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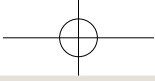
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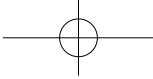
Foreword by the Minister

Archives, libraries, and museums form the three pillars of a modern nation's vault of knowledge. Among them, archives preserve unique government records and invaluable private documents. These materials not only illuminate the evolution of state policy, public governance, and their consequences, but also safeguard the combined memories and generational experiences of Taiwan.

Operating under the National Development Council, the National Archives Administration (hereinafter "the Administration") is Taiwan's leading institution in archival documentation. Its preparatory office has worked diligently since 2000 to advance archival management and promote transparency and openness. On the cusp of its 25th anniversary, the Administration inaugurated Taiwan's first purpose-built National Archives building ("the Archives") this year (2025) in Linkou District, New Taipei City. Designed to accommodate at least two decades of archival growth, the Archives strengthens the depth of Taiwan's national memory through the breadth and diversity of its collections. It also serves as the country's premier center for archival research and media preservation. The new building features exhibition spaces that combine physical displays, immersive experiences, and smart technologies to offer an engaging, educational, and cultural experience. A user-friendly digital infrastructure encourages exploration and enhances public access to archival materials. Retail spaces featuring creative goods and light refreshments, together with a lush, ecologically diverse park, form a vibrant and inclusive public environment. This landmark destination invites both domestic and international visitors to discover the richness of Taiwan's historical identity and cultural character.

The National Development Council is responsible for formulating Taiwan's development strategies. Guided by the president's vision and the premier's policy priorities — and with careful consideration of domestic and global economic conditions — national policy plans are prepared accordingly. In the 2025-28 National Development Plan, we are advancing the National Project of Hope in adherence to the principles of innovative economy, balanced Taiwan, and inclusive growth. In addition to macroeconomic goals, the three-year plan establishes key social, economic, and environmental indicators and espouses eight major policy objectives. Together, these efforts aim to realize a national vision of innovation-driven prosperity, social justice and sustainability, and democratic peace. Records generated by government agencies in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these policies have become a part of the archives. Through open access and value-added applications, these collections serve not only as a foundation for democratic progress, but also as an essential channel for public participation in the country's governance.

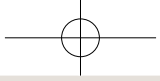
For the Archives' permanent exhibition, "Archives. Islands: Our Stories," the curators meticulously used archival records to present the exhibition as a narrative woven from archival records, tracing key turning points and the multifaceted transformation of postwar Taiwan. Like a microcosm of government action, the exhibition reflects the core value of archives, while also serves as a bridge for communication with the public. The exhibition covers national policies and major events, from the government's relocation to Taiwan and the era of U.S. aid to major construction and the pursuit of democratization. It also addresses issues vital to people's daily lives, such as the economic development, education, and technological progress, resonating with the memories of various generations. The final section of the exhibition connects a vibrant Taiwan with the global community. It integrates themes from the Hope project, such as technological innovation, social support, energy security, regional development, and diversity and inclusion, highlighting Taiwan's commitment to universal values and its contributions to global sustainability. The thoughtful layout of this guide allows readers to fully and systematically appreciate the content of the permanent exhibition. It helps them trace the path of our nation's development, as well as gain insights regarding the past, the present, and the future.



The planning, construction, and opening of the Archives represent the combined efforts of many. This endeavor stands not only as a shared national achievement, but also as the beginning of a new chapter of growth in Taiwan's cultural exchanges and soft powers. I extend my sincere gratitude to the colleagues of the Administration for their dedication, and to all those who have provided guidance and support throughout this process. We hope the Administration will take this milestone as an opportunity to infuse its work with continuous creativity, such as expanding the scope of national records, enriching the archive's holdings, and harnessing emerging technologies to deepen research and unlock new possibilities for value-added applications. Such steps will help ensure the intergenerational inheritance of national memories, transform recollections into a driving force for social development, and contribute to a thriving future for archives and their custodians.

Minister, National Development Council

November 2025



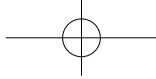
Foreword by the Director General

Archives trace the course of government action and embody the collective memories of society. To lay the foundation for systematic archival governance and promote the open access model in Taiwan, the National Archives Administration (hereinafter “the Administration”) under the National Development Council was formally established on Nov. 23, 2001 in accordance with the Archives Act. On the Administration’s 25th anniversary, Taiwan’s first National Archives building (“the Archives”) opens after years of careful planning: trial operations in September and full public access by November 2025. This milestone in national infrastructure not only ushers in a new era for Taiwan’s archival profession but also marks a transformative step in our journey.

Aligned with our mission to serve as a national center for archival memory and learning, the Archives features nearly 2,000 square meters of thoughtfully curated exhibition and educational space, where humanistic aesthetics and technology intersect. The permanent exhibition, which occupies about 660 square meters, is built around the concept of “spatial threads of memory.” Its continuous, ribbon-like layout links the Special Exhibition Hall with the Time Corridor, evoking the flow of history and connecting the arc of national memory with everyday life. The permanent exhibition, titled “Archives. Islands: Our Stories” presents over 400 key archival records from various stages of Taiwan’s postwar development, selected by our researchers to reflect the historical context and transitions behind major government policies. These records are organized into five thematic sections and eleven subtopics: “When Will Peace Arrive? Post-1945 Transformations,” “A Mysterious Force from Across the Pacific: American Aid During the Cold War,” “Growing in the Cracks Between Great Powers: The Era of Major Construction,” “The Voices from the Streets Shook the Halls of Power: The Wave of Democratization,” and “Positioning the Islands in the Waves of the World Global Currents: A Colorful Taiwan.” Original documents and facsimiles are presented alongside valuable artifacts, scaled models, multimedia installations, immersive simulations, and digital projections to illustrate how government and citizens together navigated each era of historical change and the shifting patterns of daily life. Through both physical displays and digital guide systems, visitors can engage directly with archival images and interactive media and immerse themselves in stories that once shaped the lives of their parents, friends, or even their very own.

