

Ideological Education and the Early Generation of Hardworking and Pioneering Spirit in Third Line Construction

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Abstract: Many workers who just arrived at the third line had ideological problems such as fear of hardship, fatigue, difficulty, and not settling down to work. The Party committees and political departments in third line regions immediately carried out in-depth ideological education. Through education on the situation and task of preparing for war, the strategic idea of constructing third line rooted in workers' hearts deeply. The Workers, with a posture of facing war, were working against time to engage in construction. Through class education that recalled sufferings in old society and contrasted them with happiness in new society, workers carried out construction with strong class emotions, swearing to protect Socialist New China. By lively learning and utilizing Chairman Mao's writings, workers improved their thinking, defied difficulties, and dared to fight tough battles, striving to become good workers of Chairman Mao. The effective ideological education made third line construction team quickly become strong, which played a powerful arming thought role in the generation of hardworking and pioneering spirit.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the research on third line construction have emerged as a hot topic in the New China history filed. During this process, although the research on the third line spirit started early, there were few influential results, which can be seen from the important research reviews that rarely mention the results about third line spirit.^[1] The existing research on third line spirit mostly provided a general description and affirmation of the Content, expression, and the value of the third line spirit while there were lack of relevant research on the specific generation of third line spirit for a long time. In recent years, some scholars begin to pay attention to the historical formation of the third-line spirit,^[2] but the research results from the perspective of ideological and political education are still rare. During the construction period of the third line, the workers who showed a heroic spirit of "daring to call the sun and moon for a new sky", fearing no hardship, fatigue, difficulties, forged the third line spirit characterized by "hard working and pioneering spirit". However, there were many workers who just arrived at the third line where extremely difficult had ideological problems such as fear of hardship, fatigue, difficulty, and lack of peace of mind in their work. Faced with the realistic ideological problems, The Party committees and political departments in third line regions immediately carried out in-depth ideological and political education, which played an important historical role in the early generation of third line spirit. This paper is mainly based on archival historical materials, and from the perspective of ideological and political education, examines the early

formation of the hard working spirit in third line construction specifically, in order to further deepen the research on the historical generation of third line spirit.

2. Situation and task education: motivating morale and engaging in construction with facing war attitude

The production and living conditions in regions of third line construction were extremely difficult, which was a severe test for the workers who just arrived in this area, and many of them had experienced fluctuations in their thinking. Even in Panzhihua, where Chairman Mao is most concerned about, "although the workers came here with honor of building third line, they still lacked sufficient ideological preparation to overcome the specific difficulties here. In addition, there were many new workers who had not been tested by harsh environment. So when they first arrived at this remote and arduous mountain valley, many people's thoughts fluctuated." Some people said: "coming to Panzhihua, the mountains get higher and higher, the people get fewer and fewer, and the heart gets colder and colder." Some people had "five fears": one was afraid of leprosy, two was afraid of wolves, three was afraid of crossing the Jinsha River, four was afraid of earthquakes and collapsing houses, and five was afraid of bad people shooting black guns. Some people yearned for "three small life": small family, small cooker, well-off life. There were also doubts about whether a big industrial base can be built here. Many people appeared negative emotions such as "fear of hardship, fatigue, illness, difficulty", and "lack of peace in work".^[3] This

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showed that the idea of the construction team was not strong enough, which was not compatible with the significant and arduous task of implementing the third line construction.

Faced with the realistic ideological problems of the troops, the Party committees and political departments in third line regions immediately took Chairman Mao's strategic thought of the third-line construction as weapon, and repeatedly carried out situation and task education to the workers, with preparation for war as the main content. The political departments at all levels in Panzhihua, "as soon as the troops entered the area, seized on the idea of being alive of the workers, and used the Chairman Mao's great strategic idea of building hinterland as the weapon to carry out propaganda and education on the situation and tasks among workers with great fanfare. Leaders and cadres personally carried out five lectures on workers: lectured the situation, tasks, conditions, prospects, and construction policies. Each batch of workers who came in will be preached once, preached again and again, preached extensively and discuss deeply, which became the first compulsory lesson for workers entering this area."^[4]

