

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

**Background Paper**  
**Accountability of Missing Americans From the Korean War**  
**Live-sighting Reports**

The U.S. Government has received numerous reports concerning Americans living or detained in North Korea after the prisoner exchanges with North Korea in 1953. Based on number of unaccounted for personnel captured by the Communist forces and not returned from the Korean War and, a number of recent live American sightings in North Korea, the DPMO concludes that there are two groups of Americans in North Korea ...a small group of defectors and a larger group of 10-15 possible POWs.

A small group of four personnel is comprised of American soldiers who defected to North Korea in 1960's. Based on U.S. Army files, North Korean literature and North Korean movie, entitled "Nameless Heroes", these defectors appear to be in North Korea on their own volition. They are Private Larry A. Abshier, Private First Class James J. Dresnok, Specialist Four Jerry W. Parrish, and Sergeant Charles R. Jenkins.

According to North Korean defectors, PFC Dresnok is married to a North Korean and has a daughter. One of the North Korean defectors met SGT Jenkins in a coffee shop in Pyongyang. SGT Jenkins told the North Korean defector that he is now ready to return to America. The American deserters live in the "foreigner's apartments", Chukchon-dong, Mangyongdae-kuyok, west-side of Pyongyang.

A second, larger group of Americans is comprised of US service members, most likely POWs, from the Korean War and possibly Vietnam War era. There have been numerous reports of both American and British POWs in North Korea. One of the most compelling reports received over the years was a sighting reported to DoD by a Romanian in 17 Feb 1988.

On October 1979, Mr Oprica, a former Romanian, now a naturalized U.S. citizen, along with other Romanians employed at a North Korean factory in Pyongyang was on a North Korean Government sponsored sight seeing trip. During this bus trip, the bus driver appeared to be disoriented and drove the bus through a collective farm. During this trip, he observed 7-10 Caucasians, including one individual with blue eyes, working in the fields. The workers appeared to be in their 50's. Mr. Oprica was told by a female passenger that the Caucasian farmers were American prisoners of war. Mr. Oprica was unable to recall who the lady was and how she determined the Caucasian farmers were American POWs. On 24 Nov 95, another passenger on the bus, Mr. Florin Tomescu, was finally located in Romania and interviewed. He confirmed seeing Caucasians working on a farm and the location of the collective farm to be somewhere between Pyongyang and the city of Nampo.

Since the Oprica/Tomescu sightings, a variety of additional sightings reports have been received, culminating in a recent flurry (last 60 days) of very compelling reports. The following summarizes these reports:

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

1. All "American POWs" were under the direct control of the Ministry of People's Armed Forces (MPAF) and were residing in various sections within the Pyongyang city area and they were always escorted and moved in a vehicle with a license plates belonging to the MPAF, the reconnaissance bureau, or the Ministry of Social Safety.

2. "Black and white" Americans were seen shopping together in a foreigners only, western goods store. The number of Americans sighted generally ranged from 10-15, with a few recent citing as many as 40-50. One defector cited that since 1978, he learned that over 60 American POWs lived in Pyongyang proper. Some are married to Koreans and have children.

3. One defector stated that in the film "Nameless Heroes" a black POW played a role of a house servant for the American policy officer, Dr. Kelton. The "Nameless Heroes" film has 20-21 segments, and, the DPMO is in the process of obtaining them to determine if this information is accurate.

4. Several defector reports cite that there have been numerous Americans teaching English and American customs at the foreign language department in Amnokgang College or a military reconnaissance school in Pyongyang. These English language instructors are sometimes identified as U.S. defectors, but more frequently as "American POWs".

5. According to escorts, many POWs desired to return to U.S.

6. The analysis of numerous live sighting reports correlate that American POWs live in a group compounds in various locations in Pyongyang and its suburbs, and perhaps other places in DPRK. POWs movements in DPRK are apparently controlled by the North Korean Government.

7. In the summer of 1976, a North Korean defector visited a cooperative farm located in the outskirts of Pyongyang. There he met a Caucasian man of about 60 years old, 180 cm tall with a large body. The Caucasian told the defector that he was an American. He asked one of the women who the American was, and the woman told him that the American was an American POW from the Korean Liberation War.

There are too many live sighting reports, specifically observations of several Caucasians in a collective farm by Romanians and the North Korean defectors' eyewitness of Americans in DPRK to dismiss that there are no American POWs in North Korea.

Prepared by I.O. LEE: DPMO

As of: 03/26/96



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY