

PERSONAL DATA

Age: 45

Sex: Male

Education: Industrial college graduate

Total Years Relevant Experience: 23

Last Year of Relevant Experience: 1980

Year Left China: 1980

Initial Immigration Status: Legal

Native Place/Overseas Connections: Hong Kong native, returned 1953

Class Background/Political Designation: OS

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OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY SUMMARY

Positions Held: 1) Technician, Geological Survey Team, Yunnan, 1958-62

2) Technician, Geological Survey Team, Guangxi, 1962-80

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

1) Geology Ministry

2) Geology Ministry until @1970, then Province

Experience in Full-time Manual Labor (for non-worker occupations):

none mentioned

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APPOINTMENTS: 3

TOTAL HOURS: 6

PAGES TEXT: 5

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Occupational History (6/5/80, 1.5 hrs.)

The informant was born and raised in Hong Kong, and graduated from middle school there in 1953. He returned to China that year to help in national reconstruction. He was 18 at the time. All the youth in Hong Kong read the calls in Da Gong Bao and Wenhui Bao to return and help with national reconstruction, to get a free university education, and that there were lots of opportunities in China. Also there were not many employment opportunities in Hong Kong then. Also the Chinese economy was doing well, the economy had revived quickly, and they still had markets and no rationing.

There were student associations in Hong Kong which mobilized middle school graduates to return to China. He didn't realize it at the time, but they were underground Communist organizations. When they went to Canton there was a reception center where they were met. For a couple of days they went to see exhibitions, lectures, and had one month of remedial education on China and its conditions. Then they took tests. If they didn't pass the tests, they went to the Canton Overseas Chinese Remedial School.

In his first try, he passed the test and was assigned to the South-Central Mining College in Changsha. He studied there for the regular five-year period. He studied Russian, and was a student in the Geology Department. They had other departments like Mining and Metallurgy.

In 1958 he was assigned to a Geological Team in Yunnan Province. They were looking for iron ore. Their job was to assess the potential of old and abandoned mines and to prospect for new mining sites. They made geological maps, and determined the sizes of deposits.

Originally, this geological team was under the Southwest region bureau of the Geology Ministry in Peking. Later, after the cultural revolution, these bureaux were put at the province level, each province having one. Each bureau was divided into teams (dui) specialized by types of ore they were looking for. Each team was divided into branch teams (fendui), and each branch team was divided into small groups.

In 1962 he was transferred to a geology team in Guangxi province, and worked there until he came out to Hong Kong, legally, in February 1980. His job was as a geological technician, and in 1977 he was raised to be a geological engineer. From this time on he did management work in the offices of the team. He oversaw experiments, and the balance of mining operations.

Wages

When he first graduated, he was a jianxi (trial) technician, and made about 40¥. After one year he was made regular and was a grade 13 technician, 59¥. Right up until 1980 he did not get a change in wages at all, even though there was a readjustment in 1977. He was passed over in 1977 because his political thought was not considered good enough. He was changed to engineer, but this did not change his wage. He says they were interested in raising the lowest, and 59¥ was not considered low.

Bonuses

They had no bonuses at all until they tried to institute them in 1979, but they had lots of trouble. The bonuses were supposed to increase worker activism but they had the opposite effect. Given the nature of their work it was very hard to set quotas to overfulfill for bonuses--how to compare the jobs of geological prospecting and chemical analysis? So people felt the targets were unfair, and argued a great deal about them. There were lots

of problems. So it had the opposite effect.

They tried to divide workers into three groups based on assessments. They assessed every quarter. They looked at quota overfulfilment, quality of work, and attendance. The bonuses were limited to no more than 5% of wages. For technicians, they were 12, 9, and 5¥. Workers bonuses were higher.

#### Wage Readjustments (6/7/80, 2.25 hrs.)

In 1963 or 1964 there was a readjustment. He doesn't remember much about it, how they arranged it for workers, but he remembers that they promoted a raised certain activists, backbone technicians, and some were promoted to engineer. The main criteria, especially if one was also a party member, was attitude toward Mao Thought. Whether or not you opposed the line of the Great Leap Forward and the Three Red Flags, whether or not you had been criticized as a rightist during the 1959 anti-rightist campaign following the Peng Dehuai affair, were also important criteria. If you had problems in any of the above areas, then there was no way to get a raise. You had to insist that there really was enough to eat from 1961 to 1962, and not bring up the disasters caused by the Great Leap Forward. In 1963, these were the issues bound up in whether or not you had good political thought.

He remembers this because after the Great Leap he applied to go back to Hong Kong but they wouldn't let him, and asked him why he wanted to leave. He answered that it was because of the economic problems caused by the Great Leap Forward--he made a mistake in putting it this way. So he, unlike his schoolmates, was not raised then, because he had exhibited doubts about Mao's Great Leap Forward. They brought this up in 1963 when they were assessing people for a raise.

