

# The Grass-Roots Governance of the National Government in Tianjin Recovery Area After the Triumph of the Anti-Japanese War

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The national government wants to penetrate into the grass-roots unit after the triumph of the Anti-Japanese War in the recovery area. Through the reorganization of the Baojia system, the government expects to achieve local autonomy and then solve the people's livelihood issues. The new Baojia system provides a platform for people to achieve their own demands, which presents the vision of civil rights to a certain extent. However, because of the complexity of the postwar social environment, the Baojia system cannot completely represent the will of the people, and finally becomes a militarized organization that was used as a tool to carry out the government decree.

*Keywords:* after the triumph of the Anti-Japanese War, Tianjin, the grass-roots governance, the Baojia system

After the triumph of the Anti-Japanese War, the National Government carried out grass-roots political construction in recovery area to implement decrees, and guided people to participate in the operation of political power. On September 3, 1945, Kuomintang (KMT) issued a statement to all compatriots, which related to the following aspects. In terms of demobilization, it said

We should provide employment opportunities for soldiers, provide necessary relief for the sick and wounded refugee children, revive the cities and villages destroyed by gunfire, seek rehabilitation for overseas Chinese, solve the difficulties of studying for youth, and widen the development of industry, mining, agriculture and commerce.

In terms of implementation of constitutionalism, it said, "we should speed up the formation of local autonomy, protect people's rights effectively, set up organs to convey public opinions at all levels as soon as possible, and develop the habit of respecting legal system fully" (Hebei Provincial Party Department of KMT, 1945, pp. 5-9). In middle March 1946, Chiang Kai-Shek made a special speech to emphasize the importance of grass-roots political construction and admonish KMT cadres not to rely on government violence. He made it clear that "some of our comrades always want to use political power and violence as tool rather than going deeply into the masses, which will be the most despicable means and doomed to failure" (Chiang, 1984, pp. 275-276). Then, he advocated that "we should be patient, calm, and should work hard to show our achievements and strength" (Chiang, 1984, pp. 275-276). We can realize that Chiang Kai-Shek has a clear understanding to social construction in recovery area, he thinks that "fully relying on violence is our crisis and my sole worry" (Chiang, 1947, p. 18). Facing the new opportunity of the recovery area after the Anti-Japanese War, and their own ruling

weakness, what kind of action dose the national government take on cultivating the social foundation, and what kind of its limitations are the focus of this paper.

There is still a lack of detailed analysis on the construction concept and political practice of the national government at the grass-roots level. Both Prasenjit Duara (2010) and Huang Zongzhi (2000) thought that the state power has only two meanings for rural society from the feudal dynasty to the Republic of China: One is taxation, and the other is maintaining social security.

KMT has never been able to create a sound and solid political structure.... KMT failed to create an efficient administrative institution, that could cater to the needs of people, implement the political and economic reforms, thus further weakened its institution, (Eastman, 2009, p. 207)

said by Llyod E. Eastman, in his book named *Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in War and Revolution 1937-1949*. Eastman (2009) also thought that KMT is almost entirely dependent on the army, which “has only political and military organizational structure, rather than social foundation” (Eastman, 2009,Original Preface, p. 2). In terms of Chiang Kai-Shek, Llyod E. Eastman (2009) thought he never intends to take the measures,

building of political organization that could make people have a sense of identity with the government, or carrying out social and economic reforms which could bring benefits to people, these measures may both lead to another completely different result in his struggle with the Communist Party. (Eastman, 2009, p. 206)

In book of *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle 1945-1949*, Suzanne Pepper took the similar point. She thinks that KMT has made little achievements in strengthening domestic political power and winning public support, the government has no other return to people except bunkum (Pepper, 2014).

Through the research on the progress and performance of the Baojia system in Tianjin after the war, this paper aims to show the effect of political participation under the grass-roots government of national government, and then analyzes how it affects the people’s recognition of the regime. As for KMT’s Baojia system, most of researchers are focus on its history, lacking of analysis on its specific operation (Li, 2010; Xiao, 2005; Yang, 2008).<sup>1</sup> Out of these researches, Zhang Ming’s view is typical. In book *The Change of Rural Social Power and Cultural Structure 1903-1953*, Zhang (2013) thought that on the whole the Baojia system is nominal and bureaucratic. In book *Revolution and Anti-Revolution: Politics of the Republic of China From Perspective of Social Culture*, Wang Qisheng (2010) pointed that the rural officials are the connection between state power and local society, which means the power sinking, and that forces grass-roots society to lose energy. The working schedules of rural officials are filled with the State administrative affairs, “Conscription, labor levy, grain levy and fund levy are not only rural officials’ work in wartime and postwar, but also their only work” (Wang, 2010, pp. 407-08). Based on his own experience in Gansu Province, Xie Juezai (1984) thought that “Because rural offices stand for the authorities, which decides that they don’t work for civilians, so there always exists opposite situation between rural offices and civilians” (Xie, 1984, p. 183), which brings about constant conflicts between the two sides. What’s more, some people think that the Baojia system which introduced during the period of national government “build a lot of obstacles between people and government, and confine the peasants in the lowest hell” (Luo, 1938, p. 2).

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<sup>1</sup> For example: Li Guoqing (2010) and Xiao Ruping (2005) focused on the progress of Baojia system. Yang Huanpeng (2008) thought that the purpose for people’s congress is to cater to superior government rather than to implement Baojia autonomy, so that the Baojia system carried out in Hangzhou ravages the local autonomy instead of achieving the combination with it.

In fact, facing the transformation of modern country, the national government has its own governance logic in urban recovery area after the war. So as to the Baojia system, its reconstruction and efficiency reflect the characteristics of the times, which should not be concluded on single line. In its detailed process, the system faces the dilemma between the subjective system design and the realistic social environment.

### Characteristics of the Grass-Roots Governance in Recovery Area

The construction of grass-roots political power of national government in Tianjin after the war reflects two sides: One is in efforts of social control, and the other is in political construction concept in recovery city. According to the file named *Measures for Household Register in Recovery Area* issued by Interior Ministry on September 11, 1945, it demands, within three months, each county and city government from recovery area which is created or moved back should firstly implement household registration, and reorganizes Baojia.<sup>2</sup> As for the urgent intention to reorganize Baojia at this time, it is directly revealed in the file named *Key Points for Baojia of All Provinces and Cities in Recovery Area*. All counties and cities in recovery area should immediately carry out Baojia system when they are recovered. During the recovery period, special attention should be paid to that the formation of Baojia must be benefit to management, at the same time should cater to military need. If necessary, local garrisons, gendarmes, and police can be consulted for assistance. Therefore, the newly established Baojia organizations from recovery area are required to carry out the joint insurance system, which demands that five households are seemed as one group, and the heads of each household establish the joint insurance. At the same time, directors of local administrative divisions, with local party groups, schools and just gentry, should comfort people, declare the intention of government, and mobilize the masses' accusation campaign. Although Baojia organizations are included in autonomous system based on the *Outline of County Organizations of All Levels* and *Measures for Household Register of County Baojia*, the meeting of head of household and people's congress that request and encourage people to participate actively, discuss their own division's regulation, and make mutual convention with other Bao, with the main goal of eliminating the bandits and stabilizing local area.<sup>3</sup> We can see that the national government makes more use of Baojia organizations to control social order in early recovery period.

With the passing of the initial recovery period, the government takes to pay more attention to the function of political construction, instead of only remaining social control. Based on municipal organization law and its detailed rules, combined with its own actual situation, Tianjin issued *Provisional Measures for Baojia Organizations in Tianjin Urban Area* in March 1946 to promote local autonomy. It formulates that Tianjin would be divided into 10 districts, and would carry out Baojia organizations. In detail, 10 to 30 households are designated as one Jia, 10 to 30 Jia are designated as one Bao, 10 to 30 Bao are designated as one district. The district sets up district office, allocated with one district mayor and one deputy district mayor, under the supervision of municipal government, and appointed to handle affaires of their own district and implement matters entrusted by municipal government. The Bao sets up one office, allocated with one chief director and one deputy director—they are under the supervision of district mayor, and appointed to handle affaires of their own Bao and implement matters entrusted by municipal government. The Bao also sets up people's congress

<sup>2</sup> *Orders for Checking and Compiling Household Registration in Recovery Area*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0025-2-003571-001.

