or light work site. Prisoners weave baskets and A-frames to be used on the backs of other prisoners carrying dirt. But they work longer hours due to the lighter type of work they are doing.

Fifth, the forest work unit. Prisoners carry out very hard and dangerous work of cutting trees and carrying the felled trees and limbs. Many accidents occur during this type of work.

Sixth, the hard labor work unit. This is most dreaded work site in the entire high-security camp. If you are assigned to this work site, you have to remain there for three months at least. This is a punishment work site for offenses such as stealing, having a love affairs with another prisoner or for committing some act to bring the disfavor of an SSA officer. The work here is much harder than elsewhere. Prisoners cannot go home at the end of the workday. They sleep in an old run-down warehouse by the river together with other prisoners. Prisoners get up at

4 o'clock in the morning and are forced to run in formation like tough military training. They are given a very small meal only once a day despite the kind of backbreaking work required: carrying heavy stones and making a high wall with the stones. A young man would return from the hard labor work site appearing like an old man.

Seventh, the quarry work unit. Prisoners cut stones and carry them. There are no safety devices and work here is several times more difficult than the work in the forest. In this unit, prisoners begin work at dawn, 5:30 AM, with the sound of an alarm bell, and they return home after dark. Any child over the age of 16 is considered an adult. All prisoners assemble in front of the SSA building at 5:30 for roll call by work units and the beginning of work in accordance with daily work instructions from SSA officers. Prisoners are forced to work like a machine all day long, with a short break of 30 minutes at lunch time and at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The work normally ends around 8 o'clock in the evening but they often must work longer until other prisoners in the same work unit finish their work assignments. Each unit has five prisoners and a unit chief. There is a manager who supervises unit chiefs and inspects work when it is finished. (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

"I was trained in Camp No. 11. Camp No. 13 had a Control Office Headquarters, SSA officers' village, the Security Headquarters, Security Battalion Headquarters (in Changsaeng Village), an office for interviews with political prisoners, offices for the political prisoners' work unit chiefs, and the Office of Propaganda, in which prisoners take part in meetings for discipline and ideology sessions. In the Tongpo Sector, Camp No. 13, there were buildings for the Security Battalion Headquarters, the Sector Office and a hospital and patient's ward for guards." (Ahn Myong-chul from PPC Camps No. 11, 13 and 22)

“My father-in-law was in charge of the administration of Sawul Sector. All they produced there were agricultural products. They produced coal in the Chungbong Sector. In the Sawul Sector, they produced corn, watermelons and sweet melons. They cultivated all kinds of vegetables, including red peppers. We lived in abundance. Potato farina, which was so popular and expensive in the market outside, was also produced there” (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

It appears that the products from the PPC are of such a magnitude that they represent a significant percentage of the entire economy of North Korea. The number of political prisoners in PPC represents one percent of the entire North Korean population. It is estimated, however, that the per capita output from the PPC would be 2-3 times higher than the average worker of North Korea. In particular, it is known that the per capita product of the prisoners in PPC is 2-3 times higher than that of ordinary North Koreans. The industrial products from maximum-security camps have the reputation of good workmanship since the prisoners' skills are advanced due to their engagement in the same work over a long period of time. Thus, the production activities in the PPC are all done by prisoners and, therefore, at an extremely low labor cost. It is estimated that the superior work skills of the prisoners and their long working hours at the PPC have boosted the share of all PPC to be approximately 3-5% of the total industrial output of North Korea. It is implied that the impact of the PPC are considerable in North Korea not only for socio-political reasons, but for economic reasons as well. In the light of such statistics, those analyzing the PPC are urged to recognize the relative importance of the PPC in the North Korean economy, as well as North Korean politics.

7) Most Recent Trends and Changes in the Operation of the PPC

Understanding the most recent developments in the PPC has been handicapped by a lack of information. The latest information on the PPC from witnesses in this report is dated 2006. As most of the witnesses under this report have arrived in South Korea most recently, including those who arrived in 2009, the interviews with them revealed some information on the operation and latest development and changes in the PPC.

It appears that there have been few fundamental changes in the operation of the PPC in spite of strong protests by the international community since 1990. In the absence of any recent information from conditions in the maximum-security camps, the survey seems to reveal that some changes are noted in the high-security camps, No. 15 at Yodok and No. 18 at Pukchang. The latest information available for this study fails to report any changes in the control systems of both camps. However, information does show relocation of sectors, release of prisoners and reduction/expansion of the size of camps. The available information reveals that the PPC No. 18 in Pukchang, in particular, appears to have undergone changes in the size and areas that lead the present survey to conclude that particular PPC has now been reduced in size. However, further information is needed for a precise assessment in details of the changes believed to be taking place at present.

Economic production at the PPC has been an important source of supply of economic resources for the SSA. It is believed that the prolonged economic crisis in North Korea today has caused the economic impact of the PPC to play an even more important role in the national economy of North Korea. It appears that the economic role played by the PPC has caught the attention of the Party leadership, and is no longer recognized at the level of the SSA alone. As most PPC products have come to be a source of private income for much of the most senior SSA staff, rather than being considered a part of national economic planning, the Central Party's voice concerning the control of PPC products appears to be increasing. Accordingly, it is feared that an increased demand for products from the PPC under the current economic crisis would only make the conditions of prisoners in the PPC even worse.

Further, such conditions would also suggest that the possibility of dismantling or reducing the number or sizes of the PPC, and the likelihood of improving the human rights of prisoners even smaller than at present. It is suggested that analysis of the PPC must be conducted not only from the political viewpoint but also from the perspective of probable economic impacts when considering the future of the PPC system. In this context, the testimony immediately below from a former prisoner from Camp No. 15, who arrived in South Korea very recently, is very relevant:

“I heard in Pyongyang about the Yodok Control Center in 2007 from XX Kim, an SSA staff of XX Ministry. We were good friends. He used to invite me out for drinks and side dishes. A few days before the Chusok holiday in 2007, he gave me a long list of foodstuffs. I said, “You must be well taken care of by SSA. Why are you asking me for all these things?” He replied, “In the past we had a good supply from Yodok. But not anymore. The products are now going to the Central Party and the supply to SSA has become less and less.” What he said was that it’s not that Yodok no longer exists. It came under the greater influence of the Party and the products from Yodok are now going to the Party. He did not say anything about other PPC. He only commented about Yodok.” (A 10 from Taesuk-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

4. The Reality of Human Rights of Prisoners in PPC

With the exception of Susong political prison, No. 25, where prisoners are imprisoned in collective buildings, prisoners live in normal farm villages, factories and boarding houses and are engaged in hard labor in the PPC. The lives of prisoners are at constant risk, at the mercy of the camp's operational system. They are separated from mainstream society and the outside world within an entirely self-contained and indigenous system. In particular, clothing, food, health and medical services, the basic and absolute criteria for human survival, are totally at the discretion of camp authorities, a situation that results in little consideration for life and human rights protection. Information by testimonies on the conditions described above is provided below:

1) Availability of Clothing, Food, Shelter and the Essential Items of Life

Fundamentally, North Korea is a communist state with a socialist system of citizens relying on the government ration system for the supply of clothing, food, shelter and basic living essentials. However, the food shortage crisis and the deteriorating North Korean economy in the late 1990s have expanded the role of markets. Efforts have become widespread to increase food production by privatizing small patches of land. This has been the result of connivance in part by the North Korean authorities with private enterprises, participation in the commercial activities and private farming on a small scale. Nevertheless, the PPC have continued to remain separated from ordinary North Koreans society and the freedom of prisoners has been completely denied. Therefore, the influence of such changes in mainstream North Korean society on the PPC has been nil. Accordingly, it is the findings of this survey that the economic difficulties experienced in 1990s by the North Korean society have made conditions in PPC even worse.

It is observed that the PPC remained somewhat better off than mainstream society in the strict terms of food supply and frequency of starvation.

This can be attributed to the PPC's independence from North Korean society, its self-sustainable system and high productivity. However, it is believed that the prolonged economic crisis in North Korea has increased the supply of PPC production to the society outside the camps, thereby causing deterioration in the living conditions in the PPC. The ongoing and chronic economic crisis in North Korea is believed to likely result in an increased demand for PPC products by the Party, the SSA and mainstream society, thereby leading to a further degradation of living conditions for prisoners inside the PPC.

Table 2-7

Comparison of Clothing, Food and Shelters by Camps

Classification	Camp No. 13 Maximum Camp	Camp No. 14 Maximum camp	Camp No.18	Camp 22 Maximum camp	Camp 15 Ipsok, Family Sector High Camp	Camp 15 Taesuk, Single High Camp	Camp 15 Sorimchon, Single, High Camp	Camp 15 Yongpyong Maximum Camp
shelter	5 families in a flat. Residence by family	4 families in a flat. Residence by family, Single prisoner over 12 at a boarding house	Independent households, prisoners over 12 at a boarding house	Shelter by families	Independent household, singles from Japan separated	Boarding at barracks	Boarding at barracks 1 st Company (male) 2 nd Company (men & women)	5 families in a flat (residence by family possible)
Blanket	No supply	No supply	No supply		Supply of a few blankets	No supply	No supply	No supply
Clothing	No supply	Supply of working clothing once in 6 mos, school uniform	Supply of working clothing once a year		School uniform, working clothing once a year underwear once a year	No supply	No supply	No supply
sox	No supply	No supply	No supply		No supply	No supply	No supply	No supply
Shoes	2 pairs of sneakers, once a year	2 pairs of sneakers, once a year	3 pairs of sneakers, once a year		2 pairs of sneakers, once a year. Sneakers manufactured	2 pairs of sneakers	once a year	No supply
Food (broken corn)	500 gram per person per day	700gram per person/day	300-900 gram per person		300 g per day 700 g per day	600g per day Corn porridge once and rice twice a year	160 g per day 600g per day	

Classification	Camp No. 13 Maximum Camp	Camp No. 14 Maximum camp	Camp No.18	Camp 22 Maximum camp	Camp 15 Ipsok, Family Sector High Camp	Camp 15 Taesuk, Single High Camp	Camp 15 Sorimchon, Single, High Camp	Camp 15 Yongpyong Maximum Camp
Side Dish	Limited supply of soybean sauce and paste	Supply of salted cabbage and salt	Supply of soybean sauce and paste		Limited supply of soybean sauce, paste & see weeds	Salted cabbage soup	Salted cabbage soup. 1kg of sweet rice jelly, 1bottle of cook-ing oil, corn cake if annual work target exceeded.	
Fish/Meat	No supply	No supply	Pork 2-3 times a year		No supply. Special Supply on New Year Day	No supply (Butchery approved by SSA officer) Supply of left over from a butchered pig	No supply	
Vegetables/Fruits	No supply	No supply	Supply of vegetables, bean sprouts 2-3 time a year		Cabbage and potato	Little supply of vegetable	No supply	
Livestock			Rabbit and dogs		Authorized to raise a dog			
Sanitary Items	Erratic supply of soap	No supply	Supply of soap	No supply	Soap & tooth brush supplied	Soap supplied	Soap supplied	
Sanitary Napkins	No supply	No supply	No supply		No supply	No supply	Once in 3 years	
Household Items	No supply	No supply	No supply		No supply	No supply	No supply	

(1) Type of Housing

This survey shows that the type of housing in the PPC is similar to the type of housing found in normal North Korean farm villages, with the exception of Susong Political Prison No. 25. In other words, prisoners are not imprisoned in closed cells and prison buildings, like prisons in South Korea, but live in housing characteristic of North Korean agricultural villages. In the case of mines or factories, there are boarding houses for single offenders. The type of housing shows some difference by camps but, in general, a house is provided for a family and married prisoners, and single prisoners reside in boarding houses. The house provided for a family has a bedroom³¹ and a kitchen in a flat shared by four to five families, and is referred to as a *harmonica flat*.

Single prisoners stay at a congested boarding house with poor facilities. The houses are made of clay bricks, cement bricks or stones; all construction is done by the prisoners themselves. There is neither wallpaper nor glass windows. Vinyl sheets are used for windows. Electric lights are used briefly and only intermittently. Both the water supply and toilet facilities are communal. Privacy is non-existent since the walls are so thin, everyone can hear what other prisoners are saying in the next room, conditions that are very conducive to everyone spying on one another.

In the case of a family being provided with a house, prisoners have to cook and keep the room warm themselves. The house is used only for sleeping and prisoners must use communal facilities for everything else. In the boarding- houses, a common kitchen is used by all. Men and women are separated. Children under age 12 are allowed to stay with parents; anyone older should live in a boardinghouse.

(2) Clothing and Other Living Items

The survey shows that housing and food are supplied, but generally there are no supplies of furniture, blankets, clothing, shoes, socks, toiletries and sanitary napkins in the PPC. Only very rarely would a limited supply be provided on a special occasion.

³¹ They are provided with a two-bedroom house in the case of a large family.

No witnesses testified to the supply of blankets from camp authorities with a single exception. One witness testified to receiving a few blankets on arrival at the Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15, a high-security camp. Generally, no clothing was reported being supplied in the high-security camps. It is surveyed that prisoners in Camp No. 14 in Kaechon received uniform fatigues once a year. It was also testified that there was a supply of clothing once a year at Camp No. 18 and Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15. There are no testimonies to the supply of clothing elsewhere in the PPC. It is confirmed that shoes, North Korean-made of poor quality, were supplied two to three times per year at all PPC. No witness from any PPC referred to any supply of soap or tooth-brush with the rare exception of a very small supply on special occasions. No furniture was ever supplied. Sanitary napkins were not supplied, a serious problem for women prisoners.

Analysis of all testimonies reveals that blankets, clothing and furniture were not supplied by the camp; most prisoners bring with them their own items for living except shoes, which are essential items for continued work performance, and these are regularly supplied by the camp. Therefore, the prisoners always and seriously suffer from the short supply of living items. Exchange of items between prisoners and stealing from one another are very common. Accordingly, most prisoners live without any spare clothing or furniture. In winter particularly, they are exposed to the severely cold climate in poor quality shoes without proper clothing and socks; their life is extremely hard and miserable.

(3) Food

In the PPC, prisoners must survive on the food supplied by the camp since individual and private activities by prisoners are, under no circumstances, authorized. The present survey has found that most prisoners suffer a chronic state of undernourishment. Many prisoners die of diseases resulting from the undernourishment; the food supplied is so little and the work is extremely hard. It is also found that families get food rations while single offenders in the boardinghouses are provided with meals in the communal dining room. It is always corn that is supplied in these circumstances, not rice. Sometimes, cracked corn, called corn rice, is supplied. Different rations are distributed by age and type of work being done. The official per-person ration is more or less the same as the national standard. Larger rations are reserved for heavy work,

such labor in mines. Smaller rations are given to children, the elderly or weak persons. The present survey has confirmed that actual rations given in the camps were smaller than stipulated and most prisoners go hungry continually. In the maximum-security camps the only side dish supplied year-round is salted cabbage. A limited supply of soybean sauce, paste and seaweed laver is distributed in the high-security camp. There is a report of 'special day' rations of vegetables, potatoes, meat and fish.

In some PPC, there are reports of families authorized to raise chickens, rabbits or dogs in the room or garden for food for themselves. Analysis of food rations in the PPC has shown that prisoners are seriously undernourished and suffer from nutritional imbalance. Furthermore, the survey has revealed that the supply of food has deteriorated since 1990's. Observations of the situation in detail by camps is provided below:

"There was no supply of clothing. You have to repair your worn-out clothing by mending yourself. There was a regular supply of shoes which, I was told, had stopped since 1995. Daily ration per person is 500 grams. So, prisoners have never felt their stomach full, even with just corn. The taste of meat is a rare thing. You can say they are in bad shape in terms of nutrition. You can raise chickens and a dog, the only source of meat. Prisoners somehow find ways to hatch chicks. Not all prisoners feed chickens. They keep chickens in their own room due to fear of theft by other prisoners. Some families raise two or three chickens. Other families do not. Prisoners' houses are in a 5 section flat (called a harmonica house). There is a shop each village. They sell a very limited quantity of soybean sauce, paste and salt. These items are all from the food factory in Chongsong. You have to pay money to buy these items. As in the society outside, we get an annual wage, from which we get little by little every month. We use the money for shopping. You can buy only the approved per-person quantity. Other items like soap are in short supply, even in society outside. Of course, there is no such supply in the center."
(A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“We received work clothes every six months and a pair of shoes twice a year, but no socks were supplied. We walked around without socks in winter. Prisoners find some spare cloth to wrap around their legs. We hang clothes on nails on the wall. There is no such thing as a clothes chest. We had to make our own underwear and we often walked around with just pants (without underclothing). We received work clothes from the camp but no gloves or anything like that. There were so many lice and fleas that we would find lice infesting our clothes. Some prisoners were diligent and kept their clothes clean by washing. If you don’t wash your clothes frequently, they become dirty and stiff. Many prisoners were assigned to mines but these prisoners wouldn’t get clothes for mining work. You just keep your own clothes in the mine and you have to somehow keep them clean yourself. The boys working in the mines are really miserable with their dirty clothes on.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from PPC Camp No. 14, Kaechon)

“Per-person daily ration for miners and farmers was 900 grams of corn. The ration had been reduced to 700 grams as of the 1990’s. The ration for all primary school children is the same:300 grams; in middle school, 400 grams are designated for children in the first four grades and 500 grams given to children in the fifth and sixth grades of middle school. There was an additional ration of salted pieces of cabbage as well as a little salt, the same cabbage each meal all the year around. The ration was so small that it was always consumed on the day after ration. My mother received a little more and she managed to save some food.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from PPC Camp No. 14)

“The house in the camp has a cement wall and floor. The wall was painted with white lime powder. There is no carpet and prisoners sleep on the cold cement floor. We heated the room by burning coal. There was no such thing as fence between houses. You just enter your kitchen right from the road and find your room. You can hear snoring in the next room. Seriously, there is no privacy. The windows are about the same size of windows commonly found in

South Korean houses, but covered with vinyl sheeting instead of glass. The vinyl sheet is misty and no one can look inside your room from outside, but it is of little help in winter. There is no system of piped water. You have to fetch water from a communal well. Every village has a system of ringing bell every 30 minutes, starting from 4 o'clock in the morning. Kitchen utensils included a few bowls, spoons, a kitchen knife, a chopping board and a kettle. We had a pot but no chopsticks. You can manage to make chopsticks, but the real problem is the lack of food to pick up with the chopsticks. We received two blankets in the beginning, but no pillows. It is easy to make a pillow with rice bran filling. We did receive needle and thread from the camp. We did not have any tables and we ate food on the floor. (Shin Donghyuk from PPC Camp No. 14, Kaechon)

“We ate 160 grams of boiled corn like porridge, with salt soup and salted cabbage as side dishes. Many male prisoners were undernourished. The food was not even enough for women. Just when I first arrived, two women died of undernourishment. Women were engaged in some kind of business. Clothes were bartered for grain. We begged for burnt corn remaining at the bottom of the kettle in the kitchen. We would get some kernels of grain from prisoners working at a threshing floor. Of course, we gave them something in return. The quarters we lived in were surrounded by a cement wall with barbed wire on top. We did not receive a supply of clothes, but we did receive a few other items, such as a notebook, a pencil, soap, shoes, a toothbrush and toothpaste. We get corn-rice only and no other food. Those prisoners who exceeded their work quota per year are given an additional supply of 1 kg. of Korean taffy and one bottle of cooking oil on New Year's Eve. The cooking oil is used for soup and for Korean cornbread, which is supplied on a holiday. (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“Most of the work there was for farming. We would get corn on the cob in return. We would get the corncobs ground at a mill. It was so difficult to eat corn in the beginning. I wasn't able to eat corn for the first 10 days there. Eating was such a hardship there, you

know. Corn was supplied on a regular basis, 700 grams per person per day. Now, when you remove husks and stripped the corncob, the actual amount of corn kernels you get is very small. The corn ration never stopped. We would get a little of what we cultivated on the farm. They gave us cabbage and potatoes. Almost no prisoners died of starvation. No prisoners ate rats. All my children were girls and the ration was enough.” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“They gave us a house for each family. There is a little open space near the entrance of the house, but no walls. You could not raise livestock. No private farming was allowed. While I was there, new prisoners kept arriving. Then, there was a period when no new prisoners arrived for a month. The number of new prisoners was decreasing. So, no new houses were needed and house construction stopped. They all lived in old houses. We would cover the floor with straw mats made from rice husks and similar methods. They didn’t give us coal. If you managed to find some firewood from up the hill, it could be used to bring some heat to your house.” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“The shops in the Camp No. 15 have no signs hung outside. It is merely a shop standing by itself. The shop has items mainly for industrial use, such as (ordinary) clothes, work clothes and shoes. In addition, you find some food items once a month. Ration quotas are strictly set: all you can buy is one kilogram of bean paste, one liter of soybean sauce and some seaweed (laver). There was aspirin in the shop. Shoes were expensive and, because of that, shoes were not much in demand by prisoners. A prisoner could buy a pair of shoes once a year. There is no limit set on what you can buy, but you can’t buy any more simply because you don’t have enough money. Nothing is free. You have to pay for everything. You can clean your teeth in the morning with salt. There’s no toothpaste. They did supply soap. Toothbrushes were also supplied, but you had to pay for them.” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“Since clothes were not supplied, all prisoners had different clothes from one another. They wore the very same clothes they had on when they first arrived here. There were clothes left over from the prisoners who were released. All prisoners wore used clothes from someone else, regardless of gender. What we ate there was corn that cooked like porridge. The quantity per person was about three cm. above the bottom of an ordinary bowl. The meals, already too small, were reduced by half in case prisoners failed to accomplish daily work quotas. The boardinghouse for women had two rooms and held about 10 prisoners per room. Some of them stayed at the grain threshing floor. The room was narrow and long and wasn’t too cramped. Prisoners must bring their own blankets from home (outside the camp). Otherwise, prisoners have to live without blankets. Sometimes, we would receive hand soap. During my three years of my detention there, I received a sanitary napkin only once and a toothbrush only twice. No toothpaste. I brought some supply of toothpaste from my home that I often shared with other prisoners.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“We took our meals in the dining room by company. We ate a kind of corn mush or porridge mixed with some vegetables. It was not corn powder, it was cracked corn for cooking. Prisoners ate frogs and snakes inside the camp. They secretly trapped them. If you were lucky enough to catch a deer or a wild bore, you had to offer them to the SSA officers. Prisoners eat rice only twice a year on the birthdays of the leaders. Other than that, prisoners eat corn all year around. Prisoners live on the leftovers from supply given to the SSA. We did not work on New Year’s Day. No meat for prisoners. We would butcher a pig on New Year’s Day and the SSA officers would take all the meat and prisoners would eat the pig cataracts.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

"I continued to wear the same clothes I had on when I first arrived there. I didn't buy any clothes there. I had a school uniform that we received on the birthday of Kim Il-sung. When the citizens of Pyongyang received a birthday gift from the leader, we prisoners also received the same gift. I remember a prisoner who brought with him the gift of a school uniform that some person outside the camp had received on the leader's birthday. The quality of that uniform was not as good as our gift. The quality was quite different. Prisoners had to make their own sports uniforms. They would buy white cloth from the shop and make a uniform out of it. Prisoners ate corn and salt, nothing else. All prisoners were undernourished and it was like hell. I always despised our miserable conditions there. Life is very hard even for children, and I used to deplore the awful life they had to endure. Now I can relate to you the details of the miserable conditions there, but at the time it was so painful that I felt like a walking dead person. There were no other (essential) items provided for living. They sell shoes. You have to pay for them in the shop in the village. We could buy soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes from the village shop. But you can't find sanitary napkins there. You find them only in the supplies reserved for the army. Soldiers don't use their sanitary napkins; they sell them for money. Prisoners wash and re-use cloth for use as feminine napkins." (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"Clothes were not supplied. There was a supply of shoes once a year. Prisoners wore old clothes from those prisoners who were released. Some new prisoners might bring an amount of spare clothes from home, so they would barter the clothes for something else. Prisoners working in the kitchen sometimes had extra meals that they would barter for clothes. The meals for prisoners were always cracked corn, with the exception of holidays, when you would have rice for breakfast, noodles for lunch and the usual cracked corn for dinner. When economic conditions got worse in North Korean society in 1996, they gave us corn porridge with a little vegetable and rice in it. That continued for some months. What we farmed there for a year was not enough to feed all of us because of the lack of or poor fertilizer and too many rocks in the soil. The prisoners in my work sub-

unit shared a room in a U-shaped building. About twenty prisoners slept in the same room. In the case of my company, we used six rooms. We took turns in shifts to bring firewood down from the hills. When it was my turn, I had to find some firewood and bring it to the boarding house. When my shift came around, the company commander released me from my (usual) work for two hours early. During that time I was expected to bring firewood and heat up the house before other prisoners arrived. We received shoes and soap from camp authorities. They gave us soap once a month or so. You were allowed to keep shoes, clothes, money, a watch and medicine that you had brought with you from home. A prisoner could keep a personal bottle of liquor.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“Even though what was available was just corn, it was rationed for all the family members. It was corn that was rationed. Salt was also supplied. Other rationed food included wheat flour, corn flour and cracked corn. We had food in a lunchbox in the field. We lived in a harmonica house with a thatched roof. There was just one room and a kitchen. For other daily required provisions, prisoners had to find their own way of getting them.” (Kim Yong-sun from Ipsok and Yongpyong, PPC Camp No. 15)

“It was a hot summer day but prisoners were wearing thick clothes, like rags all patched up. It was hardly an entire piece of cloth and it never looked like one. Clothes amounted to dirty rags all worn-out, and their shoes looked odd and clumsy, something I’d never heard about or seen before. On the day of our arrival at the camp, they gave us all a few blankets and a set of clothes each. The clothes made of chemical (synthetic) fiber had a very rough feel on our skin and did not last long. The clothes soon wore out. With no winter clothes supplied in the camp, having rags to put on (in the cold) would be the sign of a ‘rich man.’ The extreme short supply of clothes was such that prisoners made all kinds of effort to find clothes. At the news of a prisoner’s death, other prisoners would run to the corpse and try to steal the deceased prisoner’s clothes. The prisoners quickly stripped the dead body of clothes before burial.”(Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

“On hot summer days, we would go to the hills and collect herbs and wormwood. Then we would dry the herbs in the shade and use them to make clothes, thick like cotton for winter. Wormwood is generally believed to preserve heat and provide good nutrition. Once I found a gunny sack at a work site. I made clothes out of the sack. In order to conceal the fact that it was a gunny sack, I cut it into a large number of small pieces, then patched the pieces together to make some new clothes. Ordinarily, looking for a gunny sack on purpose and finding one is as difficult as plucking a star out of the sky.” (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

“First, we would chop up an elm tree and scorch it slightly, making it flat for the purpose of using a section of wood to make soles for shoes. We used wormwood as an insole. Then we would tie the sole to our feet with string made from arrowroot. This we would call ‘shoes.’ On other occasions, we would clean the skin of a dead rat with water, then dry it in shade. A rat hide is small, smaller than your palm, but it has fur. So, I thought it would be good to use as a patch over the knee of my pants.. I soon found out that the rat hide is weak and wears out very quickly. Then, we tried using the rat hide for the insole of shoes. The camp was located in the mountains and very cold in winter, often -20 degrees Celsius. Spring and autumn were very short. Snow fully melted only in summer. Prisoners would pick up all kinds of used rags or worn-out clothes to cover their hands and faces in winter. But this doesn't help very much and prisoners remain exposed to cold wind in the winter. This is why most prisoners suffer frostbite. When they remove the rags from their face and hands at home, they find their skin swollen and red with some parts of their body frostbitten. Prisoners are often forced to have frostbitten legs amputated, as they are frozen beyond saving. (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

“In the camp, eating rice is something unthinkable. All the prisoners had no choice but to rely on the ration of cracked corn. We call it “corn rice” and we get a ration of 350 gram of “corn rice” per person per day. It takes long time to cook, has a very coarse taste even after boiling for a

long time and is hard to digest. Almost every new prisoner has had the experience of loose bowels after eating "corn rice." In some cases, the diarrhea continues as long as six months. Prisoners have died as a result. On New Year's Day in 1975, we received a special ration of rice for one day and three very small fish (pollack). (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, PPC Camp No. 15)

"The house was a flat with several sections of two small rooms and a kitchen, made of earthen brick which were a mixture of stones and quicklime, very loose like that of a temporary roof on a pig-pen. The floor and walls were literally raw earth so any movement inside caused dust to stir in the house. The floor wasn't composed of only raw earth; there were some pieces of wood bark on the floor. The ceiling was made up of boards so rotten and ancient that it could have collapsed on us at any moment. What was worse was that there were spaces between the boards. The only light source was a dim electric bulb which was located in a hole in the wall. The kitchen only contained an old fashioned and primitive wood-burning fireplace and nothing else. (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

"There were regular food rations and food provided was not too bad until 1990. They could get some food by digging and farming elsewhere but here in mine, the miners digging coal had to completely rely on food rations. Miners got different rations such as 900 grams, 800 grams and 700-300 grams by the type of work they performed. Many people died of starvation after 1990." (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

"In the camp, it is your responsibility to buy or find clothes. I raised rabbits and dogs and sold them to buy clothes. Qualities of North Korean shoes were so inferior that you needed to repair them very frequently. I had my sport shoes, sneakers, casual shoes, work shoes and North Korean shoes repaired by old prisoners as they specialized in this trade. We used a piece of rubber or cloth when repairing shoes. Food is rationed and prisoners working in the mine get 100% full ration but dependants or children get 5 days ration a week. You had to find your own ways to gather whatever food is available. Some prisoners raised

dogs or rabbits for this purpose. Some prisoners survived on porridges and others weren't so fortunate and died of starvation. The extra food ration you received is 1 bottle of liquor, 500 grams of pork and 1 kilo of bean sprouts per family once a year on a holiday. We received small amount of wage to buy extra food to eat with rice when I was there. If they didn't give prisoners money for side dish, who would've worked? We received 1,700 Won a month and with that limited budget we bought soap, shoes and even sent our kids to school. We needed a lot of money. Sometimes, we asked the released prisoners for soap and shoes. Prisoners working in the mine received a strict supply—soap once a month, a pair of shoes once in 3 months, and working clothes once a year. That's all they got and they had to be content with them. (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“The national wage for a miner digging at a pit is 900 kgs of rice per day. But I never received any rice and they always gave us corn of insufficient quality and quantity. We got 500 grams of corn a day. In fact, we had 2 meals and worked hard at the pit. What you get husk is not enough and my mom used to cook broken corn with a lot of water in order to “increase” the quantity and fill up our stomachs. Sometimes, you had to survive off a very thin soup. Pongchang is a coal mine sector and prisoners are actually digging coal. They were able to warmly heat their houses in the winter with the coal they dug. At the camp, all families had a house and an extra labor force that was mobilized for various types of construction works. They often construct houses with stone. The houses they built were adequate for the North Korean standard of living. Some houses were very nice as they were constructed with good quality construction materials.” (O Myong-o from Camp No. 18).

