The Ordeal in Spring Festival

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Abstract:
This is a story about a gift money delivery experience during the Spring Festival in China, which is a common-seen phenomenon in the Chinese politics. A governmental employee was trying really hard to successfully deliver a mount of money gift to his superior in order to get a promotion in his political career path. Although he did get what he was wishing for, this bribery behavior eventually cost him and his superior losing their jobs.

While days were approaching the Spring Festival, Wu Wei is having a big problem.

He has been to the County’s Party Committee Secretary’s Office three times, with a package of money in his coats for three days, but he just cannot find an opportunity to deliver it --- He has never imagined that giving gift money is this hard.

The first day he went there at 8 o’clock in the morning, and just as the old saying goes: “Don’t say that you’re an early bird, for there are more people already way ahead of you.” The hallway of the Secretary’s Office was already full of people and Wu Wei realized he was late.

The second day he went there in the afternoon but only to found out that the situation was more severe. The hallway is already packed like a sardine can.
The third day he went there after he got off from work. Geeze, the serpentine line of people had already reached the exit of the stair well.

This is all because Wu Wei has been an office manager for ten years. Now in his his late thirties, there happened to be an opportunity for his promotion.

Lately the Bureau Director was promoted, which lead to the Vice Director’s promotion to Director. Thus Wu Wei was wondering whether he could get the position of Vice Director. After having racked his brain, Wu Wei pulled some strings and finally got in touch with the Party Secretary.

People are always saying that, the master teaches the trick, but the apprentice's skill is self-made. The following performance is all for Wu Wei himself to do.

This is a critical period and the Spring Festival is getting close, Wu Wei must make some gestures and consolidate the relationship with the Party Secretary, and it has to be now. But this gift giving is really depressing.

To be honest, there are some times that Wu Wei has made it to the door but then some people cut in front of him and he was pushed away. Wu Wei was so mad that he cursed several times, “You people are too much! You were behind me but you pushed your way to the front. Don’t you know any civil moral and politeness?

However, nobody would listen to him. What can you do?

Late at this night, Wu Wei was still worried about giving the money to the County Secretory. He realized that there are so many people in the county asking favors from the Party Secretary and they all want to make the gesture around these days before Spring Festival. There are only a few days left before the Spring Festival end, if Wu Wei cannot present the money to the Party Secretary, his promotion will never happen.

Wu Wei kept thinking, “Everyone is giving money at this time and they all want to do this while the Party Secretary is in his office. If people get this luck that the Party Secretary is in office, of course everyone is rushed to giving him the red envelop. Thus it is inevitable that people would try cutting in line.”

How can I prevent the line cutting? Wu Wei racked his brain and came up
with a great idea, which was to find someone to control the crowd and manage the queue to the Party Secretary’s office.

Yes! There must be a person who can control the crowd. But ask who to do that? Wu Wei suddenly thought of himself. “Right, why not I’ll be that person for temporary? And after I finish my thing, I couldn’t care less about the line cutting.”

“Comrade, Please get in line.” The “Crowd Management President” asked a young man to go to the end of the 2-meter line, who was seeking to get in the office as soon as he came.

“Move!” that young man still wanted to cut the line, “I’m in an emergency.”

“That’s what you said.” the “Crowd Management President” answered, “But everyone here is in emergency, too. Can you name anyone of us who is not busy at this time of the year?”

“Just to let you know, I have been here waiting for two hours.” A woman in the line said, “and thanks to this comrade here. He volunteered for this Crowd Management President without taking any credit from us, just because he saw the chaos at the door,”

“That’s right.” A mid-age man followed up, “If everybody goes inside without getting in line like you, nobody can make do the business and then everyone is harmed. So you either listen to the Crowd Management President to get in line, or you can leave and come back tomorrow.”

People all started to judge the young man, which made him feel so embarrassed that he had to move to the end of the line.

At this time, the door opened. The man at the top of the line squeezed himself into the office way before the last man had come outside.

However, coming in and out was proceeding orderly. Seeing everyone was doing it this way, the new comers are all self-consciously lined up at the end.

Finally it is the turn of Crowd Management President to get in. “My idea is so brilliant. I can finally give my gift money to the Secretary!” Wu Wei was nearly hearing that someone has called him Vice Director.
After he came out of the Secretary’s Office excitedly, he went down the floor and he already felt as if he was getting onto his official car. After arrived at the Bureau, he walked toward to his Vice Director’s office, when he heard a loud voice saying, “You haven’t paid the taxi money yet!”

At this though, his sweet dream was disturbed. “Ai, thousands of dreams in the night, but ordinary life continue from the morning.” Wu Wei sighed.

To become the “Crowd Management President” would of course have been a possible way to go. But the idea to stand there brazenly waiting to give a gift was just too embarrassing.

As the Spring Festival’s approached, Wu Wei became more and more sleepless at night. It seemed to him that there is no way the gift could be delivered.

Better think of some other way. What way? Wu Wei was thinking, Do I really need to be that “Crowd Management President”? But who will listen to a self-proclaimed president’s words today anyway?

Wu Wei really could not think of any other better solutions with Spring Festival getting closer and closer. As long as he could get the Vice Director position sooner, what the hell, he had to make this desperate move and just be the “Crowd Management President”.

Soon thereafter, Wu Wei achieved his wish of becoming Vice Director. However, he hadn’t been sitting in his BMW for very long till he was under detention and interrogation, and then eventually lost his government job.

Either success or failure boils down to the same thing. The Party Secretary was arrested for taking bribe and Wu Wei also confessed completely about the whole gift incident.