



# SWEATSHOP

# WATCH

Connecting you to  
worker struggles in the  
garment industry!

Spring 2003 Vol. 9, No. 1

## War on Terrorism, War on Immigrants, War on Workers

After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, many in the immigrant rights community called for a period of reflection and dialogue, for respect for innocent lives and for international law, for recommitting ourselves to protecting our democratic principles, and for building a society where we can all live in dignity and peace. However, the post 9-11 climate has been one of hyped up patriotism with little discussion about the US' role as the world's dominant political, military and economic power. This in turn has led to rising xenophobia, allowing the Bush administration to pass draconian policies such as the US Patriot Act and other INS (Immigration & Naturalization Service) directives that scapegoat immigrant communities in the name of fighting terrorism. As civil liberties are being bulldozed, the rights and livelihoods of immigrants and working class people are also being whittled away.

In the US, direct attacks against immigrants began immediately after September 11<sup>th</sup> when the INS began conducting raids at US airports. According to the INS, the raids were part of an effort to curtail the illegal smuggling of undocumented immigrants. However, most arrested and detained were innocent of any such crime. Within a couple of months immigrant airport workers then came under scrutiny, when the Aviation

and Transportation Security Act was revised to require that all airport screeners be US citizens. It is estimated that nearly one-third of the 28,000 US airport screeners are immigrants, which translated into roughly 7,000 non-citizens losing their jobs.



In February 2003, millions of people marched for peace on 5 continents, including members of the Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) in San Francisco. Photo courtesy of CPA.

Additionally, the Security Act allows for civil service regulations to be suspended, meaning that the right to belong to a union previously enjoyed by federal employees is now threatened. In the spring of 2002 Operation Tarmac was adopted, an INS initiative targeting airport workers with immigration violations (including legal residents who may have had violations prior to obtaining legal status), visa overstays, or those who provided false work authorizations to obtain their job. In dozens of airports across the US, hundreds of janitors, baggage handlers, and food service workers were arrested, fined, and left unemployed.

While immigrants were vulnerable to discrimination prior to September 11<sup>th</sup>, the power of agencies such as the INS and the Border and Transportation Security Department has grown tremendously, jeopardizing the rights of immigrants. In fact, on March 1, 2003, the INS was integrated into the newly created Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Not since

### TAKE A PEEK:

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## Tell Levi's Slavery is Un-American!

### Settle the Saipan Sweatshop Lawsuit!



Levi-Strauss & Co. is the only retailer who has refused to settle the Saipan sweatshop lawsuit. On March 20, 2003, a Saipan judge will make his final review of a \$20 million settlement of the lawsuit by 26 clothing retailers and 23 Saipan garment manufacturers. While workers on Saipan continue to make just \$3.05 per hour, **Levi's CEO Philip Marineau saw his pay soar to \$25.1 million**, nearly 15 times what he earned in 2001. 26 other retailers have agreed to pay back wages to Saipan workers and help end sweatshop abuse on the Pacific island, yet Levi's stands alone in failing to uphold Saipan workers' rights. Call or write Levi's and urge them to settle the Saipan sweatshop lawsuit:

Philip Marineau, CEO  
Levi-Strauss & Co.  
1155 Battery Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
1-800-USA LEVI

For more information on Saipan sweatshops, visit [www.sweatshopwatch.org/marianas](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/marianas).

## SW box

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#### **Mission Statement:**

Sweatshop Watch is a coalition of labor, community, civil rights, immigrant rights, women's, religious & student organizations, and individuals committed to eliminating sweatshop conditions in the global garment industry. We believe that workers should be earning a living wage in a safe and decent working environment, and that those who benefit the most from the exploitation of sweatshop workers must be held accountable.

**Sweatshop Watch's** newsletter is published quarterly. Membership dues, which include a subscription, are \$20.

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Commentaries, articles, and letters are welcome and should be accompanied with your name, address, and telephone or email.

### Updates

Sweatshop Watch is pleased to welcome **Deirdre O'Boyle** as our Operations Manager and **Blinker Punsalan Wood** as our Campaign Coordinator. Deirdre began as a volunteer in August 2001 when she designed Sweatshop Watch t-shirts. Blinker recently worked at the UCLA Labor Center and brings organizing and research skills to our organization.

The Garment Worker Center is pleased to welcome **Helen Chien** as Worker Organizer and **Stephen Miller** as Office Manager. Helen was a doctor in China and began working as a garment worker when she immigrated to Los Angeles. Stephen is a co-founder of Regeneration TV and most recently worked at the Red Cross.



