

## **Fact and Fiction in a Revolt in Taiwan —The Case of the Su Tong-ch'i Political Incident in 1961**

Yi-shen Chen

### **ABSTRACT**

In the wake of both the lifting of curfew imposed by the martial law and the holding of full-scale National Assembly elections during the 1990s, the government in Taiwan has established a foundation to review and compensate all those who had suffered from “miscarriages of justice” under the charge of either being members of a rebellion or CCP agents in the long-lasting curfew. However, monetary compensation is just an apparent form of restorative justice, and what should really be called for is a genuine reflection on the basis of a comprehensive and profound study and discussion, to which the present article is devoted as part of such an overall effort. By taking the Case of the Su Tong-ch'i Political Incident in 1961 as an example by scrutinizing the details and examining the issues involved, it is hoped that this article will contribute to the ongoing reflection in the society of Taiwan as a whole.

The article begins with various related materials gathered in an oral history project completed in 2000, which are then augmented by a cross reference with the Chiang Kai-shek Archives in Academia Historica, the Case Material on Su Tong-ch'i in the Archives Bureau, and the Working Diary of General Huang Jieh on Duty at the Police Headquarters in the History and Political Affairs Editing and Translation Office at the Ministry of Defence, etc. It is first found that the Su Tong-ch'i Incident was closely related to that of Lei Chen in 1960, in that although the Police Headquarters took the initiative both in carrying out the investigation and in putting forward the charge therewith, there were such issues as to the extension of the scope of involvement for the “manipulators behind the scene” in the persons of Gao Yu-shu, etc., and as to the appropriateness or correctness of the judgment of punishment, etc. One thing for sure, however, is that the final decision was determined and ratified by no other person than Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek himself. This clearly means that the case had a very strong political connotation. Secondly, sixteen out of the fifty accused and implicated in the case were charged with “carrying out the intention to overthrow the government with illegal means” and punished with heavy penalties, in

the light of whether they took part in the so-called March Ninth Incident, the main constituent event in the Su Tong-ch'i Incident. This article attempts a necessary reconstruction of the March Ninth Incident by means of oral histories given by those personally involved, in addition to the facets as presented by official and court archives, with a view to showing that this endeavor will definitely help the clarification of historical facts as well as our understanding of real issues during the period of the "White Terror."

**Keywords:** Su Tong-ch'i, Gao Yu-shu, Lei Chen, the Taiwan Independence Movement, the "White Terror," the March Ninth Incident (the 309 Incident)