



China is, for the first time, experiencing the problems of truly massive industrialization.

Ralph D. Winter



What is the greatest downside to China's miracle industrial growth? It must be the extensive damage to millions of families whose husbands have trekked off across the country to south China to take jobs that were no longer available where they lived. Mass production elsewhere kills village industry.

China's Miracle

You read about the miracle of China lifting four hundred million people out of poverty. But that great achievement has come at great cost because in many cases they are simply pulling workers from other parts of the country and pulling families apart. It is true that in China the workers may be able to get back to their families now and then. And, of course, they can send money back. But absent father families are not, by any means, the best kind.

In many other countries it is worse. There is often no way workers—once dangerously (and expensively) smuggled across an international border—can return to their families. For example, in Guatemala, I know from our own visit there a couple of years ago, that some towns have 20% of their people in the United States as illegals. In that case, unlike China, the people can't come back because

they have gained a big debt and risked their lives crossing the border. They simply don't want to go through that again.

In China, they probably can go home. Nevertheless, the impact upon the families of China has been enormous and tragic. All this is added to years of "one child" family structure, where the one child grows up with inordinate attention, producing millions of what are called "little emperors."

So, this additional partial migration problem rests upon millions of families that are being torn apart by the "welcome, much praised" economic surge in South China.

The Root of the Problem

I have hinted at the root of this problem. China is, for the first time, experiencing the problems of truly massive industrialization. This is similar to the industrial revolution in England which put so many people out of work at the local level that London became an absolute hell hole of poverty, starvation

and disease, as those workers, and sometimes their families, streamed into London to find work. That is how Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx got their start—by 1850 twenty percent of English workmen were too poorly nourished to go to work!

Thus, the very reason that workers are streaming to South China is usually the loss of their trade as manufactured goods and agricultural products (from more efficient industrial processes elsewhere) stream into their

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towns and villages in the interior of China like a menacing cloud of locusts, outdoing local processes.

Other Problems

The Chinese sell more girl babies to other countries than any other country, and they turn around and buy more brides from other countries than any other country. One province has 800,000 men with no brides. They commonly cost \$25,000.

The USA kills millions of infants in utero, and turns around and buys more babies from abroad than any other country.

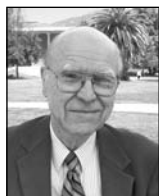
In all of this, the issue of morality becomes more and more urgent and critical. In a small town universal morality is sometimes kept in check by the fact that a customer is a neighbor but when customers are a thousand miles away, adding a chemical to milk that will make it appear to be undiluted by water is something that people are more likely tempted to do.

In the USA, after decades of scuffling, labeling and testing we still have salmon farmers resisting disclosure of artificial coloring, while many prescription drugs are made in foreign countries, and even if pure in manufacture typically pass through the hands of five middlemen sometimes becoming adulterated in that circuitous route. There is no doubt that in a globalized world where hard candy is made in one part of the world and sold in another, the instinctive scruples of local commerce don't come into play.

Faith First

All of this puts a greater strain, in general, upon the need for morality because there is greater and greater opportunity to get away with things in a distant relationship to the customer. Those temptations become very strong and morality becomes proportionately more a needed reality.

This is the reason why again today China may be helped a great deal simply by looking back on people who came from a distance with a strikingly higher morality and a very great love for the Chinese people. In fact, certain elements in China's



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government already have a high regard for much of the work that missionaries did.

The Irreducible Record of Missions

This issue of *Mission Frontiers* is intended to explain and describe that possibility for the future. The Chinese government already asked the Norwegian Missionary Society to establish a university in China because they are apparently aware of that society's work many years before.

In this issue we introduce Eric Liddell as an example of that kind of highly praised work. I describe the role of one of many, Timothy Richard. He worked wonders in his dealing with local officials and high governmental people, seeking overall benefits to the people of China. This was a radically different approach from the pure evangelism of other missionaries even though both were very much Christian activities and were very significant to China.

Some good things are already coming from the four hundred million who have been lifted out of poverty and are gaining new skills appropriate to a technological world.

Yet, there is no way you can overstate the importance of personal salvation and individual transformation of people into people of integrity and good will. At the same time, our Gospel compels us to demonstrate God's love as Jesus did, helping people climb out of poverty and brutal limitations that God never intended them to suffer.

However

Most of what has been said so far in this editorial may seem negative and ignore the fact that Chinese officials have very shrewdly accumulated enormous amounts of cash in their dealings with foreign countries, in their exploitation of a very low priced labor market. Obviously, in the long run that lucrative labor market will rise in cost as they run out of workers and wages have to go up.

Some good things are already coming from the four hundred million who have been lifted out of poverty and are gaining new skills appropriate to a technological world. The Olympics in China demonstrated the incredible potential of China's wealth and their intelligence and resourcefulness.

But equally true and maybe not so often reported is the terrible need (as well in the USA) for heightened morality in business dealings. We can hope and pray that the burgeoning Christian movement in China is concerned for translating their worship of God into personal integrity and actions that glorify God. And we need those Chinese believers to pray for us in the same regard. 🌐

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