Circular from the CCP Central Committee on Two Cases of Coercion in Grain Procurement Reported by the Northwest Bureau (Excerpt)
Date: January 5, 1954

… On **December 7, 1953**, when the County Party Committee of **Qian County** sent Comrade Chen Guodong and others to inspect the grain procurement and sales work in Zhangba Township (First District), they discovered that among the 14 villages in the township, **12 villages had widespread and serious cases of coercion and orders issued by force**.

The main problems were as follows:

Tasks were forcibly assigned to villages; during "democratic evaluations," peasants were compelled to report their grain holdings, often under threats and verbal abuse.

- At a grain quota evaluation meeting, cadre **Wang Dechuan** told the masses:

"This quota is hard and inflexible — it must be completed."

- Work team leader **Ren Jin-hou** assigned West Zhangba village a quota of **49,000 jin**, but the village head only allocated **15,000 jin**. Ren cursed the village head as "xiu ke-ke" (a local insult meaning "dig up your ancestors' graves").
- The township clerk **Wang Zhixi** stood at the entrance of West Zhangba village homes, using the "broker's arm-grab" method to force people to sell their surplus grain. He required that:

"When someone is being evaluated, they must leave the meeting hall and return after the evaluation. No one may speak of pity or mention any 'objective difficulties.'"

During the meeting, Wang Zhixi said:

"Since the masses have been befuddled by bourgeois thinking, if anyone talks nonsense or spreads whispers, we will immediately stop the evaluation and criticize them. In short, the 49,000-jin task must be completed."

He added:

"Anyone who does not evaluate properly is refusing to walk the socialist road and is a lackey and running dog of capitalism."

These statements frightened the peasants into total silence.

The work team had no clear understanding of the real grain surplus or deficit among the masses, and relied on coercive measures such as "keeping people up all night" to force declarations and sales.

- For example, it was originally believed that **Zhang Xixian** of Zhangjiabao had a surplus of **160 dan** (piculs), but he actually had only a few dan.
- **Yang Zhongde** was assigned a quota of **200 jin**, but actually had **3,000 jin**.
- Cadre **Liang Chuaihua** believed **Jing Liangchen** had a surplus of 30 dan; Jing reported only 7 dan. The cadres then used the "all-night struggle" method — interrogating from dusk until dawn — and eventually extracted a report of 11 dan. Later it was confirmed that the true surplus was indeed 7 dan.

Because of these extremely erroneous coercive practices, the peasants were thrown into panic and unrest, damaging production morale.

- In West Zhangba village, an old man, terrified by Wang Zhixi's words at the meeting, reluctantly reported a surplus of **4,300 jin**, then trembled all over after reporting.
- In Heibaogu village, **Jing Ting'e**, after leaving a meeting, was urged by his wife:

"Quickly report to them — your life is more important. Even if we go hungry, it's better than dying."

- After evaluations in Yu Huangdong village, three or four households wept; the old man **Liu Yu** cried until his eyes were swollen; four people even contemplated suicide.
- In Yangbuwa village, **Sun Yulin** was assigned a quota of **7,000 jin**. Feeling hopeless, he summoned his niece and said:

"Uncle called you here for one last meal, one last meeting — after today, we may not see each other again."

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According to a letter from **Hui Feng**, a reporter for *Gansu Daily*, there were problems with the methods of grain procurement in Yuzhong. As a result, two peasants in Donggu Township (Ninth District) and Wangjiaying Township (Second District) **hanged themselves or jumped off cliffs in suicide.**

(pp. 83–84)

Source:
Archives of a certain office, Gansu Province