

**November 15, 1991**

## **FORCED LABOR EXPORTS FROM CHINA: UPDATE NO.2**

### **Prison Exports Reach California as Baker Reaches China**

**Exports of goods made in Chinese prisons are still arriving in the United States, even as Secretary of State James Baker arrives in Beijing to negotiate, among other things, a Memorandum of Understanding on prison labor.**

**A trade fair was exhibiting goods in San Francisco this week from several prison labor camps -- euphemistically called "labor reform enterprises" -- in Shandong Province, while a San Diego importer, not connected with the trade fair, received a shipment on October 10 of diesel engines produced in the No.1 prison in Yunnan Province. Dozens of political prisoners arrested in connection with the 1989 pro-democracy movement are known to be detained in both provinces, although the Chinese government has never been willing to reveal the specific whereabouts of individual prisoners. Asia Watch said it hoped that the spotlight on the labor camps producing goods for export to the US would help focus attention on the plight of people in those camps.**

#### **Shandong Province**

**The labor reform enterprises whose products were advertised or exhibited at the California fair include the Laiyang Heavy Machinery Plant which produces galvanized pipe; the Dezhou Shengjian Machinery Plant which produces diesel engines; and the Taian Shengjian Electric Processing Machine Tool Plant which makes tools. The Laiyang plant was represented at the fair by an umbrella organization called the Shandong Steel Pipes United Corporation which sells pipes made by several different factories, not all of them labor camps. The trade fair was sponsored by the Shandong Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Commissions and organized by a body called Fremont International Trading Company.**

**The plants in Laiyang, Taian and Dezhou are all listed in a chart of Shandong labor camps and their products which appeared in the 1989 Shandong Yearbook. The chart is entitled "List of High Quality Products Made by Labor Reform Enterprises in Shandong."<sup>1</sup> Brochures obtained by Asia Watch from the San Francisco fair show photographs of the factory gates of the Dezhou and Laiyang plants where the Chinese characters for "labor reform" are visible. According to the 1989 yearbook, the foreign exchange earned by reform-through-labor camps in Shandong in 1988 increased 86.9 percent over the previous year, with the labor detachments at Beishu and Laiyang respectively earning more than \$4.5 million in foreign exchange.**

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial Committee of Local Historical Records of Shandong Province, *Shandong Yearbook 1989*, Shandong Provincial Xinhua Press (Jinan, December 1989), p.344.

**Beishu is home to a graphite mine worked by prisoners. According to the 1989 yearbook,**

**The Shengjian Graphite Mine of Shandong (Beishu Reform-Through-Labor Detachment) was first founded in 1954, within Laixi County in the central part of the Jiaodong Peninsula. It now has more than 800 staff and police and holds in custody several thousand prisoners...It is a multiple-product enterprise with graphite and graphite products as the main items of production and seamless steel pipes as a sideline. The mine can produce 14,000 tons of graphite a year and its products are sold in 31 countries and regions in five continents...It was awarded a "Certificate of Approval of Export Commodity Inspection" by the Export Commodity Inspection Bureau of Shandong Province...Export of graphite reached 9700 tons, accounting for 35 percent of the total volume of Shandong's exports, and creating \$4.5 million in foreign exchange, an increase of 54.4 percent over the previous year.<sup>2</sup>**

**Asia Watch knows of several political prisoners detained in Laixi County where this labor camp is located. Chen Lantao is serving a lengthy term for peaceful political activities in connection with the pro-democracy movement. Chen, 28, received an M.S. degree in marine biology in 1988 from the Shandong College of Oceanography, formerly the Ocean University of Qingdao. When the pro-democracy movement erupted in 1989, he was working as an associate engineer for the Beihai Branch of the State Commission on Oceanography. Between June 5 and June 8, Chen was accused of making contact with and giving advice to the College Students Autonomous Federation of Qingdao, leading demonstrations on the steps of the local government building and spreading rumors from the Voice of America. He was also accused of posting leaflets in the Architecture College in Qingdao. On August 23, 1989, he was sentenced to 18 years in prison; according to one report received by Asia Watch, he had no defense counsel. His family appealed the case in February 1991 but as of November 1991 had heard nothing in response. Chen's wife, Sun Lujian was detained in early June 1989 and held for almost two months. She was pregnant at the time and gave birth to a son in February 1990. As of late 1991, Chen was detained at Laixi County Jail together with eight other political prisoners, but it is unlikely that he will spend the entire 18-year term in a single prison.**

**Another prisoner serving an equally heavy sentence in connection with the 1989 pro-democracy movement is Zhang Jie, aged 22, an unemployed worker. According to the Shandong Yearbook for 1990, Zhang on June 5, 1989 presided over a memorial meeting in which thousands participated in front of the Qingdao municipal government building and spread rumors that there had been a massacre in Beijing with 3,000 killed and 10,000 wounded. The yearbook said he shouted slogans such as "Hang Deng Xiaoping" and "Give Li Peng a Public Trial." On June 7, the yearbook said, he stood at the intersections of two streets in Qingdao, obstructing traffic, and then continued on to the Qingdao Beer Factory where he disrupted production. He was tried in Qingdao and sentenced to 15 years for counterrevolutionary offenses and five years for disrupting traffic but was given a total sentence of 18 years. It is not known where Zhang Jie is detained.<sup>3</sup> Other political prisoners from Shandong are listed in Appendix 1.**

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p.343

<sup>3</sup> Editorial Committee of Local Historical Records of Shandong Province, *Shandong Yearbook 1990*, Shandong Provincial Xinhua Press (Jinan:1990) p.327

## **Yunnan Province**

**Asia Watch learned that on October 10, 1991, a shipment of Golden Horse ("Jin Ma") diesel engines arrived in San Diego for a company called China Diesel Imports.**

**The engines, 50 crates of the Jin Ma model 1100, together with tool kits and spare parts for the Jin Ma model X-195 engine, were exported from China by the Yunnan Machinery Import-Export Corporation (a state-run concern) and shipped to the US via Hong Kong. They were imported by a California-based company named General Globe, Inc., on behalf of the purchaser, China Diesel Imports.**

**Jin Ma diesel engines are produced by an extensive penal-industrial complex, consisting of several large prison enterprises, all situated in the suburbs of Kunming, the capital of China's southwestern Yunnan Province.**

**According to the official *Yunnan Yearbook of 1986*:**

**The reform-through-labor and re-education-through-labor units throughout the province...by 1985 had produced over 100 industrial and agricultural products. Of these, 'Golden Horse' brand X-195 diesel engines and 'Clouded Mountain' brand 3WB-16 sprayers received national-level silver prizes...The "Golden Horse" X-195 diesel engines sell well inside and outside the province and are on sale in 13 foreign countries and regions.<sup>4</sup>**

**In addition, the book notes that in 1985, prison-made internal combustion engines accounted for no less than 89 percent of the total province's output of such items, showing that *most engines of all types* made in Yunnan are in fact gulag-produced.**

**Another official PRC source, the restricted circulation journal entitled *Theoretical Studies in Labor Reform and Labor Re-education*, states bluntly:**

**Yunnan Province No. 1 Prison produces the Golden Horse (Jin Ma) brand of internal combustion engines. Ninety-eight [98] other enterprises supply it with the components, and it carries out the assembly work. ... The prison is currently in the process of becoming a "production and business corporation" ...Yunnan Province No. 1 Prison has now become the 'dragon head' i.e. the key driving force of an economic alliance between enterprises.<sup>5</sup>**

**But Yunnan Prison No. 1 is only one part of a much larger complex of prison enterprises devoted**

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<sup>4</sup> "Reform-Through-Labor and Education-Through-Labor Units Improve Economic Performances" in section entitled "Judicial Organs," *Yunnan Nianjian 1986*, in FBIS, May 17, 1991

<sup>5</sup> "Horizontal Linkages Between Labor Reform Enterprises is an Effective Way of Developing Labor Reform Production," *Theoretical Studies in Labor Reform and Labor Re-education*, No.3, 1989, pp.35-37.

to production of the "Jin Ma" range of goods. The complex includes also *Jin Ma Diesel Engine Works*, an ostensibly civilian enterprise located nearby Yunnan Prison No. 1 in the eastern suburbs of Kunming; *Jin Ma Machinery Plant*, which is located at Linjiayuan, about five miles north-west of Kunming and is actually *Yunnan Provincial No. 2 Prison*, and the *Jin Ma Synthetical Processing Plant*, also in Kunming municipality.

Although only amounting to four out of the more than sixty known labor camps, prisons and prison enterprises in Yunnan Province, these penal units account for a large proportion of the province's total industrial output. According to an official publication, the net combined earnings for 1984 of the *Jin Ma Diesel Engine Works* and the *Jin Ma Machinery Plant* alone accounted for more than 10 percent of the total profits of the top 50 "key-point" industrial enterprises of Yunnan Province.<sup>6</sup>

One of these four penal institutions, the *Jin Ma Machinery Plant* is designated as a "model prison" and has been visited by foreigners. Established in 1949, it holds more than 4,000 prisoners (including about 300 women), mostly prisoners serving sentences of 10 years or more. One foreign visitor who went there in the late 1980s was informed by officials that the prison held "about 60" counterrevolutionary (i.e. political) prisoners. The prison houses a huge complex of industrial workshops: a truck and jeep assembly plant; agricultural sprayer factory; nail factory; and two small factories producing bricks and wooden furniture. (The *Jin Ma* diesel engines may well be used in assembly of the jeeps and trucks in the same prison.)

As of 1987, the prison commandant was one Hu Shixian, a trained engineer who by then had spent over 30 years working in the Yunnan penal system -- 27 of these years in Yunnan Prison No. 1. In 1986, he went on an official visit to Britain to inspect the *Land Rover* company's production plants, and a few years earlier, he visited the US to "inspect industry" there, according to the foreign visitor.

Yunnan Prison No. 1, affiliated closely with the *Jin Ma Diesel Engine Works*, reportedly has much worse conditions than those in Prison No. 2 (the machinery plant), and also a larger number of prisoners, most of whom are serving shorter-term sentences. Little more is known about this facility however, as it is not open to foreigners.

The same article that explained how Yunnan Prison No.1 assembled internal combustion engines noted that labor reform enterprises in Yunnan had learned how to make market studies, learn about the products of their competitors on the world market, study the growth of technology and get feedback on how their own products sell on the world market in order to make decisions for production, sales and development. It also stressed that these enterprises train people to become "permanent workers"; temporary workers are given subsidiary jobs so that they do not disrupt production.<sup>7</sup>

Political prisoners believed detained in Yunnan include Wu Haizen, 34, a lecturer on the foreign language faculty of the Yunnan Education Institute in Kunming. He was arrested together with two others on June 13, 1989 in Kunming for giving "dozens of speeches attacking party and government

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<sup>6</sup> *Yunnan Provincial Conditions* (*Yunnan Shengqing*), 1986, p.609-10.

<sup>7</sup> "Horizontal Linkages", *op.cit.* p.37

leaders" to students and factory workers. In late 1989 or early 1990, he was sentenced to three years in prison on charges of engaging in "anti-government propaganda." It is not known where he is detained.

The two other men arrested with Wu Haizen were Wang Cun, 27, an accounting supervisor at the Kunming Jinglong Hotel, and Yang Hong, 36, a reporter at the Kunming newspaper, *Zhonggyo Qingnian Bao*. Wang was accused of being head of the propaganda section of the Yunnan Students Autonomous Federation; Yang was charged with circulating "rumor-mongering leaflets" and protesting against corruption.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the best known political prisoner from Yunnan is Chen Erjin, now 45, who was arrested in late April 1981 at the height of the Democracy Wall movement and tried on March 7, 1982 in Kunming for "plotting the creation of a counterrevolutionary party." He was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and five years' deprivation of political rights. He was active in the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution, then worked as a teacher. In the 1970's, he was a statistician in a coal mine. Chen Erjin should have been released in April 1991, but the Chinese government has provided no information about his current status or whereabouts.

