

“Scrutiny and Surveillance” on “The Special” during the White Terror

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ABSTRACT

During the White Terror in Taiwan, the Kuomintang (KMT) authorities used various means to suppress and monitor existent and potential dissidents, in particular the political prisoners. Upon release, they were classified as “the Regenerated / New Life”, and together with “the Surrendered”, “the Registered” and “the Related”, they were collectively referred to as “the Special” (特殊份子). “The Special” usually fell under long-term “Scrutiny and Surveillance” (考管), with strict monitoring measures conducted in an absolutely secret manner. Coordinated by the Taiwan Garrison Command and its predecessor the Taiwan Provincial Security Command, the various security authorities as well as KMT party agencies, involved in the “Scrutiny and Surveillance” included the Bureau of Investigation, National Security Bureau, Taiwan Provincial Police Bureau and General Political Department of the Ministry of National Defense.

The number of “the Special” in 1973 was 24,417 and the total throughout the White Terror era was estimated to exceed 30,000. Among those put under “Scrutiny and Surveillance” for years were the former President Lee Teng-hui (1988-2000 in office) and many famous figures.

The “Scrutiny and Surveillance” on “the Special” was closely coordinated with *Bao Fang* (meaning “Counter-intelligence and counter-espionage”) which was actually a nationwide monitoring network. The network was hugely mobilized and well-operated involving central and local security agencies, as well as the relatives, friends and neighbors of “the Special”, who were also asked to surveil and report on them. Those under “Scrutiny and Surveillance” were under exit restrictions, were not allowed to participate in political activities, and faced difficulties at work and promotion. The three-volume *A Jail Beyond the Prison Wall* (published by the Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica and the National Human Rights Museum Preparatory Office in 2014-2015) contained mainly the

stories of “the Special”. Using official archives and materials from the general public, this article presents a brief introduction to the little-known political and social control systems of the White Terror era.

Keywords: “The Special”, “Scrutiny and Surveillance”, Monitoring System, “The Surrendered”, “The Registered”, “The Regenerated”, “The Related”, White Terror, *Bao Fang*