PERSONAL DATA

Age: 39 Sex: Male

Education: Primary school graduate, some lower middle school

Total Years Relevant Experience: 7

Last Year of Relevant Experience: 1962 Year Left China: 1962

Initial Immigration Status: Illegal

Native Place/Overseas Connections: Canton native/no known OS ties

Class Background/Political Designation: unknown

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY SUMMARY

Positions Held: 1) Manganese Plant, Canton, 1956-60
a) Temporary worker/permanent worker, smelting shop, 1956-58
b) Statistician, Shop office, 1959-60
2) Statistician, Plant Director's Office, Steel Plant, Canton, 1960-62

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

1) Municipal/(@500)

2) Municipal/(1000+)

APPOINTMENTS: 2 TOTAL HOURS: 4 PAGES TEXT: 4

No. 59

Occupational History (6/23/80, 2.25 hrs.)

The informant is a native of Canton, and had not yet graduated from lower middle school when he began working in a factory in 1956. He used personal connections to get a job as a temporary worker in a manganese plant, where he worked in the smelting shop for half a year before being made a regular worker and continuing in the shop for another two years. Around 1958 he was put to work as a statistician (tongji yuan) in the office of the smelting shop director. In 1960 he was transfered to a steel plant, where he continued as a statistician for two more years before coming out to Hong Kong illegally in 1962 because of the economic hardships and his personal dissatisfactions with China. The manganese plant was under Canton Municipal administration, and was state-owned. The steel plant was under the same system and had over 1000 employees.

Wages

When he first started working in the manganese plant he was a temporary worker for six months. He made 39¥, or 1.49¥ per day. He could have sick leave with a doctor's certificate, but this was not paid leave. About 30% of the workers were temporary workers from the city, and none were from the countryside. When they entered the factory they signed contracts saying they would follow plant regulations, but did not fix the work period. They could and did fire temporary workers whenever they wanted. They just sent them back to the labor bureau.

For regular workers, they did not have any 8 grade wage scale in either of the plants he worked in. All regular workers got about the same sum, around 1.77¥ per day or over 40¥ per month. And technicians and engineers got more. He does not know about any grade system. Some factories had apprentice systems and grades for skilled workers, like maehinery plants, but not his metallurgy plants. When he was transfered to statistics work his wages did not change, nor did they change until he left in 1962. He knows of no general wage adjustments during his work experience.

There were no bonuses in his factories. They gave out face towels for labor models. These were people who for the entire year had overfulfilled quotas, who had not asked for any leave, and who had good political thought. They had no piece wages. They did have a contract (baogong) system, but this was basically where the small group had a meeting, pledged to fulfill quotas for the quarter for the state. They did not get to rest if they finished early--they just continued with the next quarter's work. They got no extra money for overfulfilling the plan. They had overtime work, but no overtime pay.

Worker activism was generally quite lax. Workers generally had the style of 'manman lai'. It was always like this. The only time it changed was at the end of the year or during a production campaign. Then things would get much busier.

Discipline and Punishments

For people that stole things, they just notified public security and took the person to a labor camp. For bad work or poor work attitude, the first step was small group criticism. If the person persists after criticism and self-criticism, they removed him from the plant and sent to a labor camp. Yes, they had warnings, the criticism was adequate to warn a person. The plant party secretary (or in this case the branch party secretary) had the power to fire a worker. He is talking here only about permanent workers. The temporary workers were sent away as soon as problems

developed. Among permanent workers, he estimates that about 15 workers per year were fired for bad work. The major problem was dissatisfaction in their minds, which caused their work to be poor.

Shop Organization in Manganese Plant

He worked in the smelting shop, which had 28 permanent workers, about 15 temporary workers, and two leaders. The temporary workers did odd jobs--moving coal, picking up around the shop. They were mixed in evenly with the production groups. Each group had a few. They had 3 production groups, one for each of the three shifts. Each production group had about 8 workers. The best production workers with the best political attitudes were chosen by the shop director to be a group leader and vice-leader. The group leader concentrated on production, the vice-leader on ideological work. These were not party members but people who were reliable with advanced political thought. These two handled all the management jobs. They made work assignments, filled out reports, went to meetings with the shop director. They handle the job of dividing up the planned grp. quota into individual quotas. They have their own production tasks also. The group leaders filled out reports every day on the completion of the plan, the general situation in production and thought in the group. Output figures were reported daily. They also record the amount of raw materials used every day. When they need raw materials they send temporary workers over to stores to sign out the needed amount.

They had post-shift meetings every day after work, which lasted 30 minutes to an hour. They analyzed the day's work every day, evaluated progress, problems, discussed and analyzed the reasons for the problems they uncovered. Workers commonly offered opinions, and in fact they were encouraged to participate and had to say something or they might be called to account for not raising opinions. The group leader listened to the opinions and they usually discussed them. This system had an advantage in that it kept production continually on people's minds, and everybody always knew just what the situation was. The difficulty with the meeting system is that you can't be dissatisfied or express dissatisfaction with decisions, methods, or in work performance or politics. They will then criticize you, send a report on you up to the party secretary. Then the leaders know and will form a bad impression of you.

Political study meetings were usually one night a week for two hours. This was a meeting of all shop members, led by the shop director who was also a party member. They discussed production situation, studied political editorials and documents, and sometimes criticized people. When they had campaigns, the number of meetings would increase and they usually started with all-plant meetings on Sunday to hear speeches, introduce the campaign. Then each group for the next few weeks would hold meetings to discuss the mass meeting's themes, and each person in the group would be required to speak and give their opinion.