Other political prisoners believed held in Yunnan are listed in Appendix 2.

## **Conclusions**

Chinese labor reform enterprises are continuing to export goods to the United States, despite repeated Chinese government assurances to the Bush administration that this practice would be stopped. Those assurances have proven worthless. It is now more important than ever that the US officials insist on access to every labor reform camp which they suspect is producing goods for export to the US, if US law is to be enforced. Any Memorandum of Understanding on prison exports signed by the Chinese government which does not provide for such access will be of little value.

It is the plight of the prisoners in these labor camps and prisons which is of most concern to Asia Watch, however. Secretary Baker should continue to press for a regular presence in China of the International Committee of the Red Cross with its full range of humanitarian services. An ICRC presence could not bring about freedom for all those prisoners detained for their political and religious views and activities, but it could at least ensure that they were treated reasonably well, had access to medical care, and were in regular touch with their families.

Secretary Baker should be pressing for the release of all prisoners detained for non-violent political activities, but the revelations about exports to the US from prisons in Shandong and Yunnan provide an opportunity to seek specific information about prisoners detained in those two provinces. It is bad enough that people like Chen Erjin or Wu Haizen were ever arrested; it is even worse to think that they might be working in a labor camp producing diesel engines bound for California.

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<sup>8</sup> Kunming Radio in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, June 16, 1989.

**For More Information**  
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***News From Asia Watch is a publication of Asia Watch, an independent organization created in 1985 to monitor and promote internationally recognized human rights in Asia. The Chair is Jack Greenberg, the Vice Chairs are Harriet Rabb and Orville Schell, and the Executive Director is Sidney Jones.***

***Asia Watch is a component of Human Rights Watch, which includes Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Helsinki Watch and Middle East Watch. The Chair of Human Rights Watch is Robert L. Bernstein and the Vice Chair is Adrian DeWind. Aryeh Neier is Executive Director; Kenneth Roth, Deputy Director; Holly Burkhalter, Washington Director; and Susan Osnos, Press Director.***

## Appendix I: Prisoners from Shandong Province

- **ZHANG Xinchao**, from the Jinan City Workers Autonomous Federation and the Workers Democratic Federation, was sentenced to three years in prison for disturbing the public peace, according to the Chinese government's response to an International Labor Organization request for information. He was arrested in Jinan on June 15, 1989 along with five others. According to official reports, a coalition of the two organizations with which Zhang was associated planned to seize political power by armed force, but there is no indication of what evidence the government had for this.
- Three other workers, **LIU Yubin**, **CHE Hongnian**, **SHAO Liangchen** and **HAO Jinguang**, all from the same two organizations, were arrested in Jinan on June 15, 1989. Liu, a worker at the Qianqiaoju Textile Company of Jinan, and Che were named as the group's leaders.
- **WANG Lixin**, a 21-year-old factory worker from the Light Industry and Chemical Works in Jinan, and **WANG Yong**, a 20-year old office worker from the Jinan Physical Education Department, each received ten-year prison terms in connection with the burning of a *Shanghai*-brand vehicle on June 6, 1989 in Jinan, Shandong Province. Along with **SUN Baohe**, a 19-year-old who was executed as the "instigator" on October 14, 1989 the three boarded a bus that was being used as a roadblock. Sun tried to start it, but failed. The three tried to overturn it, but were unsuccessful. They then proceeded to a hotel where the *Shanghai*-brand vehicle was parked. They pushed it to the middle of the road, overturned it, and Sun reportedly set fire to it.
- **GUO Luxiang**, 23, a student at Beijing University's Department of Geology, and **JIANG Xiaodong**, a student at the Beijing University of Science and Technology, were arrested in Feicheng County, Shandong Province on June 15, 1989 and escorted to Beijing on June 18. They reportedly were charged in connection with a case in which another man was sentenced for allegedly inciting people to intercept, burn and smash 31 military vehicles near the Majia Overpass in the Haidian District in Beijing. Jiang lived in the No.7450 Plant in Feicheng and in 1988 was admitted into Beijing University from the Feicheng No.1 Middle School. He was described as one of the seven "ringleaders of illegal organizations" in Beijing who were arrested in Shandong.
- **SUN Feng**, a worker who joined the student demonstrations on May 14, 1989 and was in charge of the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation's broadcasting station, was arrested on June 2, 1989. He is charged with spreading false rumors, blocking traffic and disturbing the social order. It is possible that Sun Feng is **SUN Weibang**, a Democracy Wall activist arrested in April 1981 and released in April 1984 without ever having been tried or sentenced. Sun Weibang, 43, was a worker in Qingdao (Shandong Province) Handicrafts Factory when he went to Beijing in March 1979 to display posters at the Democracy Wall. In August 1979 in Qingdao, he founded an unofficial journal, *Hailanghua*, (*Foam of the Wave*). Sun reportedly was in contact with other journal editors and became a close friend of Xu Wenli, an imprisoned Democracy Wall activist.
- **MENG Qingqin**, an unemployed native of Harbin, was arrested in Zhifu, Shandong Province on June 23, 1989 for "trying to provoke a resurgence of counterrevolution" by "sending letters to illegal organizations in Shandong universities, asking them to circulate (the letters) nationwide." Meng allegedly was in detention twice before on charges of "hooliganism and offenses against the social order."
- **PENG Jiang**, a student leader, was arrested on June 22, 1989 in Jinan. There has been no additional information since then.

