

PERSONAL DATA

Age: 32

Sex: Male

Education: technical school graduate

Total Years Relevant Experience: 10

Last Year of Relevant Experience: 1974

Year Left China: 1975

Initial Immigration Status: Illegal (swam bay)

Native Place/Overseas Connections: China native/OS ties unknown

Class Background/Political Designation: unknown

OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY SUMMARY

Positions Held: 1) Machinery Plant, South-Central Transportation Bureau,
Guangdong, 1965-74
a) Technical worker, 1965-69
b) Procuring agent, 1969-74

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

1) Ministry/ (500+)

APPOINTMENTS: 3

TOTAL HOURS: 6

PAGES TEXT: 8

Occupational History (4/14/80, 2.5 hrs.)

The informant attended the Highways School, a technical middle school in Xian under the Highways College (gonglu xueyuan), which in turn was under the transportation ministry in Peking. The middle school was under the administration of the college, and its teachers and party leadership were from the college. After graduation in 1965, he was assigned to the South-Central Machinery Plant under the Transportation Ministry (jiaotong bu). There were about 500+ employees in the production shops of this unit, which also had some 2500 employees, not all of whom were permanent workers, in various construction teams throughout the region. The plant where he worked produced machinery for the construction of roads. It was directly under the South-Central Department (chu) of the ministry. This division is not the same as the "6 great administrative regions". It is a level between the ministry and the bureau.

When he started working, he was on 'trial' (shixi) for a year, then became a technical worker. Some graduates of the technical schools became assistant technicians, while some became technical workers. Strictly speaking, he was never actually changed in status, because before his year was up, the cultural revolution came and all systems of rules and regulations were not carried out, including those relating to bonuses and promotions.

Later, in 1969, he became a procurer for his plant (caigou yuan), or purchasing agent. He did this work right up until he stopped working in October 1974. In 1975 he entered Hong Kong illegally by swimming across the bay. His plant was located in Canton.

Wages

When he first started work, he was paid technical school graduate starting wage of 38.75¥. He uses the term "zhongzhuan shixi sheng" to describe his status. He received grain supplements, also in hazardous workshops got hazardous work supplements, so his actual wage was close to 42¥. In 1969, his work was changed, but not his wages. But since he was a purchasing agent, he got travel expenses and related supplements, so his income actually went up, depending on trips, how far he had to travel, and to which area.

They did have a readjustment of wages throughout the country, but they carried it out differently in different areas. It was after the "cleaning of the class ranks" campaign in 1971-72 or so. They had set year lines, and also had different conditions for different cadres in different systems, for skilled and technical workers, demobilized soldiers, etc.

At that time, according to regulations, he and others like him should have been raised to 44¥, but they weren't because the leader of their plant was a member of a different faction from his and his friends during the CR, and had old grudges. So he didn't adjust their wages. They thought later on about notifying the Ministry, which should have supported them, but it was too much trouble to get documents down through the Chu and to the enterprise, so they just forgot about it. This was a direct result of factionalism. He was supposed to have been readjusted to the first step of the technician's scale. His basic wage never changed from the time he first entered the plant. Bonuses: They did not have any bonuses in his plant while he was there. They discontinued them at the end of 1964. This is because they began to emphasize politics in command. There were no supplementary wages of any sort, apart from the normal supplements--not even pay for overtime.

Temporary and Contract Workers

They had a small number of temporary workers in the production plant. They were dependents of workers (jiashu). They did not work for very long periods of time. Those who had connections, who were children of leading cadres, could be turned into contract or permanent workers more easily. The main difference with contract workers was that the contract workers could work for longer periods of time. Originally there were real contracts, but gradually they did not really use them--that was during Liu Shaoqi's period. But during the CR and after they didn't sign contracts, because this was what Liu did, but the actual system was about the same.

