

# No Apologies For Today's Slavery

By Lawrence T. Newman

In the spring of 1997, the President of the United States apologized for the enslavement of Blacks hundred of years ago. But who is apologizing for human bondage today? Why hasn't President Clinton apologized for the fact that 2000 out of 6000 garment shops in New York City could be called sweatshops, and 4500 out of 5000 shops in Los Angeles? In one sweatshop in New York's famous garment district, an employee testified in 1996 that there was one bathroom for 100 people, and she worked at least 56 hours a week with no vacation or holidays off, in blistering hot or freezing cold conditions.

In August 1995, 72 illegal Thai immigrants were released from human bondage behind barbed wires in El Monte, California, near Los Angeles. They worked as virtual slaves in an around-the-clock garment factory for 69 cents an hour, filling the racks of American stores like Montgomery Ward and Sears.

Labor abuses and bondage do occur in the garment industry. One of the largest poultry producers in the U.S., based on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, is Perdue Farms. A typical day for the Black women who work on Perdue lines involves standing in ice-cold rooms on cement floors as chickens race past them on conveyor belts. Some women are forced to gut as many as 120 birds per minute. Workers are routinely denied permission for the bathroom, sometimes forced to urinate on themselves, and then not allowed to change into dry clothes, despite the freezing temperatures. Workers describe Perdue Farm conditions as

"like being a slave" and being "treated like dogs." Most labor abuses occur in industries which produce everyday products such as sports equipment, sneakers, toys, carpets, and clothing. What do these products have to do with the global child prostitution industry?

Across the world, 250 million children are forced to labor long hours for low pay. Children who are exploited as labor resources are often also exploited for sexual purposes. A million children are forced to work in Asia's sex trade. "In the ever-expanding global free market, child prostitutes are among the hottest commodities," according to World Watch magazine, Summer 1995. Experts claim that the U. S. military encouraged Thailand's brothel industry since 1975, when American soldiers were allowed to come ashore and visit brothels. At the same time, the World Bank encouraged Thailand to form a plan to attract wealthy foreign tourists. The plan underwrote the sex industry, with no objections from the World Bank or others. Over 20,000 brothels soon surfaced in Thailand, where there are nearly one million child prostitutes. In 1993, homeless child prostitutes of ages 8 on up were gunned down by police while sleeping in front of a church in Rio de Janeiro. In the Philippines, five-star hotels such as Ramada block off whole floors for the use of Japanese sex tourists. According to the Institute for the Protection of Children, nine percent of prostitutes were less than 10 years old when they were sold into sexual slavery. In Sri Lanka, at

least 10,000 boy prostitutes receive as little as a dollar per day as sexual slaves. Child prostitutes are part and parcel of tourist package holidays in many countries.

Because of widespread fears in many Latin American countries regarding the use of their homeless children for "spare parts," prostitutes, and household servants or slaves, some countries have virtually discontinued all adoptions by Americans. In 1992, a New Jersey lawyer was arrested in Peru for child trafficking. A former juvenile judge explained anti-U.S. sentiments by Peruvians as a fear of "unscrupulous lawyers, corrupt officials, and foreign couples with money...(who) combine to turn a child into an object of commerce, of deceit." Scandals of "baby-buying" and "baby-stealing" have hit the Latin American countries of Bolivia, Columbia, Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay, and Guatemala like a violent storm.

In 1996, two United States reporters successfully bought two boy slaves, ages 10 and 12, in Sudan. The boys were returned to their father as the reporters confirmed first-hand child slavery in Sudan. According to the Washington Post, March 14, 1996, Black women slaves are sold in Khartoum for as little as \$15. U.S. government reports placed the number of slaves currently held in North Africa at 90,000 to 300,000, but normal governmental relations continue and expand among slave-holding countries and the United States each and every day.

In lectures across the United States, a former FBI agent of 26 years

claims that auctions of missing and exploited children as held in the United States. In America, nearly one million children are reported as missing and exploited each year. (850 children from Indiana remain missing today.) Millions more are shuttled into foster care and brutally separated from their friends, teachers, clergy, and family members who normally protect them from exploitation. Are these missing children and foster children part of "the underground world of forced child prostitution" and child labor, described in the Congressional Quarterly of August 25, 1996?

Who has ever apologized for scientific experiments done on infants and toddlers used as sexual toys by "researchers" for the Kinsey Institute of Indiana University? Hundreds of children were forced against their will to serve as sexual objects for deviant adults who timed their sexual responses with stopwatches. This violence done to infants and children in the name of "science" is reminiscent of the "scientific experimentation" done to hundreds of Black men with syphilis in the infamous Tuskegee Study, which lasted for 40 years at taxpayer expense. The Kinsey Institute is still funded at taxpayer expense. The taxpayers and decent citizens of America deserve an apology for the slavery and bondage of children and adults today. We deserve much more than an apology. Bondage and brutality must be ended. Slavery is not a thing of the past, but a modern-day monster which roams the globe and preys on poor people of all ages in every country.