- **FANG Wensheng, JIANG Tao and GAO Feng**, heads of the Students Autonomous Federation at Qingdao Architectural and Engineering Institute and Marine College, reportedly turned themselves in to authorities sometime before June 13, 1989. They may be three of the eight students sentenced with Chen Lantao.
- **SHI Jingang**, a "major participant" in the pro-democracy movement, was arrested at a relative's home in Shandong Province on June 10, 1989 by the Laoling City Public Security Bureau. There has been no word of his whereabouts since June 22, 1989.
- **YU Fangqiang (Fangqing)**, a student at Beijing Science and Engineering University and a "major participant" in the pro-democracy movement, was arrested in his native city of Xintai, Shandong Province on June 17, 1989. The last report as to his status was on June 22, 1989.
- **PAN Qiang**, a leader of the Autonomous Federation of Students from Outside Beijing, was arrested at Shandong University on the evening of June 20, 1989. Pan, a graduate of Shandong University's Foreign Literature Department, reportedly led the university's supporting group to Beijing on May 18, 1989 and served as a member of the liaison command of the colleges of Shandong Province. He was accused of participating in and plotting the "counterrevolutionary riot." Following Pan's arrest, the authorities announced that he was wanted by the Beijing police and would be returned there for "further investigation and trial."
- **WANG Changan**, 21, a worker, was arrested after turning himself in to local authorities on June 23, 1989 in Jinan. He was accused of setting up barricades on roads and railway tracks and of organizing the Jinan Autonomous Residents Union.
- **NIU Shongchang**, 38, a peasant from Niulin Village, Yunshang Township, Dongping County was arrested on June 16, 1989 in Tengzhou and accused of going to Beijing on May 18 to join the Peasants Autonomous Union. After allegedly resisting martial law troops, Niu returned to his home on June 4, but reportedly then traveled to other provincial localities where he posted "reactionary" posters and distributed "counterrevolutionary leaflets." Niu allegedly had "a record of dissatisfaction": between 1984 and 1986 he went to Beijing eight times, said the report, to present unspecified appeals to higher authorities.
- **HAO Fuyuan**, 37, a peasant from Haojia village, Tianzhen Town, Gaoqing County, reportedly was detained prior to June 19, 1989 for interrogation by the Public Security Bureau. He allegedly "spread reactionary statements and incited peasants to create disturbances, brought counterrevolutionary leaflets and cassettes from Beijing to Gaoqing," and urged peasants not to sell grain to the state or pay their taxes.
- **LI Welguo**, 22, a peasant from Shili village, Mazhai Township, Juancheng County in Shandong, was arrested on June 8, 1989 for taking part in a Beijing "Dare-to-Die Corps" and for distributing leaflets entitled "The Truth of June 3" in front of the Heze Specialized Teachers School. Li allegedly went to Beijing on May 15, 1989 to support the student hunger strikers. Once there, he made contact with students from Heze and through them entered the "Dare-to-Die Corps." On June 5, Li allegedly left Beijing to go to Qingdao and Yantai to make contact with unidentified persons; he returned to Heze on June 8 and was promptly arrested.
- **LI Wenting**, a peasant from Feicheng County, was arrested on June 24, 1990 in Tai'an. He allegedly had links to the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation.
- **WANG Gulshen**, a Shandong Province native, was arrested on December 4, 1989; he was denounced by an informer for allegedly writing counterrevolutionary tracts and posting them in downtown Dalian, Liaoning Province. Wang reportedly "harbored resentment against the party" and "slandered" its leadership.



