

No. 142 (Cambridge)

Background (6/24/90)

Informant is male, 39, came out December 1988, and worked in his unit until late December. He worked for the transportation team of the Tianjin Grain Transport Co. I entered the dui as a mechanic right out of the army. About 60% of our workers come from the army. In 1974, I was promoted to the administrative office of the dui. Did general affairs. Did this until 1976, when he was sent to the loading dock section as a vice ke head. In 1979 became the head of the ke. Then was transferred to a bigger ke, the diaoyun (dispatching) section, as a fukezhang. Then in 1983 was promoted to be duizhang and did that until 1987. There were problems in the leadership of the unit, so they sent down a group to investigate and they selected me to be the head. Then at the very end of 1987 transferred to the company office, to the xingzheng ke as head, and was responsible for housing, meal hall, other general affairs. He worked for the Tianjin Grain Transport Co. Worked in the trucking section, and later worked in the company office. He was the head of the trucking section. His section had 500 plus people and over 150 trucks. Main task was to transport grain from storehouses to the mills, and then from mills to the stores. This was all grain that was procured by the state to be distributed within the state system. Some grain imported from Australia, US, mostly from Shandong, Hebei, Henan, Hubei. Sometimes drove long distance to these places. They have a very large storehouse in Dagang area where they collect it from various places, send it for milling and then delivery, and then deliver processed flour to units, and sell the by products for feed. Main task is to protect grain supply in Tianjin city, to deliver flour to areas where supply is short.

He was the chief representative of the trucking section for the company. There were 12 enterprises in the company, his was one of them, but the other twelve were all storehouse sections. Ours was the biggest company of this kind in Tianjin, there were about 6 in all. He was responsible for everything about the operation: productivity, workers' livelihood, safety, contacting other units. Even responsible for family problems, like marital discord, divorces. We had to handle everything; we are like the head of a big family. If the husband and wife work in different units, the leaders of units get together with them to talk. Usually if the problem was not great, someone in my office would do it, but if it was a big problem, I would do it myself if the office people couldn't handle it. We had 3 duizhang and one secretary. I was the zheng duizhang.

Wages and Bonuses

Wage changes in 1980s. There were several readjustments in the mid to late 1970s, people could get raised no more than one grade. In early 1980s and late 1970s, as the reforms began, there were readjustments for a portion of people. There was one big nationwide readjustment for 40 percent in the early 1980s. I made 40.95 yuan in 1973, no bonus. In 1977 or 78, was readjusted 56.60, still no bonuses. Around 1980, was readjusted again to 72 yuan. Again around 1984, after I was promoted to duizhang, was raised to 89. Later I was raised to 105 because this is what chuji ganbu were supposed to get. Ordinary workers didn't get so many readjustments. There were only 2 big readjustments where 40 percent got raises, and only one where 20 percent got raises.

We began floating wages around 1985. The money comes from the bonus fund, this was decided by us. Depends on your level of work, decided by the heads of various

departments. But generally if you didn't have a big problem, like being responsible for an accident, or stealing from the company, you would get it. IT was about 6-12 yuan, depending upon your rank, with the higher jibie people getting more. Later on the floating wage turned into part of the wages, because it was mainly handed out according to whether you came into work, unless there was a major problem. You couldn't have more than 3 days of sick leave. And no more than 1 day of personal leave (shijia). Can't leave early or come late more than 2 times.

There were also bonuses. The amount of bonus was set at the average level of end of 1979 average bonus of 5 yuan per person per month. By the time I left it was about 25 per month on average. The drivers bonuses were much higher than the cadres, was calculated according to the mileage formula explained above. When we first started we had to assess for bonuses every month and this always caused a lot of arguments and wasted a lot of time. For example, in our repair shop, we divided workers into four grades according to their performance, with a difference of 5 yuan per grade, range was about 35 yuan to 15. This was around 1983. Every time we assessed for bonuses there was an uproar. Later, because of this monthly uproar, we established this system of calculating the bonus according to set criteria. These were hard, no soft standards, so you couldn't argue. It became a hundred point system, points for attendance, finishing jobs, not arguing with cadres, no accidents. But the problem with this was that this was still daguofan. So the above levels began to control the average level of bonuses per worker per year. The limit was 25 yuan before I left.