<sup>3</sup> *Key Points for Baojia of All Provinces and Cities in Recovery Area*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000670-071.

composed of one person from each household, and it is convened every two months. The people's congress is responsible for the consideration of Baojia's regulation and conventions between the Bao and Bao. It also decides on the matters referred by chief director of Bao and suggestions of the citizens of their own area, on the other hand, it listens to the work report of Bao office and puts forward questions to it. Jia sets up director, who is elected by the meeting of heads of households.<sup>4</sup> The district's Baojia organizations and their autonomous affairs are in the charge of Social Ministry, and in May 1946, both of the newly appointed directors take office.<sup>5</sup>

The operation of Baojia organizations, under the grass-roots political power in this period, inherits the rudiment of Baojia initially used by the national government during the period of suppressing the Communist Party in Jiangxi, and the idea of combination between Baojia and autonomy formed after the reform of the new county system in 1939. However, this Baojia system forms a distinct difference from the Japanese puppet rule in Tianjin. In August 1932, in order to strengthen the public organization, to thoroughly check the registered residence, to enhance the self-defense ability, and to complete the work of suppression, the general headquarters of suppression in Henan, Hubei, and Anhui issued *Regulations on Compiling and Checking Baojia's Household in the Area of Suppression*. It indicates that because there are so many original levels in every county, all of the self-defense organizations with different names should be adapted to Baojia. According to the regulations, household is the minimal unit, 10 households form one Jia, and then 10 Jia form one Bao. The household sets up head of household, Jia sets up director of Jia, and Bao sets up director of Bao. The main responsibilities of these directors are to maintain peace and order of their area, such as admonishing residents not to be illegal, providing help to police to search for Communist, checking and controlling those who have participated in reactionary activities, checking traitors and residents' entry and exit, supervising the construction of fortifications and other security matters. In addition to following their own regulation, each head of household should join at least five other heads of household in common Jia to form joint security, which would benefit to encourage and monitor each other to prevent collusion with Communist (General Headquarters of Suppression in Henan, Hubei and Anhui, 1999, p. 110). With the coming of the stalemate stage of against Japan, the national government puts forward slogan that "the war of resistance and founding of the People's Republic should go hand in hand". In September 1939, the government's Executive Yuan issued *Outline of County Organizations at All Levels* to carry out the reform of new county system. There exists different opinion on the construction of counties in KMT, such as running autonomy without Baojia system and running Baojia system without autonomy. The basic feature of the new county is the combination of local autonomy and official state administration, the combination of autonomy and Baojia system (Wei, 2004, pp. 212-213). *The Law of the City* issued in May 1943, which regulates that "the county autonomy shall be applied" (Government's Executive Yuan, 1999, p. 256), is the embodiment under this background. After the triumph of Anti-Japanese war, from the *Key Points for Baojia of All Provinces and Cities in Recovery Area* to *Provisional Measures for Baojia System in Tianjin Urban Area*, the related measures taken in Tianjin recovered area reflect the national government's practice on Baojia system, which from only maintaining security reflected in *The Regulations on Compiling and Checking Baojia's Household in the Area of Suppression* to containing a wide

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<sup>4</sup> *Provisional Measures for Baojia System in Tianjin Urban Area*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0025-2-000319-004.

<sup>5</sup> *Orders for Self-Governance and Baojia Organization to Bureau of Social Affairs*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0025-3-004815-001.

range of local construction matters reflected in *Outline of County Organizations at All Levels and the Law of the City*. All in all, the nature of Baojia system changes from a simple self-defense organization to an autonomous organization.

This is more obvious in comparison with the Baojia formation during the period of Japanese puppet rule in Tianjin. In order to strengthen the efficiency of public security and enhance the spirit of cooperation between police and the public, and according to the Baojia regulations issued by administrative committee of the provisional government of the Republic of China in July 1939, Tianjin special municipal office issued *Measures for Implementation of Baojia of the Police Bureau of Tianjin Special Municipal Office*. The most important feature of this regulation is to classify the Baojia system into the police organization, and the Baojia area is under the jurisdiction of each branch of the police station. In terms of management, the chief of police office is the highest supervisor who is responsible for guiding and supervising Baojia's affairs. Under the order of this chief of police office, the chief of each sub police office is responsible for their own Baojia's affairs; then under the order of this chief, the chief inspector of each local police station is responsible for the implementation of their own Baojia's affairs. There exists a set of conditions for directors of Baojia. Their candidates should be submitted by lower level police organization and approved by chief of sub police office or police office, they should be politically reliable and ethical, and should be residents of this city at least for one year; furthermore, they should not be considered reactionary. Those who smoke opium and have other bad habits, or who are not good enough to set an example for the public can not to be the candidates.<sup>6</sup> The duties of directors are implementation of political control rather than social construction, whether it is out of subjective settings or actual operation. The core functions of this Japanese puppet Baojia organization are to assist with hunt and arrest communists, make report whether there is rape in this area at any time. However, the national government's reconstruction in this area is based on people's congress and the meeting of directors of Baojia.

