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**Folder Title:**  
Sweatshops

**Stack:**  
**S**

**Row:**  
**23**

**Section:**  
**1**

**Shelf:**  
**9**

**Position:**  
**1**

THE WHITE HOUSE

2.23.99

Lael —

Just received This from Henry Stora —  
You may already have seen it —  
wanted to pass it on.  
Lael

THE WHITE HOUSE

2.23.99

Sarah —

wanted to pass This on — just received  
it from Henry Stora.  
Lael

PS — would you please w/ State & Labor  
(Sarah Rosen) Club, Lael

## ANTI-SWEATSHOP INITIATIVES

- ▶ The development of tripartite, anti-sweatshop, oversight bodies to collect data and monitor enforcement of labor rights and standards would help to augment government efforts in the enforcement of labor laws in those countries that have been identified as major garment exporting countries. Governments in these countries have neither the capacity nor the political will necessary to enforce effectively international labor rights and standards which has enabled sweatshops to proliferate. Ministries charged with the enforcement of national labor codes are often the weakest cabinet offices politically and operate at reduced efficiencies because of chronic under funding and the lack of trained staff. While the lack of political will and capacity effect the enforcement of labor rights and standards in all industries, their enforcement in garment and textile workplaces is particularly problematic for well known reasons unique to the industry. When governments are pressed to take more proactive measures to improve or enforce national labor laws against sweatshops, they often respond with highly visible, but temporary measures for public relations purposes. Longer term strategies are often not considered.

Permanent, tripartite, anti-sweatshop oversight bodies with active and informed citizens representing labor, employers, government, as well as concerned civil society organizations can augment government efforts, improve adherence to international labor rights and standards, and eradicate sweatshops. In addition, such bodies can help to build trust and cooperation between labor, business, and government interests. These oversight bodies can lead to improved rule of law, more government accountability, and a more stable industrial relations environment. Such bodies already exist in some countries, for example the Philippines.

- ▶ A study of the relationship of codes of conduct with the enforcement of ILO core labor standards combined with tripartite education and training programs for code strengthening and improvement of core labor standards is needed because of the proliferation of codes of conduct in recent years. Because codes are viewed as a significant option for the elimination of sweatshops, it is important that a clear understanding of their impact to date is established. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, at best, codes have been a mixed success. We believe that until a complete survey of those most affected by the codes - employers and workers - is made, we will not be in a position to design the most effective strategies to eliminate sweatshops and improve the overall enforcement of international labor rights and standards. Following completion of the survey, regional, tripartite conferences will be held to exam the results and discuss ways in which the application of the codes might be strengthened to improve core labor standards. The conferences will be followed by training and education programs for workers and employers to use codes more effectively to eliminate sweatshops and encourage adherence to core labor standards.
- ▶ Special economic zones remain a major cause of sweatshop conditions and therefore there is an urgent need to conduct an analysis of sweatshops in export processing zones and use the information developed for targeted tripartite education and training programs

to encourage the eradication of sweatshops in the zones. Developing countries entice foreign and domestic investors with promises of tax and investment benefits and more ominously, with suggestions of docile workers and union free environments. Since many zones are private, there is very little government oversight of working conditions within these zones and worker rights violations are legend. In recent years there has been a huge proliferation of such zones throughout the world. Domestic companies have been relocating to zones within their own countries in record numbers and in many zones domestic companies now outnumber foreign investors. Despite these trends there has been no comprehensive study of special economic zones in many years. Among the questions that need answering are: size and rate of growth of economic activity in the zones; their industrial composition and geographical distribution; the conformity of labor rights and standards in the zones with that of the host countries', in law and in practice, and; the effects of the zones on economic development and international trade, investment, and migration.

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**NEWS  
FROM**



**CONGRESSMAN  
GEORGE MILLER**

7th District, Calif. Committee on Resources.  
Committee on Education and the Workforce.  
2205 Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C. 20515

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
Wednesday, January 13, 1999

CONTACT: Daniel Weiss  
202/225-2095

**REP. MILLER: NORTHERN MARIANAS SWEATSHOP  
LAWSUIT CRITICAL STEP FORWARD**

**But Says Still Urgent For Congress To Enact Reform Legislation**

WASHINGTON — The lawsuit filed today on behalf of exploited workers in a Pacific islands U.S. territory is a critical step toward ending years of human rights and labor violations that are sanctioned by the local government, taken advantage of by American companies, and protected by Republican leaders of Congress, said Congressman George Miller (D-Calif.), the leading voice in the Congressional effort to reform the laws governing production in U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (US/CNMI).

“For years, the government of the Northern Mariana Islands has conspired with local contractors and foreign companies to deceive and exploit poor working men and women brought over from Asia,” Miller said. “Many have gotten rich off the backs of these abused workers. As we exposed their illegal and reprehensible practices, they sought, and found, protection of their corrupt system from Republican leaders of Congress who have blocked bi-partisan reform legislation, refusing even to hold hearings on well-documented exploitation and serious damage to our domestic garment industry.

“This lawsuit might not have been necessary had the CNMI government and Congress taken the necessary and proper steps to rein in the abuse, rid the islands of the sweatshops and make the Northern Marianas a legitimate production site rather than a renegade outpost that better resembles a prison labor camp than a factory site making clothes bearing the ‘Made in USA’ label.”

Miller, the senior Democrat on the House Resources Committee, which has jurisdiction over the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (US/CNMI), conducted a fact-finding tour of the capital, Saipan, in 1998 and has issued two critical reports on the CNMI. Miller authored legislation to reform the immigration and minimum wage laws in the CNMI and to restrict the use of the “Made in the USA” label on products made in the CNMI.