■ **LI Fenglin's** name, address, photograph and I.D. number appeared on the Chinese government's August 19, 1989 compilation of "most wanted lists." A 31-year-old, he was a vegetable farmer from Zhudian Village, Honglou Town, Jinan, Shandong Province. No details of his pro-democracy activities were given and his whereabouts are unknown.

■ **ZHAO Gang**, a Zouping County cotton mill worker, was arrested in connection with the pro-democracy movement. Since the initial report, no further details have become available.

## **Appendix II: Prisoners from Yunnan Province**

■ **ZHANG Jun**, a self-employed worker, was arrested on June 14, 1989 in Chuxiong. Using the pen-name **TANG Shijie**, Zhang allegedly wrote for *Qinghai Wenxue Bao* and was editor-in-chief of *Xiaoxi Bao* and *Xinfeng Zaobao*, newspapers which circulated during the pro-democracy demonstrations in Kunming. As a reporter for the Yunnan Students Federation, he allegedly did a "great deal of evil" during the "turmoil."

■ **LI Hongbing** and two other leaders of the Kunming City Residents Group for Supporting Patriotism and Democracy allegedly surrendered to the police and confessed their crimes. According to a Kunming police spokesperson, an additional 15 "criminal elements," some of whom were accused of "beating, smashing, looting and burning," infiltrated the organization and were arrested on June 11, 1989.

■ **BAI Daoqian**, a Guizhou Province native, was arrested in Kunming sometime between June 9 and June 12, 1989. According to a spokesperson for the Kunming Public Security Bureau, Bai, described as "a murderer" wanted by police in Guizhou, fled to Beijing, joined the "Beijing Residents Dare-to-Die" team, participated in the "counter-revolutionary rebellion" on June 3-4 and then fled to Kunming where he joined the Kunming Citizens Autonomous Federation.

■ **WANG Zhongyun**, one of the students on the Chinese government's June 1989 "21 Most Wanted" list, reportedly was arrested sometime during the week of July 10, 1989 in Yunnan Province. Wang, 21, a native of Yunnan and a student at the Central Institute of Nationalities in Beijing, is a member of an ethnic minority.

■ Seven people were tried in Kunming on September 16 on charges of fomenting a counterrevolutionary plot. **SHI Ying (Qing)**, 27, named as the leader, allegedly went to the town of Zhuzhou in Hunan Province on June 9, 1989. At the train station there, he publicly denounced the military assault in Beijing. He then went to Kunming "to take part in agitation." Shi and three other co-defendants, **SHANG Jingzhong**, **YU Anmin** and **JI Kunxing**, decided to found a "counterrevolutionary party"; they then established an underground magazine called *Pioneers*, circulated anti-government leaflets and put up counterrevolutionary posters. They also allegedly "sought contacts abroad" and tried to "spirit their leaders out of the country." The sentences of the four named men have not been made public; there is no word as to the fate of the remaining three defendants.

■ **WANG Gang**, 27, manager of the Jinlong Hotel in Kunming, was arrested and charged with engaging in "counterrevolutionary propaganda" and contacting people from Hong Kong. The date of his arrest is uncertain.