Through repeated and in-depth education on the situation and tasks, Chairman Mao's strategic thinking of building hinterland deeply rooted in workers' hearts. The workers generally recognized that the third line construction was of great significance, which concerned the security of the motherland, related to the world revolution. At that time, American was expanding war of aggression against Vietnam and could launch aggressive war against China at any time. In order to defend socialist China and support the world revolution, third line construction is to build unbreakable strategic base for national defense and war preparation in the hinterland of China. Only by building a strategic defense base in the hinterland as soon as possible could we deal more effectively with the war of aggression that imperialism may launch. The workers fully realized that the third-line construction was a struggle against imperialism for time and speed, a struggle for the construction of the proletarian state, and a major event related to the Chinese revolution and the world revolution, and fully realized the importance of building a strategic defense base in the hinterland before the Imperialists launched a war. The workers understood Chairman Mao's strategic thinking of third line construction deeply, and were repeatedly conveyed Chairman Mao said he couldn't sleep well if the hinterland construction was unsuccessful, so they expressed one after another: "we would rather not sleep ourselves, but also let Chairman Mao sleep well."^[5]

Through conducting situation and task education always, the Workers, with a posture of facing war, were working against time to carry out construction. In order to advance the construction of the third line and to seize the opportunity before imperialism launched war, the workers worked tirelessly day and night with greatest revolutionary enthusiasm, which greatly increased the speed of construction. The Panzhihua mine sampling team, for example, was operating on a nearly 2,000-metre-high mountain and encountered the most difficulties. After undergoing situational task education with the content of "Five Lectures", they overcame original "Five Fears"

ideology and settled down in their work. They set ambitious goals and fought hardly, with a heroic spirit of daring to fight against the heavens and the earth, and completed the task of half a year's work in just three months. For another example, the workers of the class 103 of the First Channel Engineering Department, after the situation and task education, were no longer satisfied with the production targets assigned by the superiors, instead, they strove to move forward and strove to exceed the targets as much as possible. In order to complete more tasks, they seized sunny and cloudy days, even rainy days. Once it rained heavily at work, and they stayed at their posts for over three hours without moving even if everyone's clothes were wet through.^[4] After desperate construction, the workers in Panzhihua had basically completed the construction preparation work in one year that used to need two or three years, which unveiled the prelude of the 1966 Panzhihua steel base construction battle.^[3]

3. Class education: recalling past misery and cherishing present happiness, swearing to protect People's Country

In order to make the strategic thought of three line construction root in the hearts of workers deeply and firmly, and to let workers build People's Country with high degree of sense of being master, the Party committees and political departments in third line regions attached great importance to class education of recalling past misery and cherishing present happiness from the beginning while conducting situation and task education. The political departments in Panzhihua repeatedly carried out class education of recalling past misery and cherishing present happiness while preaching Chairman Mao's strategic thought of the third line construction. On the basis of studying Chairman Mao's article "Analysis of Various Classes in Chinese Society", each construction unit generally adopt the specific approach of "Two Recalling" (recalling national sufferings, recalling class sufferings), "Four Inspecting" (inspecting thoughts, work, fighting spirit, and revolutionary ferry workers' spirit), "Four thinking and Four Comparing" (thinking about who send us here and comparing how we do, thinking about misery in old society and comparing happiness in new society; thinking about the spirit of revolutionary predecessors and comparing the revolutionary drive of our own; thinking about the Party's cultivation to us and comparing our contribution to the Party) to organize the workers to recall the sufferings in the old society and compare the happiness in the new society repeatedly, to review the misery and happiness of personal life in the past and the present, to felt the changes in social systems and political status deeply.^[6]

Under the guidance of representatives of the suffering people, old workers mournfully recall their sufferings in the old society, angrily accuse the evil of the old society, and deeply contrast the changes in the new and old societies. Lots of old workers inspected their thoughts of forgetting root. They generally claim that the poor people lived a miserable life in the old society, and it is the

Communist Party and Chairman Mao that rescued us from the bitter sea and led us to become the masters of the country. today, in order to build and defend People's Country, Communist Party and Chairman Mao send us to carry out inland construction, however, we are afraid of hardship, fatigue, difficulty, and not settle down to work which kind of behavior is truly forgetting our roots. They also said that the construction of third line is a struggle against imperialism for time and speed, a major event of building and defending People's Country, and a major event which relate to the happy lives of our future generations. in order to protect Chinese revolution and the world revolution, in order to avoid suffering second persecution, we must make every effort to carry out construction. After self-education, self-revolution, and self-improvement, the workers expressed one after another that they would resolutely carry out Chairman Mao's instructions, fight this battle well, and get ahead of the enemy.

