

Sex: Male

**1**

11-11-1961

a) Worker, Stand Shop, 1968-70

1) Municipal/(2000)

worker in stand shop, 1968-70

PAGES TEXT: 15

Occupational History (6/9/80, 2 hrs.)

The informant is an overseas Chinese, born in Jakarta, Indonesia. His father was the head of a General Motors division in Indonesia. The informant returned to China after lower middle school in 1964 at the age of 16. He graduated from Jilin University in Changchun in 1968, and instead of his last year of university courses, he and his classmates were sent to the huge Changchun Automobile Factory where they spent time as workers. Later, in 1968, he was assigned to the Dalian Sewing Machine factory in Liaoning province. He worked in the main factory which had 2000 employees, and not in one of the many subsidiary factories. He had studied computer software at Jilin, but there was no work for him in that field during the Cultural Revolution. So like all university students that year, he went to do manual labor after graduation. He worked in a shop that made stands for sewing machines out of cast iron. He drilled holes in the iron stands so that the machine could be attached to it. These sewing machines were not motor driven, but pedal-powered. They were for use within China, in the home. The motor-driven ones were strictly for export.

By 1970, he had impressed the leaders with his ability to make design changes to improve efficiency, so he was promoted to assistant technician and was allowed to study mechanical engineering part time at an industrial college in Dalian. After four years he graduated and was given a certificate, not a diploma since he was there not by examination but through relations that the factory had with the college. During this period he worked in the machinery maintenance shop as an assistant technician, helping the older technicians oversee production and capital equipment. This was in the office of the shop director. But much of this time he was in the plant technical department doing designing work, because they didn't have the desks and materials in the shop offices. He did this until 1978 when he was given permission to come to Hong Kong.

Wages

He made 46¥ when he first graduated from college, and made that for two years when he was raised to 56¥. This was the trial period. It had been extended by the cultural revolution small group to two years. He remembers a talk by Jiang Qing to students of the Geological College where she discusses this decision. He made 56¥ right up until he left in 1978.

In 1972 and 1978 there were wage readjustments. Grade 1 workers could be raised to grade 2, and grade 2 to grade 3. If you had been working since 1964 and were still grade 1, or if you were working since 1958 and were still grade 2, they would raise you one grade. In 1978, they also set up year lines for raises to grades 2,3, and 4.

Bonuses

They never had a bonus system in the factory while he was there. Only some prizes for advanced workers, and this was only after 1974. Then they gave out blankets, thermos bottles, books. Before 1976 they just gave out wall certificates for advanced workers.

Beginning in 1974, they restored small material incentives, and reduced their reliance on the criticism, self-criticism method, but after a while the policy would change and they would criticize material incentives all over again. It went back and forth like this a couple of times.

What kind of material incentives did they start with? They started

with thermos bottles blankets, transistor radios, pens. These would be given out at the end of the year to the best workers. Ten percent of the workers could be model workers. They would meet in groups to assess worker performance, and were strictly limited to this 10% figure. The kind of people selected had to have good relations with both coworkers and with leaders. If you were not popular with the workers, you wouldn't get selected in the group discussion. If you didn't get along with the group leader, your name would not be approved when nominations lists went up to the shop for approval. So there were just a small number of people selected for these prizes, and the amount of money involved was small.

From the time he entered the plant until around 1974, they used the criticism method and gave certificates to advanced workers. Around 1974, they started to give these material prizes, and they would be taken away and criticized as material incentives several times thereafter. But they did not restore money bonuses until after he left for Hong Kong.

He does not remember the dates very clearly, but he remembers that in early 1975 they had these prizes, then at the end of 1975 they were discontinued. They were restored in the end of 1976, and then taken away during 1977. They criticized incentives during the Pi Lin Pi Kong campaign, but there were no such prizes yet given out in his plant. They also criticized material incentives during later campaigns, but he can't remember the names of the particular campaigns very clearly.

#### Punishments, Discipline

This is the main problem with Chinese socialism. There are really not any punishments for poor work discipline, just criticism in shop meetings. There are basically no punishments. How did China get to this point? Before 1954 one wasn't fixed to an enterprise. The employment system worked just like in Hong Kong. Workers were employed as long as needed, got straight wages. Then in 1954-58, they had a bonus system. Big bonuses that could be 2-3 times the size of the monthly wage. Workers worked very hard then.

Around 1957-59 they began piece rate systems for some kinds of work. These were different ways of rewarding people for overfulfilling quotas. But during the four cleans movement this system was restricted, and during the cultural revolution it was abolished. Now they are returning to the 1956-57 method.

After the cultural revolution, systems and rules were not very clear. It was not clear who had the responsibility for carrying out things. Both responsibilities and punishments were hazy. If a worker was absent, wages would be deducted, but outside of that it was difficult to say what would happen. For example, one young worker stole a sewing machine and took it home. His punishment was to be educated. Why educated? Because to steal was to be a follower of revisionism and Liu Shaoqi.

After the cultural revolution workers didn't work very hard. Firings: there was a man kicked out of the plant in 1968 during the cleaning of the class ranks by the PLA Control Committee. He was sent to jail for beating people during the Cultural Revolution. He was imprisoned for 2-3 years. He refers to this man as a 'smash and grabber' (da za qiang). Another person, at the end of the cultural revolution in 1969 was a worker who got drunk and stuck his hand forcibly up a young virgin's vagina. He was kicked out of the factory and sent to a labor reform camp for 3 years. When he came back, the party committee had to have a meeting to let him back in the factory. But he lost his seniority and had to start at grade 1 again. Another worker in 1972 had stolen things on the night shift, and also had played around regular during work hours after finishing his quotas. He had

been accused of raping his younger sister by his own mother--and sent to labor reform. So he was not really kicked out for bad work, this was just part of the problem. He also came back to the factory after three years. So people generally are not fired for bad work. Basically there is criticism, then another criticism with a recording in your file, and expulsion is only the last resort.

All of this is not to say that there is no punishment at all. From 1969-74 they had meetings to criticize people in the shops and small groups. If there was a quality control problem in the group, they would meet the next day and find out who was responsible. If the family background of the worker responsible was that of worker or poor peasant, then they would criticize him and this would be considered a small problem. But if your class background was not good, they would turn this into a struggle-criticism session. They might hold an all-shop repudiation meeting where they would all yell "down with Wang!" and you would have to confess to receiving orders from your capitalist father or other relative to sabotage production and socialism. Not until 1974 or so did this method gradually begin to taper off. But they used it right up until 1976 in Shanghai because of Chang Ch'un-ch'iao's control there.

So as a result, workers and technicians were afraid to make mistakes in quality, and were afraid to do anything in violation of the orders of the shop leaders. They were afraid to be caught in a mistake and be criticized. So generally people were fairly careful about the quality of their work. They had no trouble meeting their quotas. For example, in his shop during 1969-72, the quotas was 300 sewing machine heads a day. He was personally capable of doing 450 in an 8 hour shift, and could easily finish the 300 in 6 hours. But he wanted to overfulfill the quota in order to be transferred to technical work. But the average worker stayed fairly close to the standard quota, because to overfulfill would have required a lot of hard work.

An example. There was a young worker, a middle school graduate, who joined the factory in 1972. His first year his work was good, but later, after some 3-4 years as a young worker, he tried to finish his work in 4-5 hours, then would use the rest of his time to wash his clothes, do personal things in the factory. But in order to finish early he did things against established tooling procedures and this resulted in violation of quality standards. Finally an older worker told him not to do it that way, because it was against the rules. So the young guy stopped because he knew he would be criticized in a meeting if the word got out.

Workers often finished their work early and did their own personal things. This was the biggest problem with China's factories in the 1970s, indeed since 1967. The discipline of workers was not as good as before 1967. Before then, workers could leave their work post for a few minutes for a drink, and rest periods were set by law, and were short. After 1967, workers in his factory, when they completed a number of articles and piled them up beside their machines, the worker would leave as long as it did not disrupt the order of work down the line. It was not like electronics production lines in Hong Kong where the speed is set by a conveyor belt. When their pieces piled up, they could leave for a while. Before the CR, workers could also leave for short periods, but they did not want to because they had a bonus system and would be paid more the more they turned out.

What kinds of things did workers do when they left their work posts? They would wash their clothes with factory soap and water, would go find another friend in another shop and talk for 30 minutes to an hour. Also they would go to the collective showers in the factory, clean up, go to

the toilet (they don't have these kind of facilities in most factory housing or in housing outside either). So they would get their clothes, themselves all cleaned up, so that when the shift was over they could go directly home.

Women also would visit the clinics regularly complaining of cramps, monthly sickness, or to go nurse their babies at the nursing stations. Workers did not play cards or chess during work time, this was strictly forbidden. Also, workers would take stainless steel material from plant stocks (stainless steel is very scarce in China), and would make pots, pans, knives, and would take them home. But they didn't do this when the staff or leaders were around.

Workers in China could not subscribe to Reference News like the informant could, but they would get ahold of copies and read about foreign countries. They often felt that factory work in America was too fast-paced, and that life in their factories wasn't very comfortable. But they felt they were fortunate in China's factories, where life could be so comfortable from the viewpoint of work pace.

Also workers in his factory, and also technicians and cadres, would take personal leave to buy difficult to get articles, like vegetables and pork oil, which are just not enough according to rations. So they would often get in line, buy a sewing machine, then take a boat over to Shandong from Dalian--either Yantai or Qingdao. There they would have relatives or friends who needed sewing machines, but who had a lot of oil to trade. These kinds of agricultural by-products were more abundant in Shandong, because of a more liberal agricultural policy in the communes toward side-lines and private plots. Liaoning was very radical at that time, it was under Mao Yuanxin. They did not have policies where peasants could sell pigs and foodstuffs from their private plots to the collective. So supplies of these agricultural products was very tight in the cities.

