

PERSONAL DATA

Age: 38

Sex: Male

Education: University Graduate (Qinghua, construction design)

Total Years Relevant Experience: 11

Last Year of Relevant Experience: 1972                      Year left China: 1973

Initial Immigration Status: Legal

Native place/Overseas Connections: Fuzhou/no known OS connections

Class Background/Political Designation: working class

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OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY SUMMARY

Positions Held: 1) Carpenter, Shanghai Steel Plant, 1957-59

2) University student, 1959-64

3) Designer, Shanghai Municipal Designing Institute, 1966-73

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

1) Municipal Metallurgy Bureau/(10,000)

3) Municipal Construction Bureau/(unknown)

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

Construction Laborer, Shanghai Construction Company,  
June 1964-January 1966 (post-graduate labor tempering).

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APPOINTMENTS: 4

TOTAL HOURS: 7

PAGES TEXT: 7

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No. 1

11-10-79 1 hr.

Occupational History: Informant is 38 years old, born in Fuzhou, graduated from a Fuzhou middle school at age 17. Father was a carpenter, and at that time he accompanied him to Shanghai to take up work as carpenters in different plants in the Shanghai Iron and Steel Co. Since his father had taught him the trade, and since there was at that time a shortage of skilled workers, he was directly appointed to a skilled worker pay grade, and did not have to go through apprenticeship. He worked at the steel plant from March 1957 to September 1959. While there, he studied in the plant evening school. In 1959 he took the university examination and, because he had a working class background, was given preference and accepted at Qinghua University. He studied architecture and design at Qinghua, graduating in 1964. After graduation in mid-1964, he was assigned to do manual labor--mostly mixing concrete by hand--at construction sites run by the Shanghai Construction Co. This was national policy at the time of the "siqing" (four cleans) movement. Around January 1966 he was assigned to a Municipal Designing Institute (設計院) in Shanghai, where he designed factory buildings as an architect. Around June 1966, he joined the radical workers' organization, Gongren Zaofan Dui, shortly after it was formed--secretly. During the Cultural Revolution he was an active member of this group, doing no work, but spending all his time travelling to various plants around Shanghai to engage in propaganda and other political activities. Afterwards, he continued to work at the designing institute until he left for Hong Kong, legally, in 1973.

11-17-79 2 hrs.

Steel Plant Experience, March 1957-September 1959.

The plant had about 10,000 workers and staff, about 4% of which he estimates were cadres. There were five shops, each of which had from 1,000 -2,000 workers: 1) Open-hearth furnace shop (平炉), where the ore smelting was done, 2) an electric furnace shop, 3) a Bessemer furnace shop, 4) a steel rolling shop, 5) and an iron casting shop.

Each shop was divided into about 4-5 sections. Sections were divided according to the work process done. For example, in one of the shops there were three large Siemens-Martin furnaces (马丁炉). In front of them was one section. Each section was divided into three shifts (班). Each of these three shifts comprises a "large group" (大组), usually numbering about 20 people. Each large group was split into three small groups (小组).

In the shop which contained the Siemens-Martin furnaces, the system of organization fit onto the technological process as follows: One section handled all three furnaces. It was divided into three shifts. Each shift comprised a large group, each furnace (3) comprised a small group. The group leader of each of these small groups of about 7-8 people was simultaneously called a furnace chief (炉长). Most of the small group leaders were party members. Informant knows this because most of them seemed to attend Party meetings within the plant, which were open only to Party members. Very few workers were in the Party--about 10%. About 60% of the small group leaders were Party members. (See attached organizational chart drawn by informant).

Informant's job as carpenter was in the services section, repair group. He did any repair or building work in the plant which involved woodworking--door frames, windows, desks. His section included both carpenters and cement workers.

Apprenticeship system: Normally all carpenters had to go through an apprenticeship,

but the informant skipped it because he had been trained by his father and because there was a shortage of skilled labor. Normally, apprentices were appointed for three years, and were paid 28Y per month for the entire period. At the end of the period, the masters tested their apprentices, most of whom passed. Those who didn't pass failed mostly because of political problems or because they had personal conflicts with masters. Once an apprentice was appointed to full fledged carpenter, the salary was 38Y, starting pay for skilled workers. The highest pay a skilled worker received was about 100Y.

Wages: The scale for skilled workers ran about 5Y per month higher than that for regular workers. Informant says that skilled workers were divided into seven grades: 1) 38Y, 2) 48Y, 3) @56Y, 4) @60+Y, 5) @70-80Y, while the highest was about 100Y. (Informant not entirely clear on exact pay rates). Most workers were below the 5th grade, and most were concentrated in grades 3 and 4.

The scale for regular workers began at 33Y. Some older workers made as much as 80Y, but most earned about 50Y. High temperature supplements are the only kind remembered by the informant, and these were about 60 cents per day. This means that those who worked in front of the ovens could make up to an extra 15Y per month.