The non-permanent workers got paid slightly less than the permanent workers, but didn't get housing, paid medicine, and certain other supplements and labor insurance. After the cultural revolution began, they did not hire any new contract workers, and after a while because there was a central document, their treatment changed to the point where they were almost equal to permanent workers--ie. you can't fire them. And they were not called contract workers anymore. After gradual changes from 1966 to the early 1970s in their status and their wage treatment, they were formally changed to permanent workers around 1972-3.

This was not the case for temporary workers. They had two ways to enter the workforce. The first was to take the place of a parent who retired early (dingzhi). Second, you could be hired as a student out of high school, and never be sent to the countryside first. There were very few of these, but they did have them because there were ways to avoid being sent down.

The state set a limit of 3.5% of these kinds of people in the labor force, but their plant had about 10%. This was because "the mountains are high and the emperor is far away" (shan gao, huangdi yuan). In other words, there is a long way between central policy and its actual implementation. There were official exceptions to the general restrictions on contract (not temporary) workers. Namely, defense-related and secret industries, including atomic energy, bombs, and planes were excluded.

So generally, the changes in policy applied to the original contract labor system, but not in the temporary labor system. You can't say that the contract system was abolished just because Liu Shaoqi advocated it. At that time you can also say that they had already been working in the factory for a long time. At the beginning, the contract system was a real contract system, but gradually, these workers stayed on for long periods because factories needed them and could not expand their number of permanent workers on the payroll. So this was the informal way the system developed. So you can't really say they abolished the system, they just recognized that these people were entitled to get the same treatment as the others.

After 1965, they never hired any new contract workers. You can't say this was national policy, each place had its own. So this made the ones they already had more valuable. Many stayed on for another 5 years.

The Machinery Plant (4/30/80, 1.5 hrs.)

Since his factory was actually a sub-unit of the chu, it did not have its own party committee, party secretary, but had a party branch and a branch secretary. There was also a plant director, called the 'administrative director'. He was not a party member, unlike so many other plant directors. There were two vice-directors, both party members, and one was a member of the party branch committee.

The party branch had one secretary, 2 vice-secretaries, and 3 branch committee members. Below them were the party members in the plant. At the time he entered the plant in late 1965, the party already had assumed strong

powers over the plant director, especially since he was not a party member. At that time, the job of the party branch committee was to develop and strengthen party membership, to recruit new members, and to discuss internal party matters and plant production matters.

Shops: There was one shop director--none were in the party--and one engineer. The shop director handled general affairs, the engineer the production process and technical matters. Actually there were two engineers, one from Qinghua, and another from the college in Xian, and the one from Qinghua had more authority because he had a more prestigious degree.

Each small group had a group leader, and if there were more than 10 members, they also had a vice-leader. In his shop, the repair shop, they had several groups, the most important of which were the 'automotive group' (qiche zu), the 'fitters' group (qian gong), the machine tools group (chegong), and groups of 'ordinary workers', which did odd jobs, and which included temporary workers.

Each group had a group leader. The most important groups were the first three, because they had the skilled workers. The larger groups had vice-heads, but no workers were appointed to be 'yuan' or inspectors in the groups.

Cultural Revolution

They had several factions in the plant. The informant was among the first in his faction to rebel. The first demand was that wages be readjusted. They had a readjustment in the works which never materialized and they wanted to know why. They were not satisfied with the party secretary's answer that it was central policy, so they criticized him. If the members of his faction had any special characteristic, it was that they had no desire to enter the party, and had never applied to enter. They had 'middling' chushen--they were children of clerks, professors, bureaucrats under the KMT, etc. But some of their backgrounds bordered on the bad, but not the worst.

Another faction at the very beginning were groups of workers who were very keen about entering the party, were 'red', and had good political records. Among them were party members. So at the beginning, the breakdown was into 2 groups. Those who were active in politics, not too good at expertise, and those who had good technical knowledge, and who were not much interested in the party and in politics.

As time went on and the two factions enlarged, however, the 2 faction's differences became less striking, and their memberships became more similar.

