

PERSONAL DATA

Age: 43

Sex: Male

Education: University graduate (automatic control)

Total Years Relevant Experience: 18

Last Year of Relevant Experience: 1979 Year Left China: 1979

Initial Immigration Status: Legal

Native Place/Overseas Connections: Indonesia OS/returned 1950s

Class Background/Political Designation: OS

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY SUMMARY

Positions Held: 1) Glass Factory, Shanghai, 1962-79

a) Technician, Technical Department, 1962-67, 1969-79

b) Repair Worker, Electrical Repair Group, 1967-68

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

1) Municipal/(1000)

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

repair worker, 1967-68

APPOINTMENTS: 3

TOTAL HOURS: 6

PAGES TEXT: 9

Occupational History (5/24/80, 2 hrs.)

The informant is an overseas Chinese from Indonesia. He returned to China in the 1950s, as he says, to help the country of his ancestors modernize. He studied at a university in Tianjin for 5 years, specializing in 'automatic control' (zidong kongzhi), which is the automation of equipment for production. This includes the entire production process.

After graduation from college in 1962, he went to a Glass Factory in Shanghai, and he worked there until the beginning of 1979. The plant had over 1000 workers, and was under the Shanghai Municipal Construction Materials Bureau. He started in the technical department, where he did 'technical management', which means that he was responsible for taking care of the overhauls, repairs of machinery. He cooperated with workers in a small group. If they found a problem and couldn't solve it then they would notify him and discuss how to solve the problem. Depending on the problem, either he would fix it himself or the workers would fix it after getting his advice.

He worked in this technical department at the same job throughout his career there, with the exception of one year from 1967-68, when he worked at manual labor in the electrician's group (dianqi zu), which was a service and not a production group. He went with them to repair equipment and machinery. Afterwards, he returned to the department for work. Even though there were many changes in organization and a reduced number of cadres during certain periods, he was one who was kept on the job.

Wages

After graduating from college, he was on probation for one year as a technician. This was a trial period of one year, the shixi qi. After this he was made regular (zhuanzheng). This is fixed by regulations. It is different from the 'trial period' (shiyong qi) in Hong Kong industry where they can fire you at the end if you don't work out. Everybody in China is supposed to be hired permanently after this initial trial period. He made 46-48¥ this first year. Afterwards, he made 56¥, but he forgets what grade he was set at.

There was no wage readjustment from this time until 1978, when he was raised to 62¥. There were many conditions set for this in 1978, work contribution, ability. But in the end all the people who had worked for a long time without a raise, from before 1964, were given raises. Each unit handled this work. Those who had not gotten raises from 1964 on were favored. The central government did not give very exacting orders or directives. So each unit was different.

Bonuses

Before the CR they had a bonus system. They had appraisal meetings in each work group each month, and divided bonuses into 3 groups--6, 5, and 4¥. These discussion meetings were very haphazard (suibian), and were just a formalism. Not much of a difference in pay was at stake, and the only people in the group who didn't get the bonus were those who asked for too much sick leave.

They continued this system in reality all through the CR. The only difference was that they stopped having appraisal meetings, and stopped dividing the awards into grades. They automatically gave everyone 5¥, and it usually was not revoked if a person asked for too much sick leave. They had no special name for this, they just paid out the money. It didn't matter what the name was.

After the Gang of Four, he forgets exactly which year, they returned to the previous system of bonuses, just like before. They had monthly assessments and split into 3 grades--4,5, and 6. All groups in the plant did these monthly assessments, and all technicians and staff got bonuses. The only people who didn't get bonuses were the leading cadres. This bonus system was just the same as before the CR. The production workers also had a bonus for overfulfilling targets, but this was not separate (see below).

At first this was effective in giving workers motivation, it was something new and fresh. But after a while they got accustomed to these and its effect wore off. All bonuses were about the same amount, and there were a lot of other criteria--like attitude--that were unclear and hard to assess. So the effect on how hard one worked was weakened. They had a point system. Points were given for each amount of units you overfulfilled the quota, and for quality. Then in the monthly assessments they would give people points for work attitude, 'unity' (tuanjie) or getting along with coworkers, and work discipline, which meant promptness in reporting to work and low number or no leave requests. They never had piece rates in the plant. They had production line technology (liushui xing), so it was impossible to measure work contribution.

Temporary and Contract Workers

They had these kinds of workers in his plant. They used them when there were a lot of workers not reporting for work. In the summer this was a big problem, because it was so hot and a lot of workers reported sick and stayed home. Attendance rates (chuqin lu) was very low in the summers. So they asked temporary laborers to come and work in the plant for the summer months. They had contracts of a few months duration, and they came from the countryside around Shanghai. They did contract work, and sometimes took care of machines in the shops. The workers didn't sign contracts themselves. The contract is with the communes. They only get to see a certain portion of their wages, the rest goes to the commune. Wages are not low--they are about middle range for regular workers. Because they give them different work, and do not give them labor protection, they pay them a little higher.

They did not get bonuses, supplements, or any other kind of benefits. He is not too clear on this, but he is pretty sure that they participated in all meetings and movements. These contract workers were not organized into a single work group. They were dispersed throughout the entire plant in one's and two's. They had this system before the cultural revolution, and after 1977. But in the intervening 10 years they did not use it. In the midst of the CR everything was in disorder and they didn't run the system. But later, they didn't have these kinds of workers because production was developing slowly and demand for labor was not tight.

Promotions

There were not many promotions to leading positions from among the technical ranks, and in fact he could say there were none, until very recently, when he hears by reading the paper that they have started to promote technically-trained people to be department heads and assistant plant directors. So usually the leaders of technical departments and of the entire plant did not have technical training. They looked largely after political behavior of their subordinates and political reliability, and they were mostly party members. Most of the leading cadres had earlier been PLA cadres before liberation--some were even long march cadres.

So this meant that technical personnel were afraid to make important decision and had to ask these leaders who didn't really know the technical matters, and didn't have the knowledge to decide. They were afraid of making a mistake and being held responsible. Some of these leaders, of course, studied and mastered the business and work side of their responsibilities. But these were only the best few. If a leading cadre was unsure how to decide, a common way to resolve the problem is to convene a meeting and discuss various options with the technically trained. But many of these cadres just subjectively made decisions--they don't really have the training to evaluate things scientifically. Others just wildly give orders, and that's it.

For example, if there is a quality control problem in the glass bowls, it could be due to a number of factors--the raw materials might be bad, the mixing and composition might be bad, or the temperature and pressure wrong. If you had a leading cadre in the technical department without technical expertise, he will not be able to decide among the alternatives, and will hear conflicting advice from those who are familiar with each of the three processes. If he had technical ability he could evaluate the various arguments quickly, but if not he will just hold meeting after meeting, discussion after discussion, and will drag the decision out for a long time.

Young cadres: There was some conflict between younger and older cadres, naturally. The young people had been rebels, and the older cadres had been the object of struggle. After a few years they were required to work side by side. By in their minds they might have had some opinions toward one another, but these did not lead to serious political struggles.

There were a number of young cadres raised from among the ranks of workers and technicians during the CR because they were members of the rebels. They were not formally appointed, and not elected. They were appointed by the leading party cadres, their names were discussed by the masses, but they were appointed. These people really didn't have the ability to do the work, and shortly after the Gang of 4 fell almost all of them were sent back to their original work. This didn't happen all of a sudden. It was a gradual process, they just used the excuse of 'reorganizing leading groups' to return them to their old work bit by bit.

Plant Technical System (5/27/80, 2 hrs.)

The technical department had 10+ people. They had technicians of all specialties--machinery, electricity, construction, ventilation, and production technology. The department head was an old cadre who had been in the PLA since before 1949. One vice department head had originally been a worker, and was earlier raised to leading positions, and finally transferred to their plant in 1970. He was older. One vice department head was an old scientific and technical person. He had been a cadre since before the CR, and did 10 years of manual labor before they restored him to his vice-head position in 1977. He had graduated from college before 1949.

The general responsibility of the technical department was to oversee the entire technical process of production and solve any sort of problem that occurred, and also to make technical improvements in the production process. How do they know what is going on in production? They had daily production and quality statistics from the shops. Also each person walked through the shops every day to check out the situation with regard to their particular specialty. They didn't talk to the shop directors, they just went to check themselves. The shop director had his own technicians, he relied on them to solve problems. The only contact the department staff technicians had with the shop technicians was to cooperate if they found a problem in the shop--

they might talk it over together. But otherwise, there was no special relation. They were not the leaders of the shop director or of the shop technicians. They were on a basis of equality--they were led by the shop director, and the staff technicians were led by the department head. Another way to find out problems was if the department head came back from a daily 'production readjustment meeting' (shengchan diaodu hui) of all the department heads and shop directors, and had said that they had discovered x and y problems, and they would work on solving them.

Mostly during his trips to the shop he would take 1-2 hours to walk around and talk with shop technicians. One big part of his job was technical improvements. If it was a small one, the shop technicians handled it themselves. If it was a big one, he would write a report to the department head to get permission to do this. Normally, if the shops or groups want to undertake a technical innovation, they must get permission from above. For small or medium size ones, the technical department decides. If bigger, the plant director decides upon the advice of the technical department.

Changes over the Years: The department was as described above before the CR, and also more recently. During the CR it was abolished for 2-3 years. In 1967-70, when all cadres and technicians went to the shops for labor, it ceased to exist. Production was led by a 'production leadership department' (shengchan zhihui bu), this was a simplification of administration. Later, they established a technical group (jishu zu) of 3 people under the 'production leadership group'. It didn't have any concrete technical work but just funneled reports and orders back and forth.

After the establishment of the revolutionary committee, they still had this production leadership department, and they worked then under the leadership of the RC. There was also a political department, which did political work. Under the production leadership department they gradually established a number of groups (zu), and these groups gradually increased in size until even before the fall of the Gang of 4 they had reached the size of departments (ke) but were not called that. They were different in name. After the Gang fell, around 1978, they started to call them ke again.

The informant himself did manual labor for one year in the shops, then returned relatively early to office work, and was in charge of technical documents and reports for the production leadership group. The technical system had not yet been restored. He would familiarize himself with the technical situation, make reports to the leadership, and fill out forms. Work was very relaxed then. If they had a problem, he'd go take a look. If he found out what was wrong, he would just send a report up to the leadership any time he felt like it. Work was very relaxed. The 'leadership' was the revolutionary committee head, established very quickly and at the same time as the production leadership department. The leader of the production leadership group was the head of the RC. The RC's entire work was handled by its two subordinate arms, the political department and the production leadership department. The production department was large--it had people working on planning, technology, accounting, finance, and statistics.

He says that this system really wasn't that much different from before, if you consider the RC head a plant director and the group heads as department heads. There was a period of about a year of 'anarchism' where the leading group had stopped leading, and before the RC had been established. This was a period of bad production. They had high costs, bad quality. It took about a year--after 1969 or 1970, until the production situation started to

really recover. This was also the period when they started to restore the previous administrative structure. By 1975-76, the production department had increased to its former size of 10+ people, but it was still called a 'group' (zu). The personnel were basically the same as before the CR. No one was promoted from among the workers. The only new people had recently graduated from university. They had leading cadres who were promoted from among the workers, but none were promoted to be technicians during this period.

Four Cleans Campaign

A work team of 20+ people from various units in Shanghai and various walks of life--party and non-party--came to the plant to inspect the leaders for political, economic, and historical problems. They called mass meetings, and discussion meetings to get the masses to reveal the problems of the leaders, and their pasts. They looked at the individual dossiers, even though some of the work team members weren't party members. But these non-party people had earlier been investigated and were found to be loyal and have good backgrounds.

People would come under suspicion because of something brought up in meetings of the work team with the masses, or because of material in the file. They investigated a lot of people, but there were never any results or any formal accusations made. These kinds of investigations were not made public, but people knew they were being investigated because they would ask them and their friends some questions about their past. The movement had not reached a conclusion. It had only been run about 6 months by the time the CR arrived. Many of those accused became rebels in the CR because they claimed to have been oppressed by the work teams.

Cultural Revolution

The first people to rise up and rebel were hoodlums (liumang). They were people who had been reprimanded earlier by the leadership for stealing, fighting, drinking, poor attendance, or illicit sexual relations. These were people who knew no regulations on their behavior, and were uncomfortable to look at. They had earlier been talked to, maybe even punished. Now they were the first to put up wallposters and say that the leaders were opposing the workers and were capitalist roaders. There were also a minority of early rebels who were youth with good backgrounds, with no 'tail' (weiba), or shortcoming you could grab onto and criticize.

The second faction came into being because they opposed the style and criticisms of the other faction. They did not think it was right to knock down all cadres. The rebels wanted to knock down all the leading cadres. The conservatives raised different criticisms. They felt that cadres had some shortcomings deserving criticism, but not being dragged out. They felt that the rebels were the ones that had problems in workstyle and political behavior. The conservatives tended to have better personal relations with cadres. It is very difficult to separate the characteristics of the two faction's members. But generally speaking, the conservatives tended to have longer and better relations with cadres, but as the movement progressed and got more disorderly, things got more and more complex.

(5/31/80, 2 hrs.)

Treatment of Leading Cadres: Most of the leading cadres were criticized, for both small and big things. Generally speaking, they struggled those leading cadres 'taking the capitalist road', but what did this mean? It was hard to say, because all units had bonuses, etc. But later on they went after people's historical problems--pre-1949, and class backgrounds. They usually stayed away from ordinary administrative and technical cadres. They went after leading cadres, but not those at the basic level.

During the most disorderly period, almost all leading cadres, shop directors, department heads, and plant level cadres, stood aside. So for 2 years there was 'anarchism' (wuzhengfu zhuyi)--there were no leaders. There were just staff members and workers. Relations with other plants were cut off, and relations with bureaus above were cut off. People still worked and came to work most of the time, but there was no real leadership and no speed. Especially the old workers and honest people still came in and tried to do their jobs. Often they lacked tools and materials, so someone would have to think of a way to get them, and sometimes they did, sometimes they didn't.

Most of the leading cadres did labor in the shops. Also, most of the office personnel were in the shops doing manual labor. They were not sent. They just didn't have any work in the offices, and there was no leader there, so they would arrange with people on the shop floor who they knew to allow them to work in their shop. When they went to shops they did ordinary labor, not technical work.

Yes, there were top cadres put in cells and dragged out for struggle meetings, and not allowed to go home. They would find 'historical' problems. For example, the plant director/party secretary was accused of being a revisionist and a false party member, and was struggled repeatedly. They could make accusations wildly because nobody could tell them otherwise, and they just didn't listen to anyone, they just talked and made accusations. They were just like today's Iranian students. The situation was the same. Mao supported the rebels, Khomeini supports the Iranian students. So they can take anyone prisoner and do whatever they want, and make any accusations.

Revolutionary Committee

Production never stopped completely. Their plant was on three shifts and was a continuous process plant. They continued, but had a lot of problems with quality, the composition of output. There were a lot of minor problems, it was an abnormal situation.

Two propaganda teams came in 1969 (?), one was a PLA propaganda team, and another was a worker propaganda team. They wanted to forge a great alliance and form a revolutionary committee. The PLA team was just a handful of people. There were about 20-30 worker propaganda team members, and they came from other factories. Not all worker members were in the party. But he thinks that maybe all the soldiers were in the party, and they wore their uniforms but were unarmed.

The PLA and workers ran a study group (xuexi ban) which including a shifting number of people. They studied the necessity of uniting and creating a revolutionary committee. In fact, the worker propaganda team was in power, they were the new leading group. At this time the party didn't have any real organizational life of its own. But it was later established again after the RC was established. But there were no elections to establish the revolutionary committee, and the worker propaganda team selected the members.

In late 1968 the revolutionary committee was established. They used the 3-in-1 formula. There was one PLA representative, old cadres on whom the masses opinions were not too severe, and representatives of the rebel organizations. There were 10+ members. At first, the head of the worker propaganda team was the head of the RC, and in facto this man was the leading cadre from another plant. The second in command was the PLA man, and the third was a rebel leader.

The worker propaganda team leader remained the head of the plant until they allowed the old party secretary to be rehabilitated. Then the old

party secretary/director became the vice-head of the RC after several years, in 1973-4. He was left hanging for the intervening years. In the meantime, the head from the worker propaganda team stayed after the rest of the team left to become the plant's leader.

The workers on the RC were leaders of factions. Soon after the RC was established, in 1969, the party established a temporary party group (linshi dang xiaozu) which gradually restored party life and organization. Not until late 1969 did they reestablish the party committee. Then they reorganized the revolutionary committee, and after that, "the party leads everything" (dang lingdao yiqie). Then the PLA man left, and they added a number of new members to the RC, all of whom were 'liberated' cadres. The old faction leaders stayed on the RC until after the Gang of 4 fell. They were all young workers, and had been party members--all of them--some before the cultural revolution. In fact the two mass representatives in the RC had also both been demobilized soldiers.

The 'cleaning of the class ranks' campaign was run near the last stages of the CR. It was not aimed at capitalist roaders in the leadership but at bad elements within the masses, among the workers. One victim was a vice-department head, accused of killing peasants before liberation. He was criticized and struggled at meetings, stripped of leading positions and sent to do manual labor. There were several victims, and all were being struggled for pre-1949 mistakes or small things--being KMT army member, listening to the voice of America, etc. About 2 people from each department were struggled and sent to manual labor, although they still got their normal wages. Ordinary workers were also struggled. There was no 'anti-May 16 elements' campaign. This was more a Peking thing.

Administrative Reorganization

Right after the establishment of the RC they divided administration up into two halves. They had a political department (zhengzhi bu), and a production leadership department (shengchan zhihui bu). They no longer had staff departments (ke). Below the RC were also a set of office workers who transacted the RC's leadership business. In reality, they still had most of the department staff still in the offices, but there was no leader, no organization in name, they were just all called office personnel.

