



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on December 5, 2011

## Worker Unrest Plagues Communist China

Someone forgot to tell the workers at the [Hi-P International plant in Shanghai](#). More than 200 of these workers have gone on strike, and the strike entered its third day on December 2. The workers were chanting slogans and carrying banners that demanded answers from management. The strike was principally prompted by fears of big layoffs, and it was part of more general labor unrest in China.



Thousands of workers have gone on strike or begun work stoppages at factories that are part of China's export industries. This has interrupted the supply of such products as shoes, bras, watches, and electronic equipment. The companies claim to operate on a razor thin profit margin and that there is no room for pay hikes, and, indeed, the workforces in some facilities may be reduced.

Police watched the strikers closely, and workers have claimed that the police have beaten dozens of the strikers. Most of the workers at the facility — although not necessarily most of the strikers — are women. These workers carried banners and shouting slogans saying, "Give me justice!" and "We want an explanation, we want the truth."

South China has been rocked with strikes in the last few months, owing primarily to companies downsizing or moving operations to lower cost areas in China. On November 22, 1,000 workers went on strike at the Jingmo Electronics Technology in Shenzhen. Workers have complained of verbal and also physical abuse by management.

The problems of the Chinese economy, which have in part been prompted by the labor unrest, have gotten so bad that some speculate that China may actually run a trade deficit for the first time in two decades. The forecast of economic growth for China has already been reduced from 9.1 percent to 8.4 percent, which puts increasing pressure on companies and workers, both of which are highly dependent upon exports and also upon economic growth.

The conditions of workers in China have been deplorable, and pressure from corporations that market products outside of China are largely responsible for producing safer workplaces, shorter hours, and other advantages taken for granted throughout the Western industrialized world. These companies, however, have not been able to reverse the law of supply and demand when it comes to compensation to employees and relocation of plants to places with cheaper operating costs.

And "cheap labor" in China includes slave labor. There's a contingent of workers in Communist China in the Laojiao, the Chinese equivalent of the Gulag, who, as [Jerome Corsi](#) has pointed out in *Human Events*, labor in places marked with the slogan "Laodong Gaizao," which is Mandarin for "Reform



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Through Labor." It's similar to the odious Nazi "Arbeit Macht Frei" — meaning literally "work makes [one] free" — a slogan proclaimed to the wretches doomed to the horrors of Auschwitz by a metal sign at the entrance.

The Laojaio Research Foundation has evidence that in China there are more than 1,000 of these camps containing millions of slave laborers.

Human Rights activist [Harry Wu](#) spoke to that foundation two weeks ago. Wu endured 19 years of imprisonment, slave labor, and abuse in the Laojaio, and he has spent his life of freedom chronicling the abuses of the Chinese government and its use of slave labor to compete against the free world.

When slave labor and cheap labor cannot keep China competitive with the rest of the world, then it would seem likely that the problems of worker unrest in China will just get bigger, as the rest of the world enters scary and lean economic times.

*Photo: AP Images*



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