

Mission and Influence of “Taiwanese Retrocession Tribute Group”

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ABSTRACT

The “Taiwanese Retrocession Tribute Group” (臺灣光復致敬團) was founded in 1946 by Qiu Niantai (丘念台), Lin Hsientang (林獻堂) and eight other members. They set out for the Mainland on August 27th of that year and returned to Taiwan on October 5th. The principal goal of this trip was to promote mutual understanding between Taiwan and the Mainland. They also wished to restore their status as members of the Chinese nation by paying homage to the tombs of Dr. Sun Yat-sen (孫逸仙) and the Yellow Emperor (黃帝). In addition, they expressed their compliance with the central Chinese rule by showing respects to Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and other senior government officials. However, the preparations for this trip were hastily done and fund-raising did not go smoothly. On top of these, the Governor General of Taiwan, Chen Yi (陳儀), imposed many obstacles right when the group was about to set off. In view of the difficulties they faced, whether the delegation could accomplish their mission remained doubtful.

With reference to the daily journals of the group members, memoirs, as well as the newspapers and journals of that era, this paper probed into the experiences of the delegation and their subsequent influence. It is especially worth noting that the group had originally wished to make use of this opportunity to appeal to the Nationalist Government for improving the political situation in Taiwan. Nevertheless, the delegation achieved nothing more than paying tribute to the central authority in the Mainland.

Keywords: Taiwan Retrocession Tribute Group, Qiu Niantai, Lin Hsientang, Trial of Traitors