

Age: 30 Sex: Male

Sex: Male

Total Years Relevant Experience: 10

Initial Immigration Status: Legal

Class Background/Political Designation: OS

- 1) District, collective/(500)
- 2) District/(700)

Occupational History (2/12/80, 2.5 hrs.)

The informant is an overseas Chinese from Burma who returned to China in 1961 to get an education. After graduating from middle school in 1967, he was assigned to a factory which produced oil pressure pumps in Wuhan. The plant was a collective, under district (qu) administration, under the light industry bureau of Wuhan city. The plant used these pumps to produce ether articles, and also spare parts, which they sold to other factories. He worked here from 1968-70, as a fitter in a production workshop.

Because he was an overseas Chinese, he was able to get himself transferred to a state-run factory after the cultural revolution. He believes they gave the overseas Chinese special treatment in this respect. He wanted to leave the collective sector because welfare provisions were better in state factories. So he notified the city bureau, and later he was transferred to another plant in the same light industry system. He says that at this time-around the time of the Great Alliance--they sent many powers down to the basic levels from the bureau--the district and street. They wanted to simplify the administrative structure and send down powers, for example over hiring and transfers down to the district.

So in 1971 he was transferred to a state-run plant of 700 employees, which made daily use articles like cups, plates, and lamps. The difference of this plant from the collective one was that it had materials given to it according to state plans and contracts. They did not have to barter for materials as did collective plants. He worked at this plant as a repair worker until 1977, when he came out legally.

Oil Pump Collective Factory Experience, 1968-71

The enterprise was independent economically, but had party committee leadership, and relations with the light industry bureau, but had responsibility for its own profits and losses. The plant had about 400-500 workers in all, and was divided into groups (zu) of no more than 20. They were led by group leaders and vice leaders. There were no internal contracts, responsibilities were handed down through the shops in the form of orders. The selection of shop directors--the plant leadership selects candidates, has the workers discuss them, and then workers can add names and send up their comments. The leadership makes the final decision. There wasn't much of this while he was there because of the arguments during the Cultural revolution. They had the equivalent of departments(ke), and they were called bu.

Wages and Labor: They had an 8 grade wage system. He was an apprentice when he first entered the plant. They got 18¥ their first year. It was a three year training period with increases each year. A grade 1 worker got 32.5¥, while a grade 8 worker got over 90¥. Wages were distributed twice a month. Everyone got a grain supplement of 4.8¥. They also got supplements on Chinese New Year. This was based on need, like a welfare supplement. Supplements in general were given out on the basis of need during important holidays. They had bonuses for a short while during this period--one time. Production was down and they had to work overtime, so they gave out bonuses according to the size of one's salary, and the limit was the size of the normal monthly wage.

There were no piece rate systems, and he never heard of any then or since. Only 50% of hospital expenses were paid. They got paid sick leave depending on what was wrong with them. There were no raises or promotions during this period, because everybody was always arguing about it. There were two factions. Sometimes you could get a raise in pay if transferred to another plant. Most workers were at grade 2. There was no chance for a promotion above that during this period. They had a testing system before the

cultural revolution, but it was cancelled. New workers were assigned by the street committees. They arranged introductions and formal assignments. So the collective was led by both the district (for production) and by the street committee (for hiring).

There were no temporary or contract workers. All workers were permanent (except apprentices), and could not be fired except if they made serious mistakes or political errors, or violated laws. If a person's technical abilities are not good enough, they help him. If he's a slow worker, they educate him.

Every week they had a production meeting where problems were relayed by the management, after which they would divide into groups to discuss.

Cultural Revolution in Wuhan Plant

There were 2 factions during that period, split up basically over opinions on whether certain leaders were good or bad--not really related to one's age or anything else, just opinion. Production did not stop, it was just less efficient because there was no order--and no one dared to manage or to give orders and enforce them.

There was no armed struggle in the plant, they just argued and held meetings, put up wallposters. There were no strikes or stoppages. Most of these activities were held outside the plant, and during off-work hours. Production and struggle were mostly kept separate. At criticism meetings of cadres, they criticized mainly the plant director and Party secretary. Meetings were held and attended by members of a single faction. Both these leaders stood aside, and were replaced by the faction which seized power. They could handle production because they were former higher cadres in the plant who knew the business. After the CR these leading cadres (the top two) were transferred to new plants because it was too embarrassing for them to continue in the same plant.

The informant did not participate, and there were others who didn't want to, but they often had to do so because they would be criticized otherwise. So usually they joined a faction which they shared opinions with, but this issue is very complex. Some joined for personal reasons--to get revenge on cadres, for example--while some joined for more public-minded, political reasons.

No PLA members came to form the Great Alliance. This was reserved only for the most disrupted plants. The newly transferred-in Party secretary and other leading cadres ran this movement. They talked to the two factions' leaders, engaged in propaganda about keeping up production, the interests of the state, etc. He left this plant right after they formed the revolutionary committee, so he witnessed its entire formation.