Postscript on punishments and discipline: In a later interview, the informant says he is concerned that I received a mistaken impression in our earlier discussion on punishments. Management of workers in China is not primarily the use of punishment. It is the use of 'enemies'. For example, in his first 2 years in the plant, when he was a worker in the shop, they would commonly have meetings in the shop where the shop leader would give a speech: "Recently, there have been many people in this shop who have been very little concerned about production and quality. This reflects the influence of the class enemies!" This was common. He says that at this time he was just out of college, and didn't understand the country and its politics very well yet, so one time he raised his hand in a group meeting and said that if you always use this people-enemy contradiction in talking to the people, you'll never get anywhere. At that point the shop leader pulled out the little red book of Lin Biao's quotations and read a quote that went something like this: "Politics is nothing more than class struggle". At this point he sensed he would be the object of 'class struggle' if he persisted, so he didn't speak out at meetings anymore.

The point he tried to make when he spoke out in this instance was that the reason why people weren't paying attention to quality was that many of the workers were women, they had families to take care of, and with all the meetings after work every day they couldn't take care of all the family chores. It had nothing to do with class struggle at all. So work discipline does not rely on systems of punishment. It relies on the use of 'enemies'. Exactly like what is going on in Iran today.

How did this make people feel? He personally felt sympathy for these women when they were being lectured to about class enemies by the shop leader just because they were chatting during the meeting. This method

is called "Pointing to the mulberry and cursing the willow" by Chinese people. When he spoke up in this particular case, it was in one woman's defense. The group leader then turned on him, and other workers in the group, including the woman worker he had defended, turned on him and criticized him, reading a few quotations from Lin Biao at him. So he was criticized a bit. Later, an old experienced woman worker came up to him and said, "Look, you just got out of college and came out into society. You don't yet understand things. It would be better for you just to talk less and work more, say the things you have to say and be done with it". You can imagine how I felt. This is what is meant by the common saying in China, "Liars can move up in the world" (shuo jiahua de ren neng shangqu), or more appropriately, "those who can sing a high-pitched melody can rise in the world" (neng shuo diaoze gao de ren neng shangqu). The whole thing is a performance. You learn very quickly to make these performances and not say what you really feel. The "loyalty to Mao dance" is just another example of this kind of performance. Biaoxian is an important word, it means to 'show', and depends not on what you think or feel, but on what you show to others.

It became like cheating when the PLA representatives came. They instantly stood up, became very polite, yelled a few slogans from Mao or Lin Biao, and then danced the "loyalty to Mao dance". It was a show just for the PLA representatives. Far from people's feelings, it was almost like cheating these PLA cadres. But it reflected well on the group leader, who knew how to sing a lofty tune and get ahead.

This type of activity tapered off after the Lin Biao affair, and it was used less often. No more "loyalty to Mao dances" after Lin Biao died. Now in China intellectuals refer to the Gang of Four policy as one of "keeping the people in ignorance" (yumin zhengce). Workers didn't like these kinds of things, especially the 'loyalty to Mao dance', but they didn't dare resist. Whether or not they dared to resist depended on the political atmosphere in different units. Some units you don't dare, in others, like some universities, they made a big joke of the whole thing and had to give it up.

#### Temporary and Contract Labor (6/10/80, 3 hrs.)

There were many of these kinds of workers. Temporary workers who had worked in the factory since 1967 were all changed to permanent grade 1 workers in 1972. But they continued to hire new temporary workers after that time, and those who had entered after 1967 were still temporaries. But they restricted the number of temporary workers newly hired after 1972. After that the temporaries were people from the families of people connected with the unit. But a large portion of these were from the families of cadres who used connections to get their children back from the countryside and into the city, or to get their wives a job.

Almost all temporary workers in their plant were women. The work was basically the same as regular workers, just that the skill level was lower. Many had formerly been housewives. The vast majority of female workers among the temporaries is evidence that they had been hired from the families of employees for quite some time. During the period he worked there he saw very few male temporary workers.

#### Structure of the Sewing Machine Factory

His plant was the main plant (zongchang), state-owned. There was a branch factory, collectively owned, which also had about 1000 employees, which did their iron casting for them. This was 'da jiti' (large collective), which meant it got plans from the state, its leaders were assigned by the

bureau. They are under the bureau, and have sales and supply departments just like a regular factory. The small collectives (xiao jiti) are the smaller collectives and are under street committees, and are called street factories. When the informant left China, he heard that they were going to make a company in the city to coordinate all the activities of the general plant, branch plant and the street collectives which produced sewing machine components.

The leading group of the factory: When he first came to the plant in 1969, they had already formed a revolutionary committee. There were three PLA representatives on that committee. The head of the RC was a PLA man, and so was one vice-head and one regular member. In 1973, the third one, the regular member, was sent back to his military unit. The other two left after the fall of the Gang of Four in 1977. At that time the military officer had been head of the RC for 10 years.