“At Camp No. 18, there were single offenders without family and the boarding house they were staying was called the “revolution boarding house.” There used to be some 90 prisoners in the boarding house. They were formerly high ranking officials from the Police Ministry and central party who used to take instructions from Kim Jong-il directly, including a switchboard girl. They are all called the students of revolution.”(O Myong-o from Camp No. 18)

“The outside influence of market has now reached the camp and now we have a sale block in the high-security camp. The sale block is staffed by internal residents and filter cigarettes are also now available there. Expensive items are needed by prisoners to bribe camp officials. One package of cigarettes is already very expensive and to bribe a camp officer, you need many packages.” (O Myong-o from Camp No. 18)

We are informed that they recently began to operate a sales box in the PPC N0.18. Pukchang—a PPC, that is more of a mainstream society. Further study and information are needed to determine whether or not the camp in Pukchang should be classified as PPC, how the Camp No. 18 is different from other PPC and whether or not the difference is due to the fact that the camp is under the police or the camp was created for different objectives, systems, and etc. from the beginning.

“Their uniform was grey and clean, no rags. Shoes were makeshift. They all looked very weak.” (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

- 2) Realities of Family Life (including Marriage, Pregnancy and Rearing a child)
 - (1) Family Life and the Life of Single Prisoners in the Boarding House

Family life in the PPC differs from camp to camp. Basically, family life is authorized. However, as in the case of a maximum-security camp like camp No. 14, husband and wife are not authorized to live together even though marriage is rarely authorized. A child is allowed to stay with the mother until the primary school ages, after which the child is forced to stay away from the mother in a boarding house. The survey has shown that a new wife is assigned to a farm unit and a house is provided, but the husband is forced to stay at the factory boarding house and is only occasionally authorized to spend a night with his wife when he performs on an outstanding level. There are cases where unmarried adult members of the family are assigned to a factory and are forced to stay at the factory boarding house away from home.

In case of single offenders and one-person family, men and women stay at different boarding houses. It is also reported that in high-security camps, a single person is authorized to live in the same village in the same sector with other families. Generally, a group of families stays together in a village in the pattern of a normal farm village whereas a single person stays at a boarding house of the school, factories, or mines.

- (2) Marriage and Selection of Spouse

Marriage and the selection of spouse are fundamental rights for any human being. In the PPC, however, marriage and selection of spouse are restricted and utilized as means to ensure safe operation and maximize productivity. Considerable differences have been noted among the camps in terms of authorization and extent of interference in the marriage and selection of spouse by prisoners.

In the case of Yodok high-security camp, single offenders are not authorized to be married. On exceptional cases, the long-term family prisoners are authorized to marry someone in the same family sector. In case of PPC No. 18, marriage between prisoners is authorized. If a prisoner and ex-prisoner decide to marry, the ex-prisoner must return to the status of prisoner and has to live with his or her spouse in the camp, making such marriage extremely difficult and ultimately improbable.

In the case of maximum-security camps, marriage of prisoners is authorized on occasion of an exemplary performance and is recognized as a mean to ensure the steady supply of labor force, the loyalty of prisoners, and an exploitation of prisoners. In PPC No. 14, marriage and selection of spouse are determined by the SSA and therefore, the right of selection of spouse by prisoners concerned is totally deprived of. In the other maximum-security camps, however, it is found that marriage between prisoners must be authorized but prisoners concerned can select the spouse. As mentioned before, there are considerable differences by camps concerning the regulations governing marriage and selection of spouse. In general, marriage is not recognized as a most natural and emotional human behavior, but as an important mean to ensure the prisoners' loyalty to the camp, to maximize labor productivity, and to stroke grievances, when necessary. It is confirmed that in the maximum-security camp, in particular, the reason of marriage authorization is to safely increase the number of prisoners and consequently the labor supply by births of babies

(3) Baby birth and Issues Relating to Sexual Relations

In PPC, childbirth is generally allowed for the families of marriage in the camp or the prisoners who had already been married when arrested. It is noted that in some camps, husband and wife are authorized to stay together but their pregnancy or childbirth is not allowed. Even when childbirth is authorized, the actual rate of childbirth is not very high due to the limited number of days of husband and wife sleeping together, undernourishment, or excessive hard labor. The survey confirms the alarmingly high rate of child mortality and the absence of any consideration for the protection and care of infants. The parents in PPC are restricted by the severely hard life in the camp from rearing a child with normal affection and consequently, do not desire a baby. It is surveyed that a brief maternity leave is provided, 15 days before and 15 days after the childbirth in Camp No. 14

It is surveyed that pregnancy and sexual relation by unauthorized prisoners, if and when detected, are severely punished. The man and woman prisoners involved are separated and relocated at different sectors or sent to a punishment jail. There was a case of public execution for the charge of unauthorized sexual relation. It was also surveyed that, in cases of such relations of prisoners with SSA officers or guards, the woman prisoners involved are generally missing. In case of detection of pregnancy, forced abortion is generally enforced with rare exceptions of allowing childbirth. It is confirmed that in such cases the rights of the woman and baby are severely abused.

Table 2-8

Comparison of Family Life and Marriage System by Camps

Classification	Camp No.13 Maximum-security	Camp No.14 Maximum-security	Camp No.18	Camp No.22 Maximum-security	Camp No.15 (Ipsok-ni) Family Sector, High-security	Camp No.15 Taesuk-ni Single offenders, High-security	Camp No.15 Sorimchon Single offenders high-security	Camp No.15 Yongpyon Maximum-security
Family Life	Family Life Authorized	Family Life Authorized	Family Life Authorized		Family Life Authorized		Family Life Authorized	
Boarding House Dweller	Garment Factory Food Factory	Middle School Students, unmarried prisoners (men & women)		Men and women separated	Single Offenders Men & Women Separated	All prisoners at Boarding houses	All prisoners at Boarding houses	
Marriage Authorization	Authorized	Limited Authorization	Authorized	Not Authorized		Not Authorized	Not Authorized	
Spouse Selection	Authorized	Not Authorized Selection by SSA Officer						
Childbirth Authorization	Authorize & Encouraged	Authorized	Authorized		Authorized	Not Authorized	Not Authorized	
Sexual Relation	Punished (Hard Labor)	Strictly Punished (Missing)	Not Punished (Abortion Possible)	Strictly punished. Men & Wife Rarely Allowed	Forced Separation	Strictly Punished (Jail)	Strictly Punished (Jail) Woman only	
Treatment of Pregnancy		Punished & Abortion (missing)	Pregnancy, childbirth authorized. Limit in Ages	Pregnant Women Secretly Executed		Forced Abortion and punishment (jail)	Forced Abortion and punishment (jail)	

Testimonies in detail on the marriage and pregnancy, childbirth and rearing by camps follows:

“Marriage is allowed. There is no restriction of childbirth. Doyou know why? They need more prisoners in the future and young prisoners to keep the camp in operation. Someone arrived here under the charge of being a revisionist. She loved a man and had a special relationship with him. Then, they reported their relationship to the director of political department to seek approval. If approved, they can go ahead and be married. In the Camp No. 13, prisoners were married and as a result, the population simply increased. Everyone lived with the family here and the single offenders also lived in the same village. There was a boarding house only for the girls working at the garments factory. Of the girls working at the food factory, some 20 of them stayed in a boarding house in the factory. All the girls working at the garments factory slept in the boarding house.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“Prisoners can be married but they cannot live together. If a girl is married, she is released from where she was working and given a house while the husband has to continue to stay in the same boarding house. I think some 60% of the prisoners at 20s were married there. The camp needs many prisoners and young people are doing a good job and it appears that the camp authorities are encouraging young prisoners to get married. In the village, all women were married. In the camp, all prisoners have strong desires for marriage. In fact, you can hardly call it a marriage as the human rights of prisoners are totally disregarded and the one person, an SSA officer, makes all the decisions in the “marriage” process. As marriage is the strongest desire for all prisoners in the camp, prisoners risk dangers and even volunteer for tough work to receive the marriage authorization. Doing good work is not the only condition for such authorization. A prisoner must obey all the camp regulations and be a good spy on other prisoners to get married. Prisoners over the age of 25 for man and 23 for women may be authorized for marriage. Marriage authorization is provided on a fixed special day 3 or 4 times

a year— New Year day, 16 February or, 15 April. The bride moves to the house, occupied by the mother of bride groom. No matter how skillful or efficient the bride was as a worker, she gets new assignment to a farm work unit. The married couples are authorized to sleep together only for the first 5 days of marriage but they have to work during the day time and leave home for work very early the next morning.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14)

“In cases of unauthorized pregnancy or sexual relations between prisoners, the prisoners immediately “disappear” and no one ever hears from them again. Such cases are detected by the prisoner spies under instruction from SSA officer. In case of a relationship between a prisoner and SSA officer, the girl disappears immediately and no one knows what happens to the girl. This happens very frequently.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14)

“In the camp, there is maternity leave, 15 days before the delivery and about a month after the delivery. During the maternity leave, she is not doing her normal work but given work that could be carried out at home, such as making straw rope. In the camp, there are no services that look after the children while the parents are at work. There were many cases of babies dying at home alone while the mother was at work. If a child starts to walk, the mother may take the child to her work site for protection. Sometimes, a child is dangerously left home alone.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14)

“All family members live together. There is no marriage. If anyone shares a special intimacy with another prisoner, it can lead to extremely severe consequences.” (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“There was a case of marriage in the family sector. Kwon XX married Kim XX, an older woman, in the same sector. Although they were allowed to live together, they were not allowed to have a baby. I have never seen any children below the age of 10 in the camp. In the family sector, almost everyone was wife and husband.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“All I know about marriage is that you must find one in the same sector. Finding a spouse from other sectors is unthinkable. If prisoners love each other, then they are married. (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

“I was married in the camp and I gave births to a daughter and a son. We could marry and raise children. No conditions were required such as good behavior and etc. Anyone could marry if he was over the age of 30 and she was over the age of 28. But the prisoners who had been released could not marry any current prisoner. Because the current and ex prisoners never saw each other, marriage was impossible for them.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“When I was released, I was in love with a girl who was not released. The system was such that I could not marry her. If a released prisoner marries a present prisoner, the status of the release will be revoked to be a prisoner again. I tried desperately but I could not marry her.” (O Myong-o from Camp No. 18)

Neither marriage nor childbirth is allowed in the camp. Small children who were brought here because of the parents must live there even after they become grown-ups. It is said that such children carry a sense of defiance stronger than that of their parents. Their marriage is not authorized and the parents are not allowed to live together. I was told that some prisoners are given a special privilege of staying together with spouse for one night every several months for an exemplary performance. There, children stay with children, men with men, and women with women.” (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

“In the camps, there were family sectors where all families lived together and single offenders sectors where the prisoners lived in a boarding house in mine sector.” (Ahn Myong-chul from Camp Nos, 11, 13 and 22)

3) The Realities of Public Health, Medical Service and Diseases

(1) Medical Service and Supply of Medicine

It is surveyed that medical service in PPC is primitive. There are hospitals in each sector of PPC, but the hospitals never functioned as such. In particular, there were no medicines, not even any emergency kits. The only service provided was for the simplest treatments. The absence of legitimate medical facilities and services for a population over 50,000 reveals that the North Korean authorities do not recognize PPC as a place of residence of its own citizens. However, a very few camps provide a nursing home for undernourished prisoners, isolation ward for patients of contagious diseases, or ward for psychiatric patients according to the character of the camp. It is assumed that such facilities and medical services are operating at the most elementary level to cope with the situation of increasing psychiatric patients due to the degrading conditions of camps and to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

(2) Current Situations of Medical Personnel

It is confirmed that there is no professional medical service personnel appointed in the PPC. The present survey reveals that at all PPC, an SSA officer or a prisoner doctor is in charge of medical treatment and 1 or 2 prisoner nurses are in charge of performing simple treatments and medication. On the other hand, medical facilities and service are readily available at PPC for SSA officers, guards, and their families. It is further revealed that the standard of such facilities and services for the SSA officers are not low.

(3) Role and Function

No operations are conducted in the medical facilities in PPC. However, the services for the simple treatment for wounds, the most rudimentary medication, and vaccination are available on a limited scale. Issuing a medical certificate is recognized as an important function of medical service. The incompetence of the persons providing medical service and the limited availability of basic medicines only for the treatment of the most

common illnesses such as indigestion and diarrhea render this “medical service” useless when it comes to curing a variety of diseases that plague the PPC. PPC is void of a functioning medical service and prisoners largely rely on the help of folk remedies for their serious diseases. Tragically, many of these prisoners die. The death rate is abnormally high due to the inability of the medical service to cure or alleviate the following common health problems: undernourishment, tuberculosis, gastro enteric troubles, and industrial accidents. It is further noted that failure of adequate and timely treatment of wounds has resulted in the large number of physically handicapped prisoners.

Table 2-9

Public Health and Medical Service by Camps

Classification	Camp No.13 Maximum Security	Camp 14 Maximum- security	Camp 18	Camp 22 Maximum -security	Camp 15 Ipsok High-security	Camp 15 Taesuk High- security	Camp 15 Sorimchon High- security	Camp 15 Yongpyong Maximum- security
Hospital Facilities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (not for treatment)	
Medicine Supply		Vaccination at school	Yes (pur-chase only)	None	None (individual buy possible)	Simple medicines only	Simple medi- cines only	
Hospital Bed (Nursing)						Nursing Home for the weak/ good performanc e	Nursing Home for the weak and old	
Doctor	1 prisoner	1 SSA officer	1 SSA officer	1 SSA officer	1 prisoner	1 prisoner	1 SSA officer	
Nurse	1-2 prisoners	1 prisoners	4 prisoners	1 prisoner	1 prisoner	1 prisoner	1 prisoner	
Main Function	Medical certifi- cate, infectious diseases con- trol, vaccina- tion, medicine supply	Vaccination for students, dis-infection, treat-ment, medicine supply	Medical certifi- cate, operation possible, med- icine manu- facture		Basic Emergency Treatment, medicine supply	Casting broken bones possible	Temporary protection of good back- ground people, old and serious patients	

Operation/ Treatment	None	None	Yes	For the training of SSA Doctors	None	None	None	
Operation/ Patients			Yes				Transferred to SSA Hospital	
Isolation Ward	None		Yes for TB patients	Yes (hepatitis, TB, psychiatric patients)	Yes for psychi- atric/TB patients	None	None	
Main Disease			Undernourishment	Hantavirus	Pellagra, TB, Gas- troenteric, pleurisy, hepatitis, psychiatric			
Cause of Common Deaths	Undernourishment				Undernourishment, pellagra, typhoid, hepatitis, TB	Under- nourishment	Under- nourishment	Under- nourishment

Testimonies in detail available for the public health and medical services by sectors in PPC are as follows:

“There was a medical clinic at every village. 2 or 3 people worked at the clinics. Their main work was to issue medical certificates. If you stop working without a medical certificate, you don’t get your food ration for the day. We get some basic injections and medicines. There is no medical equipment and an actual operation is out of the question. You get injection for influenza and other highly contagious diseases. Many prisoners died of undernourishment. When we were released in 1990, we received a ration for only 15 days in one whole month. The general situation was bad in North Korea and because of that, we also suffered. Many prisoners died from hard labor combined with undernourishment. Many prisoners suffered from gastro enteric diseases. Many prisoners also died of accidents. There were many accidents that occurred frequently in mines. Some prisoners died when an underground gallery collapsed while others were run over by a trolley. Some farmers died when they fell from a cliff or hill. Whatever the case, many prisoners died in numerous ways. How can people survive under such inhumane circumstances? It is despicable to live like a slave and it is obvious that many people die under such circumstance.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“You cannot get a kind treatment for your injury. There was a vaccination once at the primary school and there was an SSA doctor and a prisoner nurse in the clinic.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14)

“Yes, there is a clinic. But there is no doctor most of the time and almost no medicine at all. Perhaps, they may have a medicine for loose bowels. There was a nursing home. It is mainly for the elderly people. When an SSA officer finds an old person extremely weak, he sends the old man to the nursing home. But that occurs rarely. The nursing home was located up the valley from the threshing floor. They seem to be well-fed. They don’t work. When we were cutting grass in front of the nursing home, we saw some of them cultivating their own food without all the manual labor we perform.

They may have someone influential outside who instructed the camp authorities to take good care of them. Normally, we are not allowed to go up there. Many prisoners suffer from undernourishment. Some prisoners die of dropsy in the liver. (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“There is a hospital. But the hospital is not for curing and treating diseases. They provide the most seriously ill patients or the weak prisoners who were just released from the PPC jail with temporary protection. There was no medicine. There was a SSA doctor but no treatment of sickness. There was a prisoner assigned there. Male prisoners died when they were undernourished but women didn’t. There are cases of death of dropsy in the liver. Many prisoners suffer from diarrhea as they ate corn only. (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“There was a hospital and nursing home which were operated by prisoners. The nursing home was located at the peak. Prisoners doing extraordinary work or in a state of near death are sent up there temporarily. If you get injured, yes, you are admitted to the hospital. But there is almost no medicine or treatment of the injury. You get a cast if you have a broken bone. If you have diarrhea, they give you medicine and that’s all.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesukni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“There was a hospital and nursing home. The doctor was also a prisoner. Hyewon, the daughter of the family from Germany, was a nurse there. After the family sector was closed, I don’t know who was a nurse there. When prisoners catch the cold, they get a primitive form of medicine from the hospital—a plant’s root that has been ground up. Sometimes, you get an injection if the disease is contagious. But there was no operation. They cleaned and applied some ointment. I don’t remember how they treated prisoners with broken bones. There were cases of death caused by diarrhea. However, only two or three prisoners died this way. We washed our face at the stream and sanitation was non-existent. There were many lice and fleas. There was a common bath house also. In the winter, they heated the water from the stream and we bathed there once a

week with our work unit. I think we bathed 2 or 3 times a month.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“There was a small one-room clinic in Ipsok village. There was no sign, no operation, and no treatment. Once, I had a gastro enteric problem and received an acupuncture treatment. If you are sick, they just give you a medicine for the common cold. If you get your leg broken, that essentially means that you are dead. We were doing farm work and there were no life-threatening accidents. If a prisoner gets injured while logging, he is left to die or become crippled. In North Korea, there are so many tuberculosis patients. This is because they don’t get enough food and are constantly starving and undernourished” (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“There is a clinic. One person works there. He was a prisoner and was working there. You can get the most basic medication there and that’s all. There is also a nursing home. Prisoners who are seriously ill are sent there. My son was admitted in the camp at the age of 5. The only food he got was corn and as a result, he had a swollen stomach. He went to the hospital and got an injection. They never told me what injection it was but my son’s health improved slowly after that. In fact, my child had pellagra disease. This disease can be cured by eating a dog. When I explained to the doctor how my child had a severe case of pellagra, he authorized us to eat a dog we were feeding. My husband and child recovered after eating the dog.” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“A prisoner had his legs and arms broken from logging. He died without any treatment. He had to tie his broken arms with bandage to continue the work. Otherwise, he would get no food ration and die from starvation. Many prisoners died of pellagra.” (Kim Yong-sun, Ipsok-ni and Yongpyong, Camp No. 15)

“There is no hospital and medicine in the camp. As a result, the common cold would often develop into serious diseases. The most common diseases in the camp are pellagra, tuberculosis, gastro

enteric, hemorrhoids, pleurisy, frostbite, and psychiatric disease.” (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“There was a clinic and hospital. In the clinic, there was a doctor and a nurse. The doctor was not a prisoner. He was well treated.” (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

“There was a hospital in the camp. The hospital for camp officials was called the army clinic and the hospital for prisoners was called a hospital. A doctor, who was a prisoner before, was a doctor in the hospital. In case of Yongdung hospital, there was a director of hospital, deputy director, departments of internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, hepatitis, out-patients, and pharmacy. They performed actual operations. There were 2 nurses in the internal medicine department and 2 nurses in the surgery department.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“Once I had a sty in my eye and the doctor by the name of xxx told me he would cure it. He operated on my eye without an anesthetic and the pain was just unbearable. After that, I had a problem with my left eye looking askance. The doctor left a scar on my eye where he made the cut and this made me look rough. The unhealed wound on my eye was mixed with sweat, dust, and germs and eventually developed into a more serious condition which prevented me from working. Then, he sent me to a hospital. Of course, in the hospital, there were no medicines and treatment. I was sent there only to “cheer” up. Up in the Sugol valley, there were isolation wards for patients of contagious disease and for psychiatric patients. The entrance is guarded by the Sugol Investigation Unit. In the Chungbong hospital, a family hospital, there were 10 army doctors and 3 nurses. They were using live prisoners for the actual training they missed in medical school.” (Ahn Myong-chul, Camp Nos. 11, 13 and 22)

“In the camp, there is a hospital and some medicine. But the level of treatment was awfully low. (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

4) Realities of Forced Labor by Prisoners

(1) Objectives of Forced Labor

In addition to the primary objectives of PPC to isolate political prisoners from the mainstream society and intimidate the populations, the forced labor in PPC appears to also serve the purpose of satisfying demand for industrial products for the internal and external consumption by increasing the productivity in the camps. In case of high-security camps, it has an additional purpose of “reforming” prisoners through heavy labor work.

According to the testimonies by Ahn Myong-chul, a former guard at several PPC, prisoners were mobilized for dangerous construction projects called grand construction—the construction of nuclear base, pits in a secret mine, or underground tunnels for a secret purpose. The camp authorities spread rumors that prisoners would be released if their performance is satisfactory under the grand construction project and carried a large number of prisoners away to unknown locations. The reality that none of them has returned to the camp suggests that political prisoners were mobilized for dangerous and secret construction work and they were either executed or transferred to a location of complete isolation to guard the secret after the construction work. It is found that the North Korean authorities are using labor work by prisoners in PPC for a variety of objectives.

(2) Quota and Rigorousness of Labor

It was surveyed that the rigorousness of labor in PPC was incomparable to the rigorousness of labor in the mainstream society. Workers work 3 shifts, 2 shifts, and 12 hours in mines, factories, and farms respectively. Even in the case of 2 shifts or 3 shifts, prisoners are forced to continue work with the prisoners to take over for some time and their actual working hours exceed 10 hours per day. Nevertheless, they receive 30-60 minute lunch break and an additional 30 minute break one or two times a day. They work even longer if prisoners failed to accomplish the work quota of the day. Generally, they have a day-off once a month. Several testimonies have revealed that the day-off is on a Sunday. It appears that they have two holidays a year on the birthdays of the leaders.

The rigorous demand for work is “blind” and does not discriminate when it comes to women, children, and the elderly. The primary school children are forced to carry out hard labor work from 2 o’clock in the afternoon. The high school boys are essentially working just like adult prisoners all day long.

Former prisoners of PPC testify that the labor work in PPC is much more rigorous than in the mainstream society and the starvation and undernourishment in PPC have made the work even more painstaking.

(3) Exemption from Work and Control of Work

It is surveyed that some prisoners over the age of 65 are exempted from work and allowed to stay at home or are given easy work. It is also surveyed that in maximum-security camps, no prisoners are exempted from work at any age and all prisoners are forced to continue hard labor work until their death. In most camps, patients or physically handicapped prisoners who have lost their ability to work are also forced to continue their hard work. The survey has found that in high-security camps, prisoners are exempted from work on presentation of medical certificate but there is no such system in the maximum-security camps.

The present survey has revealed that, for the most part, the work that is carried out by prisoners in PPC is enforced under the harsh conditions of violence. It has been found that some PPC officers directly use violence towards prisoners, but in most cases, violence is committed by the prisoner chief of work unit, prisoner commander of company, or platoon leaders, and by other prisoners. Similar to the work requirements, violence affected everyone and was committed equally without any exception to women, old folks and children. Because all the prisoners in the same work unit are collectively punished for any individual failure of accomplishing work target, the prisoners are pushed to the utmost rigor to finish the work assigned for the day.

Table 2-10

Realities of Forced Labor by Camps

Classification	Camp 13 Maximum Security	Camp 14 Maximum Security	Camp No. 18	Camp 22 Maximum- security	Camp No. 15 Ipsok, Family sector, High- security	Camp No. 15, Taesuk, Single, High- security	Camp No. 15, Sorimchon, Single, High-security	Camp No. 15, Yongpyong, Maximum-security
Objectives of Forced Labor	Production Increase	Production Increase	Production Increase/ Internal consumption	Production Increase	Internal Con- sumption & Reform Thru Labor	Internal Con- sumption & Reform Thru Labor	Internal Consumption & Reform Thru Labor	Internal Consumption
Per Day Working Hours	8 hrs for mines, 3 shifts 12 hrs for farm	12 hrs in summer 10 hrs in winter	8 hrs in 3 shifts for mines		5:30~20:00 14 hrs, break at lunch and at 17:00 hrs	Dawn to dark	12 hrs in summer, 10 hrs in winter, Often work at night to 02:00 hrs in summer	Dawn to Dark
Monthly Leave		1 Day			Sundays	1 day occasionally	Irregular break in peak farm season: 10 minutes in the morning and 10 minutes in the afternoon	
Annual Leave		New Year Day, Birth days of 2 leaders			New Year Day, birth days of 2 leaders	New Year Day, birth days of 2 leaders	New Year Day, birth days of 2 leaders	
Minimum Labor Age		1st Year in Middle School (12 yrs) Primary school pupils mobilized for forced labor	After middle school graduation		Primary School children Mobilized for Forced Labor	Primary School Children Mobilized for Forced Labor		

Classification	Camp No.13 Maximum Security	Camp No. 14 Maximum Security	Camp No. 18	Camp No.22 Maximum Security	Camp No.15 Ipsok, Family sector, High- security	Camp 15, Taesuk, Single, High- security	Camp No15, Sorimchon, Single, High- security	Camp No. 15, Yongpyong, Maximum- security
Work Exemption Age	The old exempted from work but mistreated without rations	No exemption from work	Married women & the aged exempt-ed from work in mines		Exempted from work over the age of 65	No work exemption The aged assigned to Security duty	No work exemption for the aged	
Work for the Aged		No (less work) for the aged over 60.	The aged not exempt-ed from work		The aged not exempted from work	The aged not exempted from work	The aged not exempted from work	
Enforcement of Work	Collective punishment Prisoners pushing pushing prisoners for more work	Prisoners watching prisoners. Punished for work under target	Prisoners watching prisoners. (informing camp authorities		Prisoners watching prisoners. Punished for work under target	Prisoner supervisor punished for work under target	Prisoner supervisor punished for work under target by platoon leaders & company commander	
Violence at Work	violence by prisoners. No violence by SSA Officers	Violence by SSA officers	Violence by prisoners		Violence by SSA officers and work unit chiefs	Violence by work unit chiefs	Violence by work unit chiefs. SSA only shouting	
Treatment of Prisoners Incapable of Work	Absence from work authorized on medical certificate	No exemption from work			Transferred to Nursing Home		Exempted from work. The aged people sent to nursing home without food ration	

Testimonies on the realities of forced labor in PPC are as follows:

“The work quota must be accomplished and if a prisoner fails, all the prisoners accuse him. The camp authorities want to maximize production and give each prisoner an absurd amount of work target for the day. The field is always so clean and neat without any weeds and stones. We use a lot of barn yard manure to have a good harvest. We all work in an organized way and make very good progress. The oxcart we built there, for example, works much better than the same in the outside of the camp. If the work target is not achieved, prisoners in the entire unit are collectively punished and work hours are prolonged. Consequently, prisoners push other prisoners to work harder. In mines, prisoners work 8 hours in 3 shifts. In case of work outdoors, prisoners work for 10 hours. In the farm, they work for 12 hours, 7:00 to 19:00 hrs. In summer, they start work before breakfast. Prisoners have lunch breaks for one hour and bring lunch from home unless the prisoner has time to go home for lunch.