The new Party cadres transferred in were the heads of the RC. The former plant director was still there, and after undergoing "struggle, criticism, and transformation", was made a vice-head. Also each faction selected a couple of leaders to participate. There were four or five altogether in the main group. The enlarged body was over 10. Some workers were on this smaller standing committee, but they were fairly smart, party members, and had good politics and studied hard.

The State Household Articles Factory, 1971-77 (2/14/80, 2 hrs.)

After he was transferred to this plant, he worked as a repair worker (baoyang gongren). He repaired machines, fixed spare parts to keep the equipment in shape. He did these jobs for all the production groups. He was attached to the machinery shop, along with production workers, but he also helped others. He had no fixed production post, but walked around, and there was a lot of variety. There was no quota for him, as there were for

other workers.

He was still a grade 2 worker during this entire time. He had done his 3 years of apprenticeship, and started at 18¥, and increased at 2¥ per year. After that he became a grade 1 worker, and one year afterwards grade 2 at 42.8¥. Why was he promoted after one year as grade 1? This was during the Cultural Revolution. There was no testing system then. They just raised grade 1 workers to grade 2 after one year. After that you were stuck at that grade. There were no adjustments until around the time he left in 1977-78. There were no temporary or contract laborers in this unit, just students on summer holiday.

The new workers were intellectual youths from villages who had been sent down earlier. Someone from the factory would go to the villages where youth from their district were sent. They would go looking for workers, and come back after having hired those who had exhibited good political behavior and attitude during their rural stay.

There were no 'worker-managers' in their small groups. They just had group leaders. But this does not mean that workers did not do anything to help the group leader. Sometimes they would take notes at meetings for him, etc. They had meetings on production about 2 times a week. They would discuss completion of plans and problems. They would ask for suggestions on how to solve the problems and complete the quotas. They had no 'ba dayuan' system or anything like that in the small group.

PLA representatives were not in the plant when he came in 1971, but he heard they had been there to set up the RC. He did hear that at that time there were still PLA representatives at the Light Industry Bureau.

There were 5 or 6 people on the standing committee of the revolutionary committee. The old factory director was rehabilitated and was the vice-head, and a newly-transferred in party secretary was the head. There was also a former vice plant director, and a few workers on the standing committee. The workers were chosen by a process of democratic centralism where nominations were sent up to the Party Committee and decisions made there. Very often, however, the shop director qualified as a worker because they weren't separated from the production process. So often they became worker representatives on the RC. The RC was still there when he left, and as far as he knows there were no changes in its membership. But he says that changes in the top leadership is a special matter and not something they notify workers about.

There was a union in the plant, and their job was to help workers with difficulties both inside and outside the plant. They had mass meetings of workers once a year called 'commendation meetings', (zanyang huiyi) held usually soon before the beginning of the year, to discuss the situation in production, plans and problems in their completion.

Wages and Labor: Wages in this plant were also on the 8 grade system except each grade was about 1-2¥ higher than in the collective. Collectives earlier had made more money because they had done piece work, but he hears that after the Great Leap they no longer had this. But for a while, he hears, they got rich. There is no difference in worker diligence between these two sectors that he saw.

There were no contract or temporary laborers, but they did have a lot of children of workers, students on vacation, working in shops for short periods. They usually called this 'summer vacation fees', and it was done in the name of providing extra income for workers' families, for the children's school expenses. This was done on an informal basis, you just went and asked any cadre.

There were no piece rates. They had supplements, but no bonuses or supplementary wages. There were no readjustments or wage raises during this period, although some people had their positions raised. This situation did

not really affect workers' motivation. They still worked, and there was no slowdown or daigong.

Political Campaigns: Many cadres were sent down to do manual labor in shops about six months, some to villages and some to shops. Gradually, by 1973 or so, they began gradually to transfer cadres back to the offices. This was because things were too busy in the offices. After that, they went in rotation for short periods, but he is not clear about this.

They had some 'increase production and practice economy' (zengchan jieyue) campaigns to increase production and cut costs. The activists in this kind of movement could be declared labor models or at least be announced at the meetings as someone to learn from. If you had experience, you also could be promoted to a better job.

During the pilin pikong campaign, they studied and also led a 'high tide of production' campaign. They reached the conclusion in their meetings that they should make greater contributions to socialism, and they were encouraged to increase their output. If it went down, they could be criticized individually. They always discussed the study documents together with the evaluations of each person's work performance.

In his experience, he did not see anyone get fired at the plant, and this was generally reserved for people who made serious mistakes. Usually they would be talked to by leaders or would be criticized in meetings, held in the small group. He does not know of any factions within the leadership. They did not usually discuss these things openly, and this was not known to the workers. After the Gang of 4 fell, they had to study and criticize them, but generally no one was removed from office in the factory. This was just higher leadership--district, city, and national, where people were removed. They just studied to raise their consciousness.