

Why Don't They Go Back Home? ——— **Research on the Situation of Taiwanese in Canton** **after the War and the Issue of Their Return**

Chien-chiu Chang*

ABSTRACT

This paper tried making a preliminary study relating to the situation of the Taiwanese in Canton after the war and the issue of their returning to Taiwan by the aid of files, newspapers and historical materials in Taipei, Nanking and Canton as well as all other oral historical data and memoirs. Taiwanese in Canton encountered many difficulties shortly after termination of WW II. Basically, such difficulties resulted from the hostility of the local society and a swinging and hesitating policy of the martial government authorities. However, the key is that the status or position of the Taiwanese were put at an uncertain or unsteady status, which was subject to the interpretation of the local government and competent authorities. As there were many political parties in Canton, the political conditions were relatively complicated at that moment. Some people considered that all acts of Taiwanese during the war were forced by the Japanese, and their acts should be forgiven, because Taiwan had been returned to China and Taiwanese were also the nationals of China. However, some considered that the acts of Taiwanese should be heavily punished because they were traitors. With the promulgation of regulations by the Central Government, Taiwanese were in a predicament day after day.

Under all kinds of difficulty, Taiwanese in Canton sought self-protection and remedy and asked to be sent back to Taiwan. Although the Taiwanese Association in Canton did every effort to extend the help to them, long-term support was impossible. Unfortunately, due to different standpoints in regard to the responsibility between Taiwan's Government and Kwangtung's Government, Taiwanese who were expecting ships for Taiwan suffered a lot from both carnal and mental anguish. From the experience of Taiwanese in Canton, we can find how Taiwanese got along with the local people in Mainland China and it became a new stage when Taiwan, as a Japanese colony, was returned to China after the war. Meanwhile, it is also an important starting point to study the changes in relationship along the Taiwan Strait.

Keywords: Taiwanese, Relief, Taiwanese Association

* Ph.D., Graduate Institute of History, National Chengchi University; Post-doctoral Fellow, Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica.