

THE  
LABOUR MOVEMENT AND  
LABOUR LEGISLATION IN CHINA

By

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1933

CHINA UNITED PRESS  
299 SZECHUEN ROAD  
SHANGHAI

CHINA UNITED PRESS SERIES

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT AND LABOUR  
LEGISLATION IN CHINA

CHINA UNITED PRESS SERIES

*Edited by T'ang Leang-Li*

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FIRST PUBLISHED IN MCMXXXIII  
BY THE CHINA UNITED PRESS  
MADE & PRINTED IN CHINA  
AT THE COMACRIB PRESS  
SHANGHAI

## FOREWORD

The past two decades have witnessed a tremendous change in the public estimation of, and attitude towards, labour. This does not mean that labour had no rightful place in the past; in fact, labour was held in high esteem, constituting one of the four social classes in China and occupying the third place in the social hierarchy of intellectuals, farmers, labourers, and merchants. But the social philosophy implied in this hierarchy was never to any large extent actually translated into the social and political institutions of the country, with the result that the Chinese working classes occupied a generally inferior social position in the past.

The Revolution of 1911 brought about a radical change in the structure of Chinese society, causing the general public to modify its attitude towards the workers, more particularly so since the reorganisation of the Kuo-Min Tang in 1924. In point of fact, legal protection of labour was practically unknown in China until the adoption by Kuo-Ming Tang of a labour policy in that year. Labour protection in the real sense of the term is the fruit of the teachings and work of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the founder of the Kuo-Min Tang and the Father of the Chinese Republic.

This book of Professor Lin Tung-Hai (Jefferson D.H. Lamb) is the result of many years of research and of teaching in various leading universities in China. The first comprehensive book on Chinese Labour, written with real expert knowledge, Dr. Lin's book should be of great value and interest not only to the specialised student of Chinese labour conditions, but also to the general public.

Nanking, May 1933

CHEN KUNG-PO,  
*Minister of Industry.*

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This work is an attempt to give an account of the conditions under which the Chinese wage-earners lived during the period 1912-1931, taking into consideration not only the economic, but also the social and political aspects. The Revolutionary Movement which has given rise to all the recent social movements, is brought out in its proper perspective, but the major part of the book is devoted to the study and analysis of the legislative enactments of the last eighteen years, more especially the period between 1924 and 1931.

The present volume is the outcome of the series of lectures delivered at Yenching University, Peiping, during my occupancy of the Chair of Social Legislation and of the research work undertaken under the Princeton-Yenching Foundation. The whole has been thoroughly edited and revised by Mr. T'ang Leang-Li, Editor of *The People's Tribune* and the China United Press *Series*.

LIN TUNG-HAI (Jefferson D. H. Lamb).

Nanking, March 1933.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
FOREWORD <i>by Minister Chen Kung-Po</i> . . . . .	v
AUTHOR'S PREFACE . . . . .	vi

### CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL AND INTERNATIONAL BACKGROUND. . . . .	1
A. THE INTERNATIONAL BACKGROUND, p.1; Effects of the Industrial Revolution, p.1; The Rise of Modern Labour Legislation, p.3;	
B. THE IMPACT OF THE WEST, p.7. The Nature of the Chinese Reform Movement, p.7; Foreign Capitalism in China, p.8; The Influence of the British Labour Movement, p.9; The Influence of the International Labour Movement, p.10; The Influence of the Soviet Union, p.13;	
C. DOMESTIC INFLUENCES, p.14. The Effects of the Republican Revolution, p.14; The Student Movement, p.14;	
TABLE: <i>China's Population and Her Main Industries</i> , p.23.	

### CHAPTER II

THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT . . . . .	25
A. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KUO-MIN TANG, p.25. The Development of the Kuo-Min Tang, p.25; Chaos and Confusion, p.27; The Revival of the Kuo-Min Tang, p.29;	
B. THE ORIGIN OF THE REVOLUTION, p.30. The Pre-Republican Insurrections, p.30;	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Page*

- Wang Ching-Wei's Attempt on the Prince Regent, p.36;  
The Seventy-two Martyrs, p.37;  
C. THE REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION, p.38.  
D. THE SECOND REVOLUTION, p.41.  
E. THE THIRD REVOLUTION, p.42.  
F. THE SOUTHERN GOVERNMENT, p.43.  
Dr. Sun as President of the Republic, p.43;  
The Reorganisation of the Kuo-Min Tang, p.43;

### CHAPTER III

#### **INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS AND POSITION OF THE WORKERS. . . 45**

- A. GENERAL STATEMENT, p.45.  
The Supply of Labour, p.45;  
Low Wages and High Cost of Production, p.47;  
The Woman as a Wage Earner, p.48;  
The Exploitation of Child Labour, p.51;  
Relative Wages of Man, Woman and Child, 53;  
B. LABOUR STATISTICS, p.53.  
Sources of Information, p.53;  
The Wage-Earning Population, p.56;  
The Distribution of Workers, p.58;  
The Number of Industrial Establishments, p.61;  
The Size of the Industrial Establishments, p.65;  
C. SCALE OF WAGES, p.66.  
Analysis of Daily, Monthly and Yearly Wages, p.66;  
Average Daily Wages During Period 1915-1930, p.72;  
Wages in Government Establishments, p.74;  
D. HOURS OF LABOUR, 75.  
E. STANDARD OF LIVING, p.77.  
Family Incomes and Expenditures, p.77.  
Real Wages and Money Wages, p.82;



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

F. LABOUR AS A SOCIAL FACTOR, p.82.

Trade Unions as an Established Institution, p.82;

The Settlement of Labour Disputes, p.84;

## TABLES:

- I. *Industrial Establishments and Workers in 1915*, p.55;
  - II. *Number of Wage-Earners in China*, p.57;
  - III. *Distribution of Workers (1915)*, p.59;
  - IV. *Number of Factory Workers in 30 Industrial Cities (1930)*, p.60;
  - V. *Number of Modern Factories*, p.61;
  - VI. *Number of Factories and Workshops*, p.62;
  - VII. *Labour and Production*, p.63;
  - VIII. *Distribution of Workers and Size of Establishment*, p.64;
  - IX.(A) *Daily Wages in the Various Industries (1919)*, p.67;
  - IX.(B) *Average Wages in the Textile Industry (1920)*, p.68;
  - IX.(C) *Daily Wages of Male and Female Workers (1919-1920)*, p.69;
  - X. *Average Monthly Wages in 30 Industrial Cities (1930)*, p.70;
  - XI. *Daily Wages in Government Establishment (1920)*, p.74;
  - XII. *Daily Hours of Labour in 1920 and in 1930*, p.76;
  - XIII. *Rest Days and Holidays (1930)*, p.78;
  - XIV. *Family Incomes and Expenditures (1926-1930)*, p.79;
  - XV. *Index Numbers of Wages and Prices*, p.81;
  - XVI. *Labour Unions and Organised Workers in BT Cities (1930)*, p.83;
- GRAPH: *Development of Average Wages During The Period of 1915-1930*, p.71.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Page*

- Regulations Governing Railway Employees, p.203;
- The Fishery Law, p.205;
- Fishermen's Union Law, p.209;
- Law on Collective Agreements, p.211;

## CHAPTER XI

- THE ADMINISTRATION OF LABOUR LAWS** . . . . . 218
  - Difficulties of Enforcement, p.218;
  - The Experience of the West, p.218;
  - The Necessary Conditions, p.220.

## CHAPTER XII

- CONCLUSION** . . . . . 229
  - A. **THE DOMESTIC AND MACHINE INDUSTRIES**, p.229.
    - The Domestic System, p.229;
    - The Industrial Revolution and the Factory System, p.232;
  - B. **THE LABOUR MOVEMENT**, p.233.
  - C. **LABOUR LEGISLATION**, p.234.
    - The Underlying Principles, p.234;
    - Suggestions for the Future, p.244;