At first, the informant's group focused on criticizing the party for not handling the leadership of production well, and for not having the requisite skill and understanding for the job. The party branch secretary had no education, no qualifications. He had just been a pre-liberation CCP cadre. The other faction, after the first raised these criticisms, criticized the first as being reactionary, and anti-party. This faction had some connections with the party branch committee. The connections were not too clear on the surface. But these members all wanted to get into the party, and most had not yet been successful, so they were trying to show their worthiness by being loyal to the party leaders. His faction called these people "royalists" (baohuang pai).

In particular, the informant's faction protected an engineer in his shop--a well qualified, good person, although he had served the KMT government before liberation. He had good character. But the conservatives thought he was a rightist, and they criticized him. The engineer in question later joined the informant's faction--the rebels. They were opposed to the Party secretary for oppressing the technicians, and overriding correct technical decisions. The rebels resented him because of this, because he had no management or technical training, and had been an army officer previously, then

sent directly to the plant in the 1950s. He was an officer in the PLA before liberation. Almost all the members of the branch committee made self-examinations at their criticism meetings.

After Nie Yuanzi's poster in August 1966, the rebel group started to form. By the end of 1966, the party branch secretary had stood aside, along with all of the branch committee members. They no longer dared come to the plant on most days, they just stayed at home. But rebels would come and get them, especially the secretary, and bring them to the plant periodically for self-examinations. After this, no one came to take their place. There was no real party leadership or management of any sort. Production was reduced to about 10% capacity for about 1½ years; during one month almost no work was done, and no one came to work.

The plant director received the same criticism from the conservative faction but not too much. He sympathized with rebel criticisms of the Party secretary but dared not speak up for fear of reprisal. But he didn't do much management work either. The conservative faction tended to go after people for their backgrounds and 'political integrity', because they had vested interests to protect (jide liyi), and were not about to criticize party leaders.

(5/7/80, 2 hrs.)

In all, less than 10 leading cadres stood aside. All of the members of the Party Branch Committee with any power were forced to step aside. Also the union chairman, not a party member and older, stood aside voluntarily, because he was afraid to have his past discovered. Later the informant read his file and found he had a complex past before liberation, and had earlier been criticized during the '3-anti' (sanfan) campaign in the early 1950s. They got to read the files--this was common. The cadres watching the dangan were afraid too, so they stood by "with one eye open and one closed".

The informant's faction did not criticize the plant director, but the other faction tended to blame everything on him, not on the party secretary. So he eventually stood aside too, because of attacks by the other group. But his group felt that upon analysis, this plant director was not responsible for the problems--most of them came from the party secretary who didn't read books and had no education, yet was always trying to run production.

There were also some department heads who were criticized in wallposters, but they didn't really stand aside. They kind of informally stood aside, in the sense that they just lost power. Not because they didn't want to lead, it is just that they were afraid to throw their weight around. For example, if almost no one comes to work, what can you do?

They had a cowshed in the plant, a run down room in a building. In the first part of the CR, they threw in some people with overseas relations (they called Hong Kong chou gang--stinking harbor). Some others, a purchasing agent, some workers, all with historical problems. This usually meant that they had some sort of relations with the KMT. This was typical of the conservatives, who ran the cowshed. Then the method of attack was to attack one's political integrity (dajie). The informant's own group thought they should make theoretically informed criticisms--there were more intellectuals in their group. There was another cowshed later, during the cleaning of the class ranks campaign.

Revolutionary Committee

After Liu Shaoqi was knocked down, they decided that production must be restored. They started a propaganda campaign to "grasp revolution and promote production", and tried to get workers to return to work. Between 15-20 PLA soldiers came to their unit. They had arms, but did not carry them

all the time. When they first came, they put a poster on the wall saying: "any workers who do not report to work by XX date will be subject to criticism". The leaders of each faction were made to participate in 'study groups' (xuexi ban), where the PLA soldiers told them to stop struggling against one another.

The PLA in effect had the highest power in the plant and could use it to suppress the masses. The PLA was not immune to factionalism, and it happened that this group supported the conservatives, and tended to listen to them when it came to finding out which leaders in the plant should be removed.