*“There was no rest all year round. Prisoners are mobilized to collect acorn in the fall, collect firewood, and prepare barnyard manure during farm off-season. All prisoners are very efficient workers. The unbearable life in the camp is worse than death itself. It is a living hell where everyone is constantly suffering from hard work and must fight to live for one more day. They have to appear to be obedient outwardly, but have strong wishes for unification of Korea inside their hearts. It is a life of hard work, one after another, without any hope for liberation. Prisoners want to work harder than other prisoners so that he can be favored and assigned to the easier work.”
(A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)*

“Prisoners in the camp usually get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and leave home at 5 o'clock after breakfast. It takes about one hour to arrive at the work site. All prisoners are given daily work quotas regardless of ages, gender or health. It is an everyday-practice that old people and young children are beaten to do the work faster. After graduation, the children are assigned to a mine where

they are forced to do the hard work like other prisoners and young girls are often severely beaten for being slow. They are brutally beaten by the chief of work unit for inefficient and slow work. As a result, they are forced to work with utmost strength and desperation to avoid beating. If the entire work unit is slow, the work unit chief is so badly beaten by SSA officer that he is forced to beat other prisoners to do more work faster.

“In mines, there were more women than men prisoners. Each work unit has 6-7 prisoners at the rate of 4 women and 3 men. Male prisoners mine coal. Digging unit comprises 3 prisoners and coal mining unit of 6 prisoners. All the women working in the mine are unmarried while some male miners were married.

“Once, I was in the construction work site and there were some 5,000 prisoners working with me. They were mainly from valleys No. 4 and 5. We, school children, were here to support the work. The construction work for hydropower plant/dam was a huge project. We needed to block the wide and deep Taedong river water manually. Due to the harsh nature of the work, 7 or 8 prisoners were killed a month. We continued the work for 12 hours in 2 shifts, from 8:00 to 20:00 hrs and from 20:00 hrs to the 08:00 hrs the next morning. On freezing cold days in the winter, prisoners had to carry big stones with bare hands, without gloves, and worked in the freezing river water. The prisoners were threatened with meals not being given to them for slow work. So, they had to work tirelessly in the cold water, shivering in the cold and pissing in our trousers. When we were carrying the reinforcing iron rod, our fingers got stuck to the rod because of the cold weather.”

“At the pig pens, there is a place for butchering pigs. There was one director to supervise 200 prisoners working there and 4-5 work unit chiefs under him. There were some old prisoners there. The work at the pig pens was easiest of all works in the camp and I had the best time in the entire camp life at that time.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14)

“The work there was indeed very hard. Cutting grass is the hardest work. In July and August, the hot days are longest and prisoners were all starving. Your quota is to cut 700 kgs of grass and bring them to the corn field. Dragging logs are also very exasperating. Prisoners spend one or two hours to climb up to the mountain, cut a tree and bring the log down to the threshing field in an additional 2 to 3 hours. It is also extremely backbreaking work to plant corn in spring. Prisoners must keep their backs bent downward for 13 hours from 7 o’clock in the morning to 8 o’clock in the evening without time to stretch backs. There is only one 10-minute break in the morning and another 10 minute break in the afternoon. You can imagine how painful the work is. Prisoners are so closely watched by SSA officers that it is impossible to have unauthorized rest.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“The most painful thing in the entire Yodok camp is performing the tough labor work when hungry. Oftentimes, we prisoners embraced each other as we wept numerous times in the mountain. Once, I had a poison rash from the grass cutting work and my eyes were bulging. Nonetheless, they made me continue my work. I was badly wounded while carrying stones for a construction site (for pig-pens and pump station). I was immobile and couldn’t move. They still forced me to work, making rice straw ropes. At that time, I was so sad that I closed my eyes and tears began to roll down my cheeks. In the camp, you are forced to work until your very last minute of existence.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“Once at our platoon, ox-carts caught on fire. We put out the fire. However, the carts were all burnt down by 2nd wind some time later. Even though this was not our fault, we were punished by being forced to cut trees to make ox-carts again. The work quota was that each person had to cut 3 trees per day. There was a small stream near the power generation station and the power station was nice to us and filled the stream with river water. Fortunately, we were able to

bring logs floating on the stream. We were very lucky and saved a lot of time.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“I had my meals reduced a number of times for not doing a satisfactory job. I mean I was not always a bad worker. I did a pretty good job most of the time. You have your quota and that makes prisoners to compete with other prisoners and there is a collective pressure from the entire platoon members. So, there is no way you can do your work slowly in a cut throat competitive work environment. (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“If you want a good report about you, you must never be absent from work. And you must accomplish the work quota of the day. It is hard to be a good worker and accomplish your work target. The work quota may be similar with the standard quota of the outside society but prisoners don’t get enough to eat and that makes the work that much more difficult. The hunger in the camp is not the same as the hunger in the outside society. There, you can buy food if you are hungry. We cannot buy food here.” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“I used to work at a dry kiln for 12 hour shifts at Ipsok-ni. I worked through the night when it was my shift to do so. You must run back and forth with all your strength to accomplish the work quota. We needed water for the work and we had to fetch water from stream miles away. Oh boy, the work was indescribably hard. At the end of intense labor, we had to walk home for 4 kilometers every day. If we fail to accomplish the work quota, we are sent to Yongpyong-ni, a maximum-security camp. When we cut grass, we needed to tighten our belt with straw rope or arrowroot and bind our worn out shoes tight with old rags and strings. The prisoners fell to the ground out of fatigue with their faces black—a result of a severe sun burn and a shortage of vitamins. Humans here are treated like garbage.” (Kim Yong-sun, Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

Kang Chul-hwan, former child prisoner in Camp No. 15, described in his book the kinds of hard work he had to carry out in the camp in detail as follows:

“The first was the work of collecting grass for rabbits. This work begins from the late fall and continue in winter to collect grass for feed of rabbits in winter. You must search for dry arrowroots and vegetables in the farm fields and up in the mountains. We had to bundle the arrowroots and vegetables for the length of one meter. You must collect 20 kilograms of them per day and children are all out to the field and mountains to accomplish the target. Children had to dig frosty ground for arrowroots using their bare hands and fingernails were so worn out that some children’s fingers looked as though there were no fingernails.”

“The second was the work of collecting firewood. Children were told to collect firewood throughout winter days from valleys of steep mountains or from the mountains behind the school and this work were so hard for children that we preferred death to doing this work. We children were divided into several teams for cutting down trees with axes, cutting the wood into pieces with saws, bringing the short pieces of wood down to the foot of the mountain and carrying the pieces of wood on shoulders to school, the distance of about 3 kilometers. The strongest 5th year graders of the middle school were charged with cutting trees and bringing pieces of wood down the foot of the mountain and all the younger children were charged with bringing the fire wood to school on their backs. The pieces of wood to be carried by primary school children weighed about 20 to 30 kilograms and the small children had to carry the weight for a distance of almost 4 kilometers.”

“The third was the work of expanding rabbit hutches. We were raising rabbits as part of the national campaign of 7-year plan for earning foreign currency by small children. SSA officers took the rabbit meat. Rabbit furs were sent to the central government. This was a good opportunity for SSA school principal and teachers to be

recognized by the central government, not by being a good teacher, but by exceeding the targets. This is why there were no classes in school and all children were driven into the work of expanding rabbit hutches. We dug holes in the mountains behind school and plastered the holes with clay. Twelve children dug the clay with shovels and rest of children had to carry the clay in buckets or straw bags to the rabbit hutches. The burrow pit was about 4-5 meters high cliff and digging clay was not that hard as the clay was not so sticky. As children were digging bottom of the cliff, the cliff looked as though it may collapse any time. The digging work had continued for 2 days and made a tunnel of 2-3 meters deep into the cliff when it fell all of sudden and 6 children were buried. To rescue them, we found 3 children about half-meter below and the last 3 children about a meter deep. Their faces were covered with dirt and blood all over. Teachers covered the children with straw bags and kept us from approaching them and abandoned them to die there.”

“The fourth was the work of the farm support combat. The combat is divided into the work of creating corn farms of nutrition pots, the combat to transplant the corn and rice planting. North Korea developed what they call Juche farming technology, the leaders were so proud of, to make nutrition pots by kneading the mixture of soil and leaf mold into a shape of a cylindrical shape pot. One corn seedling is planted in the center of the pots under the special control. When corn grows to sprout 3 leaf buds, each corn pot is transplanted in the field one by one. This is called corn transplanting combat. The entire fields must be thoroughly tilled first and 10 centimeter deep holes are dug precisely at an interval of 22 centimeters. We put fertilizer at the bottom of holes and put corn pots into the hole, collect soil around it and pour water. For this combat, the entire prisoners in the camp are mobilized, men and women and young and old. The work quota for a day was transplanting corn for an area of 50 pyong (165 square meters) for a child and 140 pyeong (462 square meters) for an adult. You are entitled to full ration only when you have accomplished the target.”

“The fifth was the loyal work of alluvial gold collection. Kim Il-sung’s birthday is 15 April. We must offer him birthday gift. We start to prepare for the gift from two months before the birth day. In the upstream of the river in the Yodok County, there is an old and abandoned gold mine. Maybe because of this, we find gold in the sand of the river. The idea of the work was to collect alluvial gold from the river to pledge loyalty to the leader by offering him the gold. School children were organized into teams of 6 children each team and their daily quota for the team is collecting 0.5 gram of gold per day.”

“The sixth was digging up a particular herb, called sesin, for export. Sessin is a plant that grows in the mountains over 1,500 meters high. The root is aromatic and used for perfumery. The roots are mostly exported to Japan and I heard that the aromatic roots are very expensive. Daily per capita quota is 5 kilograms. All children were divided into 3 teams, 30 children each team. Children work hard to dig up the herb up in the high mountains for 15 days, eating and sleeping in the mountains. At the end of the 15th day, children had to descend from the mountain with the herb on their backs.”

“The seventh is picking weeds out of the farm. Per capita per day assignment was 40 pyong (132 square meters) for primary school children. When I became a middle school boy, the area of assignment increased to 60 pyong (198 square meters). You must accomplish your work assignment at any costs and 40 pyeong was already so difficult and to finish the work for 60 pyeong, simply you cannot do anything else. If you don’t finish the work, you cannot go home and children slept at the school for punishment and to start work at dawn the next day.”

“The eighth is feeding strawberry farm with feces. Strawberry farm is located somewhere at the foot of the mountain and children had to visit all the toilets, pick up feces into a bucket, carry the full bucket all the way up to the foot of the mountain, pour a little feces onto the field at a specified space. If any child frowns at the

smell or delay the work, they made the child clean the toilets by wiping out the dirty toilet floor with bare hand. Children who are out of favor of the teachers for anything, the children were forced to use their bare hands to pick up and feed strawberry plants with feces. If a child uses hands to do the job, the hands get swollen and deep blue from the poison of feces. If any child drops feces on the leaves of the plant, the child is so mercilessly beaten with club or leather whips.”
(Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No.15)

“The work at mines is in 3 shifts. The first shift starts at 8 o’clock in the morning and continues until 4 o’clock in the afternoon, 2nd shift from 4 o’clock until midnight and the 3rd shift from midnight until 8 o’clock in the morning. Thus, the mining continues for 24 hours like a clock without any mishap. But the actual hour of work of prisoners at the mine is more than 8 hours. For example, our shift may be until 4 o’clock in the afternoon, but in reality, we are staying in the pit until 6 o’clock. The shift changes every week and often we sleep less than 4 hours a night to operate the 24 hour mine. By no means is digging coal considered to be easy work. If a prisoner fails to fill up the 2-ton trolley with coal during the 8 hours, he has to collect more coal after his shift has ended from the rails or floor of the underground tunnel that were spilled over from other full trolleys. Normally, the floor of the underground tunnel is clean as other prisoners already collected coals. Countless prisoners were beaten up daily for failing to fill his trolley full with coal. The facilities at the coal mine in the Camp No. 18 were so bad that many prisoners were killed during the work. Some prisoners got electrified to death when they accidentally touched the poor quality electric wire while others faced death in a most cruel manner when they were squashed by a falling elevator. We handled many dead bodies while working there.
(O Myong-o from Camp No. 18)

“In the coal mine, we take over the work from the preceding team at 7:30 hrs. to start work from 9 o’clock in the morning and continue until 4 o’clock in the afternoon, the 2nd team takes over at 4 o’clock and works until midnight, and the last team works from

midnight to 8 o'clock the following morning. In essence, we worked

gruesomely long and hard to keep the mine operating for 24 hours. Many prisoners are injured and killed in the mine by accidents. The possibility of dying is so real in the mines that when we are up on the ground at the end of the work, we are overwhelmed with a feeling of relief—I have survived another day. The forced labor work at the camp was so exhausting. It is indeed backbreaking. Working in the mine also means that prisoners are not fully exposed to sunshine and all prisoners look pale as a result. It is terrifying to work there. There are numerous sick prisoners and they eventually all end up dead.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“The Great Construction Work means that political prisoners are mobilized for nuclear development project, dangerous underground tunnel works, secret tunnel work, or experimentation by the 3rd Bureau. They were taken to the secret construction sites. There was a rumor at that time that they would be released contingent upon their obedience and outstanding performance. But no one has returned. Han Jin-dok's father was also recruited for the great construction work but has not yet returned. The prisoners had to always consume cold meals when working outdoors. It was when we pulled down the old guard post at Sawul and built a new one. About 100 prisoners were engaged in the work of demolishing the old building and were trying to remove the roof when they were forced to rush the work by guards and SSA officers. This caused the roof to fall and some 20 prisoners, men and women, were killed. They were taken to the hospital at Naksaeeng not for treatment, but for a burial in the hill nearby after informing the families of their deaths. They were all collectively buried at a hill in Naksaeeng sector at around 6 o'clock in the evening.” (Ahn Myong-chul, former guard from Camp Nos: 11, 13 and 22)

5) Education of Prisoners' Children

(1) Objectives and Present Situation of School

Some children of prisoners in PPC are given the opportunity of obtaining a school education. However, the objectives, methods, and contents of education are different by camps and by sectors within a camp. This difference by camps in the system of education shows that the schools in the camps are operated in accordance with the particular purpose for which the camp was set-up, not with the standard education system of North Korea.

The survey shows that there were schools at all PPC, but it does not mean that all children in the camps are able to attend schools. Children in certain sectors in the camp where there was no school could not attend school. There was a primary school and a senior middle school in consideration of the ages and number of children. There were differences in the year grade system, years of education, curriculum, method of teaching, textbooks, and stationery supplies by camps and sectors. It was found that schools are operated, relocated, or closed in consideration of the number of children.

It was surveyed that the objective of operation of schools in the camps is to equip the children with basic knowledge needed to carry out labor work in the camps. In the maximum-security camps, in particular, where prisoners have no chance to return to the mainstream society, the school curriculum provides only the basic knowledge needed for carrying out the labor work. It is interesting to note that not a single hour of classes is focused on ideology, a subject that is imperative in all systems of education in North Korea. It is found that the schools in PPC are operated directly by SSA.

(2) Subjects and Teachers

The subjects taught in the schools in PPC are distinctively different between the schools in high-security camps and maximum-security camps, an indication that the purposes of the two different camps are clearly different.

The curriculum of the schools in the Camp No. 15 and 18 at Pongchang, high-security camps where prisoners are largely released on expiration of prison terms, are not noticeably different from the ordinary North Korean school curriculum. In Camp No. 18 at Pongchang, in particular, schools conduct a similar curriculum to the standard national curriculum of North Korea. The differences are that the teachers are all SSA officers who have greater interests in the labor work of the children, rather than the children's' education. Consequently, the quality of text books and related auxiliary books are relatively less than the standard. The subjects related to ideology such as history of revolution are most imperative in the North Korean national schools while the same subjects are not taught at all in schools in maximum-security camps like Camp No. 14 at Kaechon and Camp No. 13 where the students have no chance of integration with the North Korean society. This is an indication that the prisoners in the maximum-security camps are not recognized as their citizens but considered as modern day slaves who serve the sole purpose of working under the control and suppression of the North Korean government until the day they die.

Shin Dong-hyuk, former prisoner at Camp No. 14 in Kaechon, had attended both primary and middle schools in the camp before his defection from the camp. When he escaped, he had no knowledge of the history of North Korea and names of the North Korean leaders Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il. The only education he received in the camp schools were how to read, write, add, subtract, and work at factories.

It is found that the teachers at PPC schools are all SSA officers or their relatives. The teachers are mostly in uniform and always carry a gun or keep it in school. The only method of teaching is to write a lesson on the blackboard and force the students to memorize it unconditionally. The students are not allowed to ask any questions or participate in any discussions.

(3) The Life in School and Mobilization for Labor Work

Students in PPC are allowed to attend a school in PPC if there is one in the

same sector. In primary schools, there are classes in the morning and labor work in the afternoon. In the case of middle schools in maximum-security camps, schools exist but have no educational objective as students are mobilized to perform labor work all day long without any class. There were cases where textbooks, pencils, and uniform were supplied by the camp. The ravished economy of North Korea has made it the parents' responsibility to provide for school items to children. Thus, there have been cases where children could not attend schools because the parents could not provide the children with necessary school items. In the maximum-security camps, however, it is obligatory for all children to attend schools as the parents and children are not expected to provide for anything. As the students move collectively and spend most of the time on hard labor work while at schools, concentration on studies, or spending time together with parents and other children are not allowed.

It is surveyed that heavy punishment is practiced in schools and the absence of safety measures for children results in many children killed in accidents while performing labor during school.

The parents are always so tired and overburdened by hard work that they have little concern with their children's study and life in the school. Particularly, in maximum-security camps, no parents had any concern with their children in schools as the school education in the camp provides little hope for the future of children. It is confirmed that the schools are operated in PPC not for the education of children, but for a means to promote productivity.

Table 2-11

Realities of Education by Camps

Classification	Camp No. 13 (Maximum-security)	Camp No. 14 (Maximum Security)	Camp No. 18	Camp No. 15 Ipsok-ni, High-security Family Sector	Camp No. 15 Taesuk-ni, High-security Single Sector	Camp No. 15 Sorimchon, High- security Single Sector	Camp No. 15 Yongpyong Maximum Security
Operation of Schools	Primary & Middle in one school at villages	1 primary school 1 middle school	Kinder-garden, primary and middle schools, a college	1 school, primary & middle school integrated	1 school, primary & middle school integrated	No School	Heard of a 3-year Middle School
No. of Students	Over 200 in pungchon 150 in Punggye 150 in Tongpo	500 in primary school 700 in middle school	600 in Yongdung Middle school 600-900 in Pongchang M School 400-600 in Suan M School 100-300 in Sangni Middle School	160 in primary school Over 100 in middle school	7 in 1994 No children		Unknown
Clothing for Students	No uniform	Uniform only for primary children twice in 5 yrs		No Uniform	No Uniform		
Clothing for Teachers	Plain-clothes Carrying no gun	Unfirform, carrying a gun		Unfirform, carrying a gun			
Curriculum	Korean, Mathematics, Geography	Korean, Mathematics, Pysical Education	Korean, Mathematics, geometry, drawing, music, communism, revolution history	Revolution hist-ory, mathematics, world history, geography, physics, fine arts, music. Govt propaganda	unknown		

Classification	Camp No.13 (Maximum-security)	Camp No. 14 (Maximum Security)	Camp No. 18	Camp No. 15 Ipsok-ni, High-security Family Sector	Camp No. 15 Taesuk-ni, High-security Single Sector	Camp No. 15 Sorimchon, High-security Single Sector	Camp No. 15 Yongpyong Maximum Security
Labor Hours for Primary Children		3 o'clock in the afternoon to sunset		Labor work hours longer than school study, always labor work in the afternoon and during summer vacation	Easy Work of collecting grass for rabbits		Heard of Very Hard Work for Children
Type of Labor Work Primary Children		All kinds work everywhere		Weeding dry fields 132 square meters Rice planting and etc.			
Hour of Labor work for Middle School Boys				Study and labor work as in primary school			
Type of Labor work for Middle Boys				Weeding dry fields 198 square meters, rice-planting etc.			Heard of secret construction work or military construction by prisoners over 16
Disciplinary Meetings		Daily for Middle School Boys & Girls		Every Saturday Afternoon			

Testimonies in detail on the realities of school operations in PPC are as follows:

“Children can attend schools, 4 years in the primary school and 6 years in the middle school. Upon graduation, they must work without exception. Even in schools, they have to work. They are never allowed to have some personal time. They collect firewood and cut grass for rabbits, etc. Teachers are all SSA officers. It is different from the mainstream North Korean society. Teachers are in plain clothes and do not carry guns but have guns in their tables. There were 200 to 300 children in the school in Pungchon, the largest of all schools. I think there were 100 to 200 children at other schools. There were 10 children in the smallest class and 30 to 40 children in the largest class.”

“Yes there were schools, one each at the villages of Tongpo, Pungchon and Punggye-ri. Because of the distance, they did not have a separate middle school. Middle schools were in the same location with the primary schools. Their idea was that children must learn to be a diligent and obedient worker. They had different textbooks. Their textbooks were from the Political Department. The subjects were Korean, mathematics, history of Korea, geography, and everything else. But there is no subject for the history of revolution because the children would never be integrated with the outside society. But they teach them how to read and compute simple mathematics to make them useful workers.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“Children attend and leave from schools in units. They normally arrive home at 5 to 6 o'clock in the afternoon. Children in the valleys Nos:1,2 and 3 can attend school, but the children in valleys No. 4 and 5 cannot attend school because they were not allowed to leave their respective sectors. There was one primary school and one middle school in the Camp No. 14. In the primary school, there were 3-4 classes per each grade, 30 or 40 children each class. There were

a total of 5 grades, about 100 children in each grade, and the total number of children was 500 to 600. The total number of children of primary and middle schools was over 1,000 children. Many prisoners assumed the total population of the camp, including school children, to be 100,000. My estimate is about 50,000. Because there was no kindergarten, children are admitted to primary school at the age of 7.”

“Prisoners in the camp call school “senior middle school” and there was no other official name for the school. There were 5 year grades in the primary school and 6 year grades in the middle school for a total of 11 school years. Children graduate from school at the age of 17 with the same classmates from 1st grade because they do not change the students in the class from day 1. The total number of children was about 600-700 in the primary school and 700 children in the senior middle school.”

“There was a teacher for each class in the primary school and only one teacher per entire year grade in the senior middle school. This means that there were only 6 teachers in the entire middle school. There were no actual academia classes in the senior middle school and the sole responsibility of the teacher was to make sure that all students go to work. The teachers were SSA officers and they were in uniform and were carrying a pistol in the classrooms. All the teachers were men and they did not tell children their names. There was a roll call in the morning and another roll call in the beginning of afternoon class. As absence from school is not tolerated under any circumstance, many children help other sick children to come to school and children are so terrified of the teachers that they are rarely late for school.”

“The subjects they were teaching in the primary school were Korean, mathematics, physical education, and nothing else. The school hours in the camp were longer than the school hours in the main society but they did not teach children in the PPC about anything related to the leaders, history of the party, geography and history of North Korea, science, music, and fine arts. We had a school

uniform in the primary school, but only working clothes in the senior middle school. We received working clothes every 6 months. The clothes were thick and not bad, but started to wear out after 2 to 3 months. No textbooks were ever supplied. We received a note book and about 10 pencils each semester. However, we never received erasers. The note book and pencils were produced in the camp and the quality was so inferior that the pencil broke after writing each letter and as a result, we needed many pencils for the school day. As children were beaten by teachers if they did not have a pencil, children used to burn a piece of wood to use the charcoal as a substitute when they ran out of pencils. (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14, Kaecheon)

“At that time, there were no children and no school.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“There was a school in 1994. There was a teacher. There were about 7 children. They were in one class room and no divisions by year grade. In 1995 when the family sector was closed, the school was also closed. They leveled the school site and made it into a farm field. Children did not do any farm work. They carried out light work such as cutting grass for rabbits for the SSA sub-station. They had class work in the morning and cut grass and brought the grass to the sub-station in the afternoon.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“The number of children was 40 to 50 in one class and there was only one class per each year grade. So, the primary school had 4 year grades and there were about 160 children in the entire school. I attended school and was completely controlled by the strict school system. We never heard of school vacations and we were part of the school organization. Freedom for children was unthinkable at the time. All we did was perform labor work. There were classes in the morning. In the afternoon, we were subject to all kinds of hard work such as collecting fire wood from the mountains. The primary school and middle school were part of the 7th work unit. We children had to

walk 4 to 8 kilometers to go to the school every day. There were some 50 children in each work unit. There was a class for each year grade. In the morning, there was a roll call in the work unit and all of us walked to school in one line. When we arrived at school, we were split into different class rooms by year grade. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, we were assembled in the playground and told to dismiss. Then, we went to our work units, guided by a senior child. The curriculum was similar with the standard of other schools outside the camp. The subjects in the school included mathematics, English, moral education, revolution history, world history, geography, physics, fine arts, music, and physical education. Our school had tests as well. Children are graduated in order of their school record. The school is closed at 3 o'clock and, after that, the children work until 5 o'clock. Working in the afternoon was exhausting to say the least. We walked all day up in the mountains to collect fire wood in the icy winter days. On Saturday afternoons after school, there was a disciplinary session. It was part of Boy Scout activities. For adults, they had disciplinary meetings after work on Saturday afternoons. Those who did not have their party membership card confiscated also had similar meeting as a party member. My mother was allowed to keep her party membership card because she was not a criminal." (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"The primary school in the camp had the same system of 4 year grades as the schools in the North Korean society had but the senior middle school had 5 year grades as compared to 6 year grades in the mainstream society schools. As we were approaching the opening day of school on 1 September, someone who called himself a students' supervisor of the primary school visited us saying that he was from the primary school. If he were from the school, obviously, he must have been one of the teachers. He was even wearing a pistol at his waist like other SSA officers. As he was talking to us, he was as arrogant as a Japanese police man in movies with one of his legs inside the room and resting his chin with his arm on the other leg. When the morning assembly began in the morning, a short and fat man at his fifties, stood on the platform and spoke to us,

“You are children of criminals. Your parents committed unforgivable crimes and betrayed the party and fatherland. Nevertheless, Kim Il-sung, the great leader, and Kim Jong-il, our beloved comrade, has given you, the children of criminals, an opportunity of learning. You children will be mercilessly punished for violating any rules or disobeying your teachers.” I could not believe that this was a school and I felt as though I was a criminal myself in a prison.”

“The school starts at 8:30 in the morning. In the primary school, the teacher taught us all subjects with the exception of the history of revolution, so imperative and demanding in North Korea as the subject is about Kim Il-sung’s heroic anti-Japanese guerrilla fighting that is taught in Pyongyang. There was no method of teaching except for the teacher having one of the children copy his teaching plan on the blackboard and then demanding all children to memorize it. That’s all the class activity there is. Teaching was conducted in such a stressful and negative environment that children find it difficult even to swallow their own saliva. During the 4th class hour, instructions and work quota were given to children by work units so that the work quota could be carried out in the afternoon. For example, the work unit No. 1 was instructed to cut grass for rabbits, work unit No. 2 to distribute feces to the peppermint field, and Unit No. 3 to collect stones and pile them up in the hill behind the school.”

“I entered middle school in September. Entering a middle school in the camp did not mean a higher level of education, but rather it meant performing much harder labor. Perfunctory as it may be, there was an entrance ceremony. The principal of the primary school is also the principal of the middle school. They made a study hall of Kim Jong-il where children were forced to memorize speeches of Kim Jong-il. Sometimes, the slogan read: Let’s Keep Up with Young Days of Our Dear Leader Kim Jong-il. Classes were held to study Kim Jong-il’s excellent strategy, quick and smart actions, and the spirit of revolution in his early days. At other times, a stage was organized under the title of “singing meeting of loyalty” for the singing and reading of the poems that praised the history of revolution, moral character, and excellent leadership of Kim Jong-il.”