This guide was created to convey the curatorial vision behind the permanent exhibition and to guide readers through its thematic framework and featured archival images. Each section opens with a quotation from archives, followed by a curated selection of around fifty iconic archival images. These records explore topics such as the repatriation of Japanese nationals and the national government’s relocation to Taiwan, the impact of U.S. aid on daily life, the shift from agriculture to industry and the advancement of large-scale infrastructure projects, the process of democratization and civic movements, and Taiwan’s evolving role in championing pluralistic values on the global stage. Through such thematic lens, the guide offers a bird’s-eye view of Taiwan’s historical turning points, uncovering the stories within the archives and allowing readers to connect naturally with the experiences of each generation. The guide also features hand-drawn illustrations, fold-out pages, and colorized archival images, along with QR codes linking to audio guides and archival insights to help readers discover deeper meanings within the records. Supplementary materials include interior and exterior floor plans of the Archives (highlighting gallery features and functions), an overview of the architectural and public art concepts, and key statistics on Taiwan’s national depository to provide essential context for navigating this newly established space.

The Archives is designed to accommodate up to 100 kilometers of records, with space reserved for future expansion; the present collection spans more than 31 kilometers. The Administration will continue to acquire and preserve a diverse range of records across centuries, while promoting their use in research, education, and value-added applications. In doing so, we aim to ensure that the Archives becomes a resource for everyone. To

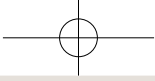


date, we have presented 56 themed and traveling exhibitions, attracting nearly 1.15 million visits and generating a wide array of creative, engaging moments. To celebrate the Archives' opening and the launch of its permanent exhibition, we are proud to publish this guide. I warmly invite you, dear readers, to visit the Archives, walk through time with us, and discover the stimulating and humanistic journey that archives have to offer.

Director General, National Archives Administration

Chiu-yan Lin

November 2025

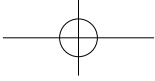


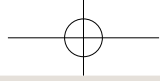
Curatorial Concept

Archives serve as “navigation charts of memory,” for they not only document government policies and actions but also trace the shifting contours of everyday life. Each archival record marks a pivotal transformation in society — the present we inhabit is built upon the yesterdays preserved in these archives. Because archives thread together the political, economic, and social dimensions of each era, this permanent exhibition at the National Archives (hereafter “the Archives”) that is curated by the National Archives Administration (“the Administration”) under the National Development Council builds a narrative centered on pivotal moments and storied memories. In doing so, it highlights issues that continue to shape everyday life. This approach offers a distinct perspective rooted in archival storytelling, setting the exhibition apart from those framed by national history or general Taiwanese history.

From migrating to trading and fishing, diverse groups of people have crossed paths on our island and their dynamic interactions have reverberated throughout history. Taiwan’s past is thus complex and the memories of its people richly varied, shaped by divergent origins and trajectories. Over the centuries, some risked their lives to reach Taiwan, some left in sorrow, some put down roots, and others passed through as transients. Regardless of when they arrived or whether they stayed, each left behind their story of encountering Taiwan. Based on this perspective, the permanent exhibition “Archives. Islands: Our Stories” is organized chronologically into five main sections: “When Will Peace Arrive? Post-1945 Transformations,” “Mysterious Force from Across the Pacific: American Aid During the Cold War,” “Growing in the Cracks Between Great Powers: The Era of Major Construction,” “The Voices from the Streets Shook the Halls of Power: The Wave of Democratization,” and “Positioning the Islands in the Waves of World Global Currents: A Colorful Taiwan.” These five sections encompass eleven themes and one interactive component: “Archival Encounters — A Personal Experience.” Together, they narrate Taiwan’s evolving story as told through the archival collection.

The exhibition space is conceived through the lens of “threads of memory” with interpretive designed to draw out the layers of remembrance, their embedded significance, and the turning points of history. These threads weave together the five thematic units using diverse methods to present select images alongside reconstructed scenes, everyday objects, and scale models. Interlacing shared memories and hopes for the future, they evoke Taiwan’s postwar journey to the present day as documented in the archives. At the same time, the exhibition’s fluid, ribbon-like spatial design is accentuated by projections of historically significant images and silhouettes that invite visitors to explore each critical historic juncture. The design extends outward, linking to the special exhibition hall, a time corridor, and other interactive zones. Whether spotlighting key records to illustrate the impact of policies on daily life, or transforming archival concepts into creative and multimodal displays, the exhibition seeks to create resonance across generations by offering every visitor a unique encounter with archival treasures as they move through this space.