### **Operation Effect of the Meeting of Directors of Baojia**

From the perspective of municipal government, on the one hand, the purpose to organize Baojia in recovery area is to organize the public to approach to democracy, on the other hand, is to propagate laws and regulations. Meeting of directors of Baojia and people's congress are the most important. The meeting of directors is held by directors of Jia, who convened by director of Bao every two month, to publicize important laws and regulations or discuss the matters to be handled by their own Bao.<sup>7</sup> After Tianjin municipal government promulgated the *Interim Measures for Meeting of Directors of Baojia of All Districts in Tianjin* in December 1947, the meeting has been held from January 1948 on schedule. Although it has the function of implementation of decrees, the work of the meeting reflects the character of autonomy. As the director of sixth Bao from eighth district said at the first meeting of directors:

the work of autonomy has to be carried out urgently to meet the constitutional government after the establishment of municipal bureau of civil affairs. On this situation, to carry out city's autonomous work, the civil affairs bureau director Feng convened meeting of directors of Bao frequently and instructed grass-roots work in detail. One of the most concerned

<sup>6</sup> *Measures for Implementation of Baojia in Police Bureau of Tianjin Special Municipal Office*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0025-2-000210-005.

<sup>7</sup> *Interim Measures for Meeting of Directors of Baojia of All Districts in Tianjin*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000001-002.

about is citizens who should build practical contact with directors of Baojia and Bao office. Then the interim measures are promulgated to manage and improve the development of local governments to accomplish the autonomous work.<sup>8</sup>

Based on the records of the 17th meeting of directors of Baojia of the 43rd Bao in eighth district from January to October 1948, we can see the basic operation of the meeting at that time:

This Bao sets up 36 Jia, each meeting of directors of Baojia shall be attended by 39 persons, including director of Bao, officer of Bao, census office clerk and director of Jia. According to the regulation of holding twice meetings every month, 20 meetings of director of Baojia should be held during this period, but 17 meetings are actually held (less than one in January, February, and May respectively), with meeting holding rate of 85%; the number of people attending each time is 36, 31, 37, 32, 31, 33, 34, 32, 34, 30, 30, 29, 26, 24, 25, 29, and 25, respectively, the average attendance is 30.5, and the attendance rate is 78%, the number of absentees increases gradually with the passage of time; in addition to explaining the significance of holding meeting of director of Baojia, encouraging director of Baojia to express their opinions on matters concerning the development and reform of Baojia, as well as the routine report on the working conditions in the past half month at the first meeting of director of Baojia, the chairman of the meeting reports 19 items of special matters in the other meetings: once for election of the senate, seven times for the recruitment and collection of living allowance for volunteers, once for assisting government to thoroughly investigate accusations about drug, twice for recruitment of shoes by labor force, twice for the promotion of joint insurance, twice for the application for postponement of recruitment, once for message to compatriots in Northern China on propaganda of Fu Zuoyi's work of suppression the communist party, twice for recruitment security brigade work, and once for consumption cooperative. Among these, seven of them are directly related to conscription, accounting for 36.8%, while 16 are related to military themes, accounting for 84.2%, which is naturally related to the tension of civil war situation in 1948. On the other hand, 19 items are also discussed: twice for designation dirty land for dumping, once for stopping blackout every night, three times for traffic problems, such as renovating roads and sewers, once for assisting government in drug control, four times for recruiting volunteers and living subsidies, once for investigating dangerous buildings, twice for joint insurance, once for calling a meeting of heads of households to promote local autonomy, twice for implementing monetary reform and reporting illegal trader, and twice for recruiting security brigade. Among these, six of them are put forward by director of Bao, four cases are put forward by director of Jia Xu Lianke, and more than half of the proposals are put forward by two of them, which show that ordinary participants are not enthusiastic. There are differences in concerns between proposals and chairman's reports. Although recruitment still accounts for the largest number of single proposal, the number of military related proposals drops to eight times, accounting for 42% of the total proposals. Compared with the chairman's report, the number of military related proposals drops significantly. However, health, power supply, traffic, drainage, and other issues related to people's livelihood are not found in chairman's report, which shows proposals focus on local characteristics of its own interests. In particular, the proposals made at the previous three meetings are all about people's livelihood. According to the nature divided between independent proposals and implementation of government decrees, only the case of designated dump dirt place, stopping power, renovation of roads and sewers belongs to the bottom-up independent proposals. And the rest, such as prosecution of smoking criminals, implementation of currency reform,