# "To **be** ...or not to **be**" a Sweatshop?

Los Angeles garment workers, Sweatshop Watch and the Garment Worker Center launched a new campaign to demand accountability from the high-end, women's retailer - bebe.

"To be or not to be a sweatshop?" That is the question garment workers, human-rights advocates and community supporters are asking Manny Mashouf, the founder, president and Chief Executive Officer of bebe after his company was exposed using sweatshop labor in California. bebe, a high-end women's clothing retailer, first opened for business in 1976 in San Francisco, California. The company caters to women from ages 18-35 and designs their clothes to appeal to affluent, urban trendsetters. The bebe label is worn by dozens of motion picture and television celebrities and now is a multi-million dollar company with over 170 stores throughout the United States and Canada. Unfortunately, bebe's tremendous financial success does not benefit the workers who sew their clothes. A new campaign calling for accountability and justice hopes to make that change.



Protesters march outside bebe's Santa Monica store.  
Photo by Sweatshop Watch, 2003.

In the summer of 2001, bebe was caught using sweatshop labor in the production of their garments. Twelve monolingual, Chinese immigrants were subjected to illegal and oppressive conditions while working inside two factories housed in El Monte, California (near Los Angeles). Inside these factories the workers assembled clothing exclusively for bebe. The retailer had long-standing contracts with both of the factories that employed the Chinese workers - Apex Factory and S&W Manufacturers. Bebe even had their own representatives at these locations daily to oversee the quality and production of their clothes, but they still refuse to take responsibility for the abuse these workers endured.

While bebe executives chose to look the other way, the garment workers toiled 10-12 hours a day, six days a week. The amount they were paid was changed arbitrarily. The workers' timecards and piece-rate records were falsified to show fewer hours and less work than was actually done. Several workers endured frequent verbal harassment and humiliation by the factory management. When they stood up against these abuses and asked for their owed wages, they were fired. One factory owner tried to ensure that they would not find work in the garment industry again, by sending their pictures to the managers of other clothing factories throughout Los Angeles.

Left without other alternatives, the workers decided collectively to pursue legal action against bebe and the garment factories. Within a six-month span, twelve garment workers filed two federal lawsuits against bebe asking for the unpaid wages legally owed to them. Their case is being represented by the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, and a trial date for one of the cases will be set sometime in the Spring. At press time, bebe is washing their hands from any responsibility and has not offered a reasonable settlement.

However, they have established a pattern of selecting, using and perpetuating the use of sweatshops in the production of their clothes.

This practice has sparked a worker-led campaign calling for bebe to take responsibility for the workers who sew their clothes. Since the beginning of the year workers, students and community supporters have united to apply pressure on bebe by launching the "to be...or not to be...a sweatshop campaign." Among other activities, campaign supporters have sent postcards to Mashouf, picketed

outside bebe's streetside locations, distributed flyers to shoppers and collected petitions. On February 1, 2003, 300 people joined a march in Santa Monica, California organized by Sweatshop Watch, the Garment Worker Center and the United Students Against Sweatshops. The march called for bebe and several other retailers to respect the workers who sew their clothes and end the use of sweatshop labor. The campaign against bebe is building momentum. New organizing materials and the bebe campaign manual is now available on the Sweatshop Watch website [www.sweatshopwatch.org/bebe](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/bebe), and word is spreading about the abuse of low-wage, immigrant workers in the factories bebe uses to sew their clothes.

While the voice of workers is ignored, bebe reports **net sales of \$316.4 million and gross profit of \$142.4 million during the 2002 fiscal year.** bebe spends millions to create a public image of sophistication and glamour trying to cover up the abuse of basic human rights. It is a really simple question. "To be or not to be a sweatshop?" As conscientious consumers, we will be organizing, watching and waiting for bebe's answer.

For more info., visit [sweatshopwatch.org/bebe](http://sweatshopwatch.org/bebe).

## War—Continued

World War II has such massive government reorganization taken place in the name of “domestic security.” The DHS merger of some 22 agencies, including the INS, will create the largest standing armed force in the country, with 70,000 armed agents for border and interior immigration enforcement. Immigrant and refugee rights groups warned of the dangers to our civil and human rights DHS would pose without effective oversight and accountability to our communities. Catherine Tactaquin, Director of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights declared, “Stopping the war abroad means upholding our communities’ rights to peace, justice, and safety at home.”

### Security Used to Support Union-Busting

Amidst new policies, old weapons are also being brought out and sharpened in the current “War on Terrorism.” This fall, fighting to negotiate a contract that would prevent new technology from displacing their jobs, Westcoast dockworkers found themselves shut out of negotiations and forced off the job. The dockworkers maintained a picket on the docks until President Bush ordered them back to work, invoking the anti-labor Taft Hartley Act and declaring them a threat to national safety.

Also, Social Security No-Match letters have increased by 800% since September 11th. The Social Security Administration sends No-Match letters to employers when they notice a discrepancy between Social Security numbers and employees’ names within their records. Discrepancies can often be attributed to typos and are not necessarily an indication of the use of false records. In fact, the Administration explains that receipt of a letter does not give an employer authority to take adverse action against an employee with a mismatch. Unfortunately, many employers are not heeding the advice, and reports of workers being fired or suspended because of a No-Match letter are numerous. This is heavily influenced by the fact that the IRS will fine an employer for not responding to a No-Match letter. In fact, by 2004, employers will be fined per mismatched name. Social Security No-Match letters can therefore encourage unscrupulous employers to discriminate against immigrant workers.

The struggle of the Assi Supermarket workers in Los Angeles’ Koreatown community is a clear example of how the No-Match letter has been used against workers who attempt to organize for better working conditions. Since March of 2002, the Assi workers have been fighting for an independent union, hoping to improve low wages and racial discrimination in their workplace. However, in August 2002, 60 workers active in the union campaign were placed on “indefinite suspension” after their names were listed on a No-Match letter. The workers have been without stable employment since being suspended, however, their fight continues for a union.

### Weak Economy Threatens Jobs and Social Services

Working class and immigrant communities are also contending with a federal budget that clearly prioritizes military spending and homeland security at the expense of their daily well-being. Bush’s 2003 budget proposal allocates \$379 billion for defense, nearly \$150 billion more than for Medicaid and healthcare and \$300 billion more than for education! His proposed spending package, on the other hand, calls for major cuts to social programs that directly affect the poor and working class. Funding for proposed Title I programs, which provide money to low-income public schools, was slashed nearly in half, for example. Despite the fact that most states are currently struggling with huge deficits, which are compounded by the need to fund local homeland security measures, the spending package also requires a cut of nearly \$6 billion in aid to states.

In Los Angeles, previously reduced federal funding led to the closure of 11 clinics, which served low-wage people, immigrants, and seniors. California’s budget crisis has led to a hiring freeze within various state agencies, including the Labor Commissioner’s Office. The inability of this office to hire more staff to inspect worksites and process workers’ claims of labor violations has hurt an agency that already struggles with very poor bilingual capabilities and huge case backlogs.

The threat of war has also worsened a previously shaky economy, pushing the nation’s unemployment rate to 6% in recent months. Globally, cautious stock investors and consumers have impacted export-oriented countries dependent on US demand for goods, causing job loss abroad. *The Washington Post* recently reported that worldwide, the number of working poor has risen to 550 million. Joblessness and poverty both in the U.S. and globally are worsened by the fact that the social safety net is being eliminated through structural adjustment programs, scarce or improperly channeled resources, and privatization.

### Millions Take Action for Peace

Clearly, the US’ “War on Terrorism,” waged hypocritically in the name of peace and national security, has resulted in attacks on immigrants, civil liberties, workers, and is now being waged against the people of Iraq. However, a peace movement is underway with many positive results. Millions have taken to the streets to protest a war in Iraq in dozens of countries around the world. Many unions, representing millions of workers, in an unprecedented display of anti-war sentiment, have signed resolutions denouncing a war with Iraq. More than 20 cities across the U.S. have passed similar resolutions, and others are also passing resolutions against the Patriot Act. Join these efforts and say “No War in Iraq!” and “No More Attacks on Immigrants!”

For more info. on anti-war efforts & post 9-11 policies, visit:

- International ANSWER Coalition: [www.internationalanswer.org](http://www.internationalanswer.org)
- Nat. Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights: [www.nnirr.org](http://www.nnirr.org)
- American Civil Liberties Union: [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org)

# Jordan's Sweatshops: the Carrot or the Stick of US Policy?

Amman, Jordan — Syed Adil Ali walks across the ground floor of the two story Silver Planet textile mill outside the Jordanian capital, Amman. The Pakistani national points at a multi-colored pile of clothes ready to be shipped to the United States.