They also had a year end bonus beginning around mid 1980s that was about 200 yuan per person. Again, only if you had a major problem like an accident or poor attendance, would you be denied the bonus. We had standards for attendance, tardiness, etc. The conflicts over the bonus assessments were basically resolved by shifting to hard criteria and relatively equal distribution. The previous system allowed for leaders to give larger bonuses to their favorite workers, the ones who obeyed them, and the workers didn't like this. Even though cadres had the right to give points according to work accomplishments of workers, they gave them out all equally because otherwise there would be too much trouble. There was young one worker who took a knife after a banzhang when he was give a low bonus for not working hard. He threatened him with the knife and said he would stab him if he ever dared to give him the lowest bonus again. Although this kind of event was rare, the contradiction is universal. We didn't have the right to fire workers without permission from the upper levels. You could only do this according to regulations if you sabotaged production, slowed down, were absent often, commonly behaved like a liumang, bad thought, illicit sexual relations. We did fire some people in our unit in the 1980s, some for causing major accidents. If you killed more than 2 people and totaled your truck, they suspended you; liuchang chakan. This was like probation: only got a living stipend and had to stay in firm for supervision for 2 years. Then you could return to your former work. We did have one guy changed jobs but would have been fired if he didn't have another unit to take him. He always fought with people, slowed down, broke into lockers. The public security bureau had arrested him a few times for fighting people outside the unit, injuring them. We had permission from the workers congress to fire him, he was transferred to his father's old unit.

Outside Jobs and Tips

Our living standards are a little higher than other workers. Drivers are

considered to be among the most skilled workers in China. This has long been the case, since the 1950s, but in the 1980s drivers have gotten even richer. We look for shipping jobs outside the system's responsibilities. And if drivers work on these jobs they get xinku fei, which is what the workers call it, but in reality its a xiaofei. The customers give them the tip, its several times more than their wage. Eg. an older driver gets 120 yuan tops a month, one around 40s gets around 80 yuan, and younger ones get 40. You can get a tip of about 20 yuan for a day's job. This kind of thing was very much restricted in the early 80s, late 70s. We still tell them you shouldn't do this, just like before, but they do it anyway now. Eg. a getihu that wants us to send fish down to Shanghai would have to give the driver around 200-300 yuan for 5 days. The company gets 2.20 per ton-mile. Its the driver and customer usually agree on the tip informally. But sometimes drivers are more direct and demand a large about before going off, and the customer, wanting good service, will unwillingly pay. It was just become a very widespread practice. Last couple of years it has really gotten out of hand. Its very common in the trucking business. We don't approve, and try to control it. E.g. if a getihu complains, we'll punish the guy for it. But basically if it's not excessive and there's no complaint, we have no way of controlling it.

I estimate that at most our workers can get about 500 yuan over their salary from this. At least 70-80 yuan per month. Their benefits are already good anyway. They get a supplement per km driven of 2 cents, in addition to bonus and salary. All of our workers live in our housing, in the Hedong and Hebei districts. Our unit is a rich one. From 1983 until 1987, under me we built 400 rooms of housing for the workers. The benefits have improved a lot in the 1980s. We didn't build any housing for our workers before the end of 1970s; we only gave out housing when units were made available to us inn handfuls by the upper levels. So before 1980s we didn't build any on our own. The land can come from our own unit, if we get approval from planning bureaus to build it there. Or we can negotiate with another unit that has land; we could, for example, give them 40 percent of the houses for their use. We usually use our own land, however.