Most workers lived in factory dorms or apartments. Almost all apprentices lived in on-site dormitories. Some of the apartments were elsewhere in Shanghai.

Bonuses: During the period up to but not including 1958, the only bonuses given were those for technical innovations, patents on inventions. Near the end of 1957 or early 1958, a regular bonus system was instituted, and they were distributed each month. They averaged 3-5Y per month, and almost everyone received one except when they had political problems, or were not active enough in political study or campaigns.

The amount of bonus for each individual was fixed in a monthly appraisal meeting within the small group, led by the group leader. In these meetings, each person's case was discussed one after another. Workers in the group raised their opinions about the person's showing, political thought, punctuality, work habits. Afterwards a discussion ensued and the group leader came to a decision which incorporated these suggestions. Informant says that in practice, everyone in the group received these small bonuses in equal amounts, except in rare cases.

#### Plant Organizational Life:

Production Group Meetings: The production group met every day before and after the shift for about 15 minutes to discuss production problems and plans for the day, or the coming day. These were called production meetings. In informant's carpenters work group the group leader was in charge of making work assignments, in addition to discussing work problems and possible solutions. Conflicts often broke out in these meetings when workers were unhappy with their assignments

Group leaders were appointed by an election process within the production groups which was supervised by the Party organization. Informal elections were held within the small groups, after an open discussion. Voting was by a show of hands and general consensus, rather than secret ballot. The small group's choice had to be approved by the Party branch. In most cases, if there was a Party member in the small group, this person would end up being the group leader. Once someone was appointed as group leader, he remained in the post indefinitely. There was no regular system of election with fixed terms of office. Selections were made about 1957-58.

Group leader remained in office indefinitely, until:

- a) promoted to a higher post
- b) developed a political problem due to his attitude towards a particular policy or campaign
- c) became involved in serious conflicts with workers, in which case he was transferred to another group

If one was elected to a post within the small group, there was no way to refuse. The party cadre in the group counseled the person to convince him to accept. In the informant's work group, which was quite different in nature from the work processes and rhythms of the steel shops (everyone was dispersed throughout the plant), there were only two 'worker-managers'. One was a safety inspector, the other a sanitation inspector who was basically in charge of the neatness of the working areas. These people were chosen through the same process used for selecting group leaders.

Section-level meetings: Production group leaders met regularly within sections to discuss special problems, new production tasks, or accidents. No worker participation.

Shop-level meetings: Once a month shop leaders would get their new plans for the next month. When these plans were sent down, the Shop chief would call a mobilizational meeting of all the workers in the shop. All the workers collected in the plant dining hall, listened to speeches by the shop leader and various other leading personnel. Workers voiced their approval and enthusiasm, sometimes offering suggestions about how better to fulfill the quotas.

Workers' Congress: The plant workers' congress met once a year. Each year, each production group in the plant, depending on its size, selected one or two representatives. This was done by discussion and general acclamation. If there was a conflict within the group over the representative, ie. a tie between two people, then the issue was sent to the shop-level Party organization for a decision. The criteria for a representative were 1) good politics, 2) good work, 3) good relations with workers in the group. The same people seemed to be elected representatives year in and year out. It was considered something of an honor to be selected.

At the Congress itself, which lasted about one week, the plant Party secretary, Union leaders, and other plant administrators gave speeches about production tasks, problems. Documents were distributed for worker delegates to study. Afterwards, the delegates returned to their production groups to report on what they had heard, and to relay the Party's messages.

Workers can give their representatives suggestions about work, or livelihood problems, which their delegates can bring up at the congress. These production group meetings usually held after work.

Political Study: Production groups also had political study, normally twice a week for one hour each time. Informant's service section met during work hours, but the steel shops couldn't halt work, so they met afterwards. The frequency of these political study-discussion meetings increased during a campaign, in which case they had political study every day. The production group leaders were also in charge of these political study meetings.

11-21-79 2 hrs.

Great Leap Forward Activities:

The main difference during the great leap was the pace of work, which was faster, the increased intensity of organized activities, and the longer work hours. This also gave rise to some serious quality problems in the steel-making process, on which the informant is not too clear. Apparently many suggestions were implemented which incorporated local (Chinese)

methods, or ways of speeding up the heating process. The result was steel that wasn't 'really steel'--in other words, it was very brittle.

Another special characteristic of the Great Leap in this plant was the frequent meetings to criticize conservatives (rightists). These were usually engineers and intellectuals within the plant who opposed some of the suggestions and methods proposed by the Party during this period. This was considered a political problem. These people were put on a stage at large, all-plant rallies, at which time they were criticized publicly. Afterwards, they went back to the shops, having lost a great deal of face and no longer with the authority of their former positions (ie., their technical decisions were no longer heeded).

There were also three-in-one meetings where workers, technicians, and cadres discussed technical problems and innovations. This is where many of the rationalization proposals were developed--especially on how to implement traditional methods. These meetings were led by workers, according to the informant. He did not participate in any of these, so he is not entirely clear about their internal workings.

Party Organization: The Party had an organizational hierarchy which paralleled the administrative hierarchy and overlapped with it at several points. The lowest level of Party offices where full-time, non-productive labor cadres worked was the shop party branch office. Each shop party branch office had four staff members: the branch party secretary (党總支書記), and cadres in charge of personnel records, files (personal dossiers), and security (internal plant police). (see attached organizational chart supplied by the informant).

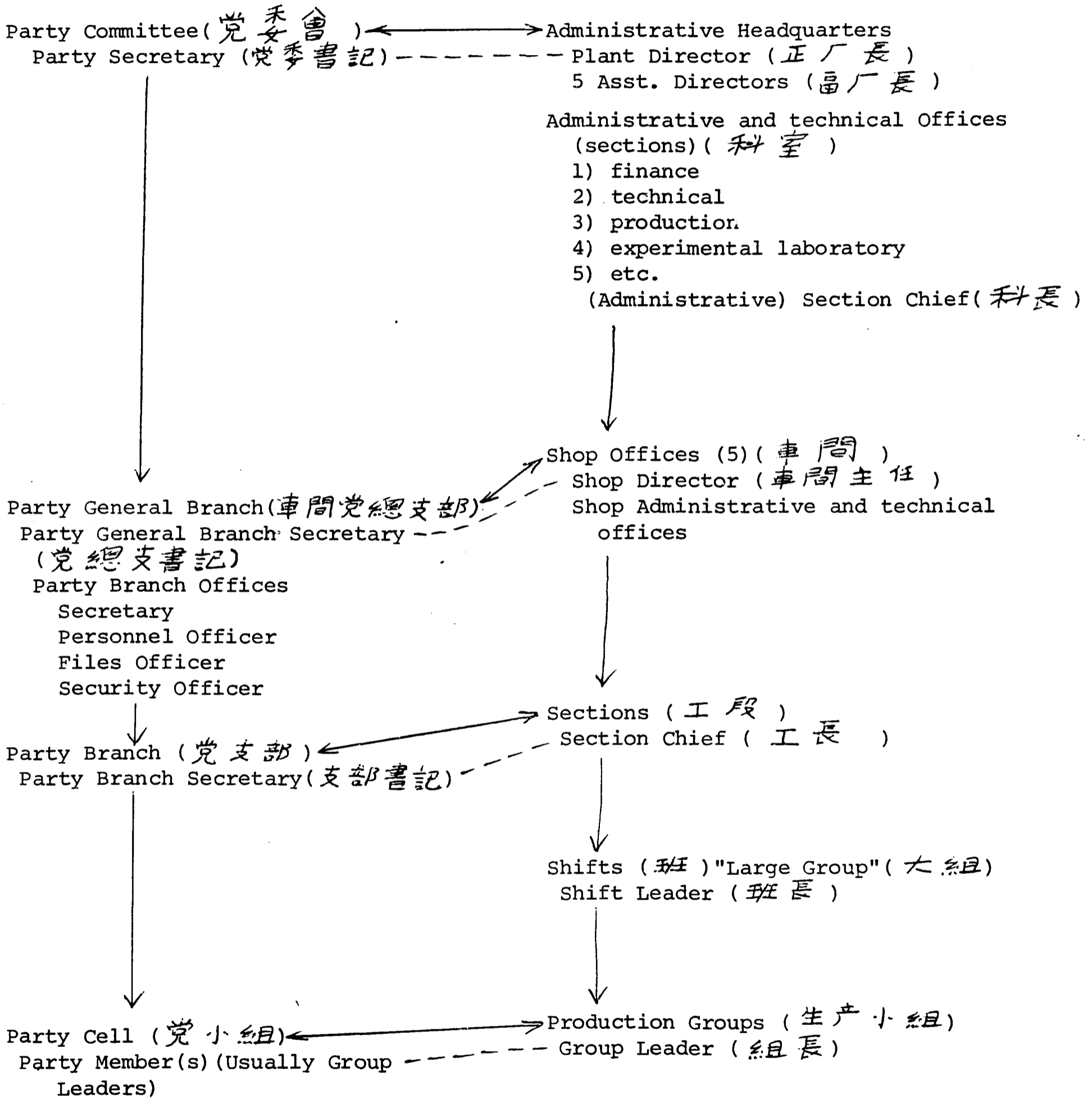
The next lowest level in the Party organization is the Party branch, which exists at the section level. The branch secretary is engaged part time in productive activities of some sort, managerial or otherwise. The next lowest level, the bottom of the Party hierarchy, is the Party Cell, which is coterminous with the production group and the study group. The Party cell leader is a full-time participator in production.