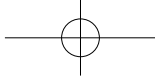




Exhibition Layout and Visitor Flow

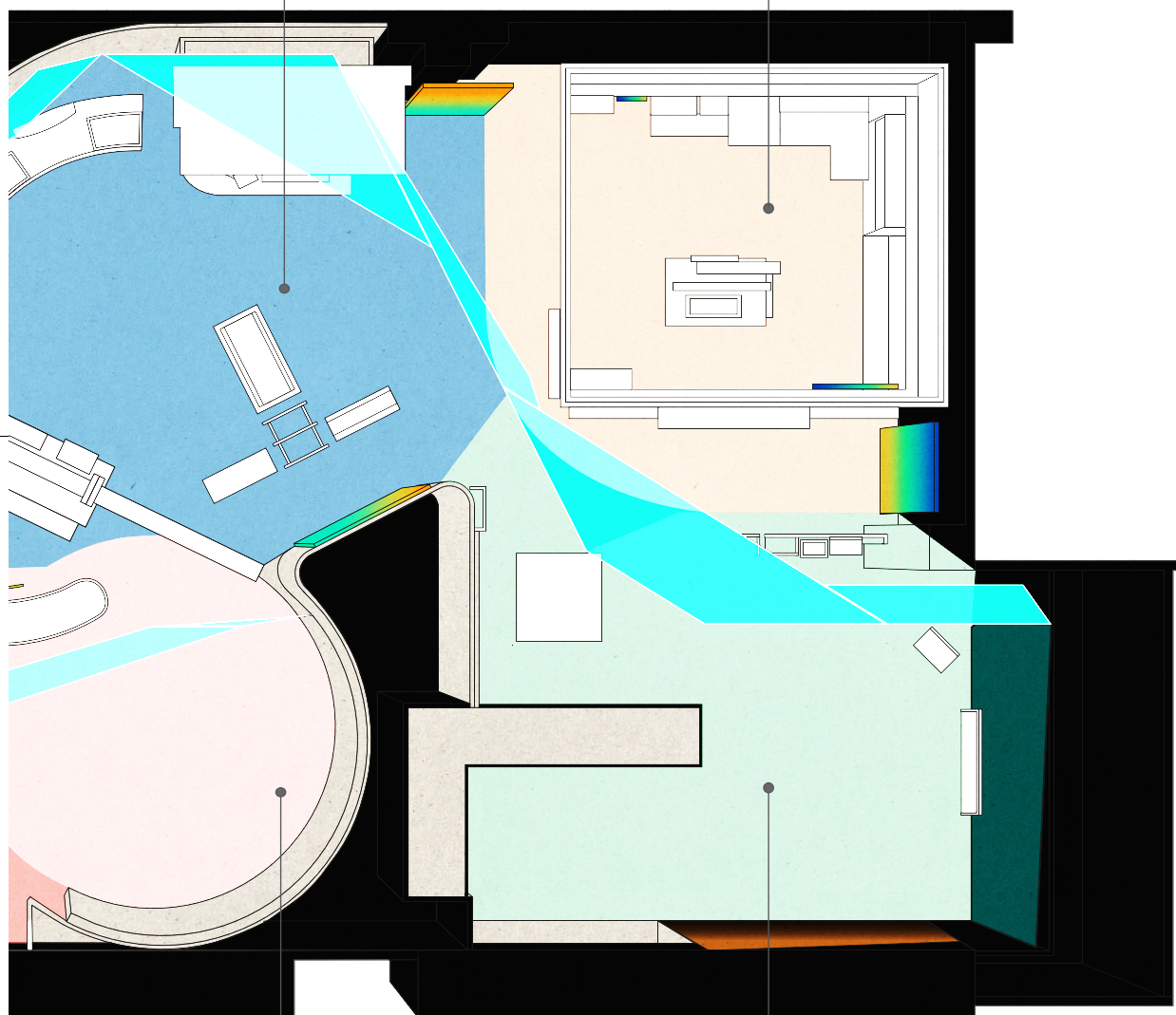
Section IV. The Voices from the Streets Shook the Halls of Power: The Wave of Democratization





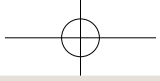
Section III.
Growing in the Cracks
Between Great Powers:
The Era of Major Construction

Section II.
Mysterious Force from Across the Pacific:
American Aid During the Cold War