“On 23 July, 1983, I completed the school education in the camp. All I learn in the school was the history of revolution of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il, hard labor work, and how to read the mind of SSA officers. When I entered the school, there were some 100 children in the same year grade. Of all the students, 15 children died, some 20 children were taken to the Yongpyong Camp, a maximum-security camp, and a very small number of children were released during the school years. When I graduated from the school, the number of children who entered the school with me and were able to survive the school years was truly small.” (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“There was a school at Ipsok-ni when I was there but it was not a place for formal education. Children of SSA officers were teachers and the children were raising rabbits instead of learning. Some children were punished and did not come home for failing to fulfill the work quota” (Kim Yong-sun from Ipsok-ni and Yongpyong, Camp No. 15)

“Most important subject in the primary school was the history of revolution. In the primary school, there was a subject titled Early Days of Respectable Father, the Great Generalissimo. In the middle school, there was a subject titled the History of Revolution.” (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

“In the controlled area of the camp, there was a primary school, middle school, and even a kindergarten. These schools were built for the purpose of binding all the innocent children. Teachers were all internally recruited. There was a day care center for SSA guards and their families only and prisoners and those prisoners who were released were not aware of the day care center in the camp.” (O Myong-o from Camp No. 18)

“Most children went to school in the camp. But the school asked for all kinds of expenses. Children were beaten if the expenses were not paid for. Consequently, many children did not go to school.

Children had to pay for stationery items, including pencils and note books. The supply of text books was extremely limited and children only got 3-4 text books out of the 10 they were suppose to have. The teachers were corrupted so if parents bribed the teacher, their children were favored, given more text books, and paid greater attention to. On the other hand, parents who could not afford to bribe the teachers had their children put at a disadvantage for everything imaginable.

“Subjects included Young Days of the Great Generalissimo Kim Il-sung, Young Days of General Kim Jong-il, Korean, mathematics, geometry, physics, drawing, Korean literature, Chinese characters, communism (nowadays it is called socialism), cooking/sewing for girls, physical education, music and etc. Children moved onto the higher levels on the basis of academic records so they had to pass tests. There were teachers for all the subjects.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“Yes, there was a school for the children of prisoners. The school was located at a village in Chungbong sector, some distance from the families of SSA officers. I was told that less than 10 children were admitted every year. The school disappeared one or two years later.” (A02, a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

6) Public and Secret Executions

There were testimonies about the public and secret executions from all PPCs. This is an indication that secret and public executions are a common practice at all PPC. It was surveyed that executions were common at both types of camps, high-security and maximum-security camps.

It was surveyed that the most common crime dealt with execution was attempting to escape the PPC. Most cases of public executions were for the prisoner who had attempted to escape. Executions were also carried out for the crimes of stealing and the expression of social or political views.

The purpose of public executions in PPC is to intimidate and deter the prisoners from engaging in various illegal activities. On the other hand, secret executions are conducted when SSA guards want to avoid the problem of excessive public executions, deny public sympathy for the victim, or prevent the public knowledge of execution of an important character which may create an adverse reaction if publicly known and possibly trigger a riot based on mob psychology.

The witnesses and testimonies on secret executions are inevitably limited by the nature of secret executions—only attended by a small number of related persons. Nevertheless, substantial numbers of witnesses have actually witnessed secret executions or been aware of the practice of secret execution. This is an indication that such secret executions take place quite commonly and frequently. It is reported that in case of involvement by SSA officers or guards with a prisoner, the prisoner concerned is arrested and executed in utmost secrecy to keep the information from other prisoners. It was surveyed that in cases of pregnancy by a prisoner as a result of sexual relation with SSA officers or guards, the prisoners concerned are secretly executed most of the time. As prisoners are not informed of secret executions, it is believed that the prisoners suddenly missing are the case of secret executions.

Testimonies on the cases of public and secret executions in PPC are presented below:

“If a prisoner is caught for escape, he will be shot to death or sent to Susong Prison after public trial. Executions by shooting are not that common. Camp authorities are concerned that frequent public executions would have a negative influence on other prisoners. While I was there, I think I saw 10 public executions by shooting. Mostly, they were the prisoners who had attempted to escape but had been caught. I remember a case where a prisoner was publicly executed after open trial for the intentional vandalism of a machine. This was in 1969 and the victim was from the steel plant in Chongjin. Secret executions are more common than public ones. A prisoner is secretly taken away and no one ever hears from him again. Nobody

knows any further details. Victims of secret execution include those prisoners with records of escape attempt or expression of political views to fellow prisoners, in which case a public trial might cause unrest among prisoners. The victims are arrested and pushed into the deep trap just outside the fence of barbed wire, with sharp spear-like poles pointed upright from the bottom that had been set up for the prevention of escape.” (A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

“My mother and brother were publicly executed in front of me and my father for attempting to escape.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14)

“There is no way to escape. Two prisoners attempted to escape and security was so tight that they were immediately caught at a guard post and executed.” (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“Stealing is a crime. There were many thieves among the single offenders. The thieves are punished, of course. I don’t know how they are punished. They didn’t simply disappear. They were not sent to punishment jail. They were often openly punished. All the work units, Nos.1-10, were assembled at the punishment jail to watch thieves being executed there. A prisoner will be shot to death for stealing. I saw two executions of this nature. The first case was involved with a thief and the second case was very similar. Both of them were single men.” (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“If a prisoner is missing, the entire work unit is alarmed and mobilized. All prisoners stop working and a manhunt begins for the missing prisoner. This is why all prisoners are brought together to work unit No. 7 to watch a public execution. If a prisoner says something wrong, he is sent to a prison in the camp. And if he admits that he had said something wrong, he is publicly executed because this serves as a warning to other prisoners that this will happen to you

if you make the same mistakes. All prisoners were very cautious when saying anything. There was no such thing as secret executions. Because we are prisoners, they wanted to show us all the executions for warning and intimidate other prisoners as much as possible.” (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

“I have not witnessed any secret executions but have witnessed public executions a number of times. At around 11 o’clock in the morning, many prisoners assembled at the river side execution site near work unit No. 2, Ipsok-ni. The camp superintendent in uniform held up a paper and loudly read something. There stood 3 poles behind him, about the same height as the prisoners. When the superintendent finished reading, three men were dragged to the poles by SSA officers. Each convict was held by two SSA guards, one grabbing each arm. None of the 3 convicts were able to walk by themselves. They all looked as though they were already dead and were helplessly dragged along. It looked as though they were so badly treated that they were already half dead. The 3 convicts were tied up with rope against the poles at the bottom of the river embankment. The convicts looked as though they already fainted, helpless, and showed no resistance. Soon, there was big shout from an officer, “Present!” At the execution order, there were 3 gun shots and the convicts fell to the straw mats at the bottom like logs. There was a loud announcement, “traitors are executed in the name of people.” On completion of the announcement, SSA officers and guards quickly rolled up and loaded the dead bodies onto a truck and disappeared to an unknown location.”

“In the late summer of 1983, a public execution took place at the river side execution site near Sondol rock. All prisoners over the age of 16 were instructed to assemble without exception. In the camp, there is an average of 15 cases of attempting to escape each year. Escape attempts are usually made by new and young single prisoners out of youthful follies. The execution site near Sondol rock is in the village of work unit No. 5, a distance of 4-5 hours walk from the work unit No. 10. Lee Chun-won was shot 3 times. One of the

SSA officers hit the head of the dead man unnecessarily hard to confirm his death. SSA officers roughly rolled up the dead body and loaded it onto an empty truck and disappeared to an unknown location.”

“In August of 1985, two soldiers from a special commando unit were brought to the camp for singing South Korean songs and talking about the good life in South Korea. They were very strong as they received very special training in the army and were very proficient in fighting. They prepared an elaborate plan to escape from the camp and North Korea. Eventually, they failed and were caught. They were to be executed by hanging under the provisions of North Korean criminal code a few days before 15 August, the anniversary of independence from Japan. They were to be hung to save bullets and magnify the visual impact. All prisoners were forced to pass the gallows and throw stones at the dead bodies on their way back to home.” (Kang Chul-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“I have actually witnessed public executions about 5 times per year. The victims were from other valleys. The camp authorities tell us why they are executed. The reasons for execution I can remember now were defiance of North Korean system, espionage acts, or refusal to be reformed. The most common charge for public execution is attempting to escape. I was told that the Taesuk-ni village I lived in was an area of lightest punishment. Each valley is separated by plank, 1.5 meters high. Many prisoners die here and public executions took place here very often. Prisoners were publicly executed 20 to 30 times a year. They install a plank behind the convict. If you see 11 planks, that means that eleven prisoners were executed. We made 5 or 6 coffins each month. Once, a member of our platoon died and we went up to a mountain to bury him. Wow, the mountain was full of stones. We dug very shallow and buried him there. We just buried him leaving no marks as to where his body lay.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“All prisoners were assembled for public executions. Two to three cars arrived from the direction of the sub-station. The camp superintendent, his deputy, a chief at the sub-station, and director of political department arrived in the first car. Three to six guards arrive in the second car. At the first execution I watched in the camp, there were 3 guards while there were 6 guards at the second time, including a signal flag holder. All prisoners were told to sit down by work units. Many guards, about the size of a company, block the road behind the prisoners. They do so to make sure that nothing goes wrong. All SSA officers were in uniform with a pistol holstered on the waist. The whole atmosphere was so suspenseful and dreadful. There was a platform and a desk in the front. The camp superintendent, his deputy, director of political department, and section chief took the seat in the front. Section chief initiated the process. Then, the camp superintendent announces the criminal history and background of the convict and declared the death sentence under the provisions of law. Then, they bound the convict to the pole. At the order of “shoot Hahn xx, the anti-revolutionary element,” the fire squad of 3 snipers shot, each sniper shooting 3 bullets, for a total of 9 shots per convict. A sniper examines the dead body and loudly declares the anti-revolution element so and so to be dead. Then, they disappeared with the dead body in a car. After that, there were speeches by the camp superintendent and director of political department.”

*“The 2nd public execution I watched in the camp was on 28 April 1997. When the death sentence was declared, a prisoner by the name of Hyon suddenly stood up, proceeded to the front platform and pleaded to reform him and make him like one of us. Guards rushed to him, gagged him immediately, beat him and kicked him into a completely submissive state and then carried him to the car. He has since been missing. This was a surprise for all of us. Most likely, he was killed. I don’t know what happened to him after my release. No doubt he was killed as he defied the sentence of the central court.”
(A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)*

“Two 26 year olds were caught and publicly executed in front of all prisoners for attempting to escape. The public execution took place at the plaza between 3 work unit and 4 work unit of the engineering battalion. Planning for escape is a serious crime. Prisoners were taken away for inefficiently growing rice, failing to fulfill the work quota of cutting grass, for not installing wind breaking walls properly, and poorly pulling weeds. (Kim Yong-sun from Ipsok-ni and Yongpyong-ni, Camp No. 15)

“A firing squad arrived in the control office of the Camp No. 18 in an SSA truck enclosed in tent. They entered the camp prison with tall walls, located at the Ibang valley, a most isolated place in the camp. They set a boundary for the execution and placed a few desks and chairs for a summary trial. Normally, executions took place in an open area for all prisoners to watch. However, in case of special events, they conducted the execution at a closed area inside the prison at the Ibang valley to prevent the public from watching. Without a judge, ring-leader and his supporters of the case of making an appeal to the leader were sentenced to death. There were 11 convicts, including the manager of Korea Hotel, General Director of Ponghwa, the Director of the 19th Police Department, and a young and righteous sergeant of a guard unit who carried the appeal in a cassette to Pyongyang. They were executed by a firing squad for about 30 minutes.” (O Myong-o from the Camp No. 18)

“The father of Comrade xx Yim was executed by a firing squad. This was when I was about 13 years old. His father was a mechanic and he was killed in connection with his work. The families were not allowed to watch the execution. I saw an execution by hanging also. This was when I was still a child in the school and a lot of people watched it. The convict was almost dead and motionless when he was brought to the execution site. It was a man.” (A01, former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

“Two or three prisoners of the Camp No. 18 were so hungry that they crossed the river Taedong to the Camp No. 14. They found a lot of corn and blended the corn there and returned to the Camp No. 18 with some corn and ate it. The river was very shallow, about knee high. Eventually, they were caught for their stealing and publicly executed. A mother of my colleague was arrested in February or March of 1996 for practicing superstition and was interrogated by the policemen for about six months. Then, she was publicly executed. Another execution case involved an auto-mechanic who wrecked a car while trying to repair it and was executed by a firing squad for the charge of obstructing the work progress of the SSA. I can't remember all the executions, but there used to be 2-3 cases of public executions each year.”

“In 1997, seven prisoners had been brought to the camp because they were involved with the case of Shimhwajo. All 7 of them were secretly executed at the valley of work unit No. 2, Pongchang-ni. They were the Police Chief of Camp No. 23, Executive Secretary of the Provincial Party in Kangwondo, Executive Secretary of the Provincial Party in South Pyongan, the 1st Secretary of Kaesong city, an SSA officer, Executive Secretary of the Party of the Chungsan District by the name of Pi Kap-son, and the Superintendent of the Camp No. 21. We happened to be there to collect sand and watched this secret execution.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“When I was assigned to the Camp No. 22, there was a secret execution site like the one in the Camp No. 13. In March, 1992, I discovered a young girl's dead body, with a shovel stuck in her body. I was told that she was found pregnant and in a sexual relationship with an SSA Officer by the name of Choi Chol-su and was therefore executed. In 1989, I was on duty at the Sobaeklyok guard post. About 500 meters away to the east of the post, there was an upland called the upland of Wunsok peculiar with a lot of flat stones. This was originally a site for secret executions and even the guards found it haunting. We knew that this was a secret execution site and did not

want to approach it. Once, I was on duty at the main gate of the post and heard gun shots from the direction of the Wunsok upland. In the early 1990s, we were reconstructing the guard post. It was such agonizing work to pick up stones and digging out dead bodies under the rocks in the blistering cold winter. (Ahn Myong-chul from the camp Nos. 11, 13 and 22)

7) Realities of Torture and Violence

The survey found almost no prisoners who were not tortured or assaulted during their detention in the PPC. This is an indication that torture and violence are routinely practiced in the PPC.

Torture and violence are routinely practiced at the work sites in general and even more seriously at detention facilities or during the process of an investigation in the PPC. It is reported that torture and violence are perpetrated not only by SSA officers or guards, but also by fellow prisoners under the encouragement and connivance of SSA officers. It is revealed that the prisoner company commanders, prisoner chief of work units, and etc. practice violence to prisoners to accomplish the work target and to control the prisoners under their custody. Violence appears unavoidable as they are also beaten directly by SSA officers when they fail to achieve the work target or any prisoner under his responsibility should cause any problem.

Violence and torture are perpetrated not only to the adult male, but also to women, children, and aged people without exception. In particular, torture is most severely perpetrated to women and children during the process of interrogation and incarceration in the camp without any consideration of human rights.

“When I was a school boy, I was completely stripped and hung from the ceiling by my legs and hands. The interrogators started a charcoal fire and placed it just under my back. I instinctively jerked hard to avoid the flames. The torturers moved the fire so that I could not avoid the heat. As I kept writhing in excruciating pain, they pierced

me with a steel hook near my groin to stop my writhing. After the torture, I was in solitary confinement for about 20 days.” (Shin Donghyuk from Camp No. 14)

“The SSA officers normally did not beat prisoners. But prisoners were beaten sometimes in the office of interview. The company commanders were often beaten by SSA officers for any problems in his company such as fighting between prisoners. In return, the company commanders beat and gave the prisoners a hard time. In essence, the SSA officers are beating prisoners indirectly through platoon leaders or company commanders.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“SSA officers scolded but did not beat prisoners at work. Scolding by an SSA officer served as a message to the company commander to beat the prisoner(s) concerned. The company commander was forced to use violence on the prisoners to accomplish the work quota. (A06, former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)

“I was not beaten and tortured myself. However, other prisoners were beaten and tortured. Women did not have menstruation because of poor nourishment and I did not witness any secret sexual relation between prisoners but saw some prisoners being beaten for such behavior.” (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

“Once I was told to stop my work in the farm and was beaten with a stick. Prisoners are severely beaten by SSA officers when they receive tips from the company commander about poor job performances by prisoners. Prisoners were badly beaten with square bars if caught cooking in the general work unit. SSA officers beat prisoners 2-3 times a month, making prisoners be on their toes at all times. I was often beaten and kicked for being too liberal. Wherever we were in the camp, we were always demeaned and despised.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

"No prisoners were beaten by work unit chiefs or sub-unit chiefs. I think there was no such thing as beating prisoners. All prisoners were so obedient and worked extremely hard. If a prisoner should attempt to defect because of the hardship in the camp, he would be in serious trouble." (A11, former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"Hard work always continues without any breaks. If any prisoner should stop work to rest, he is shouted at, "You son of a bitch!" while being stomped on." (Kim Yong-sun from Ipsok-ni & Yongpyong, Camp No. 15)

"Six children left the work site to eat wild berries up in the mountains behind the school building. For punishment, they were ordered to hold up their arms and open their hands, showing that their hands were stained with the dark color from the berries. Park Tae-su, the teacher, ordered them to be on their hands and left leg while keeping the other leg in the air and then told them to move backward. They were ordered to move around the playground until the black berry color disappeared from their hands. Their hands began to be peeled and the blood started to trickle slowly. He kicked the children in the face and crushed their hands by stomping on them if the children stopped."

"Some children failed to bring a pair of socks to the revolution study class. Cho Song-kun, the teacher from Yongpyong, kicked the children in their stomach region with boots like he was kicking a soccer ball. The children were told to stand up in the sun for the entire morning. After hours, the children began to faint one by one. The teacher then ordered them to pile up chopped firewood for additional punishment. At the end of the punishment work, he began to kick at the pit of stomach of Pae Chong-chol and beat him mercilessly with a stick for failing to accomplish the work target. The children were then taken to the classroom where they were told, "You are dogs and crawl like a dog and follow me." He spat at and fiercely beat Pae Yong-su who hesitated. His entire body, from head to feet, was soon full of wounds and his face was smothered in dried up blood." (Kang Chol-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“No prisoners could protest. Prisoners were simply beaten and terrorized constantly. If a prisoner should protest, he would be taken away and be beaten to death.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

“If a prisoner is jailed, they would first cut off his hair then ruthlessly beat him without asking him any questions. Then, the prisoner is forced to sit on his knees with a square bar lodged between the knees for 24 hours. The prisoner would be badly beaten for any slight movements he makes during the 24 hours. Each evening I was on duty, it was so boisterous with the guards’ shoutings combined with the shrieks of the prisoners being beaten. Sometimes, prisoners are killed in the process. I know a case of a Japanese wife in her 50s who was killed here. Per capita daily food ration is only 100 grams of cereals and a salt soup with a little cabbage, divided into 3 meals. Even this small meal is skipped for any movement during the day or any act of disobedience. So, prisoners make every possible effort not to move. As a result, prisoners become disabled in 3 months and have to be carried out in a stretcher. Mostly, they die after 5 months or so.”

“Han Jin-dog, a young girl, was so relentlessly beaten by the jail guards that she lost her womanhood. Then, she unbuttoned her shirt to show me her breasts—swollen with inflammation and pus. Such an intoxicating odor and so gruesome to watch! She said her breasts were burnt with an iron skewer by guards. She had a sexual relation with Yang Ki-chol, a guard. Her life was spared because she was not pregnant and might be useful for something in future. In October, 1993, I drove my truck to the 43rd work unit, Kulsan sector to pick up potatoes and I ran into her. She was completely crippled and had lost her legs. She had her legs run over by a coal trolley while working at the coal mine. In the mine, prisoners were killed by accidents everyday.” (Ahn Myong-chul from Camp Nos: 11, 13 and 22.)

8) Realities of Sexual Abuse on Women Prisoners

The percentage of women in the PPC being sexually abused appears to be at an alarmingly high level. It was revealed that the PPC are isolated from the outside world and under the control of SSA, a situation so free from the outside or internal attention and surveillance that they can easily rape and make women prisoners their sexual slaves. In particular, the sexual violations are committed most frequently at the facilities of incarceration in the camp, at factories of garment or food, or at a farm where there are many female workers. The women prisoners have no choice but to agree to, without any resistance, any demand from the SSA officers because of their complete power. In case of pregnancy or detection by others of a sexual relation between camp officials and prisoners, it is the women who are severely punished, with the death sentence being a very real possibility. The punishment of the SSA officers or guards involved seems more of a slap on the wrist than any real punishment. In some PPC, however, SSA officers or guards involved with a sexual relation with prisoners are reprimanded and reassigned to another post. No measures, however, were put in place to prevent recurrence of such accidents.

It is reported that the women prisoners are so exposed to sexual assault not only by camp officials but also by the male prisoners that the rate of sexual violations appears very high. Whether it was a sexual relation between prisoners out of love or sexual assault, there is a tendency of punishing women more severely than men. In case of pregnancy from a secret relation under the circumstances of forced abortion and punishment when detected, all kinds of folk remedies are employed for abortion leading to seriously damaging the health of women involved.

Unlike the most cases of incidents, the nature of sexual violation that remain covered unless the victims disclose the incident, it is assumed that actual occurrence of sexual violations were much more frequent than reported. It is revealed that such sexual violence happened to young and single women at work site more frequently than in the family sectors. The testimonies in detail by victims are given below:

“The several tens of thousands women prisoners at the maximum-security camp of No. 14 are subject to be sexual slavers of SSA officers. It is simply the reality and part of girls’ normal life. SSA officers play with pretty looking girls at their will. But nobody can punish them. It is a common knowledge in the camp that if girls are assigned to clean the offices of SSA officers, they are all sexual slavers for SSA officers. SSA officers come to work in the morning and go home at the end of working hours and they enjoy their sexual pleasure during the day time. Each SSA officer in the factory has an office room and the girl cleaning the room is with him in the same office all day long. Girls, if found pregnant, be it the outcome of relation with SSA officers or other prisoners, are all arrested. Girls have clothes on but their breasts are simply exposed to the rapacity of SSA officers.” (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14, Kaechon)

“While I was there, the SSA officer in charge had no sexual relation with any women prisoners. We met and talked but it was difficult even to hold hands. I sensed that food was offered for such relationships somewhere. If caught having a secret sexual relation, the prisoners are sent to jail. Kim XX was sent to the jail for having a sexual relation with Choi XX, an officer from the outside. She was working at the farm and Choi approached her with gifts and she accepted. This was in 2004. The woman was jailed, but the man was not punished. The officer who was from outside was not under the jurisdiction of the SSA sub-office in the camp.” (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

“We were changing shifts at midnight and were ambushed on the road and raped by male prisoners. The men were eventually caught and sent to jail. KimXX was a prisoner who was released, but was arrested again and sent to Kaechon prison for raping women prisoners. I heard that at the jail, the policemen bring the women prisoners out of the jail to rape them. I did not actually witness this. There were many cases of abortion in the camp.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

*“The SSA officer sat on the chair and used a fishing rod baited with pork fat to entice the naked woman prisoner crawling like a dog and this made her jump like a frog to catch the meat. The SSA officer enjoyed it by holding the meat higher to keep the prisoner from catching the meat and lowering it again to give her another chance.”
(Ahn Myong-chul from Camp Nos: 11, 13 and 22)*

9) Realities of Treatment of Aged Prisoners

Treatment of aged prisoners shows a great variety of differences by camps and times. At some PPC, prisoners over 65 were entitled to an old folk welfare plan and exempted from work. It is revealed that even in this case, the old prisoners continued to get food ration at some PPC while their food ration was denied at other PPC because they were not working. Even when they were exempted from work under the old folk welfare plan, discontinuation of food ration makes the old prisoner an extra burden for the family and is not welcomed by the family concerned. It was revealed that old prisoners were assigned to the old people work unit so they would work until their death at PPC No. 14 at Kaecheon. Old people are susceptible to diseases and the absence of an adequate medical service for them seems to make their death rate very high.

As in the PPC No. 15 at Yodok and PPC No. 18 at Pukchang, high-security camps, the old people are exempted from work and authorized to stay home and freely move around. Generally, they would help the family with household affairs and even pick up some food from the hills and mountains. It was found that the situation is much worse for the old people in the maximum-security camps where they are not authorized to freely move around to help the family.

“Old prisoners who cannot work don’t get food ration. As a result, they are mistreated by their children unless they do something productive for the family. But, in reality, there is very little what they can do for the family in the camp. “(A08, former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)

"It is the rule of camp No. 14 to keep working even when a prisoner is seriously ill. Construction work units accept sick prisoners to carry out light work such as paving and cleaning the road. In the camp, old prisoners over the age of 65 are not entitled to an old folk welfare plan. Instead, they are assigned to an old folk work unit to continue work until their death. So, there is no such thing as retirement or exemption from work in the camp." (Shin Dong-hyuk from Camp No. 14)

"There was a nursing home for old prisoners. Old people were sent up there. If a prisoner is extremely weak, SSA officers sent them up there as well. But it was a very rare occasion when a prisoner is sent up there. Some prisoners were sent up there because their families outside bribed someone. In fact, it is extremely rare that a prisoner is sent up there." (A04, former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

"We saw a nursing home at the top of the hill. Prisoners were sent up there if they were dying or had a good work record." (A10, former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)

"Old prisoners were never exempt from work. Old people were given the security work at work sites or companies." (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

"Old prisoners also had to work there, all kinds of work and not necessarily easy work. (A05, former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)

"There was no special treatment for the old and weak prisoners. If they are sick or something, they are assigned to an easier work site to do the light work such as repairing A-frame or weaving straw ropes. But, they have to work longer than the other prisoners in exchange for the easier job." (Kang Chol-hwan from Ipsok-ni, Camp No. 15)

“Old people in the camp are all entitled to the welfare plan, man at the age of 61 and women at the age of 56. They work until their birthday then don’t have to work starting from the day after. They all get the benefit from the welfare plan.” (A09, former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)

5. Knowledge of Ordinary Residents and Reality of Forced Disappearance

1) Knowledge of Ordinary Residents

A questionnaire was filled by and collected from 322 North Koreans for the survey of the impact of the PPC on North Korean residents and the knowledge of ordinary North Koreans have of the PPC. The survey results are as follows:

(1) Witness to Punishment of Political Prisoners and Knowledge Thereof

Table 2-12

Witness to Punishment of Political Prisoners or Knowledge Thereof

Relation With Political Prisoner (s)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I (or my family) was punished for political reasons	25	8.6
I Witnessed to punishment for political reasons	77	26.5
Heard of punishment for political reasons	92	31.6
No knowledge of such incident	97	33.3
Total	291	100.0

Survey was conducted on whether or not the respondent witnessed in North Korea any persons who were punished for political reasons. The result has shown that 8.6% of them were actually punished for political reasons and 26.5% of them witnessed such punishment. Those who were punished or who witnessed such punishment made up 35.1% of the response in this survey.

The rate of awareness of such punishment was 31.6% and the rate of no knowledge of such punishment was 33.3%. The result shows that one third of the populations in North Korea were either actually punished for political reasons or witnessed such punishment. The 2nd one third was aware of such punishment in North Korea, an indication that punishment for political reasons is very common and frequent in North Korea.

The survey on the charges against political prisoners shows that “expressing political views” was most common with 27 cases (32.5%), followed by “attempt to defect to South Korea” with 19 cases (22.9%), anti-government activity with 10 cases (12.0%), and human trafficking with 4 cases (4.8%).

Table 2-13
Accusations against Political Punishment

Accusation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Listening to South Korean Radio programs	1	1.2
Watching South Korean video pictures	2	2.4
Attempt to defect to South Korea	19	22.9
Defection from North Korea	3	3.6
Link with families that defected from N. Korea	1	1.2
Contact with Christians	3	3.6
Telephone call with outside world	1	1.2
Human trafficking	4	4.8
Helping separated families	2	2.4
Appealing to the government	1	1.2
Murder	1	1.2
Anti-government activity	10	12.0
Damaging Kim's picture	1	1.2
Leaking state secrecy	2	2.4
Helping South Korean POW	1	1.2
Theft on state property	3	3.6
Damaging state business	1	1.2
Total		
No response	19	
Grand Total	102	100.0

In addition, it was found that North Koreans are punished for political reasons such as “watching South Korean video pictures,” “defection and linkage with the family that defected from North Korea,” “religious activities,” “telephone call with the outside world,” “leaking state secrecy,” “assisting

separated or South Korean POW families,” “theft of state property,” and “making an appeal to the government.” As above, the political offense in North Korea includes not only the anti-state or anti-government activities, but also circulation of information about the outside world and activities related to South Korea. The definition of political offense is very broad in North Korea and encompasses human trafficking, appealing to the government, damaging state property, and engaging in activities related to the separated and South Korean POW families.