Actually, the army group that finally brought the situation under control was the third to come. The first one was very 'arbitrary' (wuduan), and was opposed by all in wallposters. They just didn't listen, so the PLA group was forced to leave. The second group was a set of well educated air force officers, but they eventually were transferred elsewhere by the upper levels. Finally the third came.

After half a year, they finally established the Revolutionary Committee. They placed an equal number of representatives from each of the two factions on the RC. Each faction selected its own. The head of the RC was the second in command of the conservative faction, a worker. The first in command had a bad class background. But this second had a father who was a revolutionary cadre, and was working in the South-Central Party Bureau. The PLA representatives decided who would be the leaders. They had 'democratic elections', but this was by an open show of hands. Actually the PLA decided.

There were two vice-heads, one worker, one technician, and both were members of the rebel faction, and one of them was a leader. The leader of the factions were not always chosen to be members of the RC. There were also four more members, 3 from the conservatives, and one from the rebels. All were workers, while one was originally a temporary worker. So there were seven in all. This was the leadership group of the factory, but they didn't really exert any leadership over production, they were actually the puppets of the 'military control group' (junguan xiaozu) in the plant.

At this point, nobody listened to this leading group, because they felt its only support was the guns of the PLA. They had no representative leadership. So they didn't listen. Production never really improved for a while. Then there was a policy change, and People's Daily said "grasp revolution, promote production", in a big headline, and they got rid of the old RC, and established a new one. This was in January 1968.

The new head was one of the old vice party secretaries. The old first party secretary was transferred to another plant, since his problems were too complex. The new vice-heads--one was the head of the plant security department, while another was a worker activist from the conservative faction. There were four others--3 workers, and the original plant director. The plant director was given membership status because he knew how to run production and people would listen to him, so they gave him a spot. This was completely titular (guaming). They needed someone who knew what they were doing to give advice. The other three were workers, all of whom had been active in the conservative faction.

This revolutionary committee had power, in which sense it was different from the first RC, which was a puppet of the army. After the Military Control Group saw that this revolutionary committee's power was consolidated, they left. This was near the end of 1968, in November. Even though this was 1968, still only about 40% of the workers came to work regularly. These were mostly members of the conservatives. The ones who stayed away were dissatisfied over the conservative-dominated RC. There were also still some

fears over safety if one came to work. And absences were contagious. The other faction saw others not attending, so sometimes they decided to stay away, too.

The revolutionary committee went through several more changes. He says there were over 10, and can't remember them all. Each time there was a change in personnel on the RC, it was for the purpose of convincing workers to return. But he says that this was a dishonest method.

Finally, in 1968, they ran a 'cleaning of the class ranks' campaign', which scared everyone, and they all returned to work very quickly out of fear. The Military Control Group formed several 'special investigation groups' (zhuan an zu), and began to investigate people. They recreated the old 'cowsheds', and threw people into them, about 8-9. These were the leaders of the rebel faction of which the informant was a member. Also there were a couple of purchasing agents who sympathized with the rebels. These people got into trouble mostly for 'historical' problems, illicit sexual relations, and mistakes made during the CR.

The use of this method of attack meant that the Military Control Group could selectively enforce the rules, and find almost anyone they wanted to be guilty of something of this nature. Most of these people were sent to the countryside for a period of many years. A few returned after one to two. Even though most of the workers returned to work by this time, they still weren't working hard--"like monks, they just beat the gong all day" (zuo yi tian heshang, zhuang yi tian zhong). They read the papers, talked, did some small jobs. Part of the reason was that they had become accustomed to not working. But the main reason was that they still didn't approve of the leadership.

The cleaning of the class ranks campaign was about June to September 1968. The return to active work for workers was gradual. There was no sudden change from this situation to one where workers all worked hard once again. The PLA team finally left in 1969 after the power of the RC was consolidated. The "anti May 16 elements" movement actually began before the cleaning of the class ranks, and continued off and on until the high tide around the time of the Lin Biao affair in 1971. There was no clear beginning or end. He thinks they just used this word 'campaign' as an excuse to clean out dissidents (yiji fenzi)--by which he means people who didn't agree with party policy.