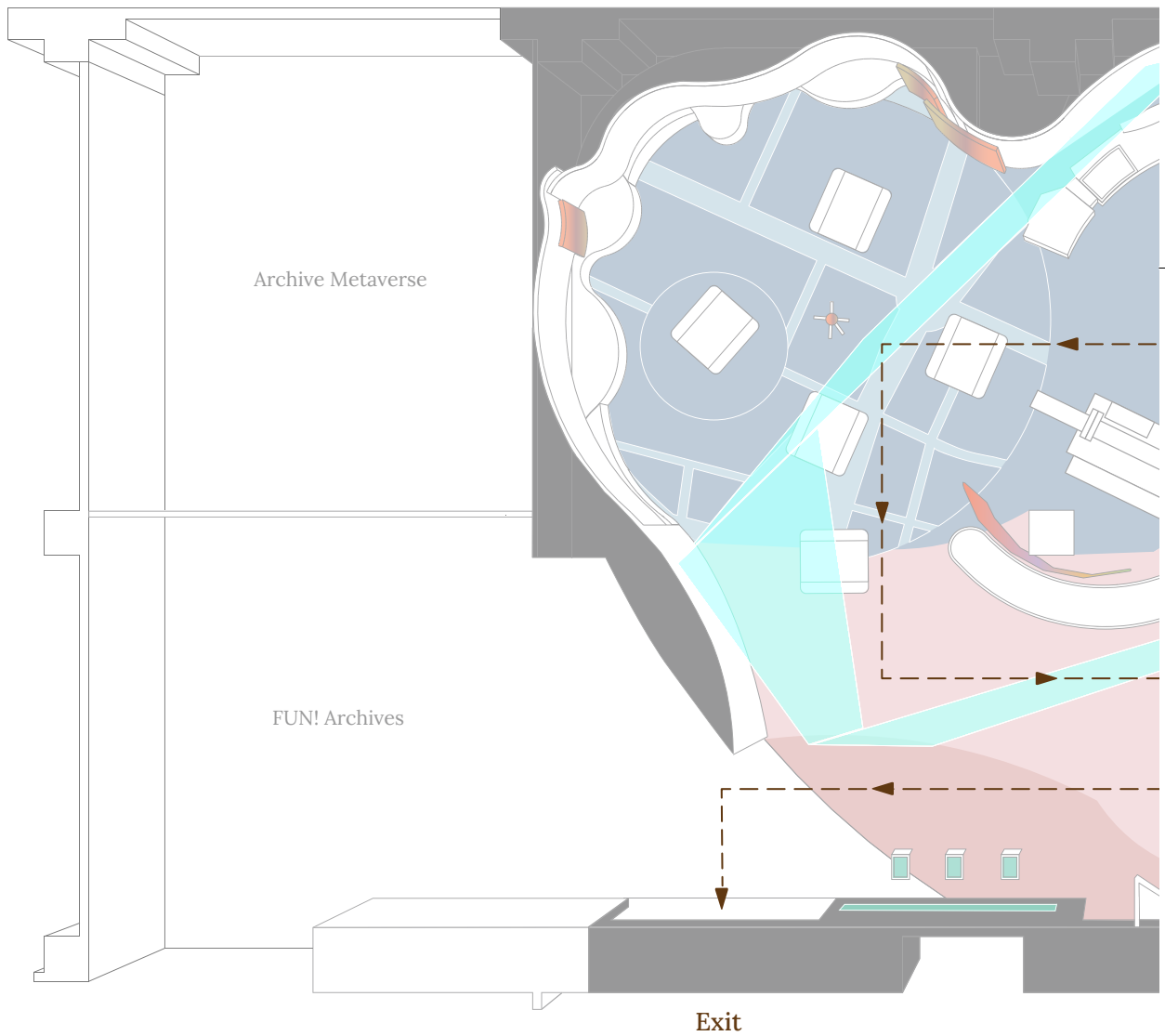


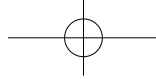
Section V.
Positioning the Islands in the Waves
of the World Global Currents:
A Colorful Taiwan