There were two vice-heads of the committee who were cadres. There were 10-13 people on the committee in all. The first head was the PLA representative, and was the 1st ranking vice-head. One of the other vice-heads was an old cadre, the former vice-director of the plant, and the second vice-head was a director of a printing plant in the city and was transferred to their plant in late 1968 or early 1969. There was a grade 6 old worker, an ordinary worker, who had been a leader of one of the mass factions in the plant. The head of the party organization (or personnel) department was a regular member of the RC and a representative of the cadres. He was a worker before he was promoted to this position during the CR. This man was a cadre as far as his current position went, but he actually was a worker in terms of his official salary scale and his organizational designation. There were a lot of workers who were put into staff and leadership positions to take the place of cadres of bad class background who had been sent to be workers in the shops. This was the policy of using workers to take the place of cadres (yi gong dai gan). There were a lot of such cadres in the plant. There were about 200 cadres in the plant, about half of them were workers taking cadre positions. Most were party members or demobilized soldiers.

The number of cadres increased greatly in 1973 as the Party's cadre policy was implemented. The old cadres came back but the workers taking cadres places, who were considered more reliable by the plant leadership (especially the demobilized soldiers), were not sent back down to the shops. So the number of cadres increased. Many of these cadres attacked during the CR had been sent to rural villages in Liaoning to do manual labor. Not May 7 Cadre Schools--to ordinary villages. They gradually returned--about 80% of them--during this period. After the cultural revolution, however, almost all the leading cadres of the departments had to be Party members.

He doesn't remember very clearly the precise membership of the revolutionary committee. The mass representatives were changed every one or two years, and the representation was not fixed, and there were no rules about who representatives should be. There was no set procedure for selecting representatives. But the masses didn't elect them--these were internal party selections, not mass elections. All the members of the RC had to be party members. There was a mass representative on the RC right after the cultural revolution who was a faction leader but not a party member. He was removed after a couple of years. Thereafter every once in a while they would have secret ballot elections for 15 or so members of the RC, and the PLA head would draw up a name list of about 17 people. So his people would always be selected. These elections are not important. They are just a formality.

Power in the factory was really held by the military. The cadre repre-



sentatives on the RC didn't have much power. There was no real fixed division of labor as far as he knew among the RC members. They just did things according to the PLA head's orders.

The finally re-established a party committee around 1974-75, he does not remember the date clearly, because he wasn't a party member. But the new Party secretary was the PLA head of the revolutionary committee. But before the re-establishment of the Party Committee, they had a party leadership core called the party small group (dang xiaozu). At the time they formally re-established the party committee they also revived the structure below of the party branches.

When the PLA left in 1977 or so the highest ranking cadres moved up and took their place. When he left there was no longer a revolutionary committee, only a party committee. They brought in cadres from other factories to become plant directors and party secretaries after the revolutionary committee was abolished. As he remembers it, they abolished the RC a few months before the PLA left. For a short period, no plant director or vice-director existed in the plant. They did not appoint a new plant director and vice-director like before the cultural revolution until after a period of almost a year when the party committee was running the plant. Then around May-June 1978 they re-appointed new directors. But you must remember that the revolutionary committee heads and party committee first secretaries never ran production, but the production offices did. So these changes did not affect day to day operations very much.

The one cadre who was transferred in during 1969 from the printing plant (their former plant director) was transferred out in 1974 or so because of irregular relations with young pretty female workers in the shop. He was well known for trading advantages for sexual favors, and was looked down on and had to be transferred out.

#### Staff Organization and Changes (6/11/80, 3 hrs.)

There were three major periods into which he breaks down the administrative organization of the factory: 1) 1969-72, 2) 1973-78, 3) and the changes, largely at the level of the top leadership, in the few months before he left in 1978.

His first few years in the plant, 1969-72, the revolutionary committee led a plant headquarters (changbu), which was divided into three groups. The personnel group (zu), production group, and political work group (zhenggong zu). The political work group led a security group (baowei zu) and a people's militia (minbing). During this period none of the university education technical cadres were allowed to work full time in the staff offices. The "proletariat occupied the superstructure"--that was the policy. So they had workers promoted to work in these staff positions. These were often workers with experience and high technical skills. They would keep the middle school level technicians--the draftsmen and design copiers, since they could almost be considered workers. Some of the workers newly appointed to staff positions were faction leaders during the cultural revolution, but not all of them were. Some were simply experienced workers with high technical skill who had already done leadership work before. Most of these people were party members--all the ones put in leadership positions were party members.

This was the policy that Kang Sheng called "simplifying administrative structures", a policy he got from one of Mao's quotations. Almost all of the old staff workers--all the university graduates, that is--were sent to do manual labor, and a large number of them were sent not to the shops but to agricultural villages. Some of them, like the informant, would be



allowed to do some designing work in the offices, but when they were finished they would have to return to the shops.

