
PERSONAL DATA

Age: 26

Sex: Male

Education: lower middle school graduate, July 21 Worker's College graduate

Total Years Relevant Experience: 9₇

Last Year of Relevant Experience: 1978

Year Left China: 1978

Initial Immigration Status: Legal

Native Place/Overseas Connections: Canton native, Hong Kong childhood

Class Background/Political Designation: unknown

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY SUMMARY

Positions Held: 1) Guangdong Province Contact Welding Plant, Canton

a) Welder, 1970

b) Technician, Technical Department, 1973-78

2) Student, July 21 Worker's College, 1971-73

Administrative Level of Work Unit/(No. of employees):

1) Province/(500)

APPOINTMENTS: 1

TOTAL HOURS: 2.5

PAGES TEXT: 3

Occupational History (5/13/80, 2.5 hrs.)

When the informant was a child, he went to Hong Kong to live with his mother, then went back to Canton for schooling. He still has relatives in Hong Kong, and some have since moved to Canada and Venezuela. At age 16, in 1970, he graduated from middle school, then was assigned to a plant which did welding work, and manufactured parts for the construction of ships. The plant had about 400-500 people, and was under Guangdong provincial leadership.

After this he was sent after 3 months to get technical education in a July 21 worker's college which was attached to the factory. He was to learn technical skills for an advanced kind of welding (penghan). Because this skill was rare, he had to go to other units to get an education in it. First he spent a year at such a worker's college in Canton, then he was later sent to Jiangxi and Hunan. These worker's colleges were attached to machinery bureaus. The teachers were experienced workers, technicians, and some university teachers. In his spare time he worked as a welder in various units.

Around May 1973, he formally graduated from the July 21 College. He did the work of a technical cadre from then on, but was still under his workers' pay classification. At this time the top looked highly upon workers, and the opportunity for being moved into these kinds of jobs was high.

After graduation, he was sent back to the Guangdong Provincial Contact Welding (penghan) Plant. He worked in the technical department (jishu gu), where he did designing work for technical drawings, and drew up diagrams to be sent to the shops. He did this until he came out legally in 1978.

Wages

When he first graduated from his technical school (zhongzhuan), he got 39¥ basic wage, which was a little higher than the standard wage for a grade 1 worker. His wages kept coming while he was in the worker's colleges, and he was given a raise in 1972 during the wage readjustment, where about 30% of the workers were given raises, based on their abilities and work performance. After this he was a grade 2 worker, and got a 41.9¥ basic wage. A few months before he left, around September 1977, he was raised to grade 3, 56¥. Most important conditions were relations with other workers, ability, political attitude. From the first meetings in the small groups to assess workers contributions to the final sifting through of candidates took about two months. Several different kinds of supplements added about 2¥ to his salary during the entire period. He received no supplementary wages.

Bonuses

There were no bonuses until 1977, when they instituted a bonus for overfulfilling quotas based on individual performance. Workers were divided into 3 or 4 grades for bonuses, the highest grade being about 15¥. They were not higher because their plant lost money. But he heard that in some other plants bonuses were running from 50-100% of the basic monthly wage. Cadres would get paid based on profits. If there was a profit, all the cadres would get a fixed share at each level, but higher or lower amounts depending on your rank.

Temporary and Contract Labor

His plant did not have them at all during his experience, but other plants did employ them.

Discipline, Firings

For bad work, poor attendance, there were several steps. First was education, a talk with the group leader and the individual alone. Second, they would bring up the person's name at a meeting and criticize him, after which there were more personal consultations, still within the work group. Third, they would report the worker to the top leadership, who would then have a personal talk with him. Fourth, if he persists, then they could change his work assignment, but this was rare.

If it was a cadre who had the work problem, then the political department would talk with him. In most cases 'education' meant studying Mao's works with an eye towards laziness (daigong). This was common among cadres because there were too many of them, they were overstaffed. In most cases of common laziness the talks and education worked because they were a lot of trouble.

There were no firings or docking of wages. But later on they would take away a person's bonus if they exhibited these kinds of problems. He says there was not too much problem with laziness in the plant, and after the CR things got better.

Overstaffing

A common problem was that staff didn't really have enough work to truly fill up their time. This developed gradually over time, but this was hard to see from the surface, because these people could find ways to look busy.

The Contact Welding Plant

There were four party secretaries--one head and 3 vice secretaries. There were no plant directors. They had a revolutionary committee right up until 1977, when they abolished it. The first party secretary was the head of the RC. There were about 30 people in the RC in all. There were Youth League representatives, worker representatives, and cadre representatives. He does not remember what the functions of the RC was, but he feels that their main duty was to help with the spread of propaganda and new policies.

The members of the RC were chosen in various ways. Some were selected by the plant leaders, some were transferred in from the outside, and mass representatives were nominated by the top people and elected in the groups. But no fixed period of service for the members. People served for a long time unless they got into trouble during one of the many political movements. If they would get into trouble, they would be taken off the committee.

The leading corps for political matters was the 'core group' of the RC (hexin xiaozu), which ran all political movements. There was a standing committee of the RC of about 6 people, but he is not clear about this. Below the RC, they had administrative departments (gu). They had an administration department (xingzheng), supply and sales (gongxiao), political work (zhenggong), and technical (jishu). They also had offices for women, welfare, etc. They had four shops, each having a shop director who was also a member of the RC. The vice-directors were not necessarily RC members. Sometimes there were mass representatives, people with higher technical ability. There were no other administrative personnel in the shops.

Each shop was divided into about 3 groups (banzu). Each group was divided into a day and night shift, so in each shop there were around 6 group leaders (banzu zhang). The production group head worked the day shift, while the vice-head worked nights. There were other people in the group responsible for things (fuze ren), like one worker who was responsible for organizing the political study meetings. These were either Party or Youth league members. But the group leaders led production. They did not

have the '8 personnel' (ba da yuan) system, even though he has heard of it. He says that his plant was too small to have such a thing.

Most study meetings were called on account of political movements which were currently being waged. The also had discussion about production problems, the results of which were reported to shop leaders. These are called 'production meetings'. When they are busy, they can have as many as one a week. This was after work for one hour. Also, if they had an unsolvable problem, a plant or shop can call a discussion meeting (pengtou hui) of all the group leaders. Political study was also after work, for one hour a week.

Factions

There were no real problems with factions in his plant, although they had this problem during the CR. Because so many in the plant were young, they had pretty much the same attitudes, and never had belonged to different factions earlier.

Technical Education

During the 1970s, they had no formal system of night education for workers, although they have revived it during the past 2 years. If workers wanted to learn previously, they had to study on their own at night, or form a study group with other workers. The July 21 worker's colleges were special, and only a few could get in. Since the students were relieved of their production responsibilities, they stopped working during most of the period of their education.

The informant felt during the time he was working there that many workers wanted to study while in the plant, but that there was no opportunity for them. Some of the youth in China don't think studying is important, and this is a mistaken viewpoint, in his opinion.

Campaigns

All campaigns came down from above. The number of meetings would increase, but they rarely used work time for the meetings, although it did happen on occassion.