Section I.
When Will Peace Arrive?
Post-1945 Transformations



Archival Narratives





Section I.
When Will Peace Arrive?
Post-1945 Transformations

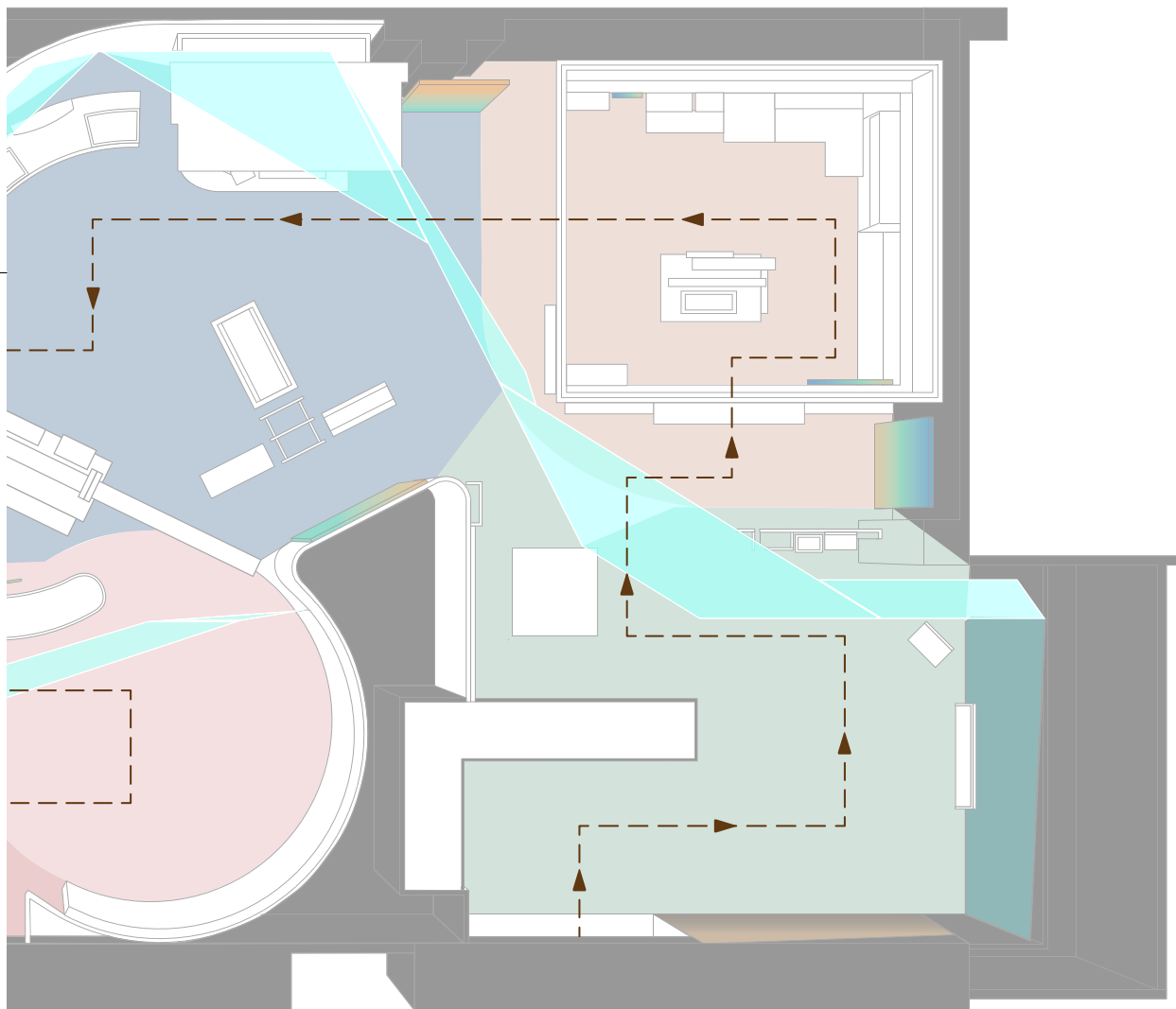
Section II.
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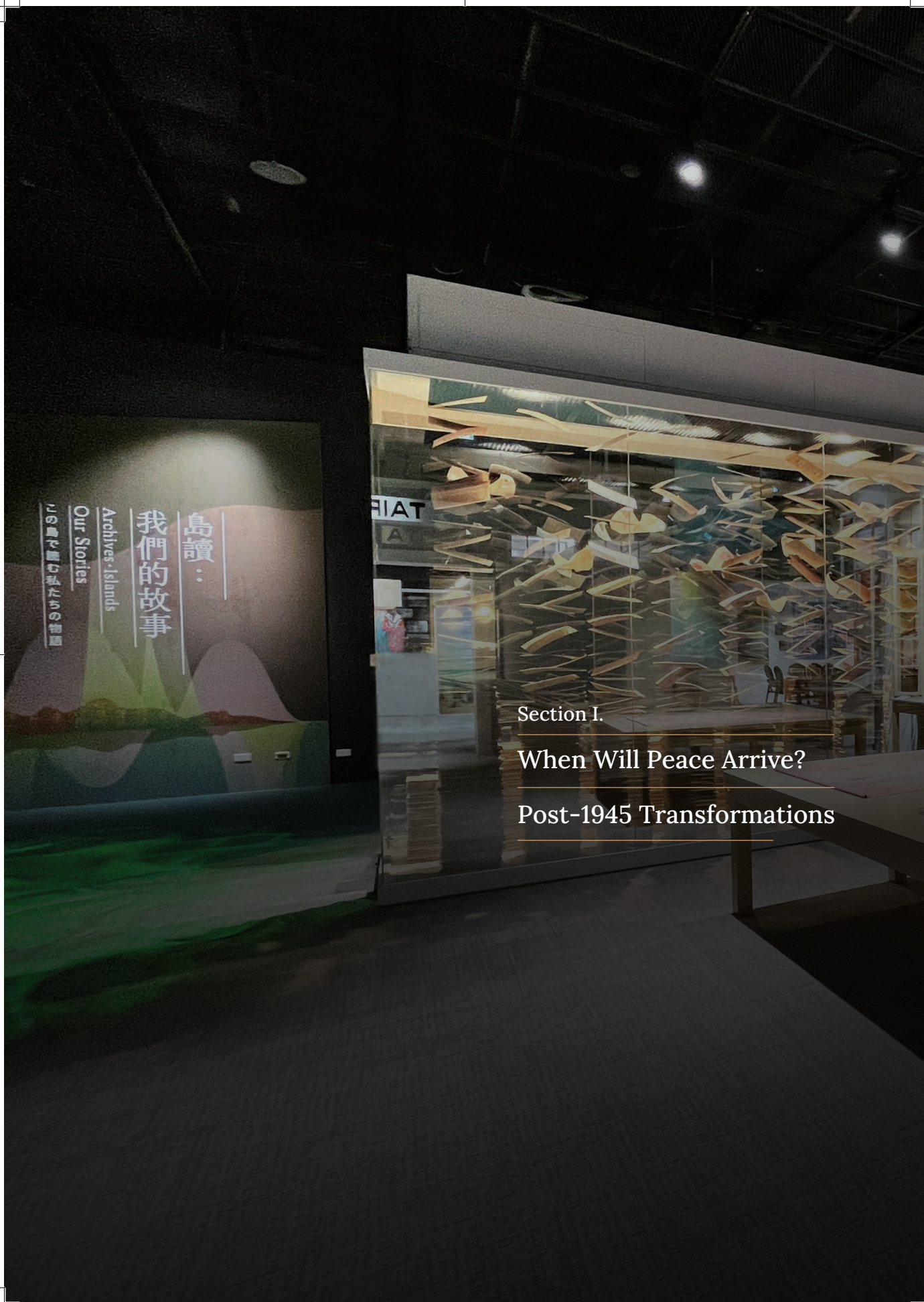
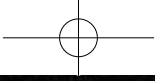
Section IV.
The Voices from the Streets Shook the Halls of Power:
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Section V.
Positioning the Islands in the Waves
of the World Global Currents: A Colorful Taiwan

Digital Art Display



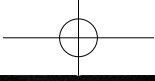
Entrance



Section I.

When Will Peace Arrive?

Post-1945 Transformations



After the Japanese colonial era ended, the transfer of power brought enormous changes to Taiwan. National identity, economic structure, and social culture faced profound disruptions. As the situation evolved, numerous problems worsened, ultimately leading to an irreversible upheaval. Post-World War II, the government faced multiple challenges beyond the complex task of “taking over Japanese assets and repatriating Japanese nationals.” The Chinese Civil War, shortages of essential supplies, and inflation severely impacted livelihoods and sparked widespread discontent.

The February 28 Incident of 1947 further intensified factional tensions. Later, as the central government retreated to Taiwan in 1949, millions of people from various continental provinces arrived on the island, giving rise to additional challenges and seeding future sources of conflict. Taiwan was soon transformed into a “base for anti-communist national recovery” through government initiatives.

“I believe Taiwan to be the final base for our revolutionary revival, with no need for any other concerns.”

Excerpt from Archive No. B5018230601/0038/583.69/6015

Section I.