It was revealed that political punishment is extremely severe. In detail, of those who were punished for political reasons and sentenced to imprisonment or punishment, the rate of detention in the PPC is highest with 35 cases (36.1%), followed by prison terms with 17 cases (17.5%), and death sentence with 9 cases (9.3%). It is confirmed that punishments for political crimes are extremely severe as most of them are sentenced to prison terms, death, or sent to the PPC. In case of capital punishment, it is carried out publicly by hanging or shooting by a firing squad

Table 2-14

Intensity of Political Punishment

Intensity of Punishment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Imprisonment	17	17.5
Detention at the PPC	35	36.1
Detention at Labor Training Camp	2	2.1
Unknown	25	25.8
Death sentence	9	9.3
Others	9	9.3
Sub-total	97	100.0
No response	5	
Total	102	100.0

The annual survey on the political punishment is affected by the respondents' length of residence in North Korea and the date of their defection from North Korea. All the respondents of this survey have arrived in South Korea during 2009 and their date of defection from North Korea were mostly in 2000's. They are mostly in the age group of 20-40. Naturally, their testimonies are concentrated during the period of their residence in North Korea. Accordingly, the survey results show that rate of political punishment was 29.9% in 1990's, 23.9% in 2006-2009, 17.9% in 2000-2005, 10.4% in 10.4%, and 6.0% in 1970s.

Table 2-15**Political Punishment by Year**

Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1970s	4	6.0
1980s	7	10.4
1900s	20	29.9
2000-2005	12	17.9
2006-2009	16	23.9
unknown	8	11.9
Sub-total	67	100.0
No response	35	
Total	102	100.0

The high rate of political punishment during 2006-2009 reflects the period of residence in North Korea of the respondent. Nevertheless, it shows that North Koreans are still punished for political reasons in recent years.

Table 2-16**Political Punishment by Areas**

Area	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Kangwon Province	1	1.0
Yanggang Province	5	4.9
South Pyongan Province	2	2.0
North Pyongan Province	1	1.0
Pyongyang	6	5.9
South Hamkyong Province	6	5.9
North Hamkyong Province	59	57.8
Unknown	22	21.6
Total	102	100.0

According to the testimonies by the respondents, the percentages of political punishment by areas shows 57.8% in North Hamkyong Province, 5.9% respectively in both South Hamkyong Province and Pyongyang, 4.9% in Yanggang Province and, very low rates of 1-2% for the rest of areas. The highest rate of political punishment in North Hamkyong Province reflects that 70.8% of the survey respondents were from that province and, at the same time, it shows that the rate of political incidents was also high in that province. This high rate of political punishment is further supported by the fact that the main causes of the political punishment were attempts to go to South Korea, expression of political views, contacts with the outside world, and activities related to the families of separation between the two Koreas and South Korean POW. North Hamkyong Province is adjacent to the border with China and

therefore, attempts to defect to China are most active. Also, information from the outside world, in general, and South Korea, in particular, is largely available and most families of South Korean POW and kidnapping victims from South Korea are concentrated here. This is the background of the province why the number of political cases is the highest.

The survey on the safety of the political prisoners' families shows that the rate of families of the offenders that were not punished was only 13.4%, the number of families that were sent to the PPC with the offender was 19.4%, and banishment to other areas was 23.9%. These percentages reveal that most families are sent to either PPC or banished to other areas in case any member of the family was punished for political reasons.

Table 2-17
Punishment of the Families of the Political Prisoners

Punishment of Families	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not punished	9	13.4
Sent to PPC with the offender	13	19.4
Banishment to other areas	16	23.9
Unknown	19	28.4
Others	10	14.9
Sub-Total	67	100.0
No response	35	
Total	102	100.0

The survey result also reveals that guilt by association is commonly applied to the families of political prisoners in North Korea.

Table 2-18

Political Punishment by Accusation and Year

Classification	Political Punishment by Year						Total
	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000-2005	2006-2009	Unknown	
Listening to S. Korean Radio	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Vewing S. Korean Video Pictures	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Attempt to Defect to S. Korea	0	0	0	3	8	2	13
Defection from North Korea	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Linkage with Families in China	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Religious Activities	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Political Views	3	4	5	1	0	3	16
Telephone to Outside World	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Human Trafficking	0	0	0	1	2	0	3
Separated Families	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Making Appeals	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Murder	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Anti-government activities	0	0	8	0	1	0	9
Leaking Secrecy	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Assisting Families of S.Korean POW	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Theft on State Property	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
Total	4	4	19	9	15	6	57

The comparative analysis of political punishment in North Korea by accusation and year reveals that punishment of political views was prevalent during the years from 1970s to 1990s, which has substantially decreased in the 2000s while the punishment for attempting to defect to South Korea, human trafficking, and engaging in activities related to assisting the separated families has significantly increased in the 2000s. The punishment of anti-government activities that intensified in 1990s indicates that there were anti-government activities in North Korea during the period of food shortage and economic crisis. As above, the political punishment varies by year in reflection of the political and economic climate of North Korea.

- (2) Knowledge of the PPC
 - (a) Knowledge of the PPC in North Korea

It was found that knowledge of the existence of PPC was common. 11.9% of the survey respondents actually witnessed it, 75% of them were aware of the existence of the PPC, and 12.8% of the respondent had little knowledge of the PPC. It revealed that 86.9% of the North Koreans are aware of various PPC in North Korea, indicating that the general North Korean population is aware of the existence of the PPC, with the exceptions of children and special segments of populations.

Table2-19
Awareness of the Existence of the PPC

Awareness of the PPC	Frequency	Percentage (5)
Actual Witness	37	11.9
Not witnessed but aware	234	75.0
No knowledge of such places	40	12.8
Was there in the past but no longer there	1	0.3
Sub-Total	312	100.0
No response	10	
Total	322	100.0

(b) Knowledge of What Happens to the Remaining Family of the Offender

Questions regarding the families of the offender were asked to respondents who were aware of the PPC. The result confirmed that most families are sent to the PPC or banished to a remote area. Only 3.4% of the respondents stated that nothing happens to the families of the political offenders. The survey as a whole confirmed that if any member of a family is sent to the PPC, it is impossible for the remaining families to continue their employment or habitual residence and the families are either sent to the PPC together with the offender or forced to be relocated to a remote area. This is an indication that guilt by association is strictly enforced for the families of the prisoners of the PPC in North Korea.

Table 2-20
Treatment of Families of the Prisoners of the PPC

Treatment of Families When a Member of Is Admitted to the PPC	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nothing happened	9	3.4
Sent to the PPC together	58	22.2
Banished to other areas	88	33.7
No knowledge of what happened to the family	55	21.1
Others	51	19.5
Sub-Total	261	100.1
No response	10	
Total	271	100.0

(c) Knowledge of Conditions of Inside the PPC

As the actual witnesses to the conditions inside the PPC is very limited, most of the respondents' knowledge of the living conditions inside the PPC is unofficial and from indirect sources.

Table 2-21
Knowledge of the Life of Prisoners inside the PPC

Living Conditions Inside the PPC	Frequency	Percentage (4)
I have a full knowledge	14	5.2
I have a rough idea but not in detail	83	31.1
Once detained, no chance of release in life time	154	57.7
No knowledge of the life inside the PPC	16	6.0
Sub-Total	267	100.0
No response	4	
Total		100.0

The rate of “some idea but no knowledge in detail” was 31.1%. The rate of “full knowledge” was low with 5.2% and rate of “no knowledge” was also very low with 6.0%. However, the high rate of 57.7% with knowledge of lifetime detention in the PPC is an indication that the PPC is recognized as a place of life-time confinement.

(d) Knowledge of Release from the PPC

Regarding the question of their knowledge of release from the PPC, only 7.1% of the respondents replied that prisoners are released after expiration of given period of time and 78.7% replied that prisoners hardly survive and will not be released for their life time. With the exception of 13.4% who had little knowledge of what happens, over 80% of North Koreans recognize the PPC as a most dreaded place where prisoners are detained for life and essentially have no chance of survival.

Table 2-22

Knowledge of the Fate of the Prisoners in the PPC

The Fate of the PPC Prisoners	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Released after expiration of detention period	18	7.1
Detained for life-time	185	72.8
All prisoners die in the PPC	15	5.9
It is like being banished	2	0.8
I don't know what happens	34	13.4
Sub-Total		
No response	17	
Total	271	100.1

The PPC is divided into 2 types, high-security camp (revolutionary sector) where prisoners are released on expiration of prison term and maximum-security camp (Total Control Sector) where prisoners are detained for life. The PPC No. 15, Yodok, is a high-security camp and large numbers of prisoners have been released and allowed to integrate with the mainstream society of North Korea after their time has been served. It is known that the number of ex-prisoners from Yodok in South Korea totals to 20-30. Nevertheless, most North Koreans in South Korea generally recognize all the PPC to be maximum-security camps perhaps due to the socialization process of North Korea. The North Korean authorities employ terrorism and intimidation as means to control and suppress the residents. The PPC is an integral part of this intimidation factor. Accordingly, the objectives of the PPC include prevention of resistance and forcing obedience through intimidating the populations.

- 2) Realities and the Present Situations of Disappearance
 - (1) Knowledge of North Koreans about Cases of Disappearance
 - (a) Witness or Knowledge of Disappearance

The survey on the cases of disappearance after arrest by the state agent including SSA showed that 67% of the respondents witnessed or had knowledge of such cases while only 32.3% had no knowledge of such disappearances. While only 0.7% denied such disappearances, most North Koreans are aware of cases of disappearance after arrest by the state organizations. This is an indication that cases of disappearance after arrest by the state agent are frequently occurring in North Korea.

Table 2-23
Cases of Disappearance after Arrest by State Agency

Disappearance after Arrest by the State	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Actually witnessed to such disappearance	48	15.8%
Not witnessed but have knowledge of it	155	51.2
No knowledge	98	32.3
No such thing in North Korea	2	07
Sub-Total	303	100.0
No response	19	
Total	322	100.0

- (b) On the Notice of Arrest and Punishment to the Family

It was surveyed with the respondents who had knowledge of disappearance after arrest by the state organization on whether or not the family is notified by the authorities of the arrest and punishment. The result has shown that only 18.8% replied yes while 68.8% replied no. It was revealed that in North Korea, families are usually not notified of the arrest and punishment of the member of the family.

The survey has shown that in North Korea, as the family is not informed when a member of the family is arrested and does not come home, he or she is ordinarily considered to be missing.

Table 2-24**Whether or Not the Family is Informed of the Arrest**

If the Family is Informed	Frequency	Percentage (%)
The family is informed	9	18.8
No one is informed	33	68.8
I do not know	6	12.5
Total	48	100.0

(c) The Situations of Families of Disappearance

The survey on the situations of the families of disappearance has shown that the rate of punishment of the entire families was very high. Only 6.4% of the respondents replied that nothing happened to the family while 44.7% reported that the families also disappeared with the “missing” person at the same time. 42.6% replied that the decision was subject to the seriousness of the case involved. In conclusion, if a person is arrested in North Korea and the state organization makes him disappear, the families also disappear or are punished at the same time.

Table 2-25**Situations of Families after the Offender is Arrested by SSA**

Families after Arrest by SSA	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nothing happened to the family	3	6.4
Family also disappeared with the offender	21	44.7
Subject to Seriousness of the case involved	20	42.6
I am not sure	3	6.4
Sub-Total	47	100.0
No response	1	
Total	48	100.0

(2) Principal Testimonies on Disappearance

Disappearance in North Korea represents cases where someone remains unheard of after being arrested by powerful government organizations such as the State Security Agency (SSA) or the police. In most cases, the suspect was sent to the PPC or killed during the process of interrogation. North Koreans generally assume that the person missing after being arrested was forced to disappear by state organizations. Therefore, all cases of disappearance is naturally associated with the PPC. Accordingly, it is difficult

to assess the number of cases of disappearance. Nonetheless, it is possible to find out examples and patterns of such disappearance as many North Koreans have actually witnessed or heard of such disappearances.

In the present survey, many respondents of the in-depth interviews have testified to disappearances. The SSA employs disappearance as one way to secretly arrest people, but people still realize that a case of disappearance with no information from the SSA means that the person has been executed or sent to PPC. The exact number of cases involving disappearances is almost impossible to determine as the SSA, the organization in charge of handling political cases, does not inform the family concerned any information.

Testimonies on disappearance in North Korea are as follows:

“Disappearance means that the case is in the hands of SSA. If someone disappears, it is known the next morning. People know the next morning when the SSA officers had carried away the entire family at night as neighbors’ houses being so close together in North Korea. Neighbors would almost always overhear the screams and commotions in the next house. The neighbors are now aware of the arrest at night and accurate information starts to spread. In my home town of Onsong district, which is near the border with China, the offender is arrested and the family is carried away to the PPC by the SSA while the offender is still detained in the SSA office. Near the border areas, there are many cases of sending the families to the PPC. Disappearance means that someone was sent to the PPC. North Koreans all know about the PPC with the exception of the privileged families or children. I have been accused three times and I know about the PPC very well.” (A14, a witness to political prisoner and disappearance. He arrived in South Korea in 2009)

A witness testified that if people are abruptly taken away at dawn or midnight by the SSA or the police, they are being sent to a PPC and the victims are recognized to have disappeared from that day forward. It appears that offenders and families are arrested at dawn or midnight to avoid the attention of the neighbors. Testimonies on the cases of disappearance in North Korea are provided below:

“In 2005 when we lived in Musan, a young woman in her 30s was our neighbor. After her daughter went to China, she was taken away by SSA officers at dawn one day. I remember it clearly as I was her next door neighbor. The residence unit chief was accompanied by the counter intelligence chief of SSA and knocked on her door. The next thing you know is that the SSA officer took her away for interrogation. A few hours later in the morning, a truck arrived and carried all the furniture away from her house. She was in her 30s and traveled to China frequently to see her daughter there. She lived alone in North Korea. At dawn, SSA officers knocked on the door of the chief of residence unit. The woman’s house was No. 0. The residence chief is a type of person who leaks information to people little by little. The residence unit chief made her open the door and the SSA officer was inside the house for about 40 minutes and then the woman was brought outside fettered. I kept watching and saw that she was immediately gagged when she was inside the car. Two days later, a policeman moved into the house. When I asked the chief of residence unit, she replied that the woman was arrested by the provincial SSA because her daughter in China was involved with some activities involving South Korea. After she disappeared, they came and carried away all her property with all the neighbors watching. The residence chief normally knows why someone is arrested because she is informed by the SSA officer. The woman’s property was not worth much. Later, there was a rumor that her daughter was involved with helping the separated families locate their families in South Korea. The provincial SSA officer stated that she was being sent to PPC and I watched her being arrested. I have not heard about them since. If someone is arrested at dawn or at night by SSA officers, it means that he or she was being sent to a PPC. (A15, a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance)

“It was in November of the year 2007. A daughter of a family living in Musan district, North Hamkyong Province, defected to South Korea and became married. She sneaked back into North Korea in an attempt to bring her parents to South Korea and was in hiding for about a month. She gave her father 5,000 US dollars but her parents refused to join her. She then decided to take her brother and sister to Korea. But she bribed a border guard with too much money which invited suspicion. Eventually, she was under secret surveillance. The three of them were ambushed by the North Korean guards just when they were going to cross the border. She was born in 1986. Her sister and brother were separated by the SSA. Later, her parents were arrested by the SSA at dawn. They were carried away to a car with their children. No one knows where they were taken to.” (A15, a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance)

It appears that most disappearance cases in North Korea involves families or someone related to an offender being arrested by SSA while the offender was being investigated, or being admitted to a PPC after the closure of the investigation, or executed. Related testimonies are provided below:

“My uncle worked for a business company in Pyongyang and earned a lot of money in his business with China. He was arrested in 1998 by SSA under the accusation that he received money from South Korea. This was nonsense and there was no proof. But I don’t know what happened to my uncle during the preliminary investigation and one day, SSA officers came and told the family not to wait for him and carried away his grandmother, mother, and two children. This is how they were sent to a PPC. No one knows which PPC they were sent to. His father was a senior party member of the Central Party and somehow, his mother was released later. When the family was being carried away, the father was at the site and told the family that they were being sent to a PPC. When they were carried away, they were not allowed to carry too many provisions. I have not heard of them since 2008, when I defected from North Korea.” (A12, former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)

“My mother’s sister lived in Pyongyang and had a close family friend. He was making money in Swiss or elsewhere for the central party. He returned to Pyongyang and he and his entire family were sent to a PPC in the summer of 2006 for embezzling state funds. His son, born in 1984, was a student at a foreign language university. His mother and sister were also taken to the PPC. They were in the classrooms in the school when they were ordered to leave the classroom in the middle of class and had their belongings confiscated. It became a big incident when the entire English class began to cry out. No one knew where their father was. There was a rumor that the father was separated from his children. If people are carried away in this manner, then it was a certainty that the people were being sent to a PPC. In case of banishment, the family concerned is notified and they know that they are being banished and carried away with all their furniture and household goods. I heard that if the case is serious, they are given 10 kgs of rice and abandoned in a mountain where no one lives.” (A12, a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance. The witness arrived in South Korea in 2009).

“Uncle Kim xx was arrested by the SSA in 1999. Someone by the name of Yu told us that he happened to see my uncle in the SSA. He was so badly beaten that he was unable to move and was being dragged. Then, in the same year, his family was sent to a PPC. They used to live in the Moranbong district and there was a rumor that they were sent to a PPC No one knew what happened to my uncle.” (A12, a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance. The witness arrived in South Korea in 2009)

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

Interviews of witnesses with personal experience in the PPC, in addition to analysis of previously compiled information have, first and foremost, confirmed the existence of the PPC in North Korea. The present survey, at the same time, has shown that little difference exists among respective camps in the process of arrest (including the cases of those that were missing), as well as the transportation and admission of prisoners to the PPC. However, some differences are noted in various PPC in the process and systems of operation and camp administration. Some differences are also noted in the systems of operation by sectors and period (areas, types of work, single offenders or families of offenders) in the same camp.

However, it must be noted that most witnesses in the survey who arrived in South Korea were previously prisoners in Yodok Camp. Their experiences in the camp were limited in terms of area and duration of imprisonment. With this in mind, it is not appropriate to completely generalize the analysis of the entire PPC system and processes largely on the basis of their testimonies. Therefore, it must be understood that the present survey is basically limited in terms of overall analysis and full information representative of the entire PPC network.

Accordingly, it must be recognized that the testimonies and information contained in this report hardly represent all the PPC at all times. They are valid only for the PPC and at the time the witnesses were involved. Further analysis of the entire PPC system, covering its full history, can only be carried out at such a time when the number of witnesses to the PPC increases substantially, and at a time when they become available for further surveys.

Nevertheless, the present report can rightfully claim that it meaningfully represents the many dimensions of the situation in Yodok Camp, PPC No. 15, during the period, 1970 to 2006. Available testimonies cover all the sectors in PPC No. 15: Ipsok-ni, Taesuk-ni, Sorimchon and Yongpyong-ni. The report also represents a basic and overall picture of the entire PPC network in that it contains well-balanced testimonies regarding PPC No.'s 11, 12, 13, 14, 18 and 22, as well as the detention systems of single offenders and families of offenders.

It is again indicated that the contents of the present survey are based on testimonies available to date and may need to be revised subject to further testimonies that would most probably be available in future. It is also noted that the present report is based on testimonies that are limited to certain periods of time in the camp. Naturally, gaps will exist and testimonies will not cover all periods equally. Nevertheless, it is believed that the following conclusions deserve special and particular attention in the quest for solutions related to the extremely important subjects at hand.

In the first place, the survey has confirmed the existence of a secret PPC network in North Korea, a 'gulag archipelago' (to borrow a term from Alexander Solzhenitsyn) that has been perpetuated over decades on a massive and systematic scale, involving the plight of approximately 200,000 victims, including women, children (including babies) who for the most part are detained there for life without judicial process.

Secondly, a more precise and detailed analysis of the nature and functions of the PPC system is called for. It has been heretofore generally understood that the principal purposes of the PPC were restricted to political and social objectives: to isolate political prisoners from mainstream society and to intimidate the residents in North Korea into submission to the regime. However, in recognition of the great impact of the PPC's production capacity on the economy of North Korea, a new and more complex definition of the PPC system may well be needed.

Thirdly, in view of the increasing international demand for the closure of these PPC, observation and analysis of the situations at issue, from the point of view of North Korean authorities, are suggested. While the chorus of voices of human rights activists in South Korea and abroad for the dismantlement of the PPC is steadily growing, the North Korean government may find itself in a very difficult position to comply with such demands as the objectives of the PPC include economic output, and are not confined to political and social objectives, as outlined above. In particular, the current economic crisis and chronic food shortages would likely make the North Korean government's reliance on the economic production by the PPC greater, not lesser, in such straitened circumstances.

Fourthly, particular attention is invited from the international community to address with appropriate action the reality of the North Korean government's 'need' of a regular supply of prisoners in order to keep the PPC system in operation. In light of the growing international concern and intent to dismantle North Korea's PPC, it must be considered that the North Korean leadership, in reality, would find it particularly difficult to close down the PPC without corresponding measures to offset the loss of large-scale economic production when such a dismantlement were to take place. The survey results reveal clearly that North Korean authorities authorize prisoner inter-marriage to ensure a sustainable supply of inmates. Clearly, this is an indication that the PPC system is not designed merely for punishment, but also to be a meaningful sector of the national economy and production. It is believed that the operation of the PPC system over an extended period of time has established it as a production base.

Fifthly, countermeasures must be presented to ensure the protection in the PPC of human rights as well as concrete steps for the prevention of violations of those rights. The present survey reveals that massive and systematic human rights violations are taking place in the PPC on a number of levels. Nevertheless, an effective recommendation has, to date, never been presented to the North Korean leadership for the dismantlement of its PPC system.

Finally, recommendations pertaining to the protection of human rights in the PPC must be based on an in-depth study and analysis of the mental health of PPC prisoners, as well as the psychological impact of this type of incarceration on them. It is believed that prisoners in the maximum-security camps in North Korea suffer from severe cases of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Psychologists and psychiatrists, who have assisted former prisoners from the maximum-security camp in the process of resettlement in South Korea, report that coordinated efforts will have to be made for an extended period on behalf of former prisoners to effectively facilitate their full recovery from PTSD. Survey results show that former prisoners from the maximum-security camps (most of the PPC) have a markedly low interest in mainstream society and the outside world at large, a marked degree of acquiescence to authority, very limited development of faculties of objective analysis or willingness to evaluate and criticize or resist external actors viewed as unjust in their lives. All of these symptoms are very likely an outgrowth of being under extended surveillance and obedience to SSA officers in

the PPC. Shin Dong-hyuk, the first successful defector from a maximum-security camp in North Korea, elaborates on this point as follows:

Little interest in life outside the camp: Those prisoners, who for the most part have been born in the camp or detained there for an extended period, have little interest in the world outside the camp walls. They accept their fate that they are destined to live in the camp in submission to all its rules and regulations until they die.

Hard labor to pay for the crimes of parents: Most prisoners have been born and raised there and have lived there for such a long time that they are not even aware that they are being kept in the maximum-security camp. They simply believe that they must work hard to pay for the crimes committed by their parents.

Little sense of objective analysis or criticism: Prisoners may have personal grudges against individual work unit chiefs or their supervisors. However, no prisoners harbor any ill feelings against the camp or camp rules. No changes will occur inside the camp unless some influence from outside takes place. Prisoners are thoroughly deprived of a sense of objective analysis or criticism; they are prevented from entertaining any sense of resistance or ill feelings.

Children accept prison life as ordinary life: Children simply believe that they must live a life of a prisoner as their parents do. Children under the age of 10 are forced to do hard work such as pushing coal trolleys in dark pits. Yet, they have no complaints and blame no one. I didn't meet any children who had an accurate idea of their real situation in their minds; they accepted the fact that they were political prisoners in the camp.

Prisoners seem void of any sense of resistance: Prisoners do not resist because there are armed guards around the camp. More importantly, however, they do not resist because of the rigid internal security systems. Furthermore, they accept their fate as social transgressors, and they reason it is quite right that transgressors must live a life like that. The camp authorities have intimidated the prisoners into accepting such a life.

Internal riot a near impossibility: *An internal riot in the camp is simply not possible. Prisoners are controlled by food; they must inform on one another to obtain more food. Prisoners are more interested in informing on other prisoners to the SSA officers, pursuing such incentives as gaining approval to marry, than in the dangerous prospect of participating in rebellion or a riot. There are no guarantees of receiving special favors for informing on another prisoner but, in most cases, the informant gets the food intended for the one being informed on. This is why every prisoner informs on other prisoners.*

Distrust between prisoners: *Prisoners cannot bring themselves to trust one another; even parents and children are extremely cautious with their words and actions. Everyone watches everyone else. Everyone accepts this as the right way for survival in the camp.*

Demands by the international community and the government of South Korea for the early dismantlement of and halting human rights violations within the PPC must take into consideration the secondary issue relating to the massive resettlement of over 200,000 prisoner-victims into mainstream North Korean society. At the same time, the issue of providing corresponding economic and political assistance to the North Korean leadership to facilitate their agreement to the closure of the PPC at an early stage must be considered.

The present survey has once again confirmed that the PPC constitute the definitive and most egregious epicenter of human rights violations in North Korea. The survey reveals that, in addition to the principal “offenders” in North Korean society, their family members, without any knowledge of the charges brought against them, are detained in maximum-security camps and are forced to carry out hard labor for life. It has been further confirmed that the victims are arrested and admitted to the PPC without judicial process. The families of the prisoners are subject to having all their property confiscated and are forced to live a life of hopelessness in the camp until their final breath without freedom and supply of the minimum necessities of life. In terms of the human rights situation during the detention period, the living conditions in the high-security camps are more-or-less the same as the maximum-security camps. The only exception is the fact that prisoners in high-security camps nurture the hope of release someday, provided they are submissive and are able to survive the severity of camp life.

It is established that the first PPC was set up at the Tukchang Coal Mine in Pukchang District, South Pyongan Province, and the number of PPC eventually increased to a maximum of 11 at one time. It is generally believed that the North Korean leadership subsequently closed PPC No.'s 11, 12 and 13 (near the border with China) in response to protests from international human rights NGOs, as well as an intensified demand for an international human rights inspection team to be fielded in North Korea. It is similarly believed that PPC No. 26 at Sungho-ri, in close proximity to Pyongyang, was also closed for fear of detection by the international community. The information that the prisoners in all the camps mentioned above were relocated is now confirmed by the present survey. The survey has found that PPC No. 18 at Pukchang began gradually to be closed, sector-by-sector, starting in 1991. Some prisoners were released while others were relocated. It is also confirmed that the Taesuk-ni sector in PPC No. 15, a high-security camp near the maximum-security area, was relocated in 1995 to the Sorimchon area near the entrance of PPC No. 15.

It is understood that the shutdown and relocation of some PPC in the 1990s were North Korea's reaction to increasing international concern. It must not be overlooked, however, that North Korea continues to this day to operate five maximum-security camps and one high-security camp. Reports of North Koreans being detained in the PPC persist. North Koreans generally conclude that a citizen has been sent to the PPC when an arrest by the SSA has taken place and the citizen, then, is found to have suddenly gone missing. Recent changes in social attitudes of North Koreans have increased the cases of confirmation through tips by SSA officers that the missing person was, in fact, sent to the PPC.

Thus, it is believed that the PPC have become the definitive case of serious violations of human rights in terms of the absence of judicial process, the system of application of guilt-by-association to the families, violation of the right to survival, forced hard labor and all aspects of extremely harsh life in the camp during detention. All the conditions listed above are in serious violation of international human rights instruments that North Korea has signed. Accordingly, the issue of the PPC is a case of utmost urgency and constitutes the very barometer of the human rights situations in North Korea.

The following recommendations are made to the governments of North Korea, South Korea as well as civil societies in South Korea and those abroad. They are made in the interest of saving the lives of detainees in the PPC who, at the time of the writing of this report, are victims facing life-threatening conditions and gravely serious human rights violations:

North Korea must dismantle the PPC immediately and release prisoners and their families. However, it may not be realistic for the North Korean leadership to disband all the PPC at once, as the functions of the PPC are three-fold, political, social and economic (as a production base). Nevertheless, it is of utmost urgency to immediately improve the life-threatening conditions of prisoners in the PPC such as insufficient meals, hard labor, poor medical services and the practice of SSA officers plundering the fruit of prisoners' labor at will and meting out arbitrary merciless punishment.

The international community and citizens of South Korea must continue launching a greater variety of campaigns geared to the dismantlement of the PPC. Firstly, surveys must continue based on the highly likely increase in the number of new witnesses with personal experience in the PPC. Such reports will provide an accurate and timely understanding of the realities of the PPC. Such surveys are of particular importance as they may well lay the foundation for all activities aimed at improving the situation in North Korea. As a follow-up step, active efforts must be made to elevate the issue of the North Korean PPC to a special subject of concern at UN human rights bodies, on the basis of findings and confirmation of such surveys. The series of reports by the UN Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in North Korea is largely based on the activities and reports by NGOs, which suggests that greater involvement by NGOs is possible and would be valuable and effective. On the other hand, it is noted that recent international efforts to bring Chairman Kim Jong-il of North Korea to the attention of the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity have been quite well-coordinated. It is essential that cooperation between the South Korean civil society and the international community be further enhanced.