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<sup>8</sup> *Records of This Meeting of Directors of Baojia*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000093-049.

investigation of dangerous buildings, handling of joint insurance, are non-military but still under the category of carrying out or responding to government orders. In this way, although more than half of the non-military proposals from meeting of director of Baojia, accounts for 58%, there are only six or 31% autonomous proposals with the nature of local autonomy.<sup>9</sup> The nature and consciousness of local self-governance affairs are not obvious enough, especially in spite of the large number of participants in the meeting, the number of proposal participants is too small, and the agenda is not active enough.

It can be seen, from this period, this Bao can basically hold meeting of director of Baojia on schedule monthly, the attendance can also maintain a large number of people, and the matters reported and discussed are not only from the administrative arrangements but also from the autonomous affairs. In early stage, there are still many discussions on the issues related to the life of people and businessmen. However, due to the influence of war situation, the focus of meeting of director of Baojia is obviously inclined to the conscription and fund-raising in later stage, and the autonomy affairs are overwhelmed by this urgent political task. In addition, the proposers are concentrated among several people, with few topics to be discussed, and most of the proposers are relatively silent. As the meeting record form is to be filled out after the meeting, and sent to district office to filing within five days, it is difficult to determine whether the content is filter out some of the speech, and whether the content of meeting record could fully reflect actual atmosphere of the meeting.

Based on the records of meeting of director of Baojia of the sixth, seventh, 10th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 19th, 20th, 32nd, 34th, 35th, and 40th (40th) from January to March in 1948 in the eighth district, the horizontal comparison also presents a similar aspect to the vertical investigation of the 43rd Bao. During the same period, the contents of the report and the discussion items of meeting of director of Baojia are basically the same, mainly about the implementation of the superior's policies and instructions, among which the matters related to conscription occupy the largest weight. The other matters related to democracy and people's livelihood, such as the election of municipal councilors and the allocation of flour during the spring festival, are still assigned by the superior, and the actual operation of the meeting of director of Baojia has not yet been enough reflect the local autonomy system design.<sup>10</sup> The urgency and compulsion of conscription magnifies the Baojia system as a means of social control, eliminates the space for its development, seriously impairs people's expectations and identification with the regime, and thus hinders people's assumption of being integrated into the regime. This is related to the grim circumstances of wartime obviously, and shows the dilemma of restoring grass-roots power to the foundations of democracy after the war. Due to the differences of participants, compared with the administrative tendency of meeting of director of Baojia, the people's congress shows more efforts of public opinion.

### The Practice of People's Congress

According to the *Provisional Measures for Baojia System in Tianjin Urban Area* formulated in 1946, the people's congress was set up, consisting of one person from each household and was held every two months.

<sup>9</sup> *Records of This Meeting of Directors of Baojia From January to October*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000160-002.

<sup>10</sup> *Records of the Meeting of Directors of Baojia*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000093-035, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-036, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-034, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-033, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-032. Minutes of the monthly report meeting of the director of Bao, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000093-019, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-022, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-021, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-020, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-018, 401206800-J0037-1-000093-005.