When Will Peace

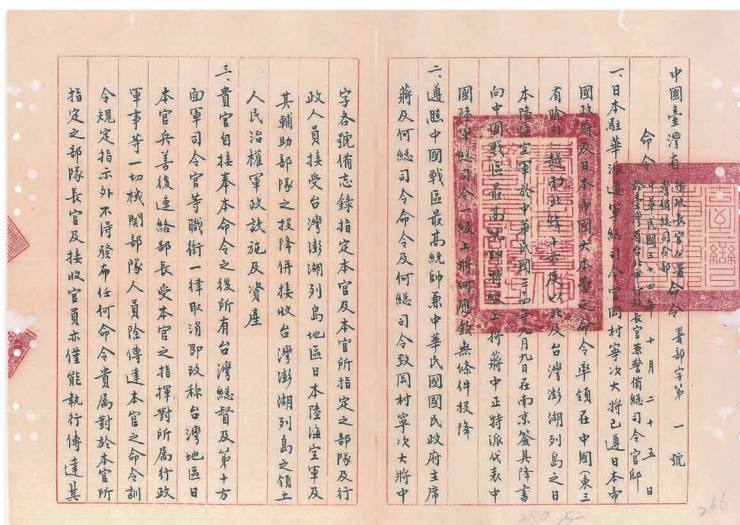
Arrive? Post-1945

Transformations

(I) Familiar Yet Strange: Postwar Takeover and Repatriation

On Aug. 15, 1945, Japan surrendered to allied forces. On Sept. 9, the formal instrument of surrender was signed in Nanjing. In preparation for the handover of Taiwan, Ge Jing-en, then director of the Forward Command Post, led a delegation of over seventy personnel to Taiwan on Oct. 5 to coordinate the surrender. The Nationalist Army soon followed to carry out the military takeover: the 70th Army arrived in Keelung on Oct. 17 to claim the northern regions, while the 62nd Army began arriving in waves in late November to take control over the southern regions via Kaohsiung. On Oct. 25, a surrender ceremony for "Taiwan Province under the China War Zone" was held at Zhongshan Hall in Taipei. That same day, the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Office was formally established.

In his dual capacity as chief executive of Taiwan Province and commander-in-chief of the Taiwan Provincial Garrison Headquarters, Chen Yi issued a directive of symbolic and historical significance — "Order No. 1," the first official order by the current government in Taiwan. The mandate first informed the Japanese forces stationed in Taiwan and the Penghu Islands that Japan had surrendered in Nanjing. Then it appointed Chen Yi to oversee the takeover of regional territory, governance, military infrastructure, and resources. It also instructed the former governor-general of Taiwan, Andō Rikichi of Imperial Japan, and his subordinates to cede authority, prepare the handover of assets and documents, and comply fully with the new directive.

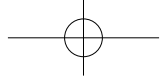


**"Order No. 1 of the Taiwan Provincial
Administrative Office and Garrison
Headquarters of the Republic of China"**

1945
B5018230601/0034/545/4010
National Archives Administration



DIGITAL GUIDE



Five days after the issuance of "Order No. 1," the Taiwan Provincial Garrison Headquarters announced on Oct. 30 the first military order formally issued by the current government in Taiwan, "Military Order No. 1." The Taiwan Military Takeover Committee chaired by Chen Yi was established on Nov. 1 and divided into Army Groups 1, 2, and 3; a Military Administration Group; a Navy Group; Air Force Groups 1 and 2; and a Military Police Group. These units were responsible for coordinating the military handover of Taiwan and Penghu.

Requiring all armed Japanese units to surrender their weapons and equipment, the military order instructed Japanese troops to remain at designated sites and prohibited them from acting on their own. The handover was jointly overseen by Chief of Staff Ke Yuan-fen of the Garrison Headquarters and General Chen Kung-ta, commander of the 70th Army. The transferred assets including weapons, horses, fuel, and provisions were sufficient to equip approximately 180,000 Japanese troops stationed in Taiwan. During the Nationalist takeover, however, incidents of theft, concealment, damage, and looting of military supplies were reported.



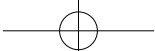
**"Military Order No. 1 of the
Taiwan Provincial Garrison
Headquarters, Republic of
China"**

1945
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National Archives Administration



DIGITAL GUIDE





"Guidelines for the Repatriation of Japanese Nationals in Taiwan Province"

1946

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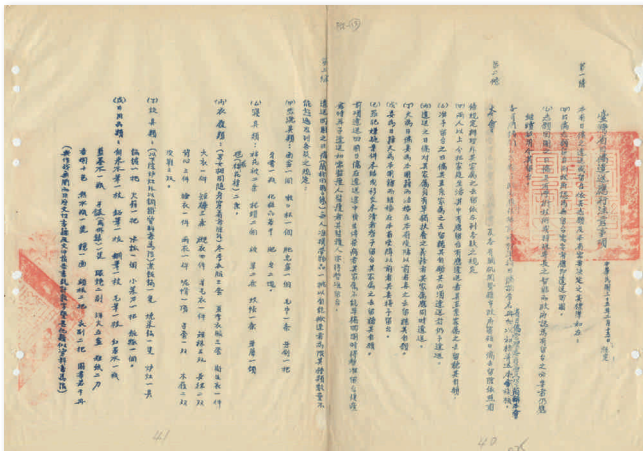
National Archives Administration



DIGITAL GUIDE

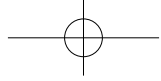
Holding concurrent posts as both civil and military chief, Chen Yi oversaw the takeover of Taiwan's civil and military affairs through the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Office and the Taiwan Provincial Garrison Headquarters. His top priorities included the transfer of Japanese assets and the repatriation of Japanese nationals. Before the repatriation process began, the Administrative Office issued the "Interim Measures for the Employment of Japanese Nationals" in November 1945, allowing a portion of Japanese residents to remain. In December, the Taiwan Provincial Management Committee of Japanese Nationals was established to manage both their repatriation and retention.