Housing Provision and Distribution

We are considered to be among the best in the city in terms of housing. We have basically solved our workers' housing problems. I had an apartment of 80 meters for 3 people. The workers got about 50-60 meter apartments. The difference was not great. Our apartment was in the same building with workers. If my house was a lot bigger, they would know, and they would get angry. This is true for a lot of things; salary, bonus, housing. If you don't have the seniority, ability, work habits to deserve better treatment, they will get a bad opinion of you, and then they won't work hard, and your units won't do well. This is what Chinese work units are like; everybody knows how hard you work and how well you are making money and living.

Housing distribution. They have several methods. If we have a number of apartments to give out, we organize a fenfang weiyuanhui; there are representatives from workers, cadres, leaders. This is the most normal way of doing it. There are three stages. They publicize a name list 3 times, and the 3rd time is the final list. There are discussions for each draft. We take applications for everyone and go through them. They explain current housing needs, and members of the committee go to their homes to investigate. The standard is mainly what your current housing situation is. The first time we did this the standard was 3 meters per person, but the standard has been raised

steadily in the 1980s. We have organized 3 such committees in 1980s. The first time the standards were 3 meters per person, 3 generations under one roof, children over age 16, and children married but living with parents. The second time it was 6 meters and over 2 children (one child counted as 2), those waiting for housing to get married.

After the list is initially posted, people get upset about those they think are undeserving, and the representatives, will bring it up and then a revised list comes out. Yes, the cadre's relatives were on these lists, and people raised their displeasure, but this committee is not perfect and cadres can still get their way in some respects. The cadres have another method they use to. They hold back a few apartments to solve "special individual cases". They will use these to solve special cases, also their own friends and family. Usually the corrupt cadres want to go through the committee: if they can't, then they'll use their reserves. I was responsible for the first housing distribution. I was a vice head of the dispatching department, was elected by the employees to be the chairman. I stated two demands the cadres: a) cadres can't give me any requests for themselves or any other persons; b) cadres above me cannot talk to be privately about any housing matters (workers could). They gave me 50 apartments to distribute, and this was the most successful distribution. But I later found out that the cadres had held back 6 apartments for themselves. I found this out after I was promoted to be head of the dui. When I did it this way people thought it was reasonable and we didn't have any really arguments. People were happy with this. I think the cadres knew when I was elected to be chairman that I would do it like this, so they planned ahead. The only argument was about 3 people at the end, no one could agree, workers representatives disagreed, and finally I said we had to have a vote among the 9 members of the committee to decide. 9 members of the committee were workers; one from each section, selected by discussion. Each small group nominated, then each section, then the dui level. People eliminated by discussion at each level. A big section had 2 reps, small ke had 1. Among the 9 reps, we voted and I was elected head. At that time I really had a worker's status, and spoke for them. There was also a leading cadre who sat in on the discussions, but didn't vote, and also a representative from the workers' congress. They could give opinions but didn't have any power.

But this democratic method wasn't continued. By the time the 3rd one was held in 1987, I was the duizhang but was about to be transferred out to the company. So the vice duizhang took it over and made the decisions within the committee. They made the final decision in reality who would get apartment, even though on the surface we used the same method. They gave an apartment to the son of the company manager, the son of a bureau chief. The representatives were not happy about this, sure they had an opinion, but they didn't dare speak up because they feared retaliation. When the drivers heard about this, there were 3 or so days when no work was done at all, the dui was thrown into confusion. Everybody did nothing but talk about the housing decisions, from the top to the bottom of the company. The two fuduizhang had a lot of people go to their office to complain and yell, cry, reason with them. About 6 or 7 got really angry and yelled. These two cadres said it wasn't their decision, it was the committees, and they couldn't interfere. No one listened to me during this process, and nobody complained, because they knew I was almost gone. After I left, for the first two years until I left that dui lost money, I think mainly because of this zuofeng problem and the workers' anger about it. Also its related to business conditions, but the workers just don't like them so they won't work very hard for them. But we had profit before I left. This is also one big reason why all the workers try to get tips and get money all the

time for their outside system work.