There are many new workers in the construction team whose Class views are relatively weak for they were young and didn't have deep memories of the sufferings of the old society. The recalling old society's sufferings by old workers shook them greatly. They generally said: "if you don't say we don't know, and you say we are all shook." A new worker said: "I used to listen to my parents talk about the hardships they suffered in the old society, but I think it's a thing of the past and I don't have deep understanding. Today, I shed tears several times when I hear master worker's complain. We young people have not experienced the hardships of the old society and cannot see the sweetness of the new society. It is forgetting the past and it is sorry to the Communist Party and Chairman Mao if we are unwilling to work in difficult environment." Many young workers inspected their erroneous ideas shedding tears, and they said: "We must never forget the sufferings of our class, listen to the Communist Party everywhere, and be good successors to the Revolution."^[6]

Through class education of "Recalling sufferings, complaining sufferings, digging sufferings root, thinking sweet source", it had greatly stimulated workers' class sentiment, raised their class consciousness, and strengthened their sense of ownership and responsibility in building and defending People's Country. The workers with strong class sentiment, regarded construction site as battlefield, used tools as sword and spear, and engaged in construction with towering revolutionary enthusiasm. The power transmission and transformation engineering team fighting on the Duping Line in Panzhuhua, whose average age was less than 21 years old, entered the battle with strong class sentiment and posture of facing war. No matter how difficult the conditions were, they did not frighten them. On the contrary, all of them were full of fighting spirit. They built roads themselves for there was no road, they built houses themselves for there was no house, and they eat saltwater soup for there was no vegetable. Their nose bleed due to hot weather, hand ground out blood bubbles due to crushing stones. No one complains of hardship or fatigue. With a red heart and iron shoulders, they continuously transported over 2000 tons of yellow sand, cement, iron pillars, and wires into the mountains in the battle of the first section of the Duping

Line, completing the workload in 70000 working days that used to require 180000 working days.^[7]

4.Lively learning and utilizing Chairman Mao's writings: striving to be good workers of Chairman Mao

At the same time as seizing situation and task education and class education, The Party committees and political departments in third line regions had further organized the mass movement of "lively learning and utilizing Chairman Mao's writings". The workers learned with deep class emotions, with living ideological problems, and paid great attention to application. They repeatedly studied Chairman Mao's articles such as "Serving the People", "Commemorating Bethune", "The Foolish Old Man who removed Mountains", "About Chongqing Negotiations". After the class education of contrasting past misery with present happiness, the workers said: "Without the Communist Party and Chairman Mao, how could we be today? If we don't read Chairman Mao's book carefully, listen to his words, and follow his instructions, we will forget our root." The workers with deep class sentiment, with living ideological problems, sought advice from Chairman Mao's writings anytime anywhere, and constantly armed their minds with Mao Zedong Thought, and achieved the team hardening effectively.

Pointing at the ideological problem of not settling down to work, the workers checked themselves against the advanced deeds of Bethune and Zhang Side. They generally said that Bethune was a foreigner, who came to China from thousands of miles, and he regarded Chinese revolutionary as his own cause, and was extremely responsible for his work. I was a Chinese, and what other reason do I not work well for my own country's construction. Most of the third line regions start from scratch, and all kinds of work need to be done by people. After repeatedly studying the deeds of Zhang Side, those workers who were not unwilling to do the assigned work for they want to work in big factory or want to do technical job expressed one after another: "Although Zhang Side was an old Red Army, when the Communist Party asked him to burn charcoal, he immediately went ahead happily. Zhang Side was wholeheartedly dedicated to the revolution. We should learn from Zhang Side and do whatever the party calls for because all work was necessary for revolution and is indispensable, and doing any work is revolutionary, noble, and glorious. "Through repeated learning and improvement, the workers eliminated selfish thoughts and established the concept of "one mind for revolution, everything for revolution". The workers who were obsessed with the "three small lives" and had "five fear" mentality also jumped out of the small circle of personal gains and losses. The workers consciously connected their ordinary work with the Chinese and world revolutions, fully realized the importance of their work, and engaged in construction with towering revolutionary energy.^[8]