In February 1946, the "Guidelines for the Repatriation of Japanese Nationals in Taiwan Province" were issued, granting the Administrative Office sole authority to determine whether individuals could stay or be repatriated. When it came to marriages between Taiwanese and Japanese citizens, if the husband was Japanese, he was subject to repatriation, while the Taiwanese wife could choose whether to remain or depart. If the husband was Taiwanese and had married a Japanese woman prior to Japan's surrender, the wife was likewise allowed to decide. The guidelines restricted the belongings each person could take away from Taiwan to what they were able to carry on their own in a single trip. Prohibited items included cameras, jewelry, security bonds, and bank deposit certificates; each traveler was permitted to carry no more than 1,000 yen in cash. Mandatory health screenings and baggage inspections were conducted by the port offices of Keelung and Kaohsiung in coordination with U.S. military liaison teams.



Pier on the West Bank of Keelung Harbor

Author Wang Li-zhai



However, widespread corruption and power abuse among Nationalist officials handling the takeover deeply angered the public. Simultaneously, the escalating Chinese Civil War on continental China exacerbated shortages of daily necessities while excessive issuance of Taiwan Dollars led to rapid depreciation and hyperinflation. These factors steadily eroded public trust in the new government. On Feb. 27, 1947, mishandled enforcement against contraband cigarettes by the Monopoly Bureau triggered public anger. The next day, Administrative Office guards fired at civilians with machine guns, causing mass casualties in an event now known as the February 28 Incident. The conflict quickly spread across the island.

Archival records reveal three underlying causes of the February 28 Incident. Economically, the Administrative Office continued the command economy of the Imperial Japanese Governor-General, which suppressed local capital. Politically, the Taiwanese people were excluded from government posts on the grounds that they did not speak Mandarin, resulting in even lower representation than during Japanese rule and dashing the aspirations of local elites. In terms of governance, corruption and misconduct were rampant at all levels, from the takeover of Japanese property to day-to-day administration, leading to widespread public frustration and disillusionment.

In the wake of the February 28 Incident, the Taiwan Provincial Garrison Headquarters declared a temporary state of martial law that banned public assemblies and demonstrations in Taipei. A daily curfew was imposed from 8 PM to 6 AM, during which rail and bus transportation within the city was prohibited except under special circumstances. In the following days, National Assembly delegates and provincial council members formed the February 28 Incident Settlement Committee to negotiate a resolution. However, the 21st Division of the Nationalist Army soon landed at Keelung and Kaohsiung to launch a “pacification” campaign: they advanced from north and south toward central Taiwan, and then from the western region to the east.



Tianma Teahouse

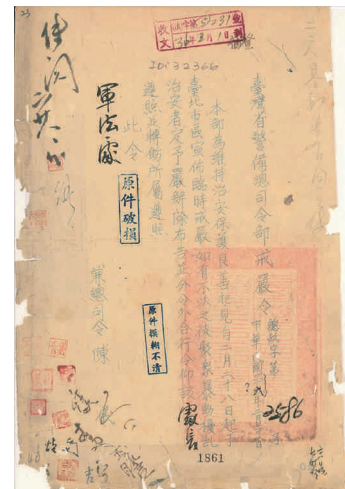
Historic photograph colorized by Prince Wang (Wang Tzu-shuo)

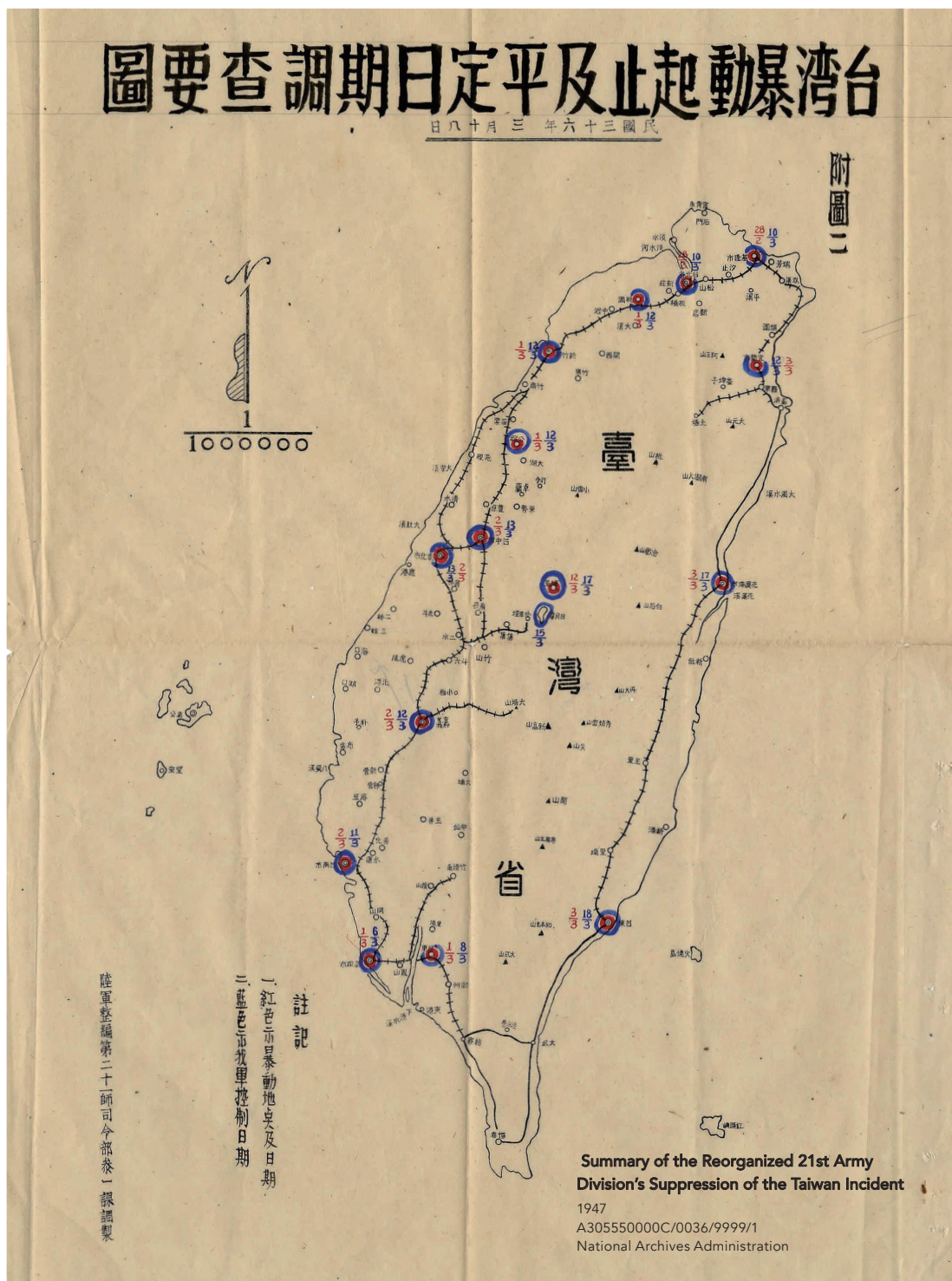
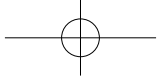
Temporary Martial Law Declared in Taipei City Starting February 28

