E lecting a corrupt official

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Yesterday, Dagu village’s party secretary Ma attended an anti-corruption and clean government seminar organized by the county. At the seminar, the county party secretary talked. He asked every committee and village to increase its anti-corruption efforts, and improve its self-checking and self-correcting work, and to report a quintessential example of corruption back up. According to Secretary Ma's understanding, it meant "electing" a corrupt official.

After Secretary Ma returned, he relayed the results of the conference to the leading group of party committee members and government cadres, who were dumbfounded. They had heard of electing a model worker, picking award winners, but had not heard of electing a corrupt official. Secretary Ma immediately organized a party committee meeting to urgently come together and discuss this matter. But since the importance was very high, nobody spoke a word.

Seeing that no one spoke, Secretary Ma had to proceed by asking one by one. He first spoke to village head Long: "Village head Long, what can be done here?" Village head Long uncertainly said: "I haven't really considered this well." Secretary Ma then asked vice village head Old Zhao. Old Zhao said: "I'll go with whatever you say, Secretary Ma." He asked other committee members, and everyone said "We'll follow your example, Secretary Ma."

What an oily bunch! Secretary Ma became angry. "None of you want to cause offense, so you let me be the bad guy. He picked up a tea cup, and drank it up with a glug. The volume of the cup was small, drinking two mouthfuls left only the tea leaves. Secretary Ma called out: "Old Hu!"
Old Hu is in charge of the county council’s water boiler. This is a tiring job, with hours from dawn to dusk, both dirty and hard. Normally, people would be scared away after three days and two mornings. When the hot water supply was interrupted, the council erupted in loud complaints, and Old Hu had to be called. Old Hu was capable and could put up with the hardship. In general, one could count on the hot water supply, but Old Hu was only a temporary worker.

In this moment, Old Hu came in and topped off Secretary Ma's cup. He also filled up the cups of village head Long and vice village head Zhao and several other committee members. Afterwards, Old Hu picked up the cigarettes on the table, and gave out a stick to every man. In the moment he put the pack back in its original spot, his wide eyes spotted the ashtray in front of Secretary Ma. In the ashtray there was a stick on which Secretary Ma had taken two or three puffs, before stubbing it out. It was still very long. Old Hu speedily put the long butt in his hand and afterwards discreetly pulled it out again.

This action was seen by everyone at the table, since they were at a pause in the conversation. Everybody's gaze was on Old Hu.

"Right. I would like to bring up..." propaganda committee member Little Lee suddenly said, "that we should all pick Old Hu. Old Hu has some dirty habits. One evening, I came back to the village, and saw Old Hu coming back pulling a cartload of coal on a flatbed tricycle. Even though I only saw this once, for sure there must be other corrupt practices which have not been discovered yet!"

Vice village head Zhao also spoke: "As far as diverting public coal, I didn't see that. But I did see old Hu steal public vegetables. One time I was accompanying guests, and I stepped out of the back of the cafeteria to throw up after drinking a lot, I saw Old Hu give a basket to his old lady. I could clearly see there was meat and vegetables inside."

The group, after listening, spoke in a chorus with their eyes beaming: "Yes, yes!, let's pick Old Hu!" Secretary Ma furrowing his brow said: "But Old Hu isn't a cadre, he isn't even a regular employee. He's only a temp!"

Village head Long spoke this time: "That's fine too, wasn't there a personnel requisition notice recently? You can give a job to Old Hu. 'Hire cadres when needed', weren't those your words, Secretary Ma?"

Little Li quick-mindedly said: "Right, let the typists draft a document immediately, naming him to be a cadre. Wouldn't that be ok? Though it may be an empty title, just give it to the county ethics board to look at, and not anyone else." This idea wasn't bad,
Wasn't making someone a village cadre just small potatoes? Secretary Ma nodded his head, a document was immediately sent down, naming Old Hu to be the supply office vice manager.

Support material was sent up quickly, and the county ethics office issued a termination order to "vice manager Hu". After the mission was completed successfully, everybody was very happy. Therefore, three tables were reserved at "Come again", the village's best restaurant run by Secretary Ma's brother in law, and they had a happy celebration.

One day not long afterwards, the village again had visitors. When they were offered water, it happened that the water bottle had no more water. Secretary Ma called out for Old Hu to send boiled water, but no one replied. Little Li busily went to the boiler room to look, but only saw the boiler cold, and no trace of Old Hu. With difficulty, he found Old Hu in the supply room. He was just putting up both his legs concentrating on listening to opera. Little Li scolded Old Hu: "You're not boiling water? The guests are really thirsty!"

Old Hu taking his time said: "I am a regular employee, why should I serve you?"
Actually, Old Hu lost his party position, but kept his government position. He had unexpectedly become a regular government worker!

When Little Li saw what Old Hu was like, the best thing was to go get Secretary Ma to come. Secretary Ma was really angry, he came down on him saying: "Old Hu, what the hell are you doing? You don't want to work anymore?"

"What can you do to me?" Old Hu jumped up, his body straight and head raised, and his right hand slapping his chest, calling out: "I am a corrupt official, I'm not afraid of anyone!"