“This is an order for Wal-Mart,” he says. “It’s shorts. Boy’s shorts. We export for all the big US retailers. Target, Wal-Mart and JC Penny.”

While the world focuses on a potential war on Iraq and the future of country’s vast untapped oil resources, US companies of a different kind are rapidly extending their influence throughout the Arab world. Under the terms of its 1994 peace agreement with Israel and its newly inked Free Trade Agreement with the United States, Iraq’s neighbor Jordan has seen a massive increase in clothing manufacturing for the US market.

## Qualified Industrial Zones

Three years ago, not a single textile mill in Jordan exported to the big US retailers. Today, there are more than 40,000 workers, toiling in more than 60 factories producing solely for the US market. Washington inserted a provision into Jordan’s 1994 peace agreement with Israel giving Jordan permission to export products duty free to the United States, provided at least eight percent of their industrial inputs come from Israel. These special factories are located in Jordan’s Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs).

“The QIZs are very important to the American government,” says Zaid Marar, spokesperson for the Al-Tajamout QIZ which houses the Silver Planet factory. “Jordan is a buffer state between Israel and its hostile Arab neighbors so it’s very important that Jordan’s economy be with linked the US economy.”

“Jordan is a strategic tool for both the US and Israel,” Marar says. And yet, Jordanians own almost none of the factories. Most are owned and operated by entrepreneurs from China, Taiwan, Korea, India, Pakistan or the Philippines who import workers from overseas.

Of the some 40,000 workers employed in these Qualified Industrial Zones, fewer than half are Jordanian. Ninety percent are women under the age of 22, and almost all of them pay the minimum wage, about \$3.50 a day.

Factory owner Syed Adil Ali says his factory only contracts Sri Lankan girls.

“They are very peace minded girls,” he says. “I found some kind of problem with the boys. They made some kind of union, some kind of disturbance in the factory. So we prefer the girls.”

There is no union at Syed’s factory which earns more than \$2 million a year in profits. He is planning on adding a third floor and hundreds more workers.

## Poor Living and Working Conditions

Zaid Marar drives his blue BMW around the Al-Tajamout

Qualified Industrial Zone. The public relations official displays the living quarters for the thousands of foreign workers housed at the industrial park. He says the dormitories comply with the minimum human rights standards permitted by US retail giants.

“There are 80 people per floor, ten rooms in each,” Marar explains. “There are eight people per room and five and a half square feet of space for each according to J.C. Penny’s specifications.”

Syed Adil Ali’s workforce of 600 is housed in one of these army-barracks style buildings. They are required to live on the factory grounds — far away from the city. Because of their sixty five-hour workweek, the workers rarely leave the complex. The company provides for their basic needs. For most of these workers, the company even supplies their only source of food and drinking water.

## Immigrant Workers Have Few Rights

Close to 50 Indian men stand outside one of Amman’s main police stations where they tried to file a complaint against their employer. Apparently their grievance fell on deaf ears.

One of the workers shakes his head. “Jordan is very bad,” he says. “(There are) no rules, no factory rules.”

The workers say their boss at the Al-Tajamout Qualified Industrial Zone refused to pay them for three months, refused to feed them for a week and then fled Jordan for the Philippines. Their factory, Tamashi Industries, manufactured the Simply Basic line of children’s clothing for Wal-Mart.

“Three months no pay, no food,” screams one of the workers. “Bad, bad, bad, very bad.”

The workers make significantly more than they would in India. Here, the average wage in a garment factory is about \$3.50 a day, compared to about \$2.50 a day in India. But in Jordan, the workers have no rights.

Factory owners work with agents in South and East Asia to locate workers interested in coming to work in Jordan. They apply to the Jordanian Ministry of Labor for visas which restrict them to working only for the factories that bring them. Then, they buy the worker a one-way ticket to Amman.

When the employer is finished with the worker, he buys the worker a ticket home. When employees try to start a union, as 120 Bangladeshis did last month, they are summarily deported.

Because the owner fled the country, the Indian workers from Tamashi Industries are stuck in Jordan with no work permit and no way to get home.

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## Strike by Garment Workers in Puebla, Mexico Sets Off International Campaign Against PUMA

On January 13, 2003, 190 garment workers at the Matamoros Garment factory in Puebla, Mexico struck for 11 hours to demand better working conditions and an independent, democratic