Regarding the ideological problem of being afraid of hardship and fatigue in work, after repeatedly studying Chairman Mao's instructions on third line construction

and on hard work, the workers stated that: sweated more in peacetime and bled less in wartime; we came to endure hardships in order to build a iron country for the people; we were suffering now, and in the future, our country would be stronger and our descendants would be happier; this kind of hardship, eating with honor, eating with happiness. When workers heard that Chairman Mao couldn't sleep well for the construction of third line, they generally expressed that in order to let Chairman Mao sleep well, and in order to complete third line construction as quickly as possible, we would rather endure more hardship and sleep less. The workers who fought on the Duping Line in Panzhihua had no oil to eat for four days and no salt to eat for two days during the construction of the first section of the line. However, they were all energetic and said, "To make Chairman Mao sleep well, let's work hard. " All the female workers from Team 12, Division 2, Sichuan Transportation Department out to drill blast holes in dark and windy night, and they didn't finish work until midnight.^[6] The workers in Panzhihua just like this shed one more drop of sweat and stayed up one more night to achieve the great strategic ideas of Chairman Mao.^[9]

For overcoming the ideological problem of fear difficulty in work, Chairman Mao's articles such as "The Foolish Old Man who removed Mountains", "About Chongqing Negotiations", and "Serving the People" had played a significant role. Yu Gong's spirit of fearlessness and daring to win had given the workers great encouragement and courage. The workers generally expressed that Old Yu Gong dared to move two mountains away, and wouldn't we dare to overcome the difficulties in front of us? The workers keep in mind Chairman Mao's teachings on "hard work is like a burden placed before us, let's see if we dare to bear it" and "the more difficult places are, the more we have to go, the better comrades we are", and "made up mind, feared not difficulties, overcame all difficulties, and strove for victor", and developed a hard bone style of fighting against the heavens and the earth, not afraid of hardships, not afraid of difficulties, daring to bear heavy burdens, and daring to fight tough battles in the harsh environment. The workers of Wuhan Survey Branch in Panzhihua had never drilled in the middle of the river in the past. After studying Chairman Mao's article "The Foolish Old Man who removed Mountains", they bravely took on the task of drilling in the deep and fast-flowing Jinsha River. After intense and tenacious struggle, they finally completed the task ahead of schedule. By lively studying and utilizing Chairman Mao's works, it was quite common for workers to improve their thinking, raise their awareness, not be afraid of difficulties, and dare to fight tough battles. The workers in Panzhihua said, "when we have Mao Zedong Thought, no matter how high the mountains are, how hot the weather is, and how many difficulties there are, they are all our defeated opponent!"^[9]

5. Summary

In summary, the ideological and political education played a powerful role in arming workers' thoughts in the generation of the hardworking and pioneering spirit.

Faced with the realistic ideological problems such as "fear of hardship, fatigue, illness, difficulty", and "not settling down to work" of the troops that just arrived at the third line, the Party committees and political departments in third line regions immediately carried out in-depth ideological and political education. Through education on the situation and task of preparing for war, the strategic idea of constructing third line rooted in workers' hearts deeply. The workers fully realized that the third-line construction was a struggle against imperialism for time and speed, a struggle for constructing and defending the proletarian state, and a major event related to the Chinese revolution and the world revolution, and the importance of building a strategic defense base in the hinterland before the Imperialists launched a war. The Workers, with a posture of facing war, regarded construction site as battlefield, used tools as sword and spear, and seized every minute and second to carry out construction. Through class education that recalled sufferings in the old society and contrasted them with the happiness in the new society, it had greatly stimulated workers' class sentiment, raised their class consciousness, and improved their spirit of ownership spirit. In order to protect People's Country and avoid suffering second persecution, the workers carried out construction with towering revolutionary enthusiasm. Through the mass movement of actively learning and utilizing Chairman Mao's writings, the workers, with their living ideological problems, sought advice from Chairman Mao's writings anytime and anywhere, and constantly arm their minds with Mao Zedong Thought. The effective ideological and political education made the third line construction troops quickly became strong which were growing rapidly into an iron army capable of successfully undertaking heavy construction task in difficult circumstances.

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