It is recommended that the government of South Korea assume more responsibility and exercise greater initiative in the quest for solutions to issues involving the PPC, the core human rights violations in North Korea. It is most important that the government of South Korea declare its support of human rights in consideration of international humanitarianism and brotherly love as well as treating the PPC issue as an important agenda item in policy formation related to North Korea. Such a course would mean a departure from the past practice of prioritizing reconciliation between the two Koreas over the solution of human rights issues.

Detailed policies that the South Korean government could adopt include conducting surveys and setting up a North Korean human rights violation archive, which would have the objective of preventing further human rights violations in North Korea. The model for such an archive is the Salzgitter Central Archive in former West Germany. A second objective for such an archive would be to effect preventive pressure on the perpetrators of human rights violations and law enforcement officers of North Korea through the collection and preservation of information and testimonies pertaining to political violence by the North Korean government as well as treatment of political prisoners in the PPC.

As a further step, the government of South Korea could support and assist meaningful efforts to solve the problems of the PPC, the most egregious human rights violations in North Korea, through greater cooperation with North Korean human rights NGOs, both at home and abroad, in a division of labor with the government. At the same time, the South Korean government must place a major emphasis on convincing North Korea, no matter how difficult a task, to discontinue its widespread human rights violations.

Protecting PPC prisoners from life-threatening conditions in the camps is in a gravely urgent need and deserves emergency international attention. To this end, South Korean and international civil societies, the South Korean government and the UN Human Rights organs must promote cooperation and share relevant experience and wisdom on workable strategies to achieve these goals. In closing, the government of North Korea is once again urged to implement measures to dismantle all the PPC as immediately as possible.

A N N E X

- **Collection of Testimonies on the PPC**
- **Collection of Testimonies on Political Prisoners and Cases of Disappearance**

<Testimonies on the PPC >

1. Arrest, Admission and Release

- 1) The Process of Preliminary Investigation, Trial and Punishment prior to Arrest

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"Before I was sent to PPC Yodok, someone came from SSA Headquarters and asked me to confirm my statement and ink my fingerprint on the document. That was my statement for self-criticism. The papers were this thick (10 cm). I was forced to fingerprint the entire statement page by page. Then, he told me, "Don't try to escape. Do good job there." About a week later, they gave me winter clothes, the clothes of other women in the cell as I did not have clothes for winter. Then, I was sent to PPC Yodok (No.15). Later, I learned from my family that they knew nothing about my fate."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"My father went to work with lunch box in the morning but did not come home in the evening. I was told he was arrested. There was no such thing as a preliminary investigation or any other investigation and he just simply disappeared."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"They were very crafty when investigating me. They told me that they knew that my mother and brother were in South Korea. When I replied that I had no idea where my mother was, they were angry and called me a wicked element and continued interrogation without lunch. I was interrogated over 20 times. They used violence as I refused to confess. The investigation ended after an SSA officer had a final round of interviews with me."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"When they sent me to Yodok, there was no trial, absolutely nothing! Do you know what happened to me? The preliminary investigator gave me this much paper and told me to read it one day. When I was leaving, they told me to sign it. A few days later, I was taken to the office of the Bureau Chief. The chief and other senior officers came in and told me, "You, Prisoner No. 00, stand up!" I stood up. The Bureau Chief read my paper and said you are sentenced to three years in the high-security camp, including the two years for preliminary investigation. Therefore you are staying your last year at the Yodok Control Camp. His implication was that I should be grateful to him."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"When my father was arrested, there was no such thing as a preliminary investigation and, in fact, the entire family was carried away at dawn with him. I was told by my father that once he was called by the SSA to confirm if he'd made a certain remark. There was no attempt to corroborate whether he'd made the remark, and we were all pushed out at dawn. I was able to carry only a bowl and some rice."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"My investigator once told me that the investigation was almost over. He said, "Someone from the Central Office will come. Just tell him what you have told me. If you start to tell him anything else, your stay here will be prolonged." Sometime later, a man from the Central Office dressed in civilian clothes came and showed me my papers and asked me if I confirmed the statement as true. The statement said that I intended to live in China. I said that I went to China intending to stay briefly, and then return to North Korea after finding the whereabouts of my mother. My proposed revision was accepted and I inked my fingerprint on all the pages. There was no trial. One day, the cell guards told me, "Get ready! You are going now." So, I obeyed him. I asked them where I was to go. They didn't tell me. Then I was taken to Yodok."

2) Accusation

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"My father was married and brought to the Control Center with Mom. He did not commit any crime and I was told that he was brought there because of the activities of my grandfather. We didn't know precisely why my father was there and why I was born there. We were settlers. Prisoners in PPC are called 'settlers.' "Settlers removed from restriction" are those who completed their prison term but still stays in the same place even after release. I never considered myself the son of a criminal. I did not know that I was the son of a criminal."

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

"Political prisoners arrive at No. 22. Their entire family is brought if Kim Il-sung was very angrily criticized. The prisoners at No. 22 are not like ordinary workers. Generally, they were high-ranking and intelligent. Mostly, they are senior party members, B.A. or Ph. D degree holders. They are all here for the mistakes they made in their speeches".

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"I was brought here because my husband made a comment during his office conference to the effect that it is acceptable for a father to appoint his son to succeed him, but holding his son's picture aloft is not appropriate when the father is still alive. That statement became a problem at his office. Because of it, he was brought here straightaway. The entire family was also brought here"

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"In Chongsong, there were many former landlords and their families, including children. When the People's Army was pushed to the north and Hwanghae Province was occupied by the South Korean Army during the Korean War,

many former landlords and their children returned to claim or sell their lands, etc. When the People's Army regained the areas, the NK government decided to eliminate and apply dictatorship to the former landlords. I was told this is why Chongsong was created in April, 1964 to relocate landlords and their children from Pyongyang, Shinuiju, Hamhung and Hwanghae Province. Later, many prisoners under the category of revisionist also arrived. Many children of revisionists were studying overseas at that time but they were also all brought here. During the period of purge in 1985-6, many anti-party revisionists arrived at this PPC from Pyongyang."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"My family was detained at a PPC because my grandfather defected to South Korea without the knowledge of my grandmother. We did not do anything except being related to that grandfather who had defected to South Korea. Many prisoners were taken here for things that happened 20 or 30 years ago. At the time of the Shimhwajo case, many people were brought to the Control Center including high ranking government officials. When they arrived, there were a lot of people and furniture in their car."

- 3) Admission to the PPC, Process of Closure, Possibility of Release and Etc.

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"Many prisoners have been released since 1984. There were some changes since that time. I don't know who made the difference. In 1991, all prisoners were released at mycamp and new prisoners arrived from Pongchang. If a house became vacant in my camp, then a new prisoner, favored by authorities, arrived to take the house. If not favored at PPC No. 18, the prisoner was sent to Pongchang. And then, from 1991, the released prisoners were sent back to Pongchang when they committed a crime again.

At that time, those prisoners of less severe crimes were authorized to meet their relatives. Those prisoners of more serious crimes were all sent to Pongchang."

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

"The purpose of the Control Center is to detain prisoners for life. Once admitted, no one can leave it. It is a secret area and no one can enter or leave it."

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"Prisoners are sent to Yodok High-security Camp to be cleansed of their transgressions through hard labor. I spent my first 15 days at the orientation unit. Some prisoners arrive there undernourished and are given attention for recovery from undernourishment while in the orientation unit."

"We were interviewed by someone from the headquarters of the Control Center when we were released. Then, we signed a statement at the SSA sub-station. The statement was to the effect that I would not disclose anything I witnessed or heard in the camp, nor the location of the camp nor any of the people I had met in the camp. My travel pass and food ration coupon issued on release stated that I was a worker at Military Unit. No. so-and-so."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"When I was sent to a Control Center, no one asked me if I wished to divorce. The entire family was sent there unconditionally. On arrival at the Control Center, we were told, "This is a high-security camp and you can go home if you perform well for three years here. In the morning of the day of admission to the Control Center, we packed our provisions such as blankets and clothing, with the exception of the items belonging to the government. We were told to

carry some food. I drew money from my bank account and bought dry fruit, candy and cooking oil from the shop. Because I worked at the shop, I was able to buy anything if I had money.

"Our cargo arrived separately. During the admission process, I was allowed to keep my Party membership card but my husband had his card confiscated. I don't know who was allowed to keep it and who wasn't. Eventually, I had my party membership card also confiscated but received it again when I was released. They kept my television set. They told me that I could get it back on my release. But they did not give it back to me when I was released. I participated in election while I was there. Of course, we must participate in an election."

"I think there were approximately five or six families being release at the same time as mine. They were all from different places. I remember that there were two families, including my family, from Pyongyang and the others were from other areas. The release takes place once a year and all the prisoners whose detention term has expired are assembled at one location. No explanation was given as to why we were assembled. When we were there, they called our names, one by one, and we began to realize that we were undergoing the release process. They simply told us, " You are going out tomorrow."The assembly for release was not frequent. The next day, a truck arrived for us and our bags. I left the place after signing a paper saying that I would never speak about the camp once I was outside."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"We arrived there by train. When we left the train at a nearby railway station, we were led to a small hotel. One of our arms was tied to a small desk inside, leaving us with the use of one arm only. We stayed there for about half a day until a coal truck arrived. We traveled for about three hours in the back of the

truck, accompanied by a SSA officer, and arrived at the main guard post of Yodok Control Center. It was three or four o'clock in the afternoon. We continued by car and arrived at a SSA officers' village and signed papers there. There was a wall in front of the guard post with a watch tower and guards. We passed four more guard posts in the next 30 minutes and observed walls and barbed wire. This was the Control Center in which I was to be detained."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"Certainly, there were two prisoners who ran away from Camp No. 13 in the year of 00. While the prisoners were at work in the downtown area of Chongsong, two of them escaped."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"I was released after the year 2000 and became a free man. In fact, I should have been released when my father died. But, this did not happen and I wasted my life there for over 20 years."

"Many prisoners who were in the Control Center No. 18 for nearly 20 years were released in 2000. Prisoners were released twice a year, on 16 February and 15 April. I did everything possible to be included in the list of released prisoners and offered the supervisor a pig as a bribe. This means that bribery was widely in practice as everyone tried to bribe officials."

"Release from here does not mean a return to their home town. If released, they are reassigned to a farm or factory in other areas."

"Prisoners are released on 16 February, 15 April and the anniversary of 27 July. For those prisoners to be released on 16 February, for example, a list of 2-6 selected prisoners arrives in the camp office in envelope from a higher

office in November of the preceding year for comments by immediate supervisors on the basis of performance records of the prisoners. The immediate supervisors of the selected prisoners will submit their comments to the Administration Committee of the Control Center. Cases of the selected prisoners and entire family, if a family is selected, are reviewed by the Committee. On 15 February, all the selected prisoners are assembled in the Cultural Hall. The selected prisoners take seats in front and approximately 250-300 prisoners watch the release process from seats behind. This seating arrangement is such for the purpose of showing other prisoners that release is possible for them, too, if they obey camp officials faithfully and be good." "Before the camp meeting begins, the camp officials make sure that the number of families to be released has been checked and is correct. When the meeting begins, the Administrative Director, Executive Party Officer and the Security Director take their seats on the stage. Then the presiding officer reads the good performance reports of prisoners scheduled to be released, creating the impression that the prisoners will be released on the basis of good performance and due to the beneficence of the leader. Three prisoners scheduled for release, with the worst social background, are selected for speaking onstage. Then the camp meeting proceeds with three prisoners, selected from the group of prisoners not being released on the day, to come up to the platform for a separate session. After that, prisoners not on the release list are ordered to leave the meeting room, leaving only the prisoners soon to be released behind. These prisoners are compelled to swear that they will not leak information related to the Control Center to their relatives and outsiders after release. Only when this pledge is extracted is the camp meeting brought to a close. However, they are not sent to their homes directly after this meeting. Instead, they are forced to do some work at a mine and help miners. The following day the prisoners must go through a ritual of cordially offering a bouquet of flowers in front of a memorial table of leaders, then, offer a bribe to the camp official in their respective unit office."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"I was admitted to the Control Center as part of a group of seven. I kept my Party membership card and it was not confiscated all the time I was there. But there were many prisoners who were deprived of their Party membership cards. Of the seven prisoners detained under the same charge, some of them had their Party membership cards confiscated and others did not. I do not know what constituted the difference. Those who were deprived of their Party membership felt very depressed about it. Many former military personnel and former members of the SSA or police were mostly deprived of their Party memberships and were badly treated. I spent my first 30 days in the unit of new arrivals." "One day in 1997, a car arrived and the supervisor told me that I was going home because of my good behavior there. So, I said good-bye to him and took the truck which was only for me."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"Because you guys are...political prisoners, you must be re-educated here for three years. If you die here, your family will continue to remain under your criminal record. So, you must leave here alive. If you do a good job here, you may be released at the end of three years. If not, your detention here may be prolonged."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"On the way to Yodok, we passed through Hwasong. There we met people from Yanggang Province and a man by the name of Park OO from Chongjin. We went to Yodok together by car. At Hwasong, they released me from my restraints and allowed me to sit in the front seat. My family arranged for an SSA officer connected to a mine to bring me a blanket, clothing, soap, a toothbrush, toothpaste and food for two days. This SSA officer accompanied me to Hwasong."

"The next day, a senior SSA officer called three of us to his office, one by one. He told me to stay at the Control Center for two years and to maintain good behavior while there. He told others to stay three years. In reality, I was there for three years. I noted that no prisoners were being released after just two years. I concluded I would be there for three years. Detention for three years was a kind of standard. But there were some prisoners, with poor work records, who stayed there for five years."

"The Chief Political Officer of the SSA came up to us. When he approached, I guessed someone was going to be released. When he arrived, all the prisoners scheduled for release were assembled at an administrative office and the prisoners were asked to sign an affidavit promising that they would not speak to anyone outside about the Control Center. We inked our fingerprints on the affidavit. Then, normally, he would tell the prisoners when they were to be released, e.g. tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. We suddenly became a member of mainstream society when we inked our fingerprints to the affidavit. We stopped working and freely walked around. Normally, prisoners are released first thing the next morning. When I was released, I was released with a woman from Kangwon Province. Her name was 00. She was young. I used to see this young girl at work. She was there for two years. The two persons detained with me at the camp were not released at that time. One of them had her detention term extended by one year. I don't know what happened to the other woman by the name of Park 00"

2. General Conditions of the PPC

- 1) Location, Title, History and the Process of Closure or Integration of PPC

■ A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)

"Many prisoners have been released since 1984. There were some changes since that time. I don't know who made the difference. In 1991, all prisoners were released at mycamp and new prisoners arrived from Pongchang. If a house became vacant in my camp, then a new prisoner, favored by authorities, arrived to take the house. If not favored at PPC No. 18, the prisoner was sent to Pongchang. And then, from 1991, the released prisoners were sent back to Pongchang when they committed a crime again. At that time, those prisoners of less severe crimes were authorized to meet their relatives. Those prisoners of more serious crimes were all sent to Pongchang."

■ A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)

"No. 22 includes the areas of Chungbong (incorporated in 1981), Sawul and Haengyong. You must take a train from Hweryong bound for Hakpo Mine (Sechon Workers' District). From there you must go about 6 kilometers further into a valley. The village for camp officers' families is in Chungbong-ni. This was originally a normal area. When I was a small boy and in the 4th year grade in primary people's school, the Chungbong Mine became a control district and many prisoners arrived in cargo trains. They were dispersed and settled in several districts such as Sawul and Haengyong."

"Lately, a resident in Hweryong told me that No. 22 has been relocated."

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"I was told that Sorimchon was created in about 1999 and I am sure that at least one hundred people have died since then. When I first arrived there, women prisoners already there told me that they had built the road as well as the control sub-station. After my arrival, the road conditions were not good and I did a lot of hard work on road construction."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"I learned the name of PPC in which I was detained as PPC No. 15. I learned it after my arrival there. I don't know why it was called No.15. Everybody simply said it was 'PPC No. 15'."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"The PPC at Yodok in which I was detained is in Kunchon-ni, Yodok County, South Hamkyong Province and was officially called Sorim-chon District. A prisoner by the name of Kim told me that she had actually been engaged in construction work of Sorimchon around the year 2000."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"In the beginning, PPC No. 13 in Chongsong County came under the heading of Army Unit No. 3579, the Korean People's Guard. The new PPC No. 12 was given the title of Army Unit No. 3578. It was known as a Control Center to the outside but was a military unit internally."

"PPC 18 at Pukchang was created before PPC 13 at Chongsong, North Hamkyong Province. I was told by camp officials of Pukchang PPC that their PPC was created 3 years before ours. I was told that the PPC at Chongsong was set up around April of 1964."

"PPC 13 was divided into two camps in 1975. The number of prisoners when I first arrived in PPC No. 13 was 5,000. The number increased to over 20,000. The large prisoner population increase was the main cause of the PPC being divided into PPC No.'s 12 and 13. What existed there already was simply split for the purpose of administration. PPC No. 13 originally encompassed the areas of Pungchon-ni, Punggye-ri, Tongpo-ri (where the PPC headquarters was located) and Chongpyong-ni of Chongsong County. When PPC No. 13 was split, Changpyong-ni and Chungsan-ni became PPC No. 12. It was only for the purpose of administration. As a result, the greater part of Chongsong County was encompassed by the PPC, and the small remaining area of the county was consolidated into Onsong County. I think this was in 1975 or so. "There were over 5,000 prisoners in PPC No. 13 in 1967, which then increased to over 20,000 by 1990. PPC No. 12 was a bit smaller than PPC No. 13. I think the number of prisoners in PPC No. 12 was around 15,000. The number of prisoners increased because anyone categorized as a revisionist along with their entire immediate family and relatives were brought there."

"PPC No. 12 was closed in October, 1991 and PPC No. 13 was closed in the fall of 1992. When prisoners began to be relocated, those officials facing imminent retirement were instructed to stay in the post until the end of 1992 to assist the process of prisoner relocation. PPC No.'s 12 and 13 were closed on instructions from Kim Il-sung who feared that the PPC might be detected by the outside world. PPC No. 12 and 13 were near from the North Korea/China border and railroad. The PPC in Hweryong (22) is deeply hidden inside a mountain. Most prisoners from PPC No. 12 and 13 were driven to PPC No. 22. PPC No. 22 was established later than PPC No. 12 and 13, in 1975 or 78." "I retired from the service in October, 1992 when PPC No. 13 was closed. At that time, large number of officials retired and remained in the areas for living after retirement. The best houses were occupied according to rank of retiring officials." "In the beginning, the PPC was under the control of the 9th Bureau of

the Police Headquarters. The 7th Bureau was responsible for the management of prisons. The operation of PPC came under the control of the State Security Agency (SSA) as of 1975.”

"Before the closure of PPC No. 13, inspection team arrived from the Central Committee of the Party and SSA. Thus, there was a government inspection before the closure of the PPC. They conducted a thorough investigation into all aspects of the PPC, such as prisoners, property, facilities and equipment and the results of production. A certain tonnage of corn was sent to the Grains Control Office of Chongsong County and livestock sent to the Farm Management Committee of Onsong County. There were several hundred cows and tens of thousands of pigs that were all carried away. It took over a year to transport all the livestock. Everything inside the PPC was carried away. After all the prisoners were sent away, soldiers were mobilized to dispose of dead bodies and eliminate evidence of graves."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"PPC No.'s 14 and No. 18 face each other across the Taedong River. Public trials and execution took place behind the tile factory where I used to work in PPC No. 18 and these were watched by the entire prisoner population of PPC No 14 from the other side of the river. PPC No. 14 has only farms. There was a place called No. 12 inside a valley, on the right side of No. 14, and the other side of Taedong River from No. 18. Wonpyong-ni is the name of the village."

"When PPC No. 18 was partially closed, there remained some 80 families that were not to be released. I was told that PPC No. 18 could not be totally closed as part of its purpose was the detention of formerly high ranking officials dispatched at any time from Pyongyang or Kangwon Province, a location to detain high ranking officials in future. The 80 families did not have records of serious crimes. They were, rather, from families so impoverished that they

could not bribe officials for release. In North Korea, being poor is a crime and being unable to bribe is a sin. When it was closed in the beginning of 2007, the 80 families that were not released were transported to Mujindae. The two guard posts, Chaktong and Songni, were closed. The tile factory, part of the construction unit and where I'd worked, the planning and draftsmen office, the cement and pottery factories, the liquor factory and elderly prisoners' unit were all moved over to No. 14. Roads disappeared and new barbed wire was set up. Barbed wire was also set up in the valley of the 2nd unit of Pongchang-ni Village. I was told that No. 14 would encompass the entire area of Pongchang-ni. There was a place called No. 12 inside a valley, on the right side of No. 14, and the other side of Taedong River from No. 18. Wonpyong-ni is the name of the village."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"Unit 7 was the center of Camp No.15. It was in Ipsok-ni. It included a shop, a clinic and schools and everything else."

"I watched as the prisoners who were detained there in the 70's were all transported to the maximum-security zone at Yongpyong-ni. We were told that conditions in the maximum-security zone are much worse. The prisoners who were sent there were all landlords, capitalists, their children and other wicked elements. So there were only new arrivals in Ipsok-ni."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"I did not know where I was. I heard the name of Yodok for the first time from people there after my arrival. I also learned that I was in Taesuk-ni. I did not know the official name of it. I remember reading a sign, "Taesuk-ni Farm, Yodok County."Some people said it has a military title but I have never read it anywhere."

"I learned from the families of the prisoners that they had lived in Ipsok-ni in the beginning and had been there over 10 years. I guess they were there before 1985. A prisoner by the name of a Kim remembered Kang Chul-hwan in Ipsok-ni. The prisoner said he and his father were detained there because of the offence by his paternal uncle. I spent a lot of time with them as we were in the same work unit. His father made carts for cows. In South Korea, I asked Kang Chul-hwan if he knew a man I met in the Yodok PPC. Kang said he remembered him. I don't know how old the Taesuk-ni facility is. All I know is that the families of prisoners in Taesuk-ni were relocated and settled elsewhere in July of 1995. I think I was told that half of them were released and the other half were sent to other places such as Yongpyong. I learned this later. When they were released, some families and the Koreans from Japan I know were resettled somewhere in Kowon County, together with former SSA officials who escorted them to the new location of settlement on their release."

2) Operational Responsibility and Security System (Size of Man Power Included)

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"There is no barbed wire in No. 18, but nobody escaped. Nobody could escape. Where could he go when mountains are all around and checkpoints are posted on all the roads coming out from the mountains? Of course, one could try to follow along the top of the mountain range and find a way out of the mountains. However, no prisoners were bright enough to do so. Of course, they also feared the horrendous punishment if caught trying to escape. I have never witnessed an escape attempt. Every prisoner fears that he might be sent to a worse place due even to any "wrong remarks" he might make. So, I never saw any prisoner make an outspoken comment. There are many Control Centers worse than this one. All the prisoners feared that."

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

(Size) "It appeared that there were some 150 families in the camp staff village. SSA staff here included young officers who finished Politics College. Guards were all singles and on duty here for a short term. So, residents in the camp staff village were naturally all SSA staff."

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"The barracks building we lived in was surrounded by a cement wall with barbed wire attached to the top of it. In the beginning, our living quarters were located relatively close to the main gate by car. The area was monitored by cameras. Among male prisoners, a system existed where prisoners monitored the movement of each other. In the case of female prisoners, a platoon chief was tasked with monitoring them. Generally, we were watched by SSA officers at the gate both day and night. They watched people coming in or going out during the daytime. Watches were set for possible defectors at night."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"SSA officers were responsible for maintaining control of the camp. The barbed wire near our living quarters was about two meters high. There were five or six lines of electrified wires with one carrying 220 volts in the middle. The lines of electrified wires were perhaps 60-70 centimeters wide. The camp areas inside the guard posts were under the control of SSA officers."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"There were about 200 control officers in the camp headquarters alone. They would total some 500 officers if the number were to include the officers assigned to each village, mines and factories inside the camp. They all operate in three shifts. The Camp Superintendent is responsible for the entire operation of the Camp and there are departments for political matters and

administration. There are 10 sections under the Administrative Department. There is a Court Section under the Political Department for conducting trials. Military troops alone are tasked with guarding the outside of the camp. There are two lines of barbed wire fences with boards studded with poisoned nails between the barbed wire. There is a battalion force of security guard. Guard posts are positioned in such a way as to command views of the entire areas within the sight of guards. In the flat areas, the distance is quite far between guard posts but very short, less than 50 meters, if any obstruction limits visibility between posts. Guards patrol very frequently with dogs."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"Tall barbed wire is set up very densely in Pongchang-ni, PPC No. 18. The security troops come from PPC No. 14 and there's a lot of barbed wire, even located at the tops of mountains, and this extends to Sang-ni. Whether or not the barbed wire is electrified, I don't know. At No. 18 camp, young male police guard the camp."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"I was told that a regiment force of guards was assigned to the entire security area of Camp No. 15. They told me that ambush units were placed even on the summit of the mountain, so there would be no chance for escape. Furthermore, the entire surrounding area was covered by steep mountains, making it difficult to run away. All the nearby villagers were keen to keep watch and submitted reports (of unusual activity) to the SSA on a daily basis. So there was no chance. Many prisoners were shot to death during escape attempts."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"There were five SSA officers in my area. There was one SSA officer each for the 1st Unit, 2nd Unit (Company), 3rd Unit and General Unit, as well as a driver. The General Unit was integrated into the Company later. There were section chiefs. The political officer came to us once a month. Normally, he was in civilian clothes. Exceptions to this would be public executions or occasions of addressing prisoners in the general meeting hall. Then he would be dressed in a military uniform"

3) Work Unit Inside the PPC

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"I was assigned to the 2nd Company. There were both men and women in the company and the 3rd platoon was for women. In the beginning there were 21 women and later the number of women became very small. When I was released there were only 5 women. In about 2004 or so, the platoon for women prisoners was divided into two platoons, the 3rd Platoon and 4th Platoon, to pit the women into competition with one another to produce more work. Some time later, they combined the two platoons into one again."

"We were at the work site by 7 o'clock in the morning, working until 6 or 7 o'clock in the evening, and much later sometimes. We worked at a farm growing corn, potatoes, beans, etc. But the work was much harder than outside the PPC. We had to do farm work in accordance with regulations and textbooks. They demanded that the work be in accordance with 'Juche Ideology Farming.' We had to be careful to keep weeds out and used our hands to spread human manure to each plant. If you don't accomplish your work quota, your meals are reduced to half. I was engaged in farming and raising livestock."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"We get up, take physical exercise, clean the camp and take breakfast at 7 o'clock. Then we start work (assignments are given by platoon first, then by individuals within the platoon). The lunch break is from 12:00 to 13:00 hours. In winter, work ends at 5 o'clock in the evening and at 8 o'clock in summer. If progress in the work is satisfactory, prisoners are given a 10-minute break at 3 o'clock but no break at all if the work progress is not considered satisfactory."

"There were about 20 prisoners in each platoon and the 1st and 2nd Platoons were for men and the 3rd Platoon was for women. Most women worked at the threshing floor."

"All of us did farm work, mostly corn, but beans were grown also."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"They were Koreans from Japan in work units 1 to 4. They produced candies and sweets. They were far away from us and we couldn't meet them. We had no time to go and see them. We were not allowed to talk with other prisoners there. We simply should not talk to each other. That's all. We all planted corn; they made our life very hard with work. There were offenders' family members laboring in 5 to 9 work units. They were needed for farm work. Single male offenders were in the 7th Unit. Single female offenders were in the 9th Unit."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"In the 1970s, I worked in the General Unit within the work company. We made tools and furniture. We considered it odd that we received instructions for the production of furniture from the SSA sub-station. I think they sold the products we made for their own profit, to line their own pockets."

4) Facilities for Management, Work, Treatment of Products,
Organization and Type of Work by Work Unit

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

"My father-in-law was in charge of the administration of Sawul Sector. All they produced there were agricultural products. They produced coal in the Chungbong Sector. In the Sawul Sector, they produced corn, watermelons and sweet melons. They cultivated all kinds of vegetables, including red peppers. We lived in abundance. Potato farina, which was so popular and expensive in the market outside, was also produced there"

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"There we learned how to survive and we were aware that we were producing for the SSA officers. I was told that they were selling mushrooms at the market outside the camp. At first when the camp just started, the food was so scarce and prisoners became so desperate that they ate grass in the hills. The prisoners who stayed here for a long time told us this."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"During the autumn in our sector, we threshed corn with machines and we put the entire corncobs with husks into the machines. Noodles are also produced by a machine, a very efficient machine. We raised livestock, like pigs, for SSA officers. There were over 10 pigs and more than 1,000 chickens. There was a pumping station."

"We harvested corn for internal camp consumption. We collected acorns, mushrooms and firewood. They gave us a bag that we had to fill. Pork and chicken were earmarked for SSA officers and gifts for officers at a higher level."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"There was an office with the title, Department of Agricultural Production, that handled all agricultural products in the camp. This is a gigantic office. We produced sugar beets totally for the production of liquor. The entire volume of liquor produced here was packed and sent to Pyongyang. The liquor called Vodka was known to be very tasty."

"We butchered 40 pigs daily and shipped the pork to Pyongyang. Any pigs weighing 90 kg.'s or over were butchered, frozen and shipped out by train. The pigs were plucked and their cataracts removed and frozen without removing skin and toes. Then, prisoners would eat cataracts removed from pigs."

"The liquor, soybean sauce and paste as well as candy are all shipped to Pyongyang. I don't know how they are distributed but the products from this camp are of such a good quality that, I guess, they are all for senior Party members. Clothing from the factory here is designated for export and shipped away to unknown locations."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"Each company is surrounded by wall. I remember there being a Control Committee, threshing floor, a warehouse, a chicken farm in the village of Taesuk-ni. There was not a single free villager. I was told that all the SSA officers were from Pyongyang. There were factories also. Oil is also pressed there. They say the camp produces everything in the manner of a rearguard base. I remember a power plant also. I saw it once and prisoners from the Science Department were working there. I was told that there used to be a shop, but there wasn't any shop while I was there."

"The camp produces a lot of materials, including rice, minerals and livestock. SSA guys usually take them away."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"The SSA sub-station is staffed by a section chief, party leader and SSA officers, each responsible for overseeing the work of four work units. The Camp Superintendent, Director of the Political Department or their deputies visited the office once or twice a month. The Control Committee was comprised of the chairperson, an inventory clerk, a junior level party secretary, chairperson of the employment union, a young workers committee chairperson and telephone operators. They have different offices and take daily instructions from the SSA sub-station to pass on to every work unit and report the feedback to the sub-station every day. Every work unit has a chief, a clerk and a dormitory dean. The dormitory dean is responsible for security and there are three other guards assisting the dormitory dean. All work is carried out in accordance with instruction from the Control Committee. All prisoners must obey the SSA officer unconditionally."

"There were cornfields, pens for ducks and pigs. Pigs were raised by prisoners from the family sector. (When the family sector was closed, the pigpen was also closed.) The general work unit has a daily provision company. They made chopsticks and farm tools there."

"Work Units, 1-3, were for farming the general work unit, staffed by single offenders and their families, was responsible for having farm tools ready for the farm work. This unit also manufactured furniture for the families of SSA officers. All grains harvested in the fall are stored in the central warehouse and threshed at threshing floors for distribution to all prison families. Ducks were raised for the needs of SSA officers."

"Newcomers are accommodated at an orientation facility to be informed of camp rules and regulations and to recover from a state of undernourishment sustained during the prior investigations. They are given light work at the SSA

sub-station, a greenhouse or a vegetable farm for a month. Normally, they learn the length of their detention terms through conversations with an SSA officer during this period and are coerced to swear that they will not speak to other prisoners about their career experience."

"There was a shop that could hardly be called a shop. It offered a very small quantity of oil, soy bean sauce and paste on holidays. You couldn't find work clothes or shoes in the shop. There was a greenhouse to culture flowers for SSA officers."

"SSA officers carried away chopsticks by car. They ate pigs and ducks and sold the surplus in the outside market everything else was consumed in the camp."

"Each work unit had three to four platoons. In addition, there was a 'sideline platoon' for livestock. Livestock attached to each work unit was for the SSA officer in charge. Rarely, a SSA officer would tell us on a holiday, "You guys take the pig." Then, prisoners ate pork."

5) Size of the PPC and Prisoners

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"I do not know the size of the entire population but there were at least 200 prisoners in the 1st Company and 2nd Company I was with."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"At that time, there were 50 to 60 families at each work unit. The 7th Unit was larger. The 7th Unit was the central area of the PPC with a school, clinic and a shop. All prisoners come to the 7th Unit on Sundays. The distance from 5th Unit to the 7th Unit is 8 kilometers. Units from 1 to 4 have a different shop.

They use the shop at the central area. The administration office is located at the 1st Unit. There was a shop. We used to receive supplies from the shop. The Koreans from Japan were concentrated in a separate location. I did not pay very much attention to their area and I don't know anything about them. There was a SSA staff member at each work unit. They carry a gun. We cannot speak to each other and have time together."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"There were offices for administration, houses for SSA officers (in charge of security), a dining room, a hall with a capacity of 200 people, a clinic and a plaza inside the wall and surrounded by barbed wire. There was a ward for patients, men and women's toilets at the other side of the plaza. Additionally, there was a ward for outpatients, a separate patients' ward for the 1st Company and 2nd Company. Half of the patient's ward for the 2nd Company was for women. The patient's ward was a single storey made from earthen bricks with tiles on the roof. There was a mountain behind and around the patient's wards and there were guard posts at the peak of the mountain. The maximum-security camp could be supervised from a considerable distance, from the top of the mountain. I was told that a high-security camp used to be inside that maximum-security camp."

"At that time, there were 150 male patients at the 1st Company Ward and 25 women patients."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"There are about 3,000 prisoners at Tongpo Mine, 80 prisoners at the food factory, 120 women and 20 men prisoners at the clothes factory, about 50 prisoners at the mechanics workshop, 10 prisoners at the livestock farm, 10 prisoners at the butchers unit and 6 prisoners at the power transformer station."

Additionally, there were some 300 prisoners in the construction unit. There were three other sections, 60 prisoners at each section."

"There were 5 units of workers at each village. There was a SSA officer, a chief worker and an inventory clerk at each work unit."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"I will explain to you about the villages in Control Center No. 18 in detail. There were villages of Sang-ni, Suan, Pongchang, Saemaul (a new village constructed for the families of camp officials) and Hyonmaul (a village for the families of camp officials) and an administration office at each village. Only one administration office served the two villages of Saemaul and Hyonmaul of the camp officials. The size of villages is large by the standard of a farm village but small by the standard of a county."

"There were 1,200 families in the Yongdong sector alone. Pongchang is the largest in size and Yongdong, Suan and Sangni were smaller in the same order. I think the entire number exceeds 20,000."

"The Tukchang Mine is very large. There were 6,000 to 7,000 prisoners assigned to each shaft and there were an additional 300 prisoner in the open shaft. So, there were also additional 20,000 prisoners."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"There were less than 250 prisoners in Taesuk-ni including the three independent platoons. Prisoners were released and new prisoners arrived all the time."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"Unit 1 was for families, Unit 2 (also called Company) was for single offenders and Unit 3 was for both families and singles. Additionally, there was a General Unit that was merged with Unit 2 after July of 1995 when the family sector was relocated."

"(Number of Prisoners) The 1st Unit is also high-security camp and there were many families. In the same unit, there were some 10 single women in an independent sub-unit. The women also worked in the farm. The prisoners in the 1st unit exceeded 50 but less than 100. There were some 120 prisoner in my company. There were 3 sub-units, sub-units No.1-3. There were sub-units for farming vegetables and raising live-stocks. There were some 20 prisoners each sub-unit. Three prisoners were on security duty. There were chief of unit, boarding house chief and an inventory clerk. There were 4 prisoners working in the dining hall (2-3 servants, 1 fireman - all male prisoners) and 5 prisoners for collecting fire wood. There were some 120 prisoners all together. It was same situation in Unit 3 but there were more prisoners than in our unit. There was a women's sub-unit. There were also families. In the Unit 3, the staffs in the dining hall were also male prisoners. When I first arrived there, the numbers of women prisoners were some 20 which gradually decreased."

"The families were divided into Unit 1 and Unit 3. Most prisoners in the Unit 1 were families and most prisoners in Unit 3 were single prisoners. There was a village for families in the Unit 1. I think there were some 10 families in Unit 1. There were 5 or 6 families in Unit 3. The families were not given any specific prisoner term. We were told we can leave here after two years or 3 years, something like that. But no families were given any information like that. If we ask them why and when they were brought here, they did not know when and why they were brought here. They simply replied, for example, they will be released if the case involving their father's brother is solved. There were

innocent families. They were being punished not for their own faults but for the offences by someone in the family under the system of punishing 3 generations of an offender."

"In Taesuk-ni, there were both single offenders and families. Then, in July 1995, the entire family unit was relocated elsewhere. I was told that some families were released. In April, 1994, there were a total of over 500 prisoners including single offenders and families together. I remember that there were about 120 prisoners in 50 families from Unit 1 and part of Unit 3. The others were all bachelors. When families moved away in July 1995, about 300 bachelors remained. There were still 200 bachelors in April , 1997."

3. Operation of the PPC

- 1) Systems and Method of Operation and Control of Prisoners
(Operational Organization and Security Systems and Etc.)

■ A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)

"A platoon leader in the Camp neither works nor takes a turn on guard duty. All he does is check the number of prisoners. They have a good life there. Certain long-term prisoners with a good work record and without a history of complaining are normally appointed as platoon leader or a guard. Platoon leaders are appointed by SSAofficers-in-charge and guards are selected by theSSA sub-station. Prisoners who formerly were high ranking officials from Pyongyang are normally appointed as guards, chiefs at a threshing floor or an independent work project."

"Prisoners who've quarreled with other prisoners or disobeyed the platoon leader are sent through the process of self-criticism. The Control Committeeholds meetings for self-criticism by prisoners on ad hoc basis and

these are typically attended by the SSA officer. While I was there, the meetings were scheduled every other day. There is something called a 10-day meeting. The prisoners here include former members of the Employment Union, Working Youth Union or Party members. Prisoners must continue meeting schedules of their former organizations, even in this camp. Meetings focused on ideological struggle are held frequently. You have no chance to avoid punishment for any mistakes you make. The meetings are compulsory and, above all, you must be extremely careful to control your tongue, saying something wrong. Don't say anything about what you have seen or heard to others; what happened at the work site or passing on rumors. You will be called to give account to the SSA officer and be given punishment for any faults."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"There is a company commander under the control of the SSA officer in the sector of single offenders and one work unit chief and many sub-division work unit chiefs under him in the family sector. There is a system of five prisoners per unit to watch each other to prevent escape. Everyone is watching everyone else. This is all done in secret. We are often called to the SSA officer to give him information in writing about other prisoners. There is no particular benefit for doing this. This is very hard. After you have come home (after the day's work), you are not authorized to walk around. You cannot visit your neighbors. In fact, even though no one is watching us, no one moves around. It would be a real disaster if anyone should find out that you were moving around at night."

"We had a meeting for checking routine activities of prisoners. I remember having a problem due to reading underneath a weak lamp light. This meeting is held according to sub-divisions of a work unit. There were 11 Party members and we had a separate meeting for Party members only. Prisoners

holding Party certificate were supervising other prisoners. They all came from different regions. I don't know all the locations they came from."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"The Control Committee meetings were attended by the company commander, junior level party secretaries and work unit chiefs. Junior level party secretaries are those who had previous experience in supervising others before their arrest. Inventory clerks or warehouse supervisors were also included. They were prisoners themselves but were supervising other prisoners."

"Prisoners were routinely disciplined through daily conduct-checking meetings at the office of the Control Committee every 10 days as well as once a month. If normal discipline didn't work, prisoners were sent to a punishment chamber, a facility within the camp. The discipline meetings are conducted every 10 days by a junior organizational committee chairman (This organizational structure in the camp reflected the same system of organizations outside society such as Party cell, Women's Union, Employment Union and Young Workers Union). The monthly meeting is conducted by an SSA officer."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"Each village office has 12 sectors, with a chief assigned to each sector. Each sector is made up of four people's units, with unit chiefs assigned accordingly. Instructions arrive from the village office for the sector chief, who in turn passes instructions on to the people's unit chiefs."

"Prisoners have to be on night-vigilance or security duty every night rotated in shifts. So, a prisoner can expect to be on night vigilance duty every 2-3 nights. Such duty is not based on hourly assignments. You stay near a fire and watch residents all night. You have to watch the comings and goings to the houses

within your responsibility, e.g.who slept at the prisoners' houses, as a basis for a report to the sector chief the following morning. Daily reports are submitted to the village office, then up the chain to the control chief. This system of surveillance makes life very hard for everyone."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"Two SSA officers worked in shifts at the SSA office of the Control Committee. But, with the exception of the SSA officers, the chairman of the committee and other workers were all prisoners. It was simply like that. There were many SSA officers but they were elsewhere and not many of them were seen at the work sites. I saw many SSA officers outside our sector. Taesuk-ni is situated most deeply inside the camp."

"At night, prisoner-guards visit us every hour and turn on the light to check the number of prisoners. There are five guards and they are well-treated."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"I reported to Work Unit No. 7 every morning. My report included the number of prisoners who reported for work that day and the number of children who went to school. There is an aide under the work unit chief. The aide does the work of a clerk. He makes sure that everyone is at work. If a prisoner is missing from the work site, the entire unit is mobilized to search for him and work does not resume until they find him."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"Every work unit has a chief, a clerk and a dormitory dean. The dormitory dean is responsible for security and there are three other guards assisting the dormitory dean. All work is carried out in accordance with instruction from the Control Committee. All prisoners must obey the SSA officer unconditionally."

"There were three sub-platoons of six persons each in a platoon. A camp regulation stipulates that six persons in a sub-platoon must act collectively at all times. None of the prisoners take the regulation seriously and they all keep moving for work at will. Prisoners proceed to the work site by company collectively, but they work at the site by platoons."

2) Rules and Regulations for Camp Officials and Prisoners

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"I don't remember rules that you specifically had to memorize, but there were many rules one had to follow. When you arrive at the PPC, you would hear about them in the orientation class. You would also hear this kind of information from other prisoners or SSA officers upon arrival at the PPC, as well as during disciplinary meetings. There should not be any involvement between men and women. Women would sometimes leave food intended for certain men. The woman would be punished for this, if caught. When detected, she would be denied a meal, given hard work or called up to the platform for public criticism at a disciplinary meeting."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"There is a system in a unit whereby three prisoners must always act collectively. For example, when you use a toilet, all three prisoners in the same unit must go together. No prisoner can go to a toilet alone. One of the three in the same unit would be a spy on the others. I never spied on anybody else. But I assumed there was a spy in my unit and I never confided in anyone even though we might've been close in some ways."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"When you first arrive at the camp, you take classes by sectors for safety rules, etc. Then, all prisoners are pushed into an underground tunnel that turns out

to be a mine. There are 10 rules in the camp including one that forbids prisoners from speaking to anyone outside (the PPC) and about the duty of protection of the Leader. It is made clear to the prisoner that he will be re-arrested again for a violation of those rules. Since I was sent there when I was only a small child, I cannot remember all the rules. They read those rules to me when I was being released. I understood that theft and murder were among violations of rules there."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"PPC rules and regulations demand that you must not speak to anyone here about your career and experience before your arrest. In addition, you will surely be sentenced to death if you attempt to run away (from the PPC.)"

3) System and Facilities of Punishment of Prisoners

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"There is a work unit in the Popi Sector. Prisoners there are from a high-security PPC. That is a labor training center and there is a wall. Prisoners living inside the wall do farm work and other hard labor such as splitting and carrying stones. They are prisoners from a PPC who have committed some kind of crime while there, such as having sexual relations with a woman, stealing and breaking tools at work."

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"For any wrong remarks you would make, SSA officers would beat you badly, then you'd be jailed. Or your meals would be denied. Prisoners would get hard labor details added to their daily work quota, be made a target of criticism by other prisoners, or humiliated at disciplinary meetings attended by all prisoners."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"At work, SSA officers yell at prisoners, but do not beat them. The company commander would beat prisoners. He is forced to be tough with them to accomplish the work quota."

"One day, a prisoner was called by a SSA officer and put in jail. Nobody knew why. Prisoners are normally jailed for about a month. The prisoner is dragged like a dog from the jail when released. It was said that, in the jail, prisoners would be given three spoons of grain at each meal and forced to remain in a crouched position, without any movement. All prisoners who had been to jail died shortly afterward."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"If a prisoner commits a crime, he/she is sent to the Susong Prison. When the prisoner's prison terms expire, the prisoner comes back to the camp. There is no such thing as permanent release. There are trials. There are internal courts. The courts are under the control of the political department and there are judges also. They are all SSA officers. The trials are public. Preliminary investigations take place in the jail. The jail is in Tongpo Sector. Perhaps, there are around five jails. Prisoners are kept there during the entire period of preliminary investigation. They stay there until their trial. After trials, they may be pardoned or sent to Susong Prison. The camp is already a very difficult place for prisoners. It is much worse in the jails. That's why the prisoners dread them. When a prisoner is released from the jail, he is in such bad shape that often the prisoner cannot walk home alone. Some one from the family must come to bring the victim home." "No woman can marry before the age of 27 nor a man before the age of 30. They are punished if they have sexual relations before marriage. In cases of punishment for sexual relations, offenders are sent to the most difficult work sites. They may be given tasks such as pushing trolleys in underground mine tunnels or digging irrigation

ditches at camp farm site. They cannot come home, but stay at a makeshift shelter to continue their work duty at night. That's really a dreadful punishment."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"You are punished for violating camp rules, failing to accomplish your work target, failing to return at a given time, taking a stroll at night, etc. Types of punishment included being denied a meal for the offender or possibly for everyone in the company. Once, ox carts were on fire and all prisoners who were nearby put out the fire. Very strangely, the ox carts caught on fire again and were destroyed. Then, all prisoners were given additional work duty of felling three trees. We had such poor meals at that time."

"I didn't see any jails there but I saw prisoners being taken to jails in another valley. I didn't know what the charges against them were. There were cases where prisoners were released from this additional hard work for doing good work."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"Prisoners are sent to jails for talking about their life before arrest, saying something they shouldn't have said, complaining about the work and camp systems, as well as failure to 'reform one's self.' Prisoners are also sent to jails for denouncing North Korean society or having sexual relations with another prisoner."

"In the camp, there are jails. Kum XX was sent to a jail for talking about her meeting with someone from Yongpyong while collecting wild plants up on the hill. XX Shin-ho (born in 1954) was in jail for about a month for not obeying an SSA officer."

4) Recent Changes in the PPC and Etc.

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"I heard in Pyongyang about the Yodok Control Center in 2007 from XX Kim, an SSA staff of XX Ministry. We were good friends. He used to invite me out for drinks and side dishes. A few days before the Chusok holiday in 2007, he gave me a long list of foodstuffs. I said, "You must be well taken care of by SSA. Why are you asking me for all these things?" He replied, "In the past we had a good supply from Yodok. But not anymore. The products are now going to the Central Party and the supply to SSA has become less and less." What he said was that it's not that Yodok no longer exists. It came under the greater influence of the Party and the products from Yodok are now going to the Party. He did not say anything about other PPC. He only commented about Yodok."

4. Human Rights of Prisoners and Changes at the PPC

1) Clothing, Food, Shelter and Ration of Daily Necessities

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"There were regular food rations and food provided was not too bad until 1990. They could get some food by digging and farming elsewhere but here in mine, the miners digging coal had to completely rely on food rations. Miners got different rations such as 900 grams, 800 grams and 700-300 grams by the type of work they performed. Many people died of starvation after 1990."

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

"Their uniform was grey and clean, no rags. Shoes were makeshift. They all looked very weak."

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"We did not receive a supply of clothes,"

"We ate 160 grams of boiled corn like porridge, with salt soup and salted cabbage as side dishes. Many male prisoners were undernourished. The food was not even enough for women. Just when I first arrived, two women died of undernourishment. Women were engaged in some kind of business. Clothes were bartered for grain. We begged for burnt corn remaining at the bottom of the kettle in the kitchen. We would get some kernels of grain from prisoners working at a threshing floor. Of course, we gave them something in return."

"The quarters we lived in were surrounded by a cement wall with barbed wire on top."

"We did not receive a supply of clothes, but we did receive a few other items, such as a notebook, a pencil, soap, shoes, a toothbrush and toothpaste. We get corn-rice only and no other food. Those prisoners who exceeded their work quota per year are given an additional supply of 1 kg. of Korean taffy and one bottle of cooking oil on New Year's Eve. The cooking oil is used for soup and for Korean cornbread, which is supplied on a holiday."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"Most of the work there was for farming. We would get corn on the cob in return. We would get the corncobs ground at a mill. It was so difficult to eat corn in the beginning. I wasn't able to eat corn for the first 10 days there. Eating was such a hardship there, you know. Corn was supplied on a regular basis, 700 grams per person per day. Now, when you remove husks and stripped the corncob, the actual amount of corn kernels you get is very small. The corn ration never stopped. We would get a little of what we cultivated on the farm. They gave us cabbage and potatoes. Almost no prisoners died of

starvation. No prisoners ate rats. All my children were girls and the ration was enough."

"They gave us a house for each family. There is a little open space near the entrance of the house, but no walls. You could not raise livestock. No private farming was allowed. While I was there, new prisoners kept arriving. Then, there was a period when no new prisoners arrived for a month. The number of new prisoners was decreasing. So, no new houses were needed and house construction stopped. They all lived in old houses. We would cover the floor with straw mats made from rice husks and similar methods. They didn't give us coal. If you managed to find some firewood from up the hill, it could be used to bring some heat to your house."

"The shops in the Camp No. 15 have no signs hung outside. It is merely a shop standing by itself. Shops have items mainly for industrial use, such as (ordinary) clothes, work clothes and shoes. In addition, you find some food items once a month. Ration quotas are strictly set: all you can buy is one kilogram of bean paste, one liter of soybean sauce and some seaweed (laver). There was aspirin in the shop. Shoes were expensive and, because of that, shoes were not much in demand by prisoners. A prisoner could buy a pair of shoes once a year. There is no limit set on what you can buy, but you can't buy any more simply because you don't have enough money. Nothing is free. You have to pay for everything."

"You can clean your teeth in the morning with salt. There's no toothpaste. They did supply soap. Toothbrushes were also supplied, but you had to pay for them."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"Since clothes were not supplied, all prisoners had different clothes from one another. They wore the very same clothes they had on when they first arrived here. There are clothes left over from the prisoners who are released. All prisoners wore used clothes from someone else, regardless of gender."

"What we ate there was corn that cooked like porridge. The quantity per person was about three cm above the bottom of an ordinary bowl. The meals, already too small, were reduced by half in case prisoners failed to accomplish daily work quotas."

"The boardinghouse for women had two rooms and held about 10 prisoners per room. Some of them stayed at the grain threshing floor. The room was narrow and long and wasn't too cramped."

"Prisoners must bring their own blankets from home (outside the camp). Otherwise, prisoners have to live without blankets. Sometimes, we would receive hand soap. During my three years of my detention there, I received a sanitary napkin only once and a toothbrush only twice. No toothpaste. I brought some supply of toothpaste from my home that I often shared with other prisoners."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"There was no supply of clothing. You have to repair your worn-out clothing by mending yourself. There was a regular supply of shoes which, I was told, had stopped since 1995."

"Daily ration per person is 500 grams. So, prisoners have never felt their stomach full, even with just corn. The taste of meat is a rare thing. You can say they are in bad shape in terms of nutrition. You can raise chickens and a dog, the only source of meat. Prisoners somehow find ways to hatch chicks."

Not all prisoners feed chickens. They keep chickens in their own room due to fear of theft by other prisoners. Some families raise two or three chickens. Other families do not."

"Prisoners' houses are in a 5 section flat (called a harmonica house)."

"There is a shop each village. They sell a very limited quantity of soybean sauce, paste and salt. These items are all from the food factory in Chongsong. You have to pay money to buy these items. As in the society outside, we get an annual wage, from which we get little by little every month. We use the money for shopping. You can buy only the approved per-person quantity. Other items like soap are in short supply, even in society outside. Of course, there is no such supply in the center."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"In the camp, it is your responsibility to buy or find clothes. I raised rabbits and dogs and sold them to buy clothes."

"I had my sport shoes, sneakers, casual shoes, work shoes and North Korean shoes repaired by old prisoners as they specialized in this trade. We used a piece of rubber or cloth when repairing shoes."

"Food is rationed and prisoners working in the mine get 100% full ration but dependants or children get 5 days ration a week. You had to find your own ways to gather whatever food is available. Some prisoners raised dogs or rabbits for this purpose. Some prisoners survived on porridges and others weren't so fortunate and died of starvation. The extra food ration you received is 1 bottle of liquor, 500 grams of pork and 1 kilo of bean sprouts per family once a year on a holiday."

"We received small amount of wage to buy extra food to eat with rice when I was there. If they didn't give prisoners money for side dish, who would've worked? We received 1,700 Won a month and with that limited budget we bought soap, shoes and even sent our kids to school. We needed a lot of money. Sometimes, we asked the released prisoners for soap and shoes. Prisoners working in the mine received a strict supply—soap once a month, a pair of shoes once in 3 months, and working clothes once a year. That's all they got and they had to be content with them."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"We took our meals in the dining room by company. We ate a kind of corn mush or porridge mixed with some vegetables. It was not corn powder; it was cracked corn for cooking. Prisoners ate frogs and snakes inside the camp. They secretly trapped them. If you were lucky enough to catch a deer or a wild bore, you had to offer them to the SSA officers."

"Prisoners eat rice only twice a year on the birthdays of the leaders. Other than that, prisoners eat corn all year around. Prisoners live on the leftovers from supply given to the SSA. We did not work on New Year's Day. No meat for prisoners. We would butcher a pig on New Year's Day and the SSA officers would take all the meat and prisoners would eat the pig cataracts."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"I continued to wear the same clothes I had on when I first arrived there. I didn't buy any clothes there."

"I had a school uniform that we received on the birthday of Kim Il-sung. When the citizens of Pyongyang received a birthday gift from the leader, we prisoners also received the same gift. I remember a prisoner who brought with him the gift of a school uniform that some person outside the camp had

received on the leader's birthday. The quality of that uniform was not as good as our gift. The quality was quite different. Prisoners had to make their own sports uniforms. They would buy white cloth from the shop and make a uniform out of it."

"Prisoners ate corn and salt, nothing else. All prisoners were undernourished and it was like hell. I always despised our miserable conditions there. Life is very hard even for children, and I used to deplore the awful life they had to endure. Now I can relate to you the details of the miserable conditions there, but at the time it was so painful that I felt like a walking dead person."

"There were no other (essential) items provided for living. They sell shoes. You have to pay for them in the shop in the village. We could buy soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes from the village shop. But you can't find sanitary napkins there. You find them only in the supplies reserved for the army. Soldiers don't use their sanitary napkins; they sell them for money. Prisoners wash and re-use cloth for use as feminine napkins."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"Clothes were not supplied. There was a supply of shoes once a year. Prisoners wore old clothes from those prisoners who were released. Some new prisoners might bring an amount of spare clothes from home, so they would barter the clothes for something else. Prisoners working in the kitchen sometimes had extra meals that they would barter for clothes."

"The meals for prisoners were always cracked corn, with the exception of holidays, when you would have rice for breakfast, noodles for lunch and the usual cracked corn for dinner. When economic conditions got worse in North Korean society in 1996, they gave us corn porridge with a little vegetable and

rice in it. That continued for some months. What we farmed there for a year was not enough to feed all of us because of the lack of or poor fertilizer and too many rocks in the soil."

"The prisoners in my work sub-unit shared a room in a U-shaped building. About twenty prisoners slept in the same room. In the case of my company, we used six rooms. We took turns in shifts to bring firewood down from the hills. When it was my turn, I had to find some firewood and bring it to the barracks. When my shift came around, the company commander released me from my (usual) work for two hours early. During that time I was expected to bring firewood and heat up the barracks before other prisoners arrived."

"We received shoes and soap from camp authorities. They gave us soap once a month or so. You were allowed to keep shoes, clothes, money, a watch and medicine that you had brought with you from home. A prisoner could keep a personal bottle of liquor."

1) Family Life (Marriage, Pregnancy, Delivery and Raising and Etc)

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"All I know about marriage is that you must find one in the same sector. Finding a spouse from other sectors is unthinkable. If prisoners love each other, then they are married."

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

"Neither marriage nor childbirth is allowed in the camp. Small children who were brought here because of the parents must live there even after they become grown-ups. It is said that such children carry a sense of defiance stronger than that of their parents. Their marriage is not authorized and the parents are not allowed to live together. I was told that some prisoners are

given a special privilege of staying together with spouse for one night every several months for an exemplary performance. There, children stay with children, men with men, and women with women."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"Marriage is allowed. There is no restriction of childbirth. Do you know why? They need more prisoners in the future and young prisoners to keep the camp in operation. Someone arrived here under the charge of being a revisionist. She loved a man and had a special relationship with him. Then, they reported their relationship to the director of political department to seek approval. If approved, they can go ahead and be married. In the Camp No. 13, prisoners were married and as a result, the population simply increased."

