

Positions Held: 1) Doctor in factory hospital, Defense plant complex in Hunan, 1968-79

1) Ministry until 1973, then provincial/(20,000+)

APPOINTMENTS: 1 TOTAL HOURS: 2.25 PAGES TEXT: 3

Occupational History (2/24/80, 2.25 hrs.)

The informant originally worked in a paint factory as an accountant and union cadre during 1950-53, and later went to university from 1953-58, at the Hunan Medical College, Changsha. After graduation, he became assistant professor of medicine (Pediatrics) there. He taught and practiced medicine at the same time. In 1968, since Mao suggested that intellectuals go to the countryside for labor, they suggested that the hospital staff be reduced by 75%. In fact, they only reduced it by 25%. They were sent all over--to factories, to communes. The informant was sent to work in a factory hospital in a national defense plant in Hunan. He worked at this enterprise until 1979.

Structure of the Enterprise

In 1968 he was sent to a National Defense Plant, a complex of over 20,000 staff and workers in Hunan. The enterprises in the complex produced a number of products. One was a bearings factory, another produced spare parts for airplanes. There were also assembly plants for aircraft engines and aircraft bodies. They also had a transport team, for both road and water transport. The plant owned its own boats, trucks, and would ship their products all over the country, as well as ship in materials. They travelled down rivers in Hunan to the Dongting Lake, and then on to the Yangzi River and to the East China Sea.

Every branch factory had its own clinic, and each clinic had one doctor, a few nurses, and a few patient rooms with some medicine and instruments. But this was for simple illnesses and injuries. If they were serious, they would send them to the hospital attached to the complex. The hospital was called the 013 system #1 staff hospital. This was mainly for the airplane plant, but since it was the best hospital in the area, they would also treat some local peasants and workers from other plants, if their health problems were serious.

The hospital as well as the enterprise were under the No. 3 Machine Building Ministry, which handled aircraft building for the entire country. During 1968-73, the plant was directly under the leadership of the Ministry. The ministry was divided into 3 systems--011, 012, 013, 014. He was the 013 system. The plants in the system were located in Guizhou, Shanxi, Hunan, and Hubei. Each system was in fact a large integrated complex, spread out over several counties, so they called it a system (xitong) and not enterprise (qiye). Each system had a special finished product that they produced. The Hunan system made warplanes, the Hebei system made aquatic planes, etc. Each system was like an enterprise, it had its own Revolutionary Committee. Other airplane plants were also directly under the Central Ministry in other provinces, but these were enterprises and not systems.

Around 1973-4, under the idea of transferring powers downward, the ministry established provincial bureaus in each province where it had operations, in order to lead the local plants under the ministry. Then they had dual leadership with the provincial national defense office (guofang gongye bangongshi), which was under the provincial RC. Then the ministry office still did planning and supply, while the national defense office did inspections, political work.

Wages

Informant's pay grade was 13 on the technical cadres scale by the time he left. He had been given two raises during his career. He made 40+¥ after graduation, and one year later was raised to 52.5¥. Then in 1964 he was

raised to 59¥, and in 1977 he was raised to 69¥. That was his wage when he left in 1979.

Recently, they have instituted a bonus system. First semi-annually, and later monthly. They would meet and discuss among all the doctors in his department. Criteria--work attitudes, tardiness and attendance, quality of work (success/failure rate of patients, operations, etc.), and also take the patients' comments into account. The department head would lead these appraisal meetings for doctors' bonuses.

#### Doctors and Sick Leave for Workers

The clinics and the hospital doctors were the ones who signed the sick leave certificates (jibing zhengming shu). Only doctors who had university degrees could do this, nurses could not. After getting the certificate, the worker would take it to his shop director and get off of work. Before mid-1977, many workers came in to ask for sick leave. But this gradually lessened off after then because new bonus regulations said that if you had over 3 days of sick leave per month, no bonus.

How to tell if a person is really sick or faking? It is difficult, since there is a whole range of seriousness in diseases. Is someone slightly ill, faking, or serious? You can give exams, but often come up with no clear indicators. But the worker still insists he's sick, and may ask for 2-3 days leave. Sometimes I would check with the shop foreman first in really doubtful cases, and often would just cut the request down to one day. What happened in 1977 is that workers stopped asking for sick leave for common colds and minor discomforts, coughs, and diahreha.

Workers knew that before 1977 whether or not they came to work, and whether or not they worked hard, they would get the same pay. So during the period of the Gang of 4, Lin Biao attacks on "checking and suppressing" workers, this problem increased. I remembers that this was an especially serious problem during 1969-71 or so, and got better during 1973-4 when Deng came back and tried to revise rules and regulations. Then the problem became worse again during 1975-77 due to criticism of rightists and the suppressing and checking of workers.

This was especially a problem with workers who had more than 8 years seniority. They would get full pay even if they had six months of sick leave per year. But workers with less than 8 years would only get paid injury leave but would had sick leave deducted from salary. So the younger workers tended to ask for long leaves only for serious problems. Why did workers do this during these periods of time? On the one hand, no one was checking them or penalizing them very regularly during these times. On the other hand, wages hadn't changed for a long time and were low, so workers would very quickly ask for sick leave if they had a chance.

Any corruption of doctors for sick leave certificates? Hard to tell, it depends of individual cases. But generally there is not much, since you can be criticized if discovered, especially since all exams and leave records are kept on file. Also, doctors wages are fairly high, and there are no livelihood problems, while workers wages are not that high. So generally there is no corruption of this sort. But you can't say it never happens. People still might give small gifts, especially of meat and things that are rationed for everybody. But doctors were discovered doing this during and after 1969, and more than once, and were criticized for it. This was more common, and more severe during the CR. The method is not usually to give gifts or money, but to 'open up the back door' (kai houmen) for doctors. This means that you give doctors special treatment in return for (understood) special favors later. For example, if you have a relative who works in a store, you can make sure that

the doctor is at the head of the waiting list for difficult-to-buy books, food, appliances, etc. This happens generally in society, a 'mutual help' kind of arrangement.

When the problem of paid absenteeism became most serious, cadres would visit the clinics and the doctors to talk over the problem and suggest that they should be more strict in giving out sick leave forms. But they really didn't give orders to reduce the total number because the final decision on a person's health was always the doctors'. So they would talk over the problem with them but there were no direct orders.

The problem got better about the time the bonus system, with limits on sick leave, was started in 1977. He wouldn't really say that this was the only reason, but it was certainly one of them, since he has not really analyzed the question. But also management had been strengthened about that time--shop directors and group leaders had more power, and responsibilities were clarified for individuals. So this problem was gradually reduced.