**(more)**

C O N C A U S U A L M I L I T A R Y

## Background on Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)/Saipan Lawsuit.

- Nearly a billion dollars worth of clothing made mostly of foreign-made cloth and bearing the “Made in USA” label is shipped annually into the U.S. duty free from factories in the Northern Marianas.
- The factories are sweatshops, staffed almost totally by “guest workers” from China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and elsewhere.
- It is estimated that there are 42,000 guest workers in the Marianas. They pay thousands of dollars to job brokers, work for the \$3.05–an-hour minimum wage, and live and eat behind razor wire barracks for which they must pay as much as \$200 a month.
- Meanwhile, the jobs of tens of thousands of American clothing and textile workers have been eliminated.

There are three lawsuits being filed alleging violations of racketeering, labor human rights and unfair business practices. **UNITE is only part of lawsuit number 2.**

- GLOBAL EXCHANGE
- SWEATSHOP WATCH
- ASIAN LAW CAUCUS -

Trade

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## Lawsuits: Retailers, factories mistreat offshore workers

BY PAULA L. GREEN  
JOURNAL OF COMMERCE STAFF

Young Asian women are being lured into sweatshops in a U.S. territory with glittering promises, only to work long hours producing clothes sold with a "Made in the USA" label, three new lawsuits charge.

Wednesday, the California law firm of Milberg, Weiss, Bershad, Hynes & Lerach filed three lawsuits that seek more than \$1 billion in unpaid wages and damages from 19 retailers and clothing designers, including The Gap, Wal-Mart, Sears Roebuck & Co., J.C. Penney, Tommy Hilfinger, J. Crew and May Department Stores.



The suits were filed on behalf of more than 50,000 workers from China, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Thailand who reportedly work in the U.S. territory of Saipan for less than \$3 an hour and nearly 80 hours per week.

The lawsuits charge that the retailers gained illicit profits by conspiring with garment contractors in Saipan. It appears to be the first class-action complaint brought on behalf of the garment workers, and says retailers knowingly distributed about \$1 billion worth of the goods yearly, taking advantage of the low-paid workers and \$200 million in tariff breaks.

Retailers had no immediate comment about the suit, but some noted that working conditions on Saipan are considerably better than where the workers had come from. And the human rights activists filing the lawsuit acknowledged Wednesday that they are indeed higher paid than most Asian garment workers.

Just two years since the Clinton administration relaxed its aggressive stance against labor abuses in domestic sewing shops, a U.S. law firm hopes to use a federal law devised to fight organized crime to make retailers more responsible for the conditions found in the factories that sew their clothes.

Two federal suits were filed in federal district courts in Los Angeles and

the Northern Marianas Islands. A third was filed in state court in San Francisco, charging unfair business practices and misleading advertising.

Known as the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Saipan has been the focus of U.S. congressional hearings and federal government reports because of labor and human rights violations.

The Clinton administration is expected this year to reintroduce legislation that would increase the minimum wage on the islands and bring immigration policies up to federal standards. The bill didn't make it out of a Senate committee last year.

The island's garment-making activities also have been a sore point with Commerce officials because Asian factory owners can set up shop on the island, pay low wages to foreign workers and then export garments that are not subject to U.S. quotas or tariffs. The garments can carry a "Made in the USA" label.

Some U.S. retailers and trade attorneys found it interesting that the 1970 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act was being used to charge retailers with engaging in a racketeering conspiracy with the owners of the factories.

"This is going to bring about an interesting debate," said John Peterson, a partner in the New York law firm of Neville, Peterson & Williams. Mr. Peterson said he had not seen the lawsuit, but it appears the class-action suit seeks to extend the conspiracy elements of the RICO law to make retailers responsible for the activities of their garment manufacturers.

"We're (retailers) not engaged in the manufacturer of garments, we're just buying them," Mr. Peterson said. "To go against retailers (with this statute) is a big deal."

While some retailers may own their factories, many sign a contract with an apparel manufacturer, either at home or abroad, to sew and deliver the clothing. That apparel manufacturer may then use subcontractors to make certain items. And with 30 million workers in 160 countries producing fashion items from cotton T-shirts to silk ties, the global apparel industry isn't easy to keep an eye on.

Morrison Cain, an attorney and executive with the National Mass Retail Association in Arlington, Va., said the RICO statute has been overused since its inception in 1970 to fight organized crime.

"It's the old anti-mob statute. It was used to go get the kingpins and money launderers . . . not the people that knocked over the candy store, but the people who planned it," said Mr. Cain, who is senior vice president of government affairs for the Arlington, Va. association.

The act allowed criminal penalties, fines and the seizure of illegal profits from companies that engage in a "pattern of racketeering activity." What

provoked a spate of civil suits was a provision that lets private parties file civil suits for damages caused by RICO violations -- anything from alleged mail fraud to murder -- even if the defendant was not convicted of a crime. What makes civil RICO suits especially enticing are provisions that make a losing defendant pay triple damages.

Attorneys said judges typically don't like the use of RICO statutes because they have been overused.

"But once you get over that threshold (of judge) it's hard to get rid of," said a New York attorney who declined to be identified.

The attorney said the plaintiff's lawyers could be planning to prove that the retailers' everyday business practices -- actions like letters, telephone calls and faxes -- were part of the conspiracy that defrauded the factory workers.

He expected the lawsuit would push retailers into using stronger measures to be sure their contractors are in compliance with the law.

This is the latest effort to make retailers more accountable for the working conditions in the factories that make their clothes.

In March of 1996 the Clinton administration launched a major publicity campaign to reverse poor pay and unsafe working conditions in the 25,000 garment factories in the United States.

That followed the publishing during the holiday season of the so-called Trendsetter List, a list of U.S. retailers that Labor officials felt were working to stop the use of sweatshops. Retailers that weren't on the list felt the omission unfairly tarnished their image.

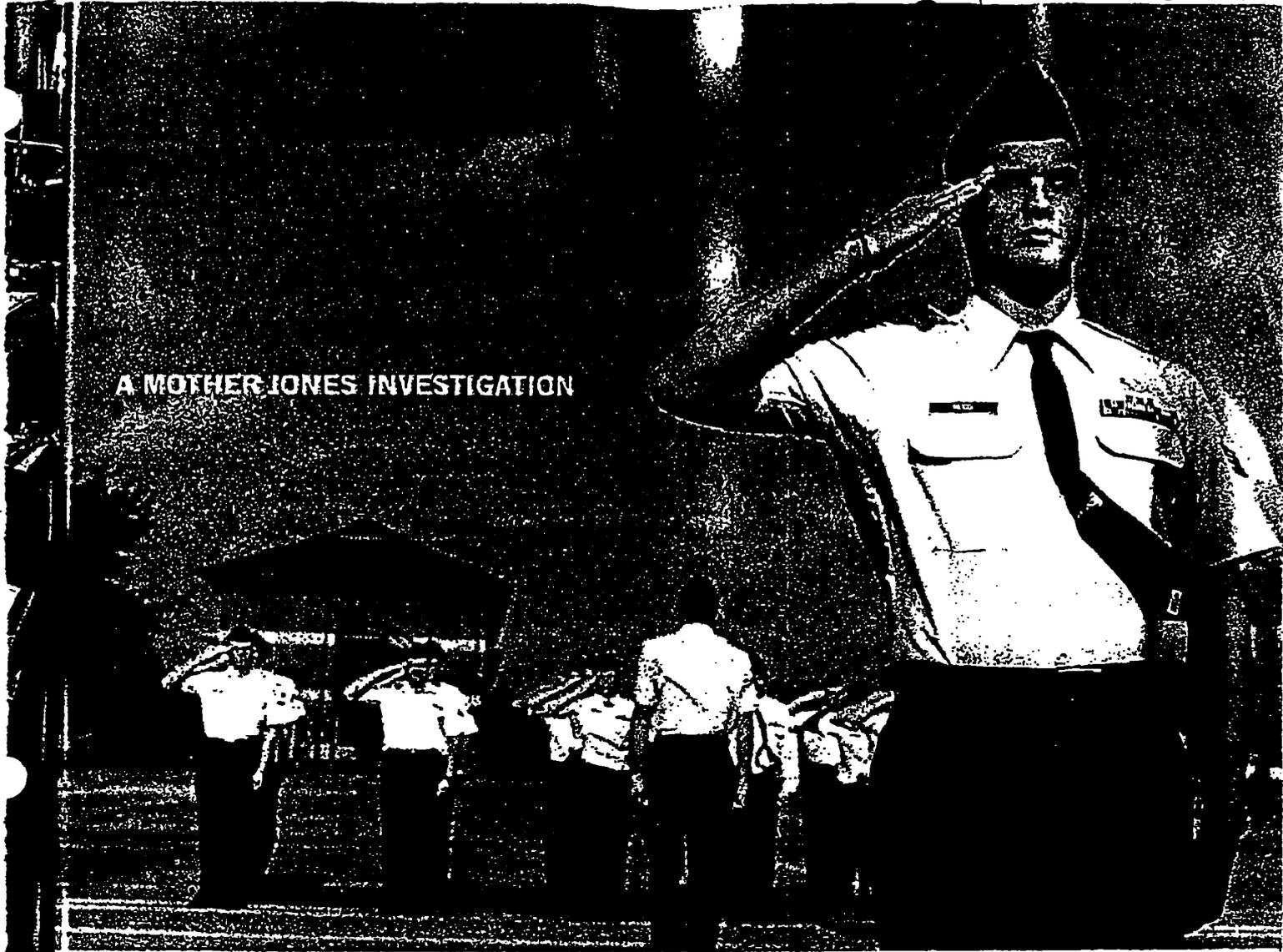
The U.S. government dropped its aggressive stance with the departure of former Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich in late 1996, but human rights and labor activists have kept the heat on retailers and importers to be more accountable for the contractors they use.

While many retailers have strict workplace codes of conduct on the books, activists say the codes are not enforced, especially in overseas factories. "The successes are always mixed," said Bama Athreya, a board member of the California human rights group Global Exchange. Reebok has hired human rights monitors for its suppliers in Indonesia and China, and Nike is promising similar steps, she said. But the practical effect in both cases isn't clear, she said.

"The rhetoric is there, but the implementation is lacking," she said.

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# 3/ 11  
sent to the Lee  
on 5/17



A MOTHER JONES INVESTIGATION

# sweatshop

by Mark Boal

The women at the Lion Apparel factory in Beattyville, Kentucky, are part of a largely female workforce of 15,000 nationwide that sews U.S. military uniforms. The Defense Department keeps costs as low as possible, and these workers ultimately pay the price.

Photographs by Jim Callaway/Black Star

PHOTO BY MARTIN PARR/MAGNUM (SALUTE)

**T**HE TWO-LANE ROAD INTO BEATTYVILLE, KENTUCKY, winds through breathtaking Appalachian foothills, past rusty machinery and heaps of broken coal left over from the last strip-mining boom. Little handmade signs offer acreage for sale. But there is no demand for land like this—too rocky for commercial farming and too remote for development. Beattyville (population 1,800) is less a town than a three-light strip bordered by aluminum shacks and a pine forest.



These days, the chief economic activity in town can be found in the parking lot of the local garage, where teenagers offer a visitor deals on moonshine by the gallon and homegrown marijuana at \$2,500 a pound, about half what it would cost in an urban area. Legitimate work opportunities, after all, remain limited. There's a private prison and a data processing center, but both require a high school education, and since half the population never graduates, most seek jobs elsewhere. Inevitably, many of the women turn to Lion Apparel, which operates a sewing factory on the edge of town.

Lion, meanwhile, takes full advantage of its labor pool. Carol Shelton, 48, friendly but blunt, says that every day for the nine years she worked at Lion she would come home exhausted, her hands swollen from pushing stiff fabric past a moving needle. She had to work fast to meet quotas kept by a timekeeper, and if she slowed down or had to redo a seam, her hourly income dropped to the base rate, which usually hovered around minimum wage. Besides the low pay, the job gave her back pain from hunching over old sewing machines held together with spare parts and electrical tape. Fumes from formaldehyde, a suspected carcinogen used to keep fabric stiff, would cling to her clothes, make her short of breath, give her headaches, and cause rashes on her arms. During the sweltering summers, the plant had no air con-

ditioning. One winter, Shelton says, the water in the toilets froze.

In May 1998, Shelton was fired after refusing to perform a job she feared would hurt her back, and she says a workers' compensation claim is pending. Meanwhile, five former and two current employees corroborate her description of work conditions at Lion. According to their accounts, the factory fits the definition of a sweatshop as specified by the laws of more than a dozen U.S. cities and counties that ban using public funds to buy from such places. Those criteria include wages so low that workers can't meet basic needs, dangerous working conditions, and intimidation when workers try to unionize. Lion, in a written response to questions from *Mother Jones*, categorically denies these conditions exist.

The responsibility for the environment these women endure doesn't rest solely with Lion, but also with its main client: the U.S. government. The 650 employees at Lion's facilities are among an estimated 15,000 apparel workers nationwide who produce uniforms for the military, which spends more than \$800 million annually on clothing for its 1.4 million personnel. (Lion, based in Dayton, Ohio, is among the top three private suppliers, with a \$51 million contract.)

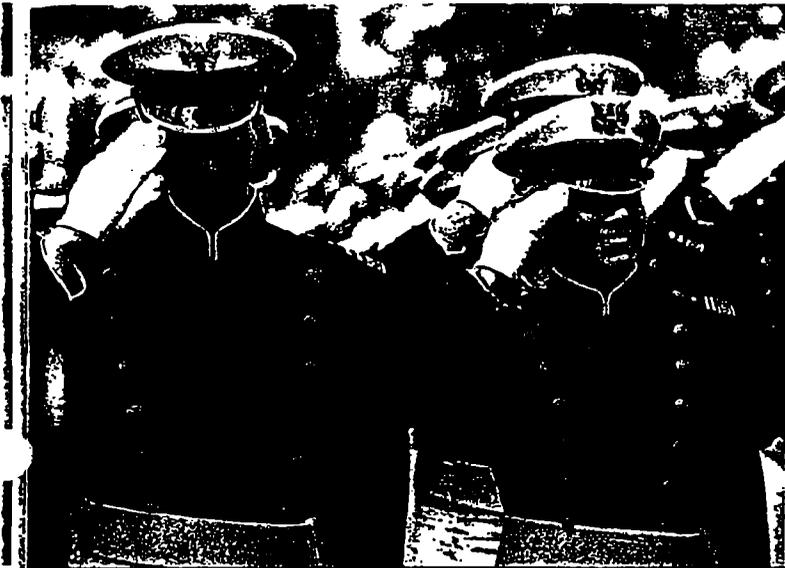
These factories are located in some of the most rural and impoverished communities in America: isolated hamlets in the Appalachian mountains of Kentucky and Tennessee, and small

towns in Louisiana. In many of these communities, the stories are similar to Shelton's. Joyce Bennett, a 58-year-old mother of five, says that in the four years she stitched collars on Navy uniforms at Doyle Shirt Manufacturing in Spencer, Tennessee, she never made more than minimum wage and had to supplement her income with food stamps.

In Beattyville, the drive to Shelton's faded-blue clapboard house (the last home on a gravel road with no sign) follows the route Lyndon Johnson took 35 years ago when he toured the area to announce the War on Poverty, his plan for helping the nation's poor join the Great Society. While the resulting social programs managed to reduce the most extreme poverty in Appalachia, the government's role has since changed dramatically. Even though

denounce such practices. With much fanfare, the Clinton administration launched the "No Sweat" campaign, which pressured retailers and manufacturers to submit to periodic independent audits of their workplace conditions.

This campaign urged manufacturers to sign the Workplace Code of Conduct, a promise to self-regulate that has since been adopted by a handful of retailers and many of the nation's largest manufacturers, including Liz Claiborne, Nicole Miller, Nike, Patagonia, and L.L. Bean. Absent, however, is the Department of Defense, which has a \$1 billion garment business that would make it the country's 14th-largest retail apparel outlet, right behind Talbots and just ahead of Charming Shoppes, whose stores include the Fashion Bug chain.



Workers' pay is based on meeting a daily quota, a task Carol Shelton and her daughter Tamara Sparks (shown with Sparks' two children) performed at Lion Apparel, one of the contractors that makes military uniforms. Through another program, the DOD sells uniforms to troops, using the profits to fund projects like an Army resort at Disney World—all with Al Gore's approval.

the women of Beattyville work for a large Department of Defense contractor, their dismal workplace conditions remain virtually unregulated by the government. And instead of trying to assist them, the U.S. government trades on their labor for the highest possible return.

**W**HEN KATHIE LEE GIFFORD'S FACE was splashed across the tabloids in 1996 after her line of Wal-Mart clothing was exposed as the work of underpaid laborers in New York City's Chinatown, the Department of Labor and the White House teamed up to

Without the Defense Department's voluntary adherence to the code, the job of stopping public-sector sweatshops falls to the Department of Labor. Federal contractors that violate wage laws or safety and health codes can lose their lucrative taxpayer-financed contracts. But Suzanne Seiden, a deputy administrator at the department, says that to her knowledge the agency has never applied that rule to government apparel manufacturers. "I just assume that they are adhering to safety and health [requirements]," she says. According to records obtained by *Mother Jones* through a Freedom of Information Act request, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited Lion 32 times for safety and health violations in the past 12 years. Furthermore, a 1996 General Accounting Office report estimated that 22 percent of all federal contractors had been cited by OSHA for violating safety standards.

In 1997, Arleenna Lawson, a worker at Lion's plant in West Liberty, about a half-hour drive from Beattyville, began waking up with small bumps on her face. At first she thought it was nothing, but in two weeks the bumps grew into large lumps. When she showed a manager at work, she was told not to worry about it. An allergist later determined she was suffering a reaction to the formaldehyde in the permanent-press fabrics she sewed at work, and recommended that Lawson be given an assignment away from the offending chemical. "But they just moved me to another line for a few days, and then I was back doing collars," she remembers. "It got so bad I had to quit."

Before she did, Lawson wrote a letter to OSHA. The agency performed an inspection, concluding that "several women had rashes and were complaining about formaldehyde exposure." OSHA also ruled that Lion should have sent Lawson to the doctor when she complained of illness, and that by not doing so had failed to behave appropriately when "a substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result." Lion's punishment? A \$975 fine. (Lawson eventually won an unemployment benefits claim against Lion.)

Lawson's case was the most recent in a history of violations. In 1987, Lion was cited for failing to give employees proper face protection. In 1990, it was fined for not training employees how to handle hazardous chemicals. It was fined seven times in 1993 for a variety of violations, and nine times in 1996 for, among other reasons, failing to train employees how to use portable fire extinguishers in a plant loaded with flammable materials.

In the absence of effective enforcement, union leaders have pushed for legislative protection for all workers employed through federal contracts. In February 1997, Vice President Al Gore championed the cause, proposing an executive order that would require companies that do business with the government to maintain clean OSHA records and permit union activity. "If you

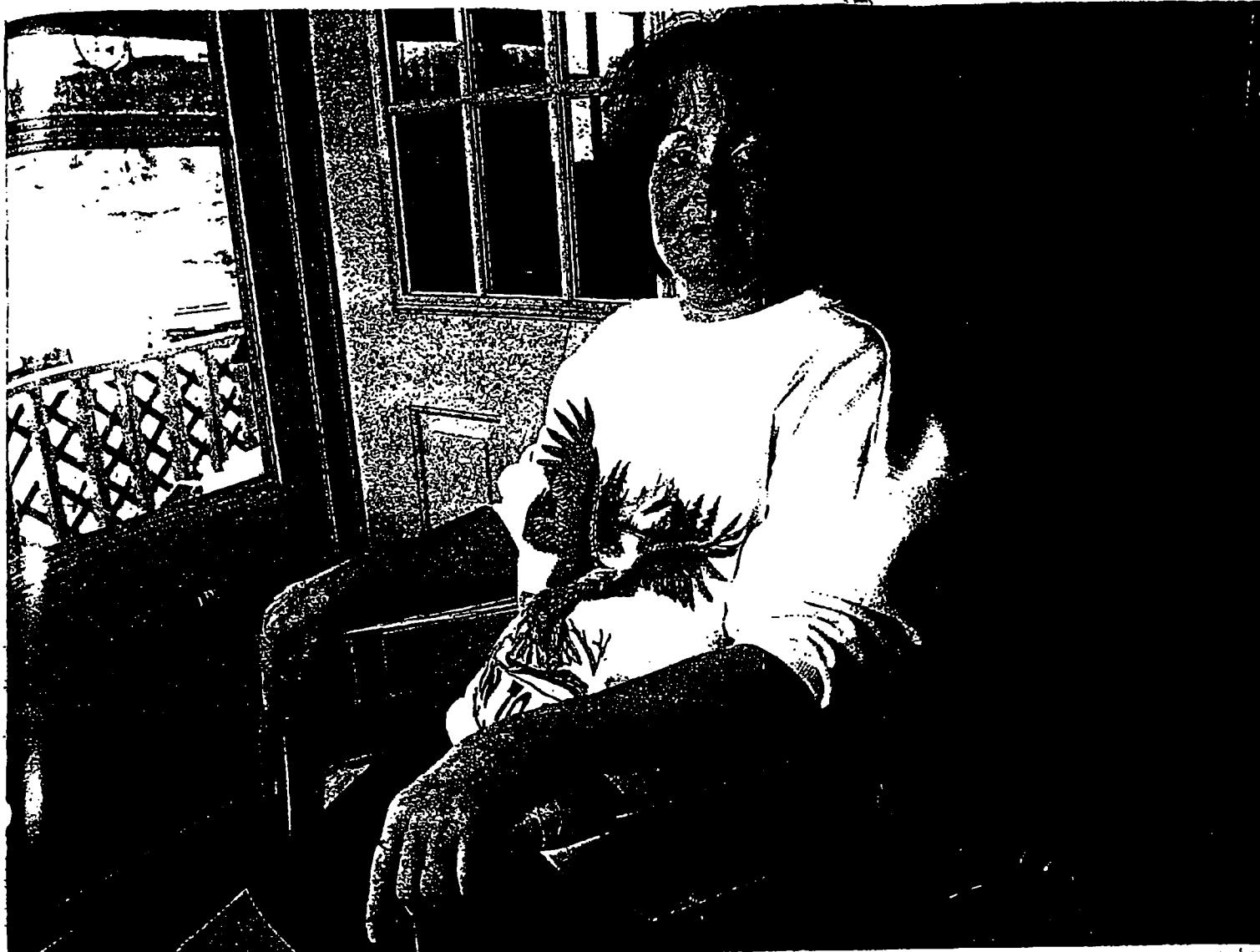
want to do business with the federal government, you had better maintain a safe workplace and respect civil, human, and union rights," Gore told an appreciative AFL-CIO audience. But the proposal caused an outcry among Republicans and has remained on the back burner ever since. Chris Lehane, a Gore spokesman, says, "You have to realize these things don't happen overnight."

**W**HEN MOTHER JONES ASKED LION if it had ever threatened to close the Beattyville plant if workers unionized, the company's president, Richard Lapedes, wrote back: "No, and we have been happy to state clearly and openly that we would never do such a thing." The Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (UNITE) tried to organize Lion in 1997 but failed, union leaders claim, because of the management's swift and unyielding opposition. Several memos circulated by Lion to its workers, and obtained by *Mother Jones*, would appear to support UNITE's interpretation; in one case, the company seems to narrowly evade federal labor laws that prohibit employers from threatening plant closings. The memo reads: "Why [is UNITE] trying to get information which they may want to use to hurt Lion's business? If that happens, that could hurt all of our jobs."

The memos did manage to instill fear in some of the workers. "We had to hide this one girl down in the floorboards of the car whenever we went out to talk about the union," says Tamara Sparks, 23, who is Carol Shelton's daughter. Sparks and her mother are very close, celebrating their weddings (Tamara's first, Carol's third) together in 1991, and working side by side at the Lion factory for three years. Sparks was a union supporter at

After the public shaming of Kathie Lee Gifford (right), whose Wal-Mart clothing line was made in sweatshops, the Department of Labor and the White House urged retailers to pledge not to exploit workers. But the Department of Defense has never offered such promises to contract workers such as Connie Outes (holding her daughter, Tiffany, age 2), a former Lion employee.





Lion, and signed a letter, along with seven other employees, that requested outside oversight to prevent the company from retaliating against pro-union workers.

Written with UNITE's help, the letter was sent to Gore, as well as to eight Kentucky congressmen and the state's U.S. senators, telling them: "Some of us have been told point-blank that if we get a union, the plant will close.... They've spied on people to see who took union leaflets, and they've told individuals who work here that if we talk to the union we will be fired. Up 'til now, people here have been too afraid to file any official charges, but we'd like to talk to you or someone from your staff about what can be done."

It's not clear how, but shortly thereafter, the letter was forwarded to Lion's management, which then posted it on the company's bulletin board. Soon after that, the union drive sputtered out.

The drive does appear to have had some benefits. Lion's payroll administrator, Tina Ward, says that last year, when Lion raised the hourly pay 30 cents to \$5.80—65 cents more than the minimum wage—it was in response to the unionizing efforts.

In Lion's written response, Lapedes told *Mother Jones*: "We believe we are one of the most progressive companies, certainly in our industry, if not any industry in the United States." Lapedes

conceded that the plant had no air conditioning, but stated that "investment capital has become available, so that air-conditioning all of our facilities has become a viable option." The same day *Mother Jones* received Lapedes' statement, according to current Lion employees, the company began installing air-conditioning systems at the Beattyville plant.

**M**EANWHILE, THE GOVERNMENT IS impressed by Lion's efficiency. "We are obviously pleased with them as a vendor," says Lynford Morton, a spokesman for the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the Defense Department office responsible for most outside contracts. A recent DLA annual report even goes so far as to highlight Lion as a success story, attributing annual savings of \$4.5 million to the company's finesse.

The DLA has, in turn, received the admiration of Gore, who has honored the agency's efficiency with 51 Hammer Awards, one of the highest honors his office can bestow. The DLA's job is to secure the lowest bid (Continued on page 78)

## an american sweatshop

(Continued from page 51) it can for a contract. The agency's officials, proud of their private-sector partners, say they have no desire to revisit the days before Ronald Reagan and, more recently, Bill Clinton, both of whom eased regulations covering government contracts. "We're getting out of the big daddy thing,"

explains Morton. "We have no right to tell our suppliers how to do their business."