"Everyone lived with the family here and the single offenders also lived in the same village. There was a boarding house only for the girls working at the garments factory. Of the girls working at the food factory, some 20 of them stayed in a boarding house in the factory. All the girls working at the garments factory slept in the boarding house."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"I was married in the camp and I gave births to a daughter and a son. We could marry and raise children. No conditions were required such as good behavior and etc. Any one could marry if he was over the age of 30 and she was over the age of 28. But the prisoners who had been released could not marry any current prisoner. Because the current and ex prisoners never saw each other, marriage was impossible for them."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"All family members live together. There is no marriage. If anyone shares a special intimacy with another prisoner, it can lead to extremely severe consequences."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"There was a case of marriage in the family sector. Kwon XX married Kim XX, an older woman, in the same sector. Although they were allowed to live together, they were not allowed to have a baby. I have never seen any children below the age of 10 in the camp. In the family sector, almost everyone was wife and husband."

3) Public Health, Medical Service and Diseases

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"There was a clinic and hospital. In the clinic, there was a doctor and a nurse. The doctor was not a prisoner. He was well treated."

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

"In the camp, there is a hospital and some medicine. But the level of treatment was awfully low."

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"Yes, there is a clinic. But there is no doctor most of the time and almost no medicine at all. Perhaps, they may have a medicine for loose bowels. There was a nursing home. It is mainly for the elderly people. When an SSA officer finds an old person extremely weak, he sends the old man to the nursing home. But that occurs rarely. The nursing home was located up the valley from the threshing floor. They seem to be well-fed. They don't work. When we were cutting grass in front of the nursing home, we saw some of them cultivating their own food without all the manual labor we perform. They may have someone influential outside who instructed the camp authorities to take good care of them. Normally, we are not allowed to go up there."

"Many prisoners suffer from undernourishment. Some prisoners die of dropsy in the liver."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"There is a clinic. One person works there. He was a prisoner and was working there. You can get the most basic medication there and that's all. There is also a nursing home. Prisoners who are seriously ill are sent there."

"My son was admitted in the camp at the age of 5. The only food he got was corn and as a result, he had a swollen stomach. He went to the hospital and got an injection. They never told me what injection it was but my son's health improved slowly after that. In fact, my child had pellagra disease. This disease can be cured by eating a dog. When I explained to the doctor how my child had a severe case of pellagra, he authorized us to eat a dog we were feeding. My husband and child recovered after eating the dog."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"There is a hospital. But the hospital is not for curing and treating diseases. They provide the most seriously ill patients or the weak prisoners who were just released from the jail with temporary protection. There was no medicine. There was a SSA doctor but no treatment of sickness. There was a prisoner assigned there."

"Male prisoners died when they were undernourished but women didn't. There are cases of death of dropsy in the liver. Many prisoners suffer from diarrhea as they ate corn only."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"There was a medical clinic at every village. 2 or 3 people worked at the clinics. Their main work was to issue medical certificates. If you stop working without a medical certificate, you don't get your food ration for the day. We get some basic injections and medicines. There is no medical equipment and an actual operation is out of the question. You get injection for influenza and other highly contagious diseases."

"Many prisoners died of undernourishment. When we were released in 1990, we received a ration for only 15 days in one whole month. The general situation was bad in North Korea and because of that, we also suffered. Many prisoners died from hard labor combined with undernourishment. Many prisoners suffered from gastro enteric diseases. Many prisoners also died of accidents. There were many accidents that occurred frequently in mines. Some prisoners died when an underground gallery collapsed while others were run over by a trolley. Some farmers died when they fell from a cliff or hill. Whatever the case, many prisoners died in numerous ways. How can people survive under such inhumane circumstances? It is despicable to live like a slave and it is obvious that many people die under such circumstance."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"There was a hospital in the camp. The hospital for camp officials was called the army clinic and the hospital for prisoners was called a hospital. A doctor, who was a prisoner before, was a doctor in the hospital. In case of Yongdung hospital, there was a director of hospital, deputy director, departments of internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, hepatitis, out-patients, and pharmacy. They performed actual operations. There were 2 nurses in the internal medicine department and 2 nurses in the surgery department."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"There was a hospital and nursing home which were operated by prisoners. The nursing home was located at the peak. Prisoners doing extraordinary work or in a state of near death are sent up there temporarily. If you get injured, yes, you are admitted to the hospital. But there is almost no medicine or treatment of the injury. You get a cast if you have a broken bone. If you have diarrhea, they give you medicine and that's all."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"There was a small one-room clinic in Ipsok village. There was no sign, no operation, and no treatment. Once, I had a gastro enteric problem and received an acupuncture treatment. If you are sick, they just give you a medicine for the common cold. If you get your leg broken, that essentially means that you are dead. We were doing farm work and there were no life-threatening accidents. If a prisoner gets injured while logging, he is left to die or become crippled."

"In North Korea, there are so many tuberculosis patients. This is because they don't get enough food and are constantly starving and undernourished"

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"There was a hospital and nursing home. The doctor was also a prisoner. Hyewon, the daughter of the family from Germany, was a nurse there. After the family sector was closed, I don't know who was a nurse there. When prisoners catch the cold, they get a primitive form of medicine from the hospital—a plant's root that has been grounded up. Sometimes, you get an injection if the disease is contagious. But there was no operation. They cleaned and applied some ointment. I don't remember how they treated prisoners with broken bones."

"There were cases of death caused by diarrhea. However, only two or three prisoners died this way. We washed our face at the stream and sanitation was non-existent. There were many lice and fleas. There was a common bath house also. In the winter, they heated the water from the stream and we bathed there once a week with our work unit. I think we bathed 2 or 3 times a month."

4) Forced Labor and Routine Procedures

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"The work there was indeed very hard. Cutting grass is the hardest work. In July and August, the hot days are longest and prisoners were all starving. Your quota is to cut 700 kgs of grass and bring them to the corn field. Dragging logs are also very exasperating. Prisoners spend one or two hours to climb up to the mountain, cut a tree and bring the log down to the threshing field in an additional 2 to 3 hours. It is also extremely backbreaking work to plant corn in spring. Prisoners must keep their backs bent downward for 13 hours from 7 o'clock in the morning to 8 o'clock in the evening without time to stretch backs."

"There is only one 10-minute break in the morning and another 10 minute break in the afternoon. You can imagine how painful the work is. Prisoners are so closely watched by SSA officers that it is impossible to have unauthorized rest."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"If you want a good report about you, you must never be absent from work. And you must accomplish the work quota of the day. It is hard to be a good worker and accomplish your work target. The work quota may be similar with the standard quota of the outside society but prisoners don't get enough to eat and that makes the work that much more difficult. The hunger in the camp is not the same as the hunger in the outside society. There, you can buy food if you are hungry. We cannot buy food here."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"The most painful thing in the entire Yodok camp is performing the tough labor work when hungry. Oftentimes, we prisoners embraced each other as we

wept numerous times in the mountain. Once, I had a poison rash from the grass cutting work and my eyes were bulging. Nonetheless, they made me continue my work. I was badly wounded while carrying stones for a construction site (for pig-pens and pump station). I was immobile and couldn't move. They still forced me to work, making rice straw ropes. At that time, I was so sad that I closed my eyes and tears began to roll down my cheeks. In the camp, you are forced to work until your very last minute of existence."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"The work quota must be accomplished and if a prisoner fails, all the prisoners accuse him. The camp authorities want to maximize production and give each prisoner an absurd amount of work target for the day. The field is always so clean and neat without any weeds and stones. We use a lot of barn yard manure to have a good harvest. We all work in an organized way and make very good progress. The oxcart we built there, for example, works much better than the same in the outside of the camp. If the work target is not achieved, prisoners in the entire unit are collectively punished and work hours are prolonged. Consequently, prisoners push other prisoners to work harder."

"In mines, prisoners work 8 hours in 3 shifts. In case of work outdoors, prisoners work for 10 hours. In the farm, they work for 12 hours, 7:00 to 19:00 hrs. In summer, they start work before breakfast. Prisoners have lunch breaks for one hour and bring lunch from home unless the prisoner has time to go home for lunch."

"There was no rest all year round. Prisoners are mobilized to collect acorn in the fall, collect firewood, and prepare barnyard manure during farm off-season. All prisoners are very efficient workers."

"The unbearable life in the camp is worse than death itself. It is a living hell where everyone is constantly suffering from hard work and must fight to live

for one more day. They have to appear to be obedient outwardly, but have strong wishes for unification inside their hearts. It is a life of hard work, one after another, without any hope for liberation. Prisoners want to work harder than other prisoners so that he can be favored and assigned to the easier work."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"In the coal mine, we take over the work from the preceding team at 7:30 hrs. to start work from 9 o'clock in the morning and continue until 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the 2nd team takes over at 4 o'clock and works until midnight, and the last team works from midnight to 8 o'clock the following morning. In essence, we worked gruesomely long and hard to keep the mine operating for 24 hours. Many prisoners are injured and killed in the mine by accidents. The possibility of dying is so real in the mines that when we are up on the ground at the end of the work, we are overwhelmed with a feeling of relief—I have survived another day. The forced labor work at the camp was so exhausting. It is indeed backbreaking. Working in the mine also means that prisoners are not fully exposed to sunshine and all prisoners look pale as a result. It is terrifying to work there. There are numerous sick prisoners and they eventually all end up dead."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"Once at our platoon, ox-carts caught on fire. We put out the fire. However, the carts were all burnt down by 2nd wind some time later. Even though this was not our fault, we were punished by being forced to cut trees to make ox-carts again. The work quota was that each person had to cut 3 trees per day. There was a small stream near the power generation station and the power station was nice to us and filled the stream with river water. Fortunately, we were able to bring logs floating on the stream. We were very lucky and saved a lot of time."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"I had my meals reduced a number of times for not doing a satisfactory job. I mean I was not always a bad worker. I did a pretty good job most of the time. You have your quota and that makes prisoners to compete with other prisoners and there is a collective pressure from the entire platoon members. So, there is no way you can do your work slowly in a cut throat competitive work environment."

5) Education of Prisoners' Children

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"Most important subject in the primary school was the history of revolution. In the primary school, there was a subject titled Early Days of Respectable Father, the Great Generalissimo. In the middle school, there was a subject titled the History of Revolution."

■ **A02 (a family member of camp official No. 22, 1994)**

"Yes, there was a school for the children of prisoners. The school was located at a village in Chungbong sector, some distance from the families of SSA officers. I was told that less than 10 children were admitted every year. The school disappeared one or two years later."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"Yes there were schools, one each at the villages of Tongpo, Pungchon and Punggye-ri. Because of the distance, they did not have a separate middle school. Middle schools were in the same location with the primary schools. Their idea was that children must learn to be a diligent and obedient worker."

"Children can attend schools, 4 years in the primary school and 6 years in the middle school. Upon graduation, they must work without exception. Even in

schools, they have to work. They are never allowed to have some personal time. They collect firewood and cut grass for rabbits, etc. Teachers are all SSA officers. It is different from the mainstream North Korean society. Teachers are in plain clothes and do not carry guns but have guns in their tables. There were 200 to 300 children in the school in Pungchon, the largest of all schools. I think there were 100 to 200 children at other schools. There were 10 children in the smallest class and 30 to 40 children in the largest class."

"They had different textbooks. Their textbooks were from the Political Department. The subjects were Korean, mathematics, history of Korea, geography, and everything else. But there is no subject for the history of revolution because the children would never be integrated with the outside society. But they teach them how to read and compute simple mathematics to make them useful workers."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"Most children went to school in the camp. But the school asked for all kinds of expenses. Children were beaten if the expenses were not paid for. Consequently, many children did not go to school. Children had to pay for stationery items, including pencils and note books. The supply of text books was extremely limited and children only got 3-4 text books out of the 10 they were suppose to have. The teachers were corrupted so if parents bribed the teacher, their children were favored, given more text books, and paid greater attention to. On the other hand, parents who could not afford to bribe the teachers had their children put at a disadvantage for everything imaginable."

"Subjects included Young Days of the Great Generalissimo Kim Il-sung, Young Days of General Kim Jong-il, Korean, mathematics, geometry, physics, drawing, Korean literature, Chinese characters, communism (nowadays it is called socialism), cooking/sewing for girls, physical education, music and etc.

Children moved onto the higher levels on the basis of academic records so they had to pass tests. There were teachers for all the subjects."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"At that time, there were no children and no school."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"The number of children was 40 to 50 in one class and there was only one class per each year grade. So, the primary school had 4 year grades and there were about 160 children in the entire school. I attended school and was completely controlled by the strict school system. We never heard of school vacations and we were part of the school organization. Freedom for children was unthinkable at the time. All we did was perform labor work. There were classes in the morning. In the afternoon, we were subject to all kinds of hard work such as collecting fire wood from the mountains."

"The primary school and middle school were part of the 7th work unit. We children had to walk 4 to 8 kilometers to go to the school every day. There were some 50 children in each work unit. There was a class for each year grade. In the morning, there was a roll call in the work unit and all of us walked to school in one line. When we arrived at school, we were split into different class rooms by year grade. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, we were assembled in the playground and told to dismiss. Then, we went to our work units, guided by a senior child."

"The curriculum was similar with the standard of other schools outside the camp. The subjects in the school included mathematics, English, moral education, revolution history, world history, geography, physics, fine arts, music, and physical education. Our school had tests as well. Children are graduated in order of their school record. The school is closed at 3 o'clock

and, after that, the children work until 5 o'clock. Working in the afternoon was exhausting to say the least. We walked all day up in the mountains to collect fire wood in the icy winter days."

"On Saturday afternoons after school, there was a disciplinary session. It was part of Boy Scout activities. For adults, they had disciplinary meetings after work on Saturday afternoons. Those who did not have their party membership card confiscated also had similar meeting as a party member. My mother was allowed to keep her party membership card because she was not a criminal."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"There was a school in 1994. There was a teacher. There were about 7 children. They were in one class room and no divisions by year grade. In 1995 when the family sector was closed, the school was also closed. They leveled the school site and made it into a farm field. Children did not do any farm work. They carried out light work such as cutting grass for rabbits for the SSA sub-station. They had class work in the morning and cut grass and brought the grass to the sub-station in the afternoon."

6) Secret and Public Executions inside the PPC

■ **A01(former prisoner from PPC NO. 18, 1972~1984)**

"The father of Comrade xx Yim was executed by a firing squad. This was when I was about 13 years old. His father was a mechanic and he was killed in connection with his work. The families were not allowed to watch the execution."

"I saw an execution by hanging also. This was when I was still a child in the school and a lot of people watched it. The convict was almost dead and motionless when he was brought to the execution site. It was a man."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"Stealing is a crime. There were many thieves among the single offenders. The thieves are punished, of course. I don't know how they are punished. They didn't simply disappear. They were not sent to punishment jail. They were often openly punished. All the work units, Nos.1-10, were assembled at the punishment jail to watch thieves being executed there. A prisoner will be shot to death for stealing. I saw two executions of this nature. The first case was involved with a thief and the second case was very similar. Both of them were single men."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"There is no way to escape. Two prisoners attempted to escape and security was so tight that they were immediately caught at a guard post and executed."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"If a prisoner is caught for escape, he will be shot to death or sent to Susong Prison after public trial. Executions by shooting are not that common. Camp authorities are concerned that frequent public executions would have a negative influence on other prisoners. While I was there, I think I saw 10 public executions by shooting. Mostly, they were the prisoners who had attempted to escape but had been caught. I remember a case where a prisoner was publicly executed after open trial for the intentional vandalism of a machine. This was in 1969 and the victim was from the steel plant in Chongjin. "

"Secret executions are more common than public ones. A prisoner is secretly taken away and no one ever hears from him again. Nobody knows any further details. Victims of secret execution include those prisoners with records of

escape attempt or expression of political views to fellow prisoners, in which case a public trial might cause unrest among prisoners. The victims are arrested and pushed into the deep trap just outside the fence of barbed wire, with sharp spikes at the bottom that was set up for the prevention of escape."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"Two or three prisoners of the Camp No. 18 were so hungry that they crossed the river Taedong to the Camp No. 14. They found a lot of corn and blended the corn there and returned to the Camp No. 18 with some corn and ate it. The river was very shallow, about knee high. Eventually, they were caught for their stealing and publicly executed."

"A mother of my colleague was arrested in February or March of 1996 for practicing superstition and was interrogated by the policemen for about six months. Then, she was publicly executed."

"Another execution case involved an auto-mechanic who wrecked a car while trying to repair it and was executed by a firing squad for the charge of obstructing the work progress of the SSA."

"I can't remember all the executions, but there used to be 2-3 cases of public executions each year."

"In 1997, seven prisoners had been brought to the camp because they were involved with the case of Shimhwajo. All 7 of them were secretly executed at the valley of work unit No. 2, Pongchang-ni. They were the Police Chief of Camp No. 23, Executive Secretary of the Provincial Party in Kangwondo, Executive Secretary of the Provincial Party in South Pyongan, the 1st Secretary of Kaesong city, an SSA officer, Executive Secretary of the Party of the Chungsan District by the name of Pi Kap-son, and the Superintendent of

the Camp No. 21. We happened to be there to collect sand and watched this secret execution."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"I have actually witnessed public executions about 5 times per year. The victims were from other valleys. The camp authorities tell us why they are executed. The reasons for execution I can remember now were defiance of North Korean system, espionage acts, or refusal to be reformed. The most common charge for public execution is attempting to escape. I was told that the Taesuk-ni village I lived in was an area of lightest punishment. Each valley is separated by plank, 1.5 meters high. Many prisoners die here and public executions took place here very often. Prisoners were publicly executed 20 to 30 times a year. They install a plank behind the convict. If you see 11 planks, that means that eleven prisoners were executed. We made 5 or 6 coffins each month. Once, a member of our platoon died and we went up to a mountain to bury him. Wow, the mountain was full of stones. We dug very shallow and buried him there. We just buried him leaving no marks as to where his body lay."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"If a prisoner is missing, the entire work unit is alarmed and mobilized. All prisoners stop working and a manhunt begins for the missing prisoner. This is why all prisoners are brought together to work unit No. 7 to watch a public execution. If a prisoner says something wrong, he is sent to a prison in the camp. And if he admits that he had said something wrong, he is publicly executed because this serves as a warning to other prisoners that this will happen to you if you make the same mistakes. All prisoners were very cautious when saying anything. There was no such thing as secret executions. Because we are prisoners, they wanted to show us all the executions for warning and intimidate other prisoners as much as possible."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"All prisoners were assembled for public executions. Two to three cars arrived from the direction of the sub-station. The camp superintendent, his deputy, a chief at the sub-station, and director of political department arrived in the first car. Three to six guards arrive in the second car. At the first execution I watched in the camp, there were 3 guards while there were 6 guards at the second time, including a signal flag holder. All prisoners were told to sit down by work units. Many guards, about the size of a company, block the road behind the prisoners. They do so to make sure that nothing goes wrong. All SSA officers were in uniform with a pistol holstered on the waist. The whole atmosphere was so suspenseful and dreadful. There was a platform and a desk in the front. The camp superintendent, his deputy, director of political department, and section chief took the seat in the front. Section chief initiated the process. Then, the camp superintendent announces the criminal history and background of the convict and declared the death sentence under the provisions of law. Then, they bound the convict to the pole. At the order of "shoot Hahn xx, the anti-revolutionary element," the fire squad of 3 snipers shot, each sniper shooting 3 bullets, for a total of 9 shots per convict. A sniper examines the dead body and loudly declares the anti-revolution element so and so to be dead. Then, they disappeared with the dead body in a car. After that, there were speeches by the camp superintendent and director of political department."

"The 2nd public execution I watched in the camp was on 28 April 1997. When the death sentence was declared, a prisoner by the name of Hyon suddenly stood up, proceeded to the front platform and pleaded to reform him and make him like one of us. Guards rushed to him, gagged him immediately, beat him and kicked him into a completely submissive state and then carried him to the car. He has since been missing. This was a surprise for all of us. Most likely, he was killed. I don't know what happened to him after my release. No doubt he was killed as he defied the sentence of the central court."

7) Torture and Violence in the PPC

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"The SSA officers normally did not beat prisoners. But prisoners were beaten sometimes in the office of interview. The company commanders were often beaten by SSA officers for any problems in his company such as fighting between prisoners. In return, the company commanders beat and gave the prisoners a hard time. In essence, the SSA officers are beating prisoners indirectly through platoon leaders or company commanders."

■ **A06 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, Camp No. 15, 2003~2006)**

"SSA officers scolded but did not beat prisoners at work. Scolding by an SSA officer served as a message to the company commander to beat the prisoner(s) concerned. The company commander was forced to use violence on the prisoners to accomplish the work quota."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"No prisoners could protest. Prisoners were simply beaten and terrorized constantly. If a prisoner should protest, he would be taken away and be beaten to death."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"I was not beaten and tortured myself. However, other prisoners were beaten and tortured. Women did not have menstruation because of poor nourishment and I did not witness any secret sexual relation between prisoners but saw some prisoners being beaten for such behavior."

■ **A11 (former prisoner, from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"No prisoners were beaten by work unit chiefs or sub-unit chiefs. I think there was no such thing as beating prisoners. All prisoners were so obedient and

worked extremely hard. If a prisoner should attempt to defect because of the hardship in the camp, he would be in serious trouble."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"Once I was told to stop my work in the farm and was beaten with a stick. Prisoners are severely beaten by SSA officers when they receive tips from the company commander about poor job performances by prisoners. Prisoners were badly beaten with square bars if caught cooking in the general work unit. SSA officers beat prisoners 2-3 times a month, making prisoners be on their toes at all times. I was often beaten and kicked for being too liberal. Wherever we were in the camp, we were always demeaned and despised."

8) Sexual Violence for Women Prisoners

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"While I was there, the SSA officer in charge had no sexual relation with any women prisoners. We met and talked but it was difficult even to hold hands. I sensed that food was offered for such relationships somewhere. If caught having a secret sexual relation, the prisoners are sent to jail."

"Kim XX was sent to the jail for having a sexual relation with Choi XX, an officer from the outside. She was working at the farm and Choi approached her with gifts and she accepted. This was in 2004. The woman was jailed, but the man was not punished. The officer who was from outside was not under the jurisdiction of the SSA sub-office in the camp."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"We were changing shifts at midnight and were ambushed on the road and raped by male prisoners. The men were eventually caught and sent to jail."

KimXX was a prisoner who was released, but was arrested again and sent to Kaechon prison for raping women prisoners. I heard that at the jail, the policemen bring the women prisoners out of the jail to rape them. I did not actually witness this. There were many cases of abortion in the camp."

9) Treatment of the Aged, Youth and Children in the PPC

■ **A04 (former prisoner from Sorimchon, PPC No. 15, 2002~2005)**

"There was a nursing home for old prisoners. Old people were sent up there. If a prisoner is extremely weak, SSA officers sent them up there as well. But it was a very rare occasion when a prisoner is sent up there. Some prisoners were sent up there because their families outside bribed some one. In fact, it is extremely rare that a prisoner is sent up there."

■ **A05 (former prisoner from Ipsok-ni, PPC No. 15, 1976~1980)**

"Old prisoners also had to work there, all kinds of work and not necessarily easy work."

■ **A08 (former SSA officer at PPC No. 12 and 13 1967~1992)**

"Old prisoners who cannot work don't get food ration. As a result, they are mistreated by their children unless they do something productive for the family. But, in reality, there is very little what they can do for the family in the camp."

■ **A09 (former prisoner, from PPC No. 18, 1975~2000)**

"Old people in the camp are all entitled to the welfare plan, man at the age of 61 and women at the age of 56. They work until their birthday then don't have to work starting from the day after. They all get the benefit from the welfare plan."

■ **A10 (former prisoner from Taesuk-ni No. 15, 1995~1998)**

"We saw a nursing home at the top of the hill. Prisoners were sent up there if they were dying or had a good work record."

■ **A12 (former prisoner, from Taesuk-ni, PPC No. 15 1994~1997)**

"Old prisoners were never exempt from work. Old people were given the security work at work sites or companies."

<Testimonies on Political Prisoners And Cases of Disappearance>

▣ A12 (a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance)

"My uncle worked for a business company in Pyongyang and earned a lot of money in his business with China. He was arrested in 1998 by SSA under the accusation that he received money from South Korea. This was nonsense and there was no proof. But I don't know what happened to my uncle during the preliminary investigation and one day, SSA officers came and told the family not to wait for him and carried away his grandmother, mother, and two children. This is how they were sent to a PPC. No one knows which PPC they were sent to. His father was a senior party member of the Central Party and somehow, his mother was released later. When the family was being carried away, the father was at the site and told the family that they were being sent to a PPC. When they were carried away, they were not allowed to carry too many provisions. I have not heard of them since 2008, when I defected from North Korea.

▣ A12 (a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance)

"My mother's sister lived in Pyongyang and had a close family friend. He was making money in Swiss or elsewhere for the central party. He returned to Pyongyang and he and his entire family were sent to a PPC in the summer of 2006 for embezzling state funds. His son, born in 1984, was a student at a foreign language university. His mother and sister were also taken to the PPC. They were in the classrooms in the school when they were ordered to leave the classroom in the middle of class and had their belongings confiscated. It became a big incident when the entire English class began to cry out. No one knew where their father was. There was a rumor that the father was separated from his children. If people are carried away in this manner, then it was a certainty that the people were being sent to a PPC. In case of

banishment, the family concerned is notified and they know that they are being banished and carried away with all their furniture and household goods. I heard that if the case is serious, they are given 10 kgs of rice and abandoned in a mountain where no one lives."

■ **A12 (a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance)**

"Uncle Kim xx was arrested by the SSA in 1999. Someone by the name of Yu told us that he happened to see my uncle in the SSA. He was so badly beaten that he was unable to move and was being dragged. Then, in the same year, his family was sent to a PPC. They lived in the Moranbong district and there was a rumor that they were sent to a PPC No one knew what happened to my uncle."

■ **A14(a witness to political prisoner and disappearance)**

"Disappearance means that the case is in the hands of SSA. If someone disappears, it is known the next morning. People know the next morning when the SSA officers had carried away the entire family at night as neighbors' houses being so close together in North Korea. Neighbors would almost always overhear the screams and commotions in the next house. The neighbors are now aware of the arrest at night and accurate information starts to spread. In my home town of Onsong district, which is near the border with China, the offender is arrested and the family is carried away to the PPC by the SSA while the offender is still detained in the SSA office. Near the border areas, there are many cases of sending the families to the PPC. Disappearance means that someone was sent to the PPC. North Koreans all know about the PPC with the exception of the privileged families or children. I have been accused three times and I know about the PPC very well."

■ **A15 (a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance)**

"In 2005 when we lived in Musan, a young woman in her 30s was our neighbor. After her daughter went to China, she was taken away by SSA officers at dawn one day. I remember it clearly as I was her next door neighbor. The residence unit chief was accompanied by the counter intelligence chief of SSA and knocked on her door. The next thing you know is that the SSA officer took her away for interrogation. A few hours later in the morning, a truck arrived and carried all the furniture away. She was in her 30s and traveled to China frequently to see her daughter there. She lived alone in North Korea. At dawn, SSA officers knocked on the door of the chief of residence unit. The woman's house was No. 0. The residence chief is a type of person who leaks information to people little by little. The residence unit chief made her open the door and the SSA officer was inside the house for about 40 minutes and then the woman was brought outside fettered. I kept watching and saw that she was immediately gagged when she was inside the car. Two days later, a policeman moved into the house. When I asked the chief of residence unit, she replied that the woman was arrested by the provincial SSA because her daughter in China was involved with some activities involving South Korea. After she disappeared, they came and carried away all her property with all the neighbors watching. The residence chief normally knows why someone is arrested because she is informed by the SSA officer. The woman's property was not worth much. Later, there was a rumor that her daughter was involved with helping the separated families locate their families in South Korea. The provincial SSA officer stated that she was being sent to the PPC and I watched her being arrested. I have not heard about them since. If someone is arrested at dawn or at night by SSA officers, it means that he or she was being sent to a PPC.

■ **A15 (a witness to political prisoner and a case of disappearance)**

"It was in November of the year 2007. A daughter of a family living in Musan district, North Hamkyong Province, defected to South Korea and became married. She sneaked back into North Korea in an attempt to bring her parents to South Korea and was in hiding for about a month. She gave her father 5,000 US dollars but her parents refused to join her. She then decided to take her brother and sister to Korea. But she bribed a border guard with too much money which invited suspicion. Eventually, she was under secret surveillance. The three of them were ambushed by the North Korean guards just when they were going to cross the border. She was born in 1986. Her sister and brother were separated by the SSA. Later, her parents were arrested by the SSA at dawn. They were carried away to a car with their children. No one knows where they were taken to."

Survey Report on Political Prisoners' Camps in North Korea

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