The people's congress is responsible for reviewing the regulations of its own Bao and conventions between Bao and Bao, discussing the proposals submitted by the head and citizens of the Bao, listening to the work report of Baojia office, asking questions to the Baojia office and other important developments related to the Bao.<sup>11</sup> Tianjin's Baojia system was completed in May 1946, and the first people's congress was successively held from August. As the core link of urban grass roots autonomy, people's congress embodies the ideal of civil politics, as the interior ministry said in the decree: "the essence of people's congress is to train people to exercise the four rights and to achieve the foundation of civil politics"<sup>12</sup>. In August 1946, the principal of the 20th Bao School from the eighth district said at the first people's congress:

People's congress is an initial act and beginning of democracy in the country. Because the government has given us sovereignty, we should be good at applying it so as to bring happiness to people. For a long time in history, most of our people have neither the opportunity nor right to participate in politics. As a result, they keep in mind that they go to bed with lamb and rise with the lark, and there is nothing to concern about the power of emperor, and then they always encounter many oppressed and fooled things, and have to endure the pain. However, because the government has given us "power", now it is the time for civil rights to be unobstructed, and we should contribute many opinions to government with our faith, views and our experience in order to build the country and benefit ourselves. We are not allowed to indulge, to be irresponsible in politics! In other words, people's congress is one of the tasks of founding the people's republic and the basic work of exercising local autonomy.<sup>13</sup>

At the first people's congress of the eleventh Bao of the same period, director of Bao expressed the same view in his speech:

We should know what is the people's congress and its mission. The director of Bao deals with all the affairs within the Bao, people should question whether they stand for public will, whether they serve people faithfully, and whether they work for public welfare. In short, we are going to govern ourselves. What is autonomy is to manage one's own affairs, that is to return the government to people. Recalling the overthrow of despotism, the reconstruction of the Republic of China, and the implementation of autonomy, the significance of holding people's congress is to unite the consciousness of people, to test the ability of autonomy, to implement the preliminary civil rights, to fulfill the obligations of people's self-government and to enjoy the natural democratic rights. As for the discussion on the development and reform of Bao, we should work together to realize the autonomy of people in a truly democratic country and establish the foundation for democracy and civil rights.<sup>14</sup>

Out of the director's enthusiasm, I am afraid that it is not as Yang Huanpeng (2008) said, the holding of people's congress is only "to cope with the inspection of the higher government" (p. 128).

By analyzing the case report form of the first and second people's congress in ninth district, it is possible to understand the practice and operation of people's congress. This district has a total of 28 Bao, of which the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, ninth, 10th, 16th, 18th, 19th, and 25th leave its resolution at the first people's congress. The above confirmed attendance is 726, 372, 920, 465, 512, 750, 360, 450, 308, and 863, respectively. Except for the absence records of the fourth, 16th, and 19th Bao, the attendance of the rest Bao is 211, 88, 405, 80, 446, 300, 400, and 293, respectively. According to this, the average attendance rate of each Bao reaches 69.4%, but the number of the first people's congress held on time is less, which less than half of a record. There

<sup>11</sup> *Provisional Measures for Baojia Organizations in Tianjin Urban Area*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0025-2-000319-004.

<sup>12</sup> *Exhortation to the Fifth District for People to Attend People's Congress Freely*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0034-1-000237-001.

<sup>13</sup> *Principal Ma's Oration at the First People's Congress*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000487-026.

<sup>14</sup> *Records of People's Congress* (August 1946), edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000481.

are 23 proposals in total, as follows: five times for relief for the destitute in the poor, five times for building clinic for the poor, twice for building gutters to drain rainwater, four times for setting up schools to relieve drop-out children, once for building embankments along river to prevent floods, once for repairing the collapsed classrooms, twice for repairing roads, once for setting up street lamps for business development, once for paving water pipes to supply drinks for health, and once for remove the electrochemical factory which is harmful to people's livelihood.<sup>15</sup> They are all about people's livelihood issues. By January 1947, five months have elapsed since the second people's congress was held. There are 27 Bao submit their records, which the rate is much higher than that of the first people's congress. Compared with 11 Bao submit proposals at the first people's congress, there are only the 25 Bao leave no record. The attendance is 365, 356, 456, 362, 421, 220, 130, 153, 250, and 617, respectively, which is 50.3%, 96.2%, 49.6%, 77.8%, 92.3%, 43%, 17.3%, 42.5%, 55.6%, and 200.3% when compared with the first people's congress. From the data of each people's congress, it can be seen that, except for an abnormal increase in one of Bao's attendance, the number of the remaining nine Bao declines, and seven of them show a significant decline. In terms of proposal, 22 Bao submit 39 proposals at the second people's congress. Once for building levees, six times for investigation of poor relief, 10 times for building gutters, six times for rubbish remove, once for building clinic for the poor, twice for elementary education case, five times for road case, once for sprinkler restoration, once for autonomy training restoration, once for preventing blackout case, once for expansion of consumers' cooperative and increase shares, once for health and epidemic prevention, once for guard against bandits, once for census check and once for water supply case. The topics involved are similar to those of the first people's congress, which are all related to people's livelihood. Compared with the changes in contents of the proposals put forward by the two people's congresses, eight of the fifteen proposals are put forward by both of the congress, and that reflects most of the proposals fail to get effective solution.<sup>16</sup>