They not only reduced the total number of people working in the offices--originally there was a staff of 200, whereas after the reduction there was only 40-50. They also reduced the number of staff departments. The former technical department was gutted. Two people were sent to the shops for labor, another 20 were sent to agricultural villages. At first they were not sent to May 7 Cadre Schools, but later they were put into them. They were sent down because of their bad class backgrounds. Only one woman was left behind in the office--a draftsman with technical school education.

The effect of this was to prevent new technical improvements in design and production methods. They could only, at best, turn out larger numbers of the old designs. For example, the older experienced workers knew how to produce articles according to technical diagrams, and knew that certain tolerances were required when doing the tooling, but they did not know the theory behind the design, they did not know why it had to be set at .00001 cm instead of .0001cm. So the result was that they could not improve the product design and create new products. They could just continue to turn out the old ones.

In other words, the new people in the technical staff positions could lead production but in a limited way. The head of the production group (shengchan zu) was an old experienced worker, had profound experience in sewing machine building. But if a problem with quality came up, he would know immediately which part of the machine was off, and in which shop it was produced, where the problem was. The remedy was just that the technical diagrams were not being followed correctly. He knew that diagrams had to be followed, and regulated tolerances observed, but he did not know why, nor could he do designing work himself.

So in all they reduced the number of staff people, reduced the number of offices, and staffed the offices with non-intellectuals. Of course, later Chou Enlai wanted to bring the intellectuals back to the offices to work. But this was the policy--the PLA representatives did not like this policy. They thought they had already cleaned the class ranks and simplified administration. Now why make them dirty and complex once again? So the rehabilitation of cadres and intellectuals was very gradual. They dragged their feet. Even when he left in 1978 there were still 5-6 cadres still in the villages. There was a conflict over rehabilitation. The issue was "how do you evaluate the past 17 years?".

Office of the Chief Engineer: Before 1966 they had an office of the chief engineer (gongcheng shi bangong shi). They abolished it at the beginning of the cultural revolution. The head of the technical department, a communist with a working class background, had led all the technicians in the technical department. If there was a new piece of equipment to be designed, the director ordered the plant engineer and the technical department head to organize technicians to design the equipment. The engineer has to approve the plans (in their plant he was not called the general engineer or chief engineer because they only had one engineer). This man was Cantonese, and had a brother who was an engineer with Pan Am in the US. He had worked in a military plant in Dalian until the Four Cleans movement in 1963 when he was transferred to this plant because of his overseas relations. They did not want him working in a defense-related plant. But this man had an elder brother in Canton who was a Party member, and he was not attacked down there because in the South things are more open and it is more common to have overseas relations.

During the cultural revolution, they abolished the engineer's office and criticized and struggled this man. How did they struggle him? They took him, a mechanical engineer, to a large meeting and asked him to repair a Swedish-made automatic jig boring machine which had broken down. He said he couldn't do it without an investigation to see what was wrong. Then they started to criticize him, and asked a skilled worker to fix it and he did. So they said the engineer was not really qualified, and that the working class was in fact the most talented and smartest class.

Then the man wrote a self-examination, and people put up wall posters about him all over the factory. This criticism was initially organized by the Party Committee, which was trying to show that it was in fact revolutionary, but later the party committee itself had the spearhead of struggle pointed at them, and the criticism of the engineer subsided as rebels went after party leaders. Later this man went to become a regular worker, and after a couple of years, when they re-established the technical department, he became a staff technician in the department.

This was typical of the trend of thought at the time. The old superstructure of organization was destroyed because it was considered bourgeois, and the working class was to occupy it. They also abolished the quality control department in 1966, and did not restore it until 1973. During 1972-74 they met their output quotas, but only 40% of the products were first-class quality goods (more on this later). The office of the engineer was not restored in the factory until after he left, in 1979.

#### Shop Management and Changes (6/12/80, 3 hrs.)

The three groups under the factory headquarters led the shops directly. The shops were led by a shop revolutionary committee. The head of the shop, a statistician, and the head of the party small group formed the leading body. All three of these people were full-time office personnel. There were also some mass representatives, who all had to be party members. Each shop had production groups under it, and also a machinery repair group (jixiu zu). There was also an electrical power shop (dongli chejian), which handled all electrical systems and also all machinery repair and building, and also a tool shop, which made cutting tools. The plan had to make all their equipment and cutting tools because they just couldn't buy these things. They were too scarce. And also they didn't have enough currency in China to buy them overseas. So the repair shops, equipment shops, and tool shops were very important.

In his first 2 years in the factory, the informant worked in a production group in the #2 workshop, which had 200 workers in all. The shop was broken down into 3 production groups and a machinery repair group. The three production groups were a sewing machine head group (jitou zu), a spray painting group, and the sewing machine stand group. The machine repair group did repairs on the shop's equipment and made simple equipment that did not require help from the electrical power shop. The informant worked in the sewing machine stand group, which had 50 workers in all.

The stand group was divided into two groups (xiao zu) of about 25 workers each, but the number of people increased greatly at the end of the year, because 50 people were just not enough.

Production Rhythms: The reason for this fluctuation in labor demand was that the quality of the iron they casted was only up to standard about 50% of the time. So they had to remelt much of it and add coking coal once again, which meant that they ran out of coking coal near the end of the year and had to use some of the next year's quota, and also this meant that because of the high rejection rate for the pig iron, which was

produced in a branch plant, a large collective, it was difficult to complete monthly quotas early in the year. So at the end of the year they have two ways to get enough coal for coking--by exchanging materials with other plants through the back door, or by 'borrowing' (jieyong) from another plant the needed materials with the understanding that they would be returned at the beginning of the next year. This in turn is one factory in continuing poor quality--they don't add enough coke. So this was a vicious cycle.

There are other factors involved. The first quarter is used for major overhauls of the plant machinery which may have been neglected in the later quarters during the previous year. Also there are about 7 days vacation in February for New Year. Before the cultural revolution if you did not meet your quotas every month, you would be in trouble with the bureau. But for 10 years after the CR, it was no problem to do this. So the rhythm-like nature of production became more pronounced after the cultural revolution.

For example, when he was working in the Changchun #1 Auto Factory in 1968, an old worker told him that before the CR if the assembly line in that plant broke down for over 7 minutes, the incident had to be reported to the State Council. The state controlled production very tightly before the cultural revolution--both quantity and quality. But afterwards they didn't, so production fluctuated by the month and quality went down. The PLA deputy in his factory told him in 1972 that the Vietnamese asked for military trucks as war aid, but did not want any of those manufactured since the beginning of the CR.

So at the beginning of the year the problem is largely that of material, but by the middle of the year the problem became worker activism. Workers generally were not satisfied with their wages so they took to purposeful slowdowns in order to get overtime and increase their income. The leaders knew what was going on and couldn't do anything, because almost all the workers were doing it and they always had an excuse when confronted. This problem is especially serious in the assembly workshops. So they would make 200 pieces from 7am to 11am, 200 from 1-5pm, and then 400 from 5-7pm. So the quality of the last group, of course, was not as good. The quota in this case was around 1000 pieces a day. So at the end of each year they added a lot of workers. Some were temporary workers, but they also mobilized teachers and students from middle schools as part of their 'labor tempering', to come to the plant and pitch in at the end of the year. They made about 30¢ a day. This 30¢ was not a wage, it was a supplement to allow them to buy lunch in the factory. This was considered 'service work' (yewu gongzuo). They were able to increase production not by adding these people to the day shift--there were not enough machines. So as the year went on and they added these temporary workers to a second shift, and sometimes they even created a third shift in order to complete the plan by the end of the year. If by some chance the plant finished the plan a month or several weeks early, the bureau would just add to the quota, so the situation would be the same.

Small Group Management: His small group had about 25 workers, but fluctuated seasonally. They had a group leader. He led meetings in the group, attended meetings at the shop level, arranged production in the group and made daily reports of production statistics on the situation in the group--specifically progress toward plan completion. The leader of the small group is not necessarily a party member, but the leader of the 'large group' (dazu--in this case the sewing machine stand group of 50 people) always is. These group leaders were excellent workers, and often

were model workers. They worked hard. They came in early and left late, and oversaw everything in the group. These group leaders are crucial. Without them, production would be very hard to arrange. These group leaders participated in production, had their own manual work to do, but did leave their production posts if there was a meeting. The large group (dazu) is roughly equivalent to a section (gongduan) in other factories. These group leaders were often selected model workers for prizes at the end of the year. Naturally these group leaders have to be very energetic, and they have to handle both production posts better and faster than most workers and also other tasks. So when they get old and their health and energy subsides, they are transferred to other work. This happens often because these leaders are usually veteran workers before being appointed in the first place.

The group leaders in China are different from those in Hong Kong. In Japanese firms in Hong Kong (the informant has worked in the Citizen's Watch Factory here), they had group leaders (zuzhang) who oversaw about 50 workers, but generally didn't take part in manual labor unless someone was absent and it was necessary. There are no group leaders in the American-run factories he has worked in here (he was laid off last week by an American electronics firm). Instead, they have 'production supervisors' who oversee 50-70 workers. They do not participate in productive labor. So in China group leaders are regular workers and the number of workers they supervise is smaller.

The vice-group leader in his Dalian factory basically helps the group leader. If the small group has workers in two different rooms, they will be sure to put a vice-leader in the second room. They had workers appointed to do management tasks, but the names changed depending on political trends. Sometimes they called the system 'ba da yuan' (eight personnel), and sometimes 'wu da yuan' (five personnel). Sometimes they called them 'red soldiers' (hong xiaobing). During the period before Lin Biao fell they used this last name, a military one, as they did in other parts of the plant--all names and organizations were militarized during these few years. Shops were called lian (company), and the shop director a 'company commander' (lianzhang). They renamed the structure according to military usages. This practice was discontinued after the fall of Lin Biao. But during this period it was not only the names that were changed. They had military-like calisthenics before each shift, and after the shift, every day. They also had to have daily meetings to study Mao's sayings and have criticism-self criticism sessions. Sometimes they had mass meetings after the shift, but this was not for discussion purposes, but for the purpose of listening to reports by the revolutionary committee on politics, production situation, and to read important new documents.

During the 1969-72 period, the people who were appointed 'red soldiers' rotated daily. Anyone who worked in the group except those who had problems of a political or historical nature could be a 'red soldier'. Their job was to help the group leader to arrange the day's work. For example, they will be responsible for keeping the workshop floor clean and swept, and will be responsible for taking notes at meetings. Someone would be responsible for sending bag lunches out to be heated up, or to get hot water for drinking and bring it to the shop. No one is especially assigned to these types of tasks, like the various custodians and helpers in Hong Kong factories. Workers do all of these things in Chinese factories, in addition to their daily production work. After the collapse of Lin Biao they changed the names of these people to 'dayuan' (personnel), but as far as he was aware they still used a rotating system, no fixed person.

In 1969 to late 1971, there were no quality inspectors at all in the shop. They had already abolished the quality control department in 1967. From that time until late 1971 there were no quality inspectors. Later, in early 1972, right after Lin Biao fell, they established quality inspectors in each small group, under the leadership of the shop. But this was much different than when they had a quality control department, because these quality inspectors, workers, were under the leadership of the shop directors, who wanted to meet output targets. So they ended up saying OK when they should not have. There were cross-pressures. This is part of what he means when he says that in a large sense, there were no great production problems, but in a more detailed sense, there were many serious and complex problems. Another problem with quality is that the military deputy decided that the second coat of spray paint on the sewing machine stand was unnecessary, so this led to a drop in quality also.

Meetings: During 1969-72, they had six days of political study per week, whereas before the CR it was two times a week for one hour each day after the shift. But often there was nothing to study before the cultural revolution and workers would just go home. So the rules was twice a week but in practice it was often just once or none at all.

During 1973-76 they went back to two times a week, one hour after the shift. During 1977-78, when production was very busy, they often went three full weeks without political study meetings. They might increase the number for political campaigns, but rarely. In the campaigns after the fall of Lin Biao, they did not have criticism meetings to attack people on political matters. These post-Lin campaigns did not have struggle targets. But there were criticism meetings of people who broke laws, and stole things from other workers.

Also, to append the earlier discussion about Communists in leading positions in the group--very often the lathe workers in the shops were mostly young workers, and there were few party members among them. So they would put youth league members in their place. They were all activists. Out of a shop of 200, only about 50 were youth league members.

#### Staff Management, Changes 1972-77 (6/13/80, 3 hrs.)

One by one, they re-established the staff departments. This was very shortly after the cadres were returned from the villages and the shops. They received a document from above telling them to re-establish staff departments. When they re-established them, they made sure the leaders were party members of worker background. Some of them were former rebel leaders or activists, but not all. The old cadres would usually be regular staff members, sometimes vice department heads. Also, they still had former workers working in the staff (yigong dai gan).

The head of the quality control department was the pre-CR department head. He was a communist, had a worker background, and had poor peasant family origins, so he had stayed on in the factory and headed the new QC department when it was re-established. The head of the sales and supply department was the same story, and also the technical department and tool department. The head of the production department was a man who was a skilled worker, party member, and a member of a rebel organization. The same was true of the new head of the security department head, except that he originally was a demobilized soldier before the CR.

The cadre department head was a demobilized PLA captain who had entered the plant in 1968. The leader of the electrical power department (dongli ke) was a former PLA company commander who had entered the plant in 1968. He was around 38-40 at the time, a demobilized soldier. The head of the party

committee office was a student just graduated from Peking University. His father had joined the PLA in 1939, and at the time was the head of Peking's Railway Bureau.

The military deputy leading the plant appointed all of these people. It is clear that he wanted to curry favor with the high official in Peking whose son he appointed to head the party office.

The union was also re-established during this period, and its job was to help the RC run political study. They had criticized the former union for being overly concerned with worker's welfare, so this time the union was purely political. There was a party branch for all of these organs called the jiguan zhibu.

#### Quality Inspection Department

There was no quality inspection department (jiancha ke) from 1969-72, just quality inspectors (jiancha yuan) under the shop director. The department was finally re-established around 1973. The members came from the experienced workers in the shops. There was no technicians in it. They carried out work according to the former quality standards. The department managed the measuring instruments. They made sure they were accurate and if they were not, they repaired them.

The inspectors in the shops, the experienced workers from the large group, were under the leadership of the quality inspection department, and their only work was to inspect. But they did not come from the group. They pulled out selected lots of parts for inspection. Even though they had these inspections, their methods were still left-wing. For example, they decided it was only necessary to paint the sewing machine stands once, and not twice as they had always done before the CR. The stand would only be painted twice on special orders from above if a lot was to be exported to Africa, Southeast Asia, or Albania. Also the packaging is different for externally and internally marketed goods.

They sorted goods into 3 grades--1st, 2nd, and substandard (fupin). They were sorted into one group or another based on the amount of tolerance in machine heads and pins, and also on the quality of the stand and the paint job. First grade goods were sold to provincial and national commercial bureaus (shangye ju), although the national market was more interested in Shanghai goods. The second grade goods were sold to the local municipal co-commercial departments, and the third grade goods weren't even packaged. Part of them were held on to by the leadership for going through the back door or to give to friends or connections in other units. The rest were offered to the workers in the plant for sale, but the numbers rarely met the demand, so these substandard goods were offered to workers on a rotating basis, by giving out ration tickets.

Before the CR, only grade 1 goods were counted toward plant plan fulfillments. After the CR, grade 2 goods were also counted. The selling prices for grade 1 goods was 150¥, for grade 2 120¥, and for substandard goods 99¥. But the costs naturally were the same for each (usually around 96¥). So the higher the quality, the higher the profit. But the Northeast was known for producing sewing machines at high cost, but with low quality. In this respect Shanghai was considered superior.

The informant traveled to Shanghai several times to study their quality systems. He found that they had more old, skilled workers on the front lines of production there, doing crucial machining work on the lathes. But in Dalian they had all young workers doing these jobs, while the experienced workers went to the repair departments. When there was no repair work they didn't go help out in production like in Hong Kong, they just



sat, talked and rested.

So an important problem with quality during this period was the quality of the young workers. Many had graduated from 1968-70, when they hadn't learned things well, their cultural level was low, and many were unhappy to be working only in a factory. So they worked hard only to get in good with leaders and get out of production line work to a staff or a repair department job.

### Factions

Factions during this 1972-77 period depended wholly on personal relations, and were not out in the open. It just depended on whether or not people got along on an individual basis. Remember that some of the old cadres didn't get along with each other, and young people also didn't get along with one another sometimes. So the relations were very complex. They have exactly the same kind of factionalism in Hong Kong factories.

### Changes after the Gang of Four

Even after Lin Biao fell, it was still "politics leads everything". The function of the party committee was very important. Nobody would dare say that the plant director should lead things. Around 1977 or 1978 they abolished the RC, and transferred in a new plant director. Also a new party secretary was transferred in. The top three leaders in the plant were criticized after the Gang of Four fell in wallposters because of their activities in the plant. This included two military deputies and two other top cadres in the plant (old cadres). They were soon transferred out. The criticisms of these military deputies had to do with their seizing of privileges, their use of the back door for their relatives, their connections with military leaders grouped around Mao Yuanxin. They said that these kinds of back-door dealings were suppressing the worker's initiative.

But when the top military deputy left, they were still maintaining the status quo as far as the leaders of the departments went. The only person they removed was the department head of the personnel department, who had good relations with the military deputy.

The bureau called a meeting to uncover the followers of the Gang of Four, and all the department heads went to this meeting to denounce their former leaders and the one personnel department head who was removed. As the people in the plant used to say--"They really did some scrambling", they were trying to save themselves. So these people who had nothing but praise for the former military deputy earlier now heaped abuse on him at the meeting. The people in the plant, however, knew that all the leaders were just the same as the ones denounced for following the Gang of Four.

They only studied documents in their groups about the Gang of Four. There were no people in the plant criticized in the meetings for following the Gang of Four. Their shop director didn't say anything more about the old military deputy because he was a party member and the goings-on of the bureau meeting were not for outside ears. These conditions were about the same throughout Dalian, according to what he picked up from his friends.

One striking change was the attitude towards intellectuals, toward technicians. Before they had looked down on intellectuals except when they came from a military background, and it was hard to enter the party. At that time they formally reversed the verdicts on all the people who had been attacked and left hanging. In some cases they promoted these people to better jobs. But they had not yet demoted the workers who had risen up to be staff members. He hears that now China is beginning to face up



to handling this problem. But when he was there they were still maintaining the status quo. This reversal of verdicts on intellectuals and old cadres affected also their relatives, and their ability to get good assignments, get accepted into the youth league and universities.

So basically there were no striking changes in the factory. They maintained the status quo. Production improved only gradually. He only hears recently from friends that it was not until mid-1979 that worker and cadre initiative was really aroused, as a result of the bonus policy.

Elections for cadres? (The informant laughs) No! Definitely not for shop directors. These leading cadres are all appointed. They did have long discussions in small groups to select group leaders, but he doesn't know much about that. It was not by show of hands or ballots. They discuss democratically, then the person is appointed by the above leadership after a report is written and sent to them summarizing the group discussion. This is what is known as the method of democratic centralism.