Workers' Dissatisfactions (7/1/90, 3 hrs.)

If workers don't have problems and you don't ask about them, the workers won't work hard. Workers engage in xiaoji daigong. This became more and more serious around 85-86 on. This I think is because many cadres got great advantages from the reform and opening, all the things that the students were talking about. They got upset about these things.

For example, this was a problem of one of the older leaders of our unit. A lot of workers wrote letters to complain to the upper levels, but he never was punished. He had girlfriends on the outside, his wife and relatives got jobs in the unit, even several of his friends, he got better housing for all of them. The workers were upset because nothing was done about it. Workers are just as upset about this as the students. This is a very serious problem and they have not yet found a way to control it. The workers wrote letters under assumed names to the company manager and party secretary, or the discipline inspection committee of the company, and warned them of this going on. If they signed names, of course, they would certainly suffer revenge. He had good connections with the officials above, so the letters were suppressed. They had this problem before of course, but in the mid 1980s it went past the chihe feng and into these abuses, and the workers began to slow down.

The reform policy is basically correct, but in implementing it at the grass roots it has been distorted. In general, I think the reforms have succeeded. At least you can say its far better than in the previously autarkic period. You can speak the truth more, raise opinions, use a wide variety of business methods. Much better than before, more lively and vital. But the 1980s have also brought a lot of shortcomings. Built a lot of fancy hotels. But we still can't come close to Japan or America. What is democracy or freedom? I don't know, but there are a lot of shortcomings in the way that the reforms were carried out. What the students and workers are saying is true. People's thinking is much more open and liberated now.

Attachment to the Work Unit

We did have too many people for the work to be done. But we never did release people for being redundant; where would you send them. If there was a firm in trouble and they had to reduce the payroll and rectify the firm, they would lay off a number of people and give them a living stipend. They called this caijian in Tianjin, didn't call it youhua. They started to advocate this in our unit just before I left it. But the main content was to set up service companies under the dui; car repair, trucking, also cleaning and laundry. But most of the people there were children of employees. Those in the brigade who had bad work attitude, poor health, low skills, were involuntarily transferred to the service group. They didn't get bonuses that were as in their normal job, at least at first, and they kept their normal wage. Women who gave birth were required to take 18 months of leave; normally they got 56 days according to state regulations; and you could extend this by another 6 months. One reason we did this was because our nursery was too full, and we wanted women to take care of their own children. They got 80 percent of their salary, no bonus. This percentage was more than the state mandated 60 percent. Some liked this policy, others didn't. If you insisted on coming back early we wouldn't give them good jobs to do. If you had bad health or family reasons, you could tingxin liuzhi. You could also take long term sick leave at 70% of wage, no bonus, if you

didn't want to do your job or if you didn't feel well.

It is very difficult for workers to begin a job transfer on their own. There are many formalities to go through and they are very complex. First you let everyone you work with you want to leave, prepare public opinion. Then you go to talk to your supervisor. If yours is a good unit, its no problem to let someone leave; but if its a bad unit and a lot of people want to leave, its difficult to give in because then the others might be unhappy. Then you have to get permission from the labor and wages department. You also have to invite people to dinner, give gifts, etc. And this is only to get released from your unit. You also have to get someone else to hire you. You have to know somebody who is a leader of the unit. Either a friend or someone you used to work with. Their leaders and the labor and wages department must agree. This is the procedure for the average worker. It is easier for cadres to get transferred within the company system. They just raise the request and the leaders in the company or system itself discuss it. It becomes complicated when you want to transfer to another system.

I know of people who quit their state jobs to become getihu. One person I know, he quit to become a taxi driver in Hainan. It is extremely rare thought. Another person I know was a worker in a cotton mill, he quit and opened up a freight company, and we dealt with him. He had a tuoyun zhan. He rented trucks from us to do his business. He had three people under him, had a motorcycle and a sanlunche. He made a lot of money. He had nothing at all when he began, but ended up a wanyuan hu, I suspect, thought we didn't ask him directly about his income. I also knew a getihu who raised fish and used our trucks to ship them. They were also workers from a state factory who were under tingxin liuzhi.