In 1997, the DLA spent \$811.8 million on uniforms and textiles for the Defense Department, and ultimately sold them for \$996.9 million, a 22.8 percent markup. Of these uniforms, 97 percent were sold to the U.S. armed services, though the DLA also sells uniforms to foreign governments, including El Salvador (\$1 million

from 1995 to 1999 in coveralls, flight boots, flight jackets, signal flags, and camouflage cloth), and Saudi Arabia (\$17.9 million from 1995 to 1999 in jackets, tents, boots, tarpaulins, helmets, and assorted clothing).

The DLA says that it does not profit from uniform sales, and that the markup is used to cover bureaucratic overhead. But the numbers don't add up. In 1997, the DLA's overhead amounted to 9.3 percent of the cost of purchasing the uniforms, which left an additional \$109.6 million unaccounted for. When an internal Defense Department task force reviewed the DLA's 1997 budget, it reported that profits were slated to fund other Defense Department programs, specifically referring to \$20 million that was budgeted for the military's operations in Bosnia. The



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#### Management Positions:

**Area Organizing Director:** Direct teams of organizers. Must have union organizing and staff management experience. \$65,640 - \$74,936. Location: regional offices. 9 positions

**Assistant Director, Organizing Communications:** If you can promote the union message, this position may be for you. The successful candidate will develop the message, PR strategy and activities for major organizing drives, and handle various public relations aspects of the AIM union campaign. Ideal candidate will have union and PR experience. Supervises field staff, vendors, consultants and contractors. \$61,485 - \$70,383. Location: Washington, D.C.

**Regional Field Administrator:** Responsible for administering and coordinating regional field service and organizing activities. Handles project management, budget tracking, project activities and project communications. \$53,997 - \$61,811. Location: regional offices. 3 positions

#### Professional Positions:

**Labor Economist III:** Conducts in-depth research to support union organizing, anti-privatization, and contract negotiations and administration efforts. Creates reports from source materials. Presents testimony and provides technical assistance. \$51,444 - \$62,162. Location: Washington, D.C.

**Organizing Research Specialist:** Conducts or coordinates research efforts to target and support organizing drives and first contract efforts. Develops unique data collection methods and organizes the data collected for analysis. \$51,444 - \$62,162. Location: regional offices. 3 positions

**Hazardous Waste Specialist:** Plans, organizes and conducts health and safety training programs on worker safety for members. Conducts on-site investigations of potentially unsafe worksites. \$47,533 - \$57,435. Location: regional offices

**Organizer:** Plans, leads and conducts a wide array of organizing activities including targeting, target reconnaissance, home visits, leader recruitment, training volunteers, rating workers, running elections, doing card checks and conducting first-contract campaigns. \$28,575 - \$54,545. Location: Regional Offices

#### General requirements for all positions:

Require degree and minimum 3-10 years experience in the field. Management positions require 6-10 years of experience in management of staff, organizing campaigns, contract negotiations or public relations. All regional positions require a successful organizing campaign track record except for the research positions. Extensive travel required. The regional office locations are: Washington, D.C., Newark, N.J., Indianapolis, Ind., and Oakland, Calif. Headquarters is Washington, D.C. Relocation provided.

#### Benefits:

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"We're getting out of the big daddy thing," explains one Defense Department spokesman. "We have no right to tell our suppliers how to do their business."

Defense Department has since claimed that the transfer was incorrectly labeled. Members of the task force, meanwhile, are tight-lipped, but stand by their report. "We reported accurately based on the facts we had at the time," says Navy Capt. Barbara Brehm. The Coast Guard's Robert Gitschier says task force members maintain "a level of doubt" about the military's denials.

There are other, more direct ways the military profits from uniform sales. Military clothing stores, for example, which are run by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), sell what they describe as "optional uniform" clothing to its troops. Usually of better quality than the standard uniforms issued to recruits—thicker fabric, better tailoring—optional uniforms are purchased from other outside vendors. A survey of these 40 manufacturers shows that 12 of them have received a total of 207 OSHA violations in the past 10 years.

In 1998, \$3.4 million in profits from optional uniform sales through these stores was allocated to the Army's Morale Welfare and Recreation fund, described by a Defense Department official as a network of programs to improve "productivity, mental and physical fitness, individual growth, positive values, esprit de corps, and family well-being." Among the projects underwritten by the fund are Shades of Green, an Army hotel in Florida that features heated swimming pools and free transportation to Disney World; a beachside resort in Hawaii; and an 18-hole golf course at Fort Knox, Kentucky, not more than 120 miles west of Beattyville.

**G**OLF ISN'T THE RECREATION of choice in Beattyville. I drove Tamara Sparks and her husband, Cecil (with whom she no longer lives), around one night in my rented car, and we talked about what they do for fun. "We party hard, son," Cecil says. That, according to the couple and their friends, means Xanax trips that last for days and moonshine that'll make you want to walk naked down Main Street. There's also racing old Buicks along the back roads, with pit stops in the woods for a little of what Sparks elusively refers to as "scroggin' and scotchin'."

Sparks is vivacious and talkative, but her insecurity comes out in offhand comments, such as when she refers to herself as "just a hillbilly redneck." She doesn't delude herself about life in Beattyville, and becomes anxious when talk turns to the future of her family. She tells Cecil that a cousin told her that "there's lots of work in Texas and I could find a job, no problem." But Cecil, the father of her children, is hesitant to go. While work remains scarce in Appalachia (unemployment estimates reach 24 percent), outside opportunities are hard to imagine in an area where only 5 percent of the population has college degrees.