Leadership positions in the Party hierarchy often overlap with administrative leadership positions. Sometimes the Plant Party Secretary, head of the Party Committee, is simultaneously the Plant Director. Even if he is not, he is still important in plant operations. At times, the General Branch secretaries are also Shop Directors. Most of the Section Chiefs are also Party Branch secretaries. And most of the Production Group Leaders are also the Party member in the group, and they are the head of the Party cell and leader of political study groups.

The Party has its own system of meetings, closed to non-members like the informant. The Communist Youth League also has officers at each level, as does the Labor Union. Informant feels that the labor union is just a formality, and is largely responsible only for welfare services. He volunteers that the Union has no real power of its own.

Organizational Chart, Shanghai Iron and Steel Co., Plant X

Plant Headquarters ( 厂部 )



While I was at the Steel Plant, there were only two workers fired that he was aware of. Both were workers who had political run-ins with the Party secretary--had different opinions. After they were removed from the factory, they had no unit, went to do temporary labor. If one made a serious political error, then the person would be sent to the countryside.

In general, temporary laborers got lower pay, and harder kinds of work. They are hired from street party committees, who introduce the workers to the enterprise. Temporary laborers had their own political study meetings. More favored temporary workers could sign a long-term contract.

#### Cultural Revolution:

After I graduated from Qinghua U. in 1964 (September), he was sent for a year of manual labor at various construction sites around Shanghai. He says this was the policy at that time. He was paid on the technical cadres scale, at 48Y. In January 1966 he was finally assigned to a technical unit--one of Shanghai's Municipal Designing Institutes.

The rebel organization--Gongren Zaofan Dui--was established around June. The reason was to oppose the work teams sent into units by the Party centre. I opposed the work teams in his own unit. He joined during June, 1966, secretly, because he opposed the work team in his unit. He opposed the work team because they were a bit too enthusiastic about their work and criticized too many people in his unit.

(Nov 28, 2 hrs.)

Previously, during the last half of 1965, there had been a "4 cleans" Party work team sent to his construction work site. The team that came to the site had three members. They led workers in mass meetings where the leadership was criticized, and the workers who were activists in these meetings were allowed to join the work team, which enlarged to 15. The work team urged workers to criticize the unit leaders and to paste up wallposters. If the activists were too active or critical in their criticisms, the Party work team (in cahoots with the Party committee of the enterprise), could have a person declared counter-revolutionary, and they then would organize a mass meeting where this person would be criticized.

The work teams put labels on many people, and many of these labels were not cleared up until after the Cultural Revolution. These who were labelled were criticized in their small groups, they made confessions and self-criticisms, were forced to stand in the sun for long periods of time until they confessed, etc. They were isolated during work hours from the other workers, and had to eat by themselves. The work team members would then take turns watching these people; they couldn't go home, and had to stay on the premises. They wore people down from lack of sleep, tiredness. About 20% of the employees were criticized by the work team, and a smaller number were actually declared counter-revolutionary. Each small group had their own counter-revolutionary. I think that these work teams "made a big thing out of nothing" (xiaoti dazuo).

At the beginning of the cultural revolution those attacked by the work teams joined rebel groups early. Many of I's friends were counter-revolutionaries, so he joined with them. About August 1966 (he has changed the date now), I joined the Worker's Rebel Committee. At first he just distributed hand-written political tracts. The 'five good' workers tended not to join the rebel organizations. The rebels were people who: had labels, young workers, temporary and contract workers, and demobilized soldiers.

Later, when workers left the factories for the streets, they still were paid. Managers didn't dare prevent or discontinuè the paying of salaries.

The rebels criticized Party Committees and work teams in factories, not the technicians). When managers were criticized, they were dragged in front of mass meetings, made to kneel, spread their arms out behind them (do the 'airplane'), and sometimes kicked and beaten until blood came from their mouths. Some were even killed--beheaded--later in the CR. Many were locked up in 'cowsheds'. Later, some cadres were criticized for their privileges, and special lifestyles.

I didn't work for two years during the Cultural Revolution. He feels that most workers opposed Mao.

Immediately after the CR, there was a return to a very strict political atmosphere within the work group. It was very easy to get declared a counter-revolutionary if you didn't come to work then--or you at least would be seriously criticized. "Grasp revolution and promote production" (zhua geming, cu shengchan)--this slogan meant that workers were being intimidated. They worked once again because they didn't want to be criticized or labelled a counter-revolutionary

I says that he was very disappointed with the Cultural Revolution, as were many others who thought that China would become a more democratic country. He returned to work at the designing institute in 1968 and stayed there until he left China legally in 1973.