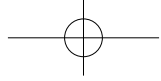
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National Archives Administration



DIGITAL GUIDE







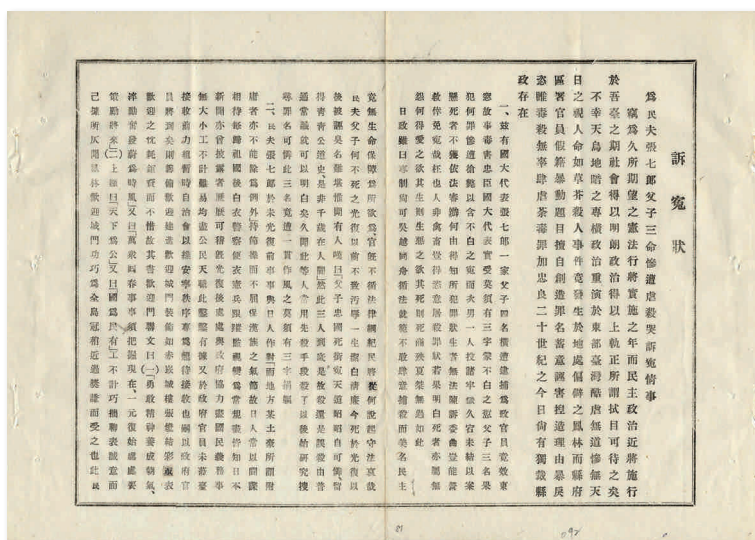
The central government subsequently dispatched Minister of National Defense Pai Chung-hsi (Bai Chongxi) to Taiwan on a mission of reassurance, hoping he could assess the situation and take appropriate action. On April 6, Pai submitted the "Report on Consoling Taiwan," which served as the basis for the Executive Yuan's decision to dissolve the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Office and establish the Taiwan Provincial Government. The Monopoly Bureau was restructured as the Tobacco and Wine Monopoly Bureau, and the Trade Bureau was abolished. In its place, the Taiwan Provincial Commodity Regulation Committee was established to manage the distribution of essential goods.

However, the military crackdown launched across Taiwan to suppress the turmoil following the February 28 Incident inflicted profound suffering on many. One of the most tragic and widely known cases occurred in Hualien and involved Dr. Chang Chi-lang. After the February 28 Incident erupted, the Reorganized 21st Division of the Nationalist Army entered Fenglin, Hualien on April 1, 1947, fortifying positions along city streets and spreading fear among the local population. To express support for the troops' role in maintaining public order, community leaders hosted a welcoming banquet on April 4. Dr. Chang Chi-lang, then serving as a National Assembly delegate, was

too ill to attend and sent his eldest son, Dr. Chang Tsung-jen, in his place.

After the banquet, Dr. Chang Tsung-jen returned to the hospital, where soldiers approached him with a request to treat their troops. When he arrived at the military camp, however, he was detained. Shortly afterward, the third son, Dr. Chang Kuo-jen, was arrested on the streets, and soldiers proceeded to the family home to detain Dr. Chang Chi-lang and his second son, Dr. Chang I-jen. During the search, soldiers found an active-duty military surgeon's insignia in Dr. Chang I-jen's pocket and learned that he had once received a personal commendation from Chairman Chiang Kai-shek. This spared him from execution. That night, the other three members of the Chang clan were tortured and executed by firing squad.

Unable to accept the execution of her husband and two sons on baseless charges, Chang's wife, Chan Chin-chih, submitted a petition for redress to the High Court out of the belief that local officials had fabricated the accusations. The case, however, received no meaningful response for many years. The Chang family's tragedy was not an isolated one. A long-standing political taboo, the February 28 Incident became one of Taiwan's deepest wounds.



The Wife of Chang Chi-lang in Hualien
Appealing for Justice of Her Husband
and Two Sons

1947
A50400000F/0036/ 刑簿 82/1
National Archives Administration



DIGITAL GUIDE