Before I came out, they discussed the issue of second jobs, but it was not permitted. But a few workers had already begun to do it. In some periods, like the mid-1980s, some were criticized it. There were a couple of workers and a group leader who made 1-200 apiece for a couple days work in their spare time fixing another danwei's trucks. Someone in the other unit told us about it. And they were punished. I didn't want to punish them because I thought it was not big deal, but the company wanted me to deal with it severely. These were good workers though. In the end, I fined them and gave them a formal warning. There was a cadre, and also a worker, who took sick leave when they weren't sick and drive for someone else, made 20 yuan a day.

I would estimate that only about 5-10% of the employees do this. Some women in the unit who can sew will sew clothes to make money after the shift also. Some men would make furniture, and so forth. Opportunities to do this are much greater than in the 1970s.

Living Standards in 1980s

Living standards have very clearly increased in the 1980s. For example, at the end of the CR the best things you could buy were watches and bicycles, clothing. The furniture in people's homes were very simple. But what people demanded in the 1980s were much better things: TV's, tape players, nice furniture. But of course prices went way up too. In the 1970s, one jin of eggs cost around .69 to .80 yuan. Right before I left, the price was 1.80 in the state stores, and more than 2.70 or so in the private market. And the amount you could buy in the state stores was rationed so you had to rely substantially on the private markets. In Tianjin, you got a ration of 3 jin per hh per month, basically enough to get by, but not if you wanted to eat well. In material terms, the 1980s are much richer than the 1970s. In the past, things were cheap but

there were many things than you often couldn't find, and you didn't get very much of different foods that were available. In the 1980s, its much more convenient, though the season often determines what foods you can buy. But the price is much higher. But even though the prices are high we still buy. In the 1970s, a jin of crabs was about 1 yuan, but recently the price has been 8-12 yuan per jin, and the supply was good. Saltwater crabs were .58 yuan in 1974, but by 1987, the best quality saltwater crabs were about 10 yuan per jin. People still buy them, and still want them, even though the price is high.

How can people afford this, since their wages didn't increase by this much? One way is to use your savings. Another way to get ends to meet is that the price rises for flour, cabbage and rice are lower, and the state give subsidies for them. Its the non-necessary items that have really risen the most in price. You can do ok if you keep to a plain diet, eat mostly rice, flour, eggs within limit. People in China are used to this; they buy fewer clothes, eat more simply and eat less. My wife and I made about 250 yuan a month and had a kid, and we could still save about 70-80 yuan per month. Our average living expenses were about 180 a month. But my wife and I did well because she had made he equivalent of 80 US dollars and had bought a lot of nice consumer items when she worked for 5 years on the Tanzam railway project as a teacher; from about 1983 to 1987. She is an English teacher in the railway system in Tianjin. I lived better in China than anyone I knew; I didn't ever accept gifts from workers because I didn't need them. So what I base my discussion of living standards on is the experience of my brothers and sisters in the 1980s; because our situation was special.

Relationships and Conflicts within the Work Unit (7/15/90 3 hrs.)

The party center always has advocated that leaders establish relations with the masses. But after many years, especially after the CR, and especially considering the quality of cadres and workers' mentalities these days. Can't say the relationship is like fish and water. In our unit, I thought that my own relationsihp with the workers was good. I always felt that no matter what the problem was, they could tell me openly and I would handle the matter according to proper regulations. But I was very rare.

There are a lot of dissatisfactions in our unit toward the cadres. Its not like durin gthe CR, when workers didn't dare say anything. Workers today do dare to speak up; but they don't criticize their own unit's leaders. Tey criticize national leaders, city leaders, other units leaders. But they don't dare criticize their own units leaders because they fear revenge, being made to wear small shoes.