Besides, Beattyville is home, and those who live here have grown to rely heavily on one another. One of Sparks' brothers-in-law grows and distributes tomatoes and beans; Carol Shelton's husband, Herbert, hunts rabbit and deer, which she then makes into sausage; people trade

labor for building supplies and staples; and every month, the church hands out 50-pound sacks of potatoes.

At her current job working at a gas station, Sparks doesn't have health insurance, so her mother lends her money for a doctor when one of the children gets sick. Sparks says she prefers the gas station to Lion, except that the pay's not very good. Unemployment, she says,

proved more lucrative. During the time she stayed home after leaving Lion, she explains, she could save the \$50 a week she now spends for a babysitter. Her lower earnings also forced her to give up an apartment with lots of space in a big cement dwelling—low-income housing built with government aid. For now, she has moved back to her mother's little blue house.

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### Today's news shows

- 10 a.m.: Fox News Sunday.** Topics: Texas George W. Bush and drugs, the presidential campaign, and Generation X and race relations. Guests: Republican Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania; House Majority Whip Tom DeLay, R-Texas; GOP presidential candidate Gary Bauer; David Horowitz of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, and Michael Meyers of the New York Civil Rights Commission.
- 10:30 a.m.: Face the Nation, CBS.** Topic: Republicans and the drug question. Guests: former Republican National Chairman Haley Barbour, political consultant Ralph Reed and Reps. Tillie Fowler, R-Fla., and Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.
- 10:30 a.m.: This Week, ABC.** Topics: Texas Gov. George W. Bush and drug abuse; airport delays. Guests: Republican Gov. Frank Keating of Oklahoma, former Vice-President Dan Quayle, FAA Administrator Jane Garvey and Continental Airlines Chairman and CEO Gordon Bethune.
- 11 a.m.: Meet the Press, NBC.** Topic: The 2000 election and the media's right to ask about candidates' personal histories. Guests: Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah; Rep. John Kasich, R-Ohio; Republican Gov. Gary Johnson of New Mexico; former Rep. Geraldine Ferraro, D-N.Y., and Republican presidential candidate Alan Keyes.
- Noon: Late Edition, CNN.** Topics: Turkish earthquake update, the 2000 election and evolution, morality and politics. Guests: Baki Ilkin, Turkish ambassador to the United States; Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Tom Daschle, D-S.D.; and the Revs. Jesse Jackson and Jerry Falwell.
- 12:30 p.m.: Spotlight on the News, WXYZ, ABC.** Topic: How the U.S. census can affect your life. Guests: Dwight Dean, regional director, U.S. Census Bureau; and Vince Kountz, field coordinator, Census Bureau.
- 6:30 p.m.: In Depth Detroit, WWJ-TV, CBS.** Topic: Michigan hate groups. Guests: U.S. Rep. John Conyers, D-Detroit; and Jeff Montgomery, president, Triangle Foundation.

# Anti-sweatshop campaign grows in Catholic schools

By Kimberly Edwards  
Scripps Howard News Service

**MEMPHIS, Tenn.** — A year ago in the Newark International Airport, Father Joseph Kerrigan came across an article about students in Newark's Catholic schools who were fighting unfair labor practices by making sure their uniforms did not come from sweatshops.

The Memphis priest tucked the idea away and this year, the 20 schools and 6,000 students who comprise the Catholic Diocese of Memphis school system will participate in the "Sweatshop Project."

The social justice initiative is a partnership between the schools and the U.S. Department of Labor. Its aim is to educate students about unjust work practices and monitor the conditions at factories where the uniforms are made.

"Clothes are so basic, and everybody can relate ... on a personal level unless they run around naked," said Kerrigan, associate pastor at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

"Knowing that a child could have made your clothes is like eating a meal with poison in it. We're trying to eliminate this problem and change people's buying habits by making them more aware of the issue."

High school and middle school students at Immaculate Conception are spearheading the project.

In 1998, Immaculate Conception students conducted their own anti-sweatshop campaign by going online to learn about sweatshops.

Cheri Kamler, principal of the school, said the students were so taken aback by the situation that they decided to bring postcards with information about sweatshop labor to the retail shops where they bought their clothes and shoes. They asked the stores to make sure their



Karen Pulfer Focht / Scripps Howard News Service  
**Kelsey Blackwell, 5, checks out her school uniform in a Memphis clothing store that makes its suppliers sign letters stating they are not using sweatshop labor. It's part of the diocese's social justice initiative.**

suppliers did not distribute clothes made with unlawful child labor.

Kamler said she contacted her school's supplier in Texas to find out if it abides by child labor laws.

"They sent us a lot of information on their factory and what they do," Kamler said. "The manufacturer assured us they don't abuse the law."

Along with informing the students and community about illegal shops, principals from all 20 schools will be asked to submit an inventory of garments and retailers to Labor Department investigators, who will determine if they are cut and sewn in line with federal standards. G. Harris James, an investigator for the Labor Department involved with the

project, said it is a way to identify possible sweatshops in the state.

In 1998, Labor Department investigations of major garment centers in Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York recovered more than \$2 million in back wages for nearly 6,300 workers.

In another case, a Texas sweatshop was fined \$32,750 for illegally employing nine children, seven of them younger than 14.

Kamler said the project is an important lesson in social and moral issues for the students.

"I want them to ask themselves, What would I do if I found out about the conditions where my clothes are being made?" said the principal.

CC: Gene  
Karen  
Lael  
  
Nice  
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angle!

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M. F. I.