

PERSONAL DATA

Age: 38

Sex: Male

Education: University graduate

Total Years Relevant Experience: 13

Last Year of Relevant Experience: 1978 Year Left China: 1978

Initial Immigration Status: Legal

Native Place/Overseas Connections: Canton native/parent OS

Class Background/Political Designation: unknown

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY SUMMARY

Positions Held: 1) Glass Factory, Peking, 1966-73
a) worker, glass heating shop, 1966-70
b) Technician, Chemical Analysis Lab, 1970-73
2) Technician, Chemical Research Institute, Peking
Light Industry Bureau, 1973-78

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

1) Municipal/(200)

2) Municipal/(unknown)

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

worker in glass heating shop, 1966-70

APPOINTMENTS: 2

TOTAL HOURS: 4.5

PAGES TEXT: 3

Occupational History (4/30/80, 2.5 hrs.)

The informant studied Industrial Chemistry at a university, and graduated in 1966. He was assigned to a glass factory, but was given ordinary manual labor to do, not technician's work. The factory he worked in was a glass complex, made up of three different factories located at different locations in one area of Peking. It was under the Chemical Industry Bureau of the city. In all, the enterprise had about 1000 employees, and made glasses for drinking, pitchers, test tubes, optical glass. In the factory he worked in the glass heating shop where he threw glass into furnaces and drew it out in molten form into tubes. There was no special title, he just heated the glass. This was entirely a machine process, no handicraft involved. Then in 1970, he was transferred to the laboratory where he did chemical analysis. He did this until he was transferred to a chemical research institute in the Bureau's system in 1973. While there he also worked in an analysis laboratory. He worked here until July 1978, when he came to Hong Kong legally. He came to Hong Kong because his parents were here and had moved out from Guangdong previously. He is not from Hong Kong, but from Canton originally. He was born in 1942.

Wages

He got 46¥ right after graduation from college, when he was a 'practicing student' (shixi sheng). He was not given regular status until 1973, he forgets exactly when. During that period they just didn't have anyone to handle these things. A document came down from the State Council about the situation of these students who hadn't been advanced to full status after their practicum, so they changed them. At this time he was raised to 55¥, this was the only time he was given a raise during his work experience. They did not have any wage readjustments to his recollection either in the early 1970s, or in 1977-8 right before he left.

Bonuses

There were no bonuses at all from 1966 to the time he left. But they did have supplementary wages of 5¥ per month. This was from the funds formerly used for bonuses, so they distributed it equally to all workers, and to all staff who began work before 1966. He did not get any because he came later. These supplementary wages were not given conditionally according to work attendance or performance--they were given to those who had received bonuses previously so they wouldn't be dissatisfied at income reduction.

Temporary and Contract Workers

They had temporary workers from among workers' dependents (jiashu). They also had workers on contract who did more of the manual labor and odd jobs. They didn't get all of the fringe benefits for medicine, etc. These were always members of households with economic hardships. They did not have any temporary workers from the streets or from the villages.

Discipline, Firings

For bad work performance, or bad work attitudes before the CR, they could not fire you, but could reduce your bonus and criticize you in a meeting or in wallposters. The only difference after the CR was that there was no bonus to be taken away. If you worked, OK, if you didn't, it was also

OK. But they did still have the criticisms, but after the CR it was possible not to listen and get away with it, since there was no real difference anyway.

The effects of this incentive situation on work: the result was more striking in the factory than in the research institute, because workers constantly had to put out. So they didn't do a lot of the little things that made a difference--keeping the workplace clean, the machines and tools repaired and well-oiled, and they didn't inspect the machines as closely and as often as needed. Also, they made workers less willing to study technology and cultural education in their spare time, because whether they did so or not did not make any difference. This was less true in the research institute because they had a more free atmosphere and could take their work home, it was more flexible. People wanted to finish work, kind of like writing and academic work.

There was no one fired for any work-related matters in either the factory or the institute. They did have transfers, but it wasn't always clear what the reasons were. One clue was if a person was transferred to a smaller town, like Foshan, then you knew it was disciplinary. But the regular, non-party person in the plant usually didn't know the reasons, or where someone like a party secretary would be sent to, so he can't really say. But there were these kinds of transfers.