For example, we had a kezhang who wasnt' realistic, like to talk a lot of nonsense, had a lot of influence among the leaders. Those who worked in his section cursed him behind his back, but never dared to say these things to his face. These wo\ere relations among the cadres.

Workers, situation is a little different. They have formalistic meetings for workers to raise opinions, butt workers fundamentally don't dare to speak up at these, otherwise there would be very bad consequences for them later. So workers ge together among them\selves and a\talk about the leaders, who is good, who is no good.

We had a worker at that time, he told the truth to one of my vice dui heads. He complained that his wife constantly used our team's cars for her personal use. He was right in bringing this up. She also came to work late and left early. She was a worker there too. Everybody was really upset about this. It was a women worker who brought this up. She also said that the vice head himself was impolite to th3e women in the

team, sexually harrassing them by hugging and so forth. She also said that the vice director always came to the storeroom, where she worked, to get whatever he needed for his home. She said this among a bunch of workers.

There was one person among those present who got along well with the vice-head reported to him about it. He immediately transferred her from her good job in the storehouse to work in the repair shop. I was duizhang then and went to ask why. He said her work and ability were no good, no sense of responsibility. But I knew that her abilities were high. I told him not to transfer her until I had investigated. I went to her and asked her if she knew why she was being transferred. She told me that she had brought these matters up among friends, and told me that they were true and that they would hold up under investigation. I then went back and told him that he couldn't transfer her because I knew why and don't ask any more about it, because it would harm cadre worker relations.

This kind of thing was common. There was a worker who cleaned up around the dui offices. An old worker, he brought something up about leaders in a meeting. He said certain leaders, especially XX and XX, were unfair to workers and didn't act like true leaders, gave some workers more bonus and others less for no good reason.. When assigning children of workers to jobs in our unit (which was common), the cadres gave his child the worst job, moving team. He told me about it and I transferred his son to better job.

This shows that workers are unable to bring up direct criticisms to leaders, can't bring up things to their faces without fear of retaliation. These are things that the cadres should know, they would be able to improve the unit if they could hear these things, and correct their behavior. But revenge is so common in these cases workers don't dare. Cadres have power and can do this, workers have no choice but to work and mad their living.

Cadres also have their favorites, and try their hardest to give them wage increases, apartments, bonuses. But they are in a minority. These workers are an advantage for the cadre. They help him paint his house, move furniture, buy presents and send to him, run errands for him like going to the market to buy food. The workers who do this aren't necessarily activists, there may be a couple who have good biaoxian, but in generally these are workers who are pretty hua. They are just trying to gao hao guanxi, live better.

Ways workers have to express their dissatisfaction. Workers can go talk to the cadre directly, or bring it up in a meeting. But this is very rare, you can only do this if a good cadre is involved. If its a bad cadre, a worker can go up to the cadre and yell and scream at him. This is more common. The cadres can yell back in this situation. But when you yell at a cadre, you bring up your own problem, not their problem. This is about your own problems--why didn't I get a bigger bonus, why didn't I get an apartment? If they don't attack the cadre himself, the cadre won't take revenge. In these situations, yelling is often effective, especially if you keep at it over several days and if your demand is reasonable. Often a cadre will back down.

Another way is that a worker who is dissatisfied will get extremely drunk and then go see the fu duizhang to yell and scream, grab by the shirt, push. If he's sober when he does this kind of thing, he would certainly be arrested for this, or would receive much more severe punishment. But if he's drunk its considered less serious. This is when the cadre has already done something like take revenge on somebody. This was usually only the young and relatively ignorant guys who would do this.

Another way is to go to your apartment in the evening and knock on the door, if he answers talk and talk and complain and do this until midnight, and do it night after night. Often a cadre will see who is there and not open the door; then the worker will just pound the door for a long time and then leave. I wasn't afraid to answer my door because workers often came to talk about something for a short while and then leave.