The shop was led by the single shop director in his office, and he was the only person working in the office. The top plant leadership included the party branch secretary, who was the top leader, and at the same time also the plant director. There was also a vice-director, whose job it was to handle the production situation of the plant, which the party secretary/plant director did not understand. The party secretary was a PLA cadre from before liberation, and he just handled political and ideological work in the plant. He did not understand production.

These leaders had an office under them, where the informant worked as a statistician later on. They had a plant engineer there who handled production and equipment. And they had a dispatcher (diaodu yuan or

shigong yuan) who made sure that production proceeeds in a balanced way. These two were also attached to the technical department. The dispatcher is under the engineer's leadership. Also there is the statistician, who collates and adds up all production reports from the shops, and fills out general reports for the plant as a whole. They also have an accountant who handled financial accounts (kuai ji). The only people in the plant director's office were the statistician and accountant. The other two were at the technical department's office. There was no secretary.

Statistical Work (6/24/80, 1.75 hrs.)

In his second factory, the steel plant, he was a statistician in the plant director's office. Every day he first would add up all the records coming from each small group from the previous day. These are records kept by each group leader on production output, quality, number of waste products, and materials consumption. He also handles requests for tools. Then he adds up all the figures and arrives at a report for the previous day for the entire plant's situation. Then he gives the figures to the plant accountant, who balances accounts and figures up costs, funds balances, etc. This takes all morning. Also, in the morning he adds up all the reports from the storeroom. These reports show how much they gave out of each item each day, and he balances these against the material requisition forms (lingliao dan) which the small groups send up with their reports. So he will know by comparing whether the records are accurate.

The records for quality are correct because all the products are sent to a 'products warehouse' (chengpin huocang). There they are checked by inspectors. So there are ways to verify the quality records of the groups. At the same time they verify the output records too. It was not uncommon to find inaccurate records. In this case the group leader would be criticized for them.

Materials requisition forms: If the group needs materials, the group leader gets a form from the shop director, who gives it to him. Then the group leader fills it out, has it signed by the factory statistician, and returns it to the group with his signature. Then the group leader goes to stores, leaving the form there, which is chopped by the man running the storeroom, and eventually is returned to the statistician. The statistician gives permission based on whether or not the request is in accord with the planned use of materials.

Stores: They had finished products, waste products (feipin), raw materials, office supplies, tools. The finished products would be sent shortly to buyers. The waste products (in the manganese plant) were of no use in steel-making but would be sold to iron plants as scrap, who could use them.

The process for ordering tools is the same as for raw materials, except that the group leader must also get permission of the shop director to request a certain kind of tool not in the group's own stores. This form is called gongju dan. As for ordinary materials, the whole process for getting permission and forms only takes about less than an hour. This required the group leader to go to these offices during work hours, so he had to stop whatever he was doing. In the afternoon, the statistician would do preparation work. He would assess the supply situation in the stores and decide whether or not it was necessary to order new things. He fills out reports on the stock of goods, and sends it up to the plant director, who decides whether or not to order more, and sends a report up to the sales department. The statistician also figures up statistics for the breakage of tools and the supply situation, and sends these reports up tb the

plant director with his recommendations for buying new tools. He knows these figures because broken tools are recorded in the group leader's reports. The had a production department, security department, and sales department in addition. There was no finance department, but an accountant's office.

Great Leap Forward

The party secretary in 1958 raised a demand for a great leap in their output, so they started to heat up the ore at faster rates. They emphasized speed, not quality, and quality suffered. For example, they sped up the heating process of manganese ore, and would pour the molten material out before it had fully melted. Quality was very bad. Generally everybody ran out of raw materials because everyone was producing faster. By 1960 this meant that production was ruined, and plants ceased operating.

The ran the great leap forward for about a year. Then in 1959 they stopped because the quality of the manganese was so poor that the steel plants did not want it. They were losing money. So in 1959 the Party Branch Secretary of their factory raised an uncomplimentary opinion about the Great Leap Forward method at their all-plant meetings, and was joined by the shop directors who saw that quality was poor and that things were not working out. So the party secretary raised this opinion to the upper levels, and was soon removed from his job because of this. He had made a political error in criticizing the Great Leap, and he was replaced by a new party secretary who supported the line of the Great Leap Forward, and said he still wanted to go the road of the Great Leap. But he turned around and criticized the technicians and engineers for quality problems. He criticized their 'conservatism' (baoshou zhuyi) and 'dogmatism' (jiaotiao zhuyi). So afterwards nobody dared criticize the general line of the Great Leap for leading to problems.

The the new Party Branch secretary turned around and used the pre-Great Leap Forward methods to continue production. He said that the previous party secretary had stressed output too much at the expense of quality. But he was not particularly concerned with quality either, and was willing to accept slightly substandard products for the sake of output.

During the Great Leap all staff workers had participated in manual labor for one day a week, including even the engineer. They also criticized old rules and regulations, but did not formally reform them, just changed work methods. They did not cancel the reporting system, however. That continued to be well handled throughout. Bad quality was the most striking problem of the Great Leap. They gradually restored quality thereafter. They had never really cancelled the place where the quality control check occurred, they just ignored the reports of the inspectors, saying that they couldn't increase production otherwise.

By 1960 the shortages of raw material had become so severe that the plant had to close down for two years, 1960-62. This is when he was sent to the steel plant. The workforce was sent to construction projects, communes and state farms. The office workers and cadres were sent to other industrial units. There had been shortages of raw materials starting in 1958 when they used them up faster. But there was no way to get additional raw materials from the state. They didn't receive enough material, but there was no other way. All the manganese mines were in Shandong and the Northeast, and they could not conclude any informal deals with them, as other plants were doing. It was strictly state supply for them.