But gradually the old system grew back. At first they divided up labor more carefully into groups (zu) of about 3-4 people, which corresponded to the old jobs of the departments. Gradually these groups added staff members, and enlarged until by 1975 they were just as big and strong as before the CR. During this entire period there was a steady flow of old staff and cadres returning to office work from the shops. The leaders of these new groups and departments were mostly old cadres who originally workers and members of rebel organizations.

The 'implementation of the party's cadre policy' was also a long process. They employed it always, but it still took a long time to carry out. You can say it finally was completely implemented only after the Gang of 4 fell from power. The original assistant directorsof the plant were liberated quickly, but it took several years for the old top cadre--the party secretary/plant director. The whole time he did manual labor, and finally became the head of the RC around 1974.

Production gradually increased during this period, but this also was a very slow process. He does not remember clearly, but it is possible that production never reached pre-CR levels again. There were no really serious production problems during the 1970s, no striking quality or materials problems. It was run fairly well. They couldn't stop production because of the nature of their continuous process, 24 hour a day operation.

Informant's personal Cultural Revolution Experience

From 1967-68 he did manual labor in the shops. He was not sent down or forced to go. It was just that there was no work in the office, and he couldn't just sit there and leaf through papers. So he went to the electrician's group, a group with which he had much everyday contract previously. After the RC was established, he became a staff member of the production leadership department, of which there were 15 or so office personnel. He was a member of an informal group which handled the work which would later be handled by the technical group. He never joined any faction--he was too timid. His background was not too good and if he became active people might go after him. He was never criticized or struggled.

Campaigns of the 1970s

Yes, there were all kinds of campaigns, but no real activities, just a lot of study meetings--Pi Lin, Pi Kong, criticisms of 'water margin', study the dictatorship of the proletariat, criticize Deng Xiaoping, and finally the criticism of the Gang of 4. No one was actually criticized during these campaigns, they just did reading, studying, and engaged in empty talk. But they sometimes used work time for this, and also studied after work. For staff cadres, they had to study half a day out of the week. They also met twice a week after work. But this increased during campaigns and they just forgot about this rule and met every night.

The meetings were nothing. They read articles in newspapers aloud. They discussed and studied. But they didn't really understand all this stuff about Confucius, it just didn't sink in, and they weren't much interested anyway. Not until the criticism of Deng was it clear that these campaigns represented a struggle at the top. During the criticism of Confucius and Lin Biao campaign it was not yet clear, and they still didn't realize what was going on.

After the Gang of Four

After they fell, things were pretty normal. No big criticism meetings were held, and no one was struggled. The only change was that a few younger cadres from the CR era and the old faction leaders no longer were allowed to be the top cadres in departments and shops. They became either vice-heads of their departments or shops, making way for the full rehabilitation of the old cadres, or they were sent to do their pre-CR jobs as workers. At that time the department head in his technical department finally returned to the top leadership position.

They didn't have any elections of shop directors, plant directors, or group leaders. Nor did they ever discuss or study the experience of other plants that did. He read about these elections in the paper while he was still in China, but it was his impression that this was still just an experiment in a few enterprises.

Factionalism

The situation in his plant was fairly normal. There were no conflicts or factions in his plant left over from the CR. Of course there was guanxi, friendships, people pulling up their own people--but this was unavoidable, and it's hard to get things done otherwise. Sometimes the masses realized this when they saw someone promoted who wasn't really appropriate for the job. The masses would then have a certain opinion about them, but would not express it openly. The leaders naturally wanted people who would listen to them--these were the 'ass kissers' (pai mapi, literally 'pet the horse's rear end'). This was not a serious problem, cadres knew it wasn't appropriate so they kept it low key and behind the scenes.

Hong Kong-China Comparison

The biggest difference between China and Hong Kong is that in Hong Kong there is so much competition for everything. In Hong Kong, if you don't compete, then you're out of luck. For example, in his glass factory they didn't have to worry about quality--demand was more than supply and they didn't have to work hard at quality and output for fear that another enterprise would surpass them. So China will develop comparatively slowly in a number of fronts as a result.

This goes for the individual worker. In Hong Kong, if you don't do good work, you're out of a job. In China, whether you do a good or a bad job, you still have the job and get the same wage. The leader can talk to you all day, but you don't have to listen. Now they have the bonuses and material incentives, but they still don't have the penalties that should accompany them. There should be both rewards and penalties.