This policy applied to the same sort of people that were attacked in the cleaning of the class ranks campaign, and to those former activists who still found it difficult to accept Party and Army leadership--those who were too 'extreme' (guo huo). But there are no members of the RC in any of its versions who were every removed for this reason.

Administration

After the cleaning of the class ranks, the party's power and prestige increased strikingly. The old organizational effectiveness and life was not yet there, it existed on paper but hadn't yet really returned. This was a gradual process. But after the cleaning of the class ranks the party clearly held power in the plant.

They still had the same departmental structure as before, and never abolished any of them formally or combined them together. But the departments were still changed. They did not have the power they had before. The power to decide major issues was now with the Party Committee. They couldn't decide questions with the freedom and authority they had before. Also, since the membership of the RC was continually undergoing transformation, the real power was becoming more and more concentrated in the hands of the Party secretary. So the departments were less able to make decisions and solve problems freely.

The same was true for the shop structure. There were no formal changes, but the shop directors had less power than before. The RC had to decide more and more production-related questions, for example, whether or not to undertake a major repair of a machine. The reason for this was that the leading people at every level, including the shop director, were less willing to use previous methods of running things, and since so many of the previous regulations and methods were abolished, they felt their realm of authority was unclear and had to check many things with the RC. But the RC did not necessarily have the knowledge required to solve these problems.

Work among the technical offices at this time was pretty demoralized. Experts had people who didn't really have expertise giving them orders, so technical personnel just followed orders and didn't go out of their way to offer advice on whether something was right or wrong, they just did what they were told, put in their time, and went home. They lost their 'sense of responsibility' (zeren gan). The authority of the experts in the departments had not returned, nor had their sense of responsibility, until after he left in 1974. This was the same from top to bottom in the factory. People were producing, but not actively, and it was changing into a situation of like loafing (bianxiang de daigong). The reason for this was that almost everyone in the plant had received some sort of attack during the CR so it took away their sense of responsibility.

Factional Relations

On the surface, there was no political factionalism, but it still existed in people's hearts. But there were no longer political factions. Those who were on the sameside in the CR became closer friends after the CR, so the factions became friendship groups after the CR. These kinds of differences, and factional conflicts, would pop up whenever a new political movement came along. The guanxi involved also proved to be important when it came time for promotions and transfers.

Unions, Technical Classes

There was no technical education for workers to speak of after the CR. This was something that was big in the era of the great leap forward. They had a union organization with cadres in name, but they had no real responsibility after the CR. There were never any workers' congresses.

Procuring Agent's Work

He was a procuring agent for five years. His job was to find parts, materials, and equipment needed in the plant, but which is unavailable in the local ministry or enterprises. They travel with forms which certify the need of the plant for the goods, and which when signed and surrendered would release funds to the second plant for the goods. They know where to go because their job is to familiarize themselves with the sources of supply throughout the nation. Also, there is a catalog printed up of plants and products throughout the nation. Sometimes they will arrange a trade of needed materials. Other times they will just bring forms, sign, set up delivery date and have a smooth transaction. They do not carry money. These transactions are legal and within the plan.

These purchasing agents can go to any plant they need to to buy things, but need the approval of the revolutionary committees of the unit, city, and south-central district, at each step along the way. The approvals were routinely given with no problem. These were legal, if informal relationships. They became illegal when figs or favors were given to cement a deal, or

speed up delivery. Then it became illegal. This is a very common method because, he says, bureaucratism still exists in China. He says he used these kinds of methods all the time, otherwise he couldn't effectively carry out his job. The people who received the gifts were the highest leaders in a plant, not their purchasing agents.

His leader did not care what method he used, if you succeeded you were good--methods did not matter. They used their own money sometimes to buy a gift, but other times they could use connections to get people a place in line to buy a TV or watch, etc. There was not a great deal of money involved.