Another way is to break tools, break glass on the trucks. Slowdowns also, but often slowdowns are not for any specific purpose; this has become such a common social condition that it is not always a response to specific dissatisfactions.

On the surface, things haven't changed since the 1970s, but in workers' minds, things are much different. In people's minds, the relations have gotten much worse in the 1980s. Workers all have the attitude that cadres lie and are trying to cheat you. They say something and they don't listen, don't believe it. Wasn't this bad in the 1970s, and the corruption wasn't so bad during the Cultural Revolution among cadres either. Cadres behavior was better back then; their treatment was not much better back then; wages, apartments. They didn't live much differently from workers back then. There wasn't so much distrust and suspicion among workers back then. There is more of a sense now that workers and cadres are two different strata (jieceng).

There are a lot of reasons for this. Workers own thinking has been opened up. There are more things that they want now, but they can only get a few of them. Also the inflation is a serious problem for workers. But cadres can use their power and their network of connections to get all kinds of things that workers can't get. The problems that workers have are very different from those of cadres. Cadres don't worry about the factory's well being, or the well being of the family of the workunit. They think of ways to use the unit and their connections to solve their own problems. Workers think they should use their connections to help everyone in the unit.

The units basically ignore the upper levels speeches and directives. They don't obey Deng's speeches and the documents. Before 1980 we had 3 days of political study for 1 1/2 hours in the evening. We don't basically have it anymore. It's a waste of time and if we had it workers wouldn't come. It's better in America; here if you stay after work they pay you. If they paid you to come to these meetings, sure workers would go in China.

Sometimes workers also would agree among themselves to work slowly. I ran into this twice when I was duizhang. The workers in the moving team, over 60 men, were upset about how jobs were assigned. They refused to work. Didn't call it a strike, just said they wouldn't do the jobs assigned. All the men refused to work in one team, because they felt the leaders were giving better work to another team. This went on for 2-3 days until the leaders came down and talked over their demands, and eventually agreed that they would give out assignments more equally. This demand was easy to meet. Other than a cadre coming down to criticize them for using the wrong methods, there was no specific punishments, but of course they didn't get bonuses for those days because they didn't come to work.

Another instance was in the repair shop. The problem was that the leader of one of the ban in the shop, 28 workers in all, had treated one worker badly. One worker in the team had criticized the shop leader for a good reason--the team was getting difficult jobs to make high bonuses on--but they didn't listen and transferred him out as punishment. The entire ban refused to work because of this, said they wanted the problem remedied and wanted the worker transferred back. This was after all a bonus problem for the whole ban. After I went down to investigate, I found that the shop

director had had a serious leadership style problem. He was very dogmatic, had poor relations with the workers. I criticized the shop head for handling this poorly, and for taking revenge on a worker for raising a criticism. I seriously thought about replacing this old guy. He was over 50 years old. He didn't want to listen to me because I was so much younger than him, he thought he knew better than me, I was so young didn't understand things. I went and settled the problem myself, but it took 4 or 5 days. I held a meeting with all the workers and with several other cadres; told them to bring up their problem; I was there to resolve the issue and not to fear any retaliation. They raised a lot of complaints; some I resolved, others I said weren't reasonable. But it finally worked. You can't just take revenge on people who complain.

Workers have a lot of ways to struggle against cadres. Open and hidden, in front and behind, by sticking one's neck out and by not sticking one's neck out.

Cadres' attitude towards workers. At the top level, we had to think about getting them to complete the work we wanted them to do. We sought to improve their living standards, solve their problems, if not for all at least for a certain number of them. But cadres at the lower levels often got into conflicts with individual workers who wouldn't listen or who would criticize them.

There are some cadres who are afraid of workers. I wasn't myself, because I handled things properly. But the cadres who were taking advantage of their positions to benefit their friends and families often feared the workers. "Because they knew workers had opinions toward them, would often come and yell at them. So they didn't trust the workers, and even feared them.