Glass Factory (5/9/80, 2 hrs.)

Both his work units were under the Chemical Industry Bureau of Peking City. The plant was made up of 3 independent factories, 1000 workers in all. They were 3 different, independent units, and were not integrated in any way, and they made different articles. One made bottles, one made glass for instrument covers, while the other made optical glass. The last one was his own.

Here there were 2 production shops, one for heating and shaping the glass, another for polishing and grinding. About 200+ employees in all worked there. There were also several other small service shops like the repair shop where they had fitters and lathe operators, electricians. They had technical and administrative departments, but he had no experience in them when he first graduated up until 1970 because they were pretty much dispersed, and most of their staff were doing manual labor in the shops, and some sent to the countryside.

Cultural Revolution

By the time he got to the plant in September 1966, there were already 2 factions in the plant. The conservatives and the rebels. The difference was in their attitude towards the old first party secretary. There were workers in both factions, but there were more technicians in the conservative faction. The main difference was simply attitude toward the leadership, but chushen was very important. At the beginning, whether or not you were revolutionary, and could become a participant, depended on chushen. The requirements at first were strict, and there weren't many who met the criteria.

At first, they wanted to knock down Liu Shaoqi, but splits came in their attitudes toward leaders of the unit. By the time he came, virtually all the leading cadres--party secretaries, plant directors, department heads and shop directors--had all stood aside and were all doing manual labor. Nobody had taken their place for several months, and there was no real leadership, so production stopped. Not until a central document about revolutionary committees came down in 1967 did they begin to form leading groups. They carried out some production, but very little. If they fulfilled

50% of their target, they felt they were doing well. The informant went to Kunming himself during this period with his friends to 'exchange revolutionary experiences', since transport was free and they still received their wages.

They first established a revolutionary committee in the plant before the PLA came. It was made up of the members of 2 factions, and no one else. They were mostly workers but there also were some leading cadres who had participated in the factions. The head of the committee was the head of the rebel faction, a worker.

Later, PLA representatives came and had actual power even though they didn't set up the RC. People listened to them in production matters. This was in 1969. Not long after they established the RC he was transferred to the chemical laboratory. The RC was established late in 1968. The RC exercise no real leadership in the plant. The group leaders basically did what they wanted (zuzhang, or production group leaders). There was no real technical or business leadership. The RC didn't meet that much about production matters--they had discussion meetings (pengtou hui), but these people were still basically workers. All the leading cadres were still doing manual labor by the time he left the shop floor and almost all the technicians, except those high up in the original factional leadership, were still doing manual labor in the shops. There were still no departments, and no rehabilitations. This did not come until 1972.

Management was handled during this period each week and month at a time, and decisions were made on the spot after discussions. Things were done on an ad hoc basis, there was no analysis or long term planning. People just got on the phone, got into contact with people, and arranged things like supplies or led activities and gave orders to the shop floor. Management at this time was comparatively simple. There was a lot of attention to ideological work.

If someone's work was bad or slow, they would do 'ideological work', and ask him what his problem was, whether or not there were problems in his family, etc. But they did not bring up wages. At the time he left, and went to the lab in 1970, the factional leaders(toutou) were still in charge in the RC.

Hong Kong-China Factory Comparison

The informant now works in a burglar alarm factory in Hong Kong, and has worked in others previously. The biggest difference he notes is in the mentality of the managers. Since in China there is planned production, forms for everything and a state supply system, managers think in terms of fulfilling targets, not about making as much money or as many products as they possibly can. So there is a different mentality.

As far as labor goes, they use wages and firings to control workers here. If they work hard, they get more money. If they don't work hard, they fire them. In China, whether you work hard or not wages are about the same. If you don't work hard they might give you some criticism and education. If you work hard they will give you a small bonus. But you can't get fired.

Management and decision-making is less flexible in China. Restrictions are too heavy in China, and people who are on the spot cannot make quick decisions, and have to go through several approvals. In Hong Kong you have to make quick decisions based on market conditions.

He says China's greatest problem is that it wastes people's talents and does not know how to utilize them. The CR was only the biggest example, but that sort of thing went on all along. They are very conservative about making use of real talents.