The second criteria was how hard-working you were in carrying out the leadership's orders, regardless of whether or not they were reasonable ones, like the backyard steel furnaces. So this also includes a political aspect. They did not have assessment meetings in 1963. The party committee selected nominees and posted their names on the wall, asked for opinions, but the masses did not nominate people themselves. After this 1964 readjustment, they began the Four Cleans, the Socialist Education Movement, and then the Cultural Revolution and the Yida Sanfan Movement in quick succession, and there was no wage readjustment during these big campaigns.

In 1972 or 1973, they had the next readjustment. This was mainly for those with low wages. A document specified years of service and wage levels. People who made over 50¥ were not eligible. Also, only those people who had been 'liberated' and had their cases cleared after cultural revolution accusations could be raised. Those who were 'left hanging' (guaqilai), could not be raised. Often factionalism crept into the decisions because political behavior was one of the criteria, and sometimes one faction would be in power, so this affected judgments of political thought of former opponents. But generally, factional influence was slight in 1973 because the central regulations were so clear about years of service and pay level.

At the end of 1977 they had another. This one was fairly simple. After Deng came back to power. The conditions: 1) political thought, 2) work contribution, 3) level of wages and length of service. They didn't distinguish between types of work, level of education. For example, if a worker started in 1958 at 18¥, and now was a grade 3 worker making 50¥, he would be raised before a university graduate technician who started at 59¥ and who had not had a wage for two decades. (He is referring here to his own case). So length of service was important, but they didn't distinguish

between types of work and level of education.

When they said 'good political thought' in 1977 they meant something different from before. They were rehabilitating a lot of people and were trying to do away with the influence of the Gang of Four. So the measure of good politics was attitude towards the new direction of modernization. But this was very complex, because they were calling the extreme left 'extreme right' in essence, and there was factionalism at the top and you still had Wang Dongxing, Chen Xilian, and Wu De, and you still had factionalism at the bottom. There were still a lot of intellectuals in units who had not yet been rehabilitated, and there were still a lot of people who formerly were extreme leftists, had beaten people, who still hadn't been caught. So politics were still in great disarray in Guangxi, and things were confusing as far as 'good political thought' went.

This raise didn't really have any great effect because they ended up promoting mostly people with long years of service and low wages, and it was hard for those with good work contributions to come through. At the end of 1979 they began another wage readjustment which hadn't been completed by the time he left in February 1980. There was no political thought condition this time. It was based solely on whether or not your work contribution was great. But there are problems here too. The documents did not specify what good work contributions were, and there was no set standards. People did all different kinds of work. How could you compare them? It takes a long time. They had been discussing for two months by the time he left and they still hadn't made any nominations. This was the first time in history that they had wage readjustments entirely on the basis of work contribution.

#### Discipline, Firings

There were no clear standards for bad work or bad behavior, so it is difficult to talk about punishments as a system. People were punished in the cultural revolution for their class backgrounds, and their thought if they were cadres. Also if you wildly had sexual relations or stole things, these were the most important types of bad behavior for which punishments were given. But it wasn't clear at any given time what would be considered bad behavior, or what kinds of punishments, from criticism to expulsion, would be given.

During the cultural revolution it was no big thing to be absent for 2 weeks in a row and not be punished at all, but at other times this was not permitted. In his geological team illicit sexual relations were fairly widespread because they were isolated and spouses were not there. But this wasn't always punished. Also, what would be considered corruption changed. Administrators, technicians, and workers would be punished for different kinds of things.

There were people who were expelled from his unit. Technicians were expelled during the CR for political mistakes and for having bad historical backgrounds. There were administrative cadres caught in corruption but they were either criticized or given a warning, but not expelled. As far as workers go, he can only think of one or two who were ever expelled, and this was for stealing, fighting, illicit sex. One's lover had committed suicide after the affair ended. Technicians were expelled the most often, and for political reasons. In 20 years at most two or three workers were expelled. Basically speaking, there is not any firings. If you come late, leave early, are absent without leave, you can't be expelled for this. The unit needs permission from the higher levels, and you have to give reasons.

### The Geological Team (6/9/80, 2.25 hrs.)

Under the State Council is the Geological Ministry. Below the ministry are several bureau, six in all, and one for each of the big administrative regions--south-central, north, northeast, east, southwest, northwest. After a while they changed to a bureau in each province. He forgets exactly when this change took place. Each Geology Bureau, located in a provincial capital, had a number of leading cadres, administrative offices and departments (chu). Finance, Coal, Materials, Logistics, and Geology. There was also a political department.

There were about 10 geological teams spread out throughout Guangxi. They are apportioned territorially in the province. They have their own region for which they are responsible. His team was responsible for several counties around Guilin. They were the #1 Geological Team. They did not cooperate with the county or city governments, they were under the bureau.

The work was difficult, they had to go around rough terrain by foot, often in small villages. The families lived far away, and this was hard. Most of the workers in the team were young fellows, and they didn't allow young women to work in the team, because it would be very easy to have sexual relations. Also the work was too difficult for women.

There was an office in Guilin, and about 1000 employees in the team, which was divided into branch teams. The team ran its own school, farms, and small factories. They had a base (jidi) in the city. When workers married and got older, they were often transferred to the base so they could be with their family more often.

The team had its own party committee, a team head, and vice team heads, and several departments (ke). They also had a shop for repairing machines, and a chemical laboratory. This, in addition to the leadership of the school and the farms, made up the team headquarters in Guilin.

The team had 5-10 branch teams (fendui) depending on the size of the area and the amount of deposits in it. The size of the branch team could be thirty to a couple of hundred. They had a branch team head, a party branch secretary, and also a vice branch team head. The branch team has several administrative groups (zu) about 7-8. A branch team would have various kinds of equipment--large drills, etc. The size of the branch team depends on how many drills the branch team had. The team was not specialized in looking for any special kind of minerals. They looked for anything--Nickel, Cadmium, Chromium, Iron, Tungsten, Tin, Zinc, Magnesium, and Platinum. But they were given specific types of minerals to look for especially hard. Some they ignored. The bureau would give them specific minerals to stress which the country lacked, because China was trying to build itself up by its own resources. The decision would be based on what industry in the local area needed, in order to reduce the stress on the transport system. So if you were in an area where there were lots of phosphorous mines, for example, you would just ignore phosphorous. They also ignored gold, because it didn't have that many industrial uses, was mostly ornamental. So they stressed metals and minerals in a varied way over periods depending on the development of production and its needs.

The work process went like this. First, they would have a general survey, and would find traces of various minerals. Then they would focus on particular areas where traces of wanted minerals were. After this more detailed survey of these smaller areas, if there looked like there was a possibility of a mine, they brought in the equipment and drills, and did an investigation to determine the size of a deposit, how widespread it was, its depth and estimated cost of recovery. Then they would raise opinions to

the team headquarters, in their geological report. The team relayed it to the province, bureau, and then the upper levels made the decision whether or not to open up a mine, and if they decide to then they turn it over to the metallurgy bureau for mining. The bureau makes the decision based on what their targets are for given minerals that year.

The informant's job was as a group leader of a general survey team, which is one of several groups (zu) which each branch team is divided into. Later he was transferred to a job as a technician in the technical group of the branch team, and in his final years there was a technician in the geological department (ke) of the team headquarters in Guilin. In his last job he was the head of a research group within the research office of the department. So he worked at all three levels of the unit.

### Great Leap Forward

During that period they took steel as the key. So they looked for iron and ignored other minerals. They did not establish a small steel furnace in their unit. Another effect was that there was a lot of pressure for more iron, so they lowered the standards for percentage of iron in the rock before it would be considered ore. And they exaggerated in their reports of the amount of potential deposits which were recoverable. They exaggerated by several times. They ignored the normal scientific standards in coming to decisions and making their geological reports. Then this had an influence later. They would set up the beginnings of mining operations at these sites, and would later have to close down (xiama), and disperse the miners because they weren't producing good ore, and it was too costly. They wasted a lot of money because of this "exaggeration wind", and because they ignored science. His own geological team in Yunnan was dispersed at that time. First the Soviet experts left, and then they did not have enough food to eat in that area of Yunnan near the Burmese border. The peasants had tried to smelt iron, and had neglected crops, so for a couple of years there was not enough food to go around. This was when he was transferred to Guangxi.

### Cultural Revolution

His team had two factions in it just like every other unit in China. But they did not participate in armed struggle very much, although some people in his team had guns. Also during that period, the leaders were afraid and basically ignored their management work. The geological team basically stopped production for 2½ years from 1966-68. Not until 1969 during the cleaning of the class ranks campaign did the work began to be restored. Some of the teams were effected seriously and basically stopped. His own team continued to work, but it was fairly lax and lazy. There was also a situation of anarchism (wuzhengfu zhuyi). If you wanted to come to work, you came. If you wanted to do work, then you did. So his unit basically stopped working during that time, but some of the prospecting teams continued to do some work. Actually production went up and down several times during this period, it depended on political conditions. The effect of the CR on production teams was just as bad as during the Great Leap. They destroyed things without building up new things in their place (po bu li).