Cadres often complain that today the workers don't listen to them. Before the CR, workers would listen to them, take orders. Today, the workers won't listen, won't take orders and don't respect the leaders.

But there are some advantages today: workers don't suffer from the same kind of political pressures as before the reforms. And they don't interfere in the relations between the sexes in the way they did before the reform and opening. Before the reform, a boy and girl couldn't even be seen together with a lot of things being said and people bothering them. And workunits don't care anymore if people from different class backgrounds in the same unit want to get married. They don't interfere anymore.

I would say that the biggest change in leader-worker relations from the 70s through today is the loss of mutual trust. In fact, this has also happened between different levels of cadres. Cadres in the unit didn't trust cadres above either, including those at the center. This has happened even though workers' situation is better than before. I think this is because there is still a big gap between what workers are thinking of, what they want, and what they have gotten. Workers now know what life is like overseas and they have bigger demands, higher standards. Also workers don't believe in any socialism, party's line and policies, Mao's thought, Marxism-Leninism. Nobody has any trust or respect for these things anymore. Now the newspapers in China report things about our own country, the dark side of China's society, the living standards abroad. You couldn't even imagine these things before the reforms. This has had a big impact on making people more realistic and practical. The more open people's thinking becomes, the more China opens up, the higher the demands of the people for their lives. This is actually a big problem--people want so much in China but they aren't willing to work really hard to get it.

Relations between workers are also very complicated. Workers don't all get along with one another very well. There are no really big conflicts, no conflicts of interest

between groups of workers. It is an individual thing; one guy gets an apartment, another doesn't; one worker gets promoted to be group leader, another doesn't. There might be a group of 5 or 6 who are really close to one another, while the others aren't. Workers' thinking is not all the same either, there are a lot of individual differences. Workers also argue with one another, fight, curse.

Changes in the party. At beginning of the 1980s, the party's organization was still strong and had a big role. By the mid-1980s, from the party central right down to the basic units, they carried out the separation of party and administration. The party was only supposed to handle their internal matters. This was very hard to carry out; people found it hard to accept. People's were used to going to the party secretary to handle everything. The political cadres in the unit couldn't accept this. But their power dropped a lot; by the time I left the party secretary was just one of the fu duizhang. The party's just didn't have much power when I left. But I suspect from reading the papers since June 4 that the role of the party has risen again. But the status of the party still is low throughout China, especially in the workunits.

In the past workers were educated that only socialism could protect their rights, give them enough to wear and eat. But now workers think that the capitalist countries have all progressed much faster than the socialist ones. Whole world, even the small countries of southeast Asia have done better. A lot of them think that socialism is meaningless, can't compare to capitalism. Taiwan is richer than China, what use is socialism?

Cadres thinking is even more complicated. They have more information, can think things over more. They almost all realize that if we continue to do things in the ways we do now, we'll never get anywhere. Everyone has their own point of view, but there's a general feeling that the current setup just won't work. Has to change. But nobody talks about it in meetings, this is just a common feeling. When they get together to talk, they often talk about their worries about China, the problem of corruption, the fear of a political campaign from above. But when they get into a meeting, they don't dare bring these things up. Deng said that they wouldn't have anymore political campaigns, but in reality in the 1980s they've had quite a few. So many people don't believe in the party, or any party, anymore. The party can't handle the problems China faces, but I don't know whether any party can. Look at the fact that so many of the children of the high level cadres are in America. What are the people back in China supposed to think about this? Bo Yibo, Jiang Zemin, Han Xu, Deng Xiaoping (in past), and many many others are here and in France, Japan, other places. What are the people supposed to think about this? With one side of your mouth you talk about Marxism Leninism and socialism, yet your children are all abroad! This kind of thing makes people hate the leaders of the party. Every country has its problems, but China, unless they change things, the country will get nowhere. I get letters from workers in my unit these days saying that nobody is really doing any work there now. They drink team read papers, and if there's some work, they'll do some.