At the beginning of people's congress, the social security bureau clearly ordered that the people's congress should be held separately instead of jointly. But in August 1948, the eighth district held the sixth people's congress, which became to be a combination with three or four Bao, so its 43 Bao combined to hold 13 people's congresses. The eighth district is the first in the city to have district mayor attend every meeting in person. In his speech, the district mayor emphasized there are two important issues of this people's congress. The one is to implement government order to deal with joint insurance and military service, the other is to handle the autonomy, to clear the household registration, to set up economic organs, to build schools, roads, and to handle health care. These issues have been concerned by people's congress for a long time, and then it proves that the issues related to autonomy have not been effectively solved. The district mayor also said that "all things that are of interest to people should be put forward by all of you, and I will gather the opinions and review them, then we will do it one by one for you". However, I am afraid that in this environment, the self-governance will only become a vision: "because the current urgent work is military service and joint security, district mayor Wang is also afraid the work will not be handled thoroughly, so he attends people's congress in person and expresses its significance". It can be also seen from this congress's proposal. Only four of 13 people's congresses have proposals for discussion, and the joint security and military conscription

<sup>15</sup> *To Distribute the Report Form of Case Resolved by the First People's Congress*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0038-1-000090-034.

<sup>16</sup> *To Report the Progress of the Second People's Congress to the Director of Municipal Social Security Bureau*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0038-1-000090-038.

assigned by higher authorities are paid most attention, other individual livelihood issues, like curbing soaring prices, rationing flour, and building water stations with less enthusiasm.<sup>17</sup>

### **Militarization of Baojia organization**

With the war rage, the national government's cognition of Baojia changes more utilitarian. How to better implement the decree is better than the autonomous operation. As early as July 1947, according to the review report of the current review panel, the Executive Yuan demanded that all officials in charge of central and local governments should fully cooperate with the subsequent military plans and be responsible for the implementation of them, and should be replaced if they could not succeed.<sup>18</sup> In December 1948, Tianjin municipal government conveyed the instruction of the Ministry of the interior on the application of the principles of Baojia in various places, which brought the expectation of its function back to the initial period of Jiangxi's suppression of Communist Party:

The first step of suppression Communist Party is to mobilize the public to defend and eliminate. As early as the suppression in three provinces, Baojia as the grass roots organization of self-governance and self-defense plays a big role in suppression Communist Party. So when communist rebellion is becoming more and more urgent, only Baojia with strict organization is enough to cooperate with military progress and stabilize the rear order.

Baojia has always been tasked with various tasks. It is necessary for Baojia to conduct the administrative decrees of education and health, the conscription of soldiers and grain. However, because the lack of actual number and the limited financial resources, it is difficult for Baojia to implement and results to complain. In fact, if Baojia organization is responsible for its mission, it would still do everything without success. To exert the utilitarian function of Baojia, the Ministry of the interior drew up *Key Points for Baojia in Pacification Area and Rear Area* and put forward the following principles: First, to cooperate with the military counter insurgency as the premise, secondly, take into account the identity, ability, and environment of Baojia's personnel, not to take them perform lowly servitude or excessive coercion, thirdly, depending on the priority of the event, the event would be solved one after the other. All work must be planned and regulated by the higher authorities, and if no order can be given by the higher authorities, organizations or troops may not directly command Baojia.<sup>19</sup> The above principles to Baojia are named after preventing excessive use of Baojia, but, in fact, are to militarise Baojia. In January 1949, the last moment of the war, the 8,998 garrison force stationed in Tianjin formulated the *Measures for the Urgent Improvement of Baojia and the Prevention of Rape and Espionage in Wartime*, which completely brought Baojia system into the wartime system. Based on its original administrative division, Baojia takes the responsibility and carries out wartime tasks: One is to grasp the household registration and investigate communist, two is to investigate and report matters such as life and death of residents moving in and out, and report various changes such as lodging with visitors, three is to prevent workers, students, refugees, jobless vagrants to be attracted by communist, and to pay attention to entertainment places and other main places for communist, four is to implement joint security, practice convention to protect people, so that the people can supervise each other, five is to maintain public order,

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<sup>17</sup> *Records on Holding the People's Congress*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000487.

<sup>18</sup> *Orders to the Director of 13th Bao for Leaders at All Levels From Central and Local Governments to Implement Various Military Affairs*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000689-051.

<sup>19</sup> *A Copy of Order to Eighth District Office for Principle of Baojia Organization*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0037-1-000642-071.

prevent all activities of communist, inspect communist and report all gatherings, and solve all problems of people, six is to inform the public, so that make government decrees can be thoroughly infiltrated.<sup>20</sup> In January 1949, at the people's congress held by the ninth district of the second division from Jinbei garrison district, Commander Liu made it clear that military was the first, which followed by politics at the martial-law period, and everything within a region was decided by the highest military chief. He also conveyed the orders of higher authorities: Director of Bao is responsible to transfer all the private weapons within the Bao to gendarmerie for temporary storage, and directors of Baojia take the responsibility of checking the household registration; to take measures to guard against those who send out signal; to combine five households to joint security; to stand guard on duty. In addition to these above orders, the commander also put forward his personal opinion: At least two wells should be built for each Bao, at least one blast hole should be built for each household, and fire-fighting preparations and fire-fighting equipment should be organized.<sup>21</sup> So far, Baojia system has no real autonomy space.

### Conclusion

On the occasion of the victory of the war against Japanese, Chiang Kai-shek and other state leaders have a sober understanding of KMT's ruling mode that attaching importance to military affairs and lacking grass-roots. They hope that through the following political construction to go deep into the public, organize them, then enter into grass-roots, and play a leading role. Out of the situation, they create a political organization, that they could use it to understand people's demands, to implement their own political and economic policies, to make people have a sense of identity with the government, then to bring social and economic benefits to people and win a solid foundation for their own political power. In order to achieve the balance between political power and local autonomy, and achieve the smooth government order and improve people's livelihood, they take detailed measures that to reorganize Baojia system in recovered cities left by the Japanese puppet period, to build meeting of director of Baojia and people's congress. Under the repeated promotion of the national government, a complete organizational framework of grass-roots management is basically established, the institutionalized operation of public opinion institution is also basically realized, and the awareness and enthusiasm of people to participate in political power are taught in many aspects, that to a certain extent promotes the effective implementation of the government order and the improvement of people's own interests.

However, in practical operation, this system is still the result of administrative supervision from top to bottom, and fails to be internalized into the needs of people. How to convey the political orders, and how to accomplish affairs assigned by higher authorities are still the most concerned things of directors of Baojia, who lack enthusiasm about the proposals for autonomy. Although paying attention to many aspects of people's livelihood, the proposals put forward by people's congress are often failed to be solved for a long time, and the following is the dropped attendance of the meeting of director of Baojia. People's congress and other grass-roots organizations provide a platform for people to participate in political power and express their opinions, on the other hand, in order to achieve the unity of the upper and the lower, the national government intends to solve livelihood problems with these organizations. However, in actual operation effect, because the

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<sup>20</sup> *To the Fifth District Office for Improvement of Baojia Organization and Communist's Suppression*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0034-1-000571-002.

<sup>21</sup> *Minutes of the Meeting of Director of Baojia From the Second Division of Jinbei Police District*, edited in Tianjin Municipal Archives, file number: 401206800-J0038-1-000033-021.

transmission of government orders and military orders are urgent day by day, the solution of livelihood problems need more time and complicated process. As a result, grass-roots organizations take much work of social control and resource absorption in a limited period of time, which forms the situation that they are not able to solve issues related to people's livelihood in time, then shows a weak vision that they cannot promote. Under the pressure of civil war, Baojia system at the grass-roots in the city has no choice but to become a militarized organization again, which blocks all kinds of above efforts. From the beginning to the end of the reign of KMT, Wang Qisheng (2010) believed that, "many of its political measures are the product of strategic interaction with Communist Party" (pp. 399, 401). However, in discussion of this paper, we can see that KMT regime has its own governance logic facing the transformation of the modern country. And it is in the internal environment of "strategic interaction with Communist Party", that such the logic is alienated before it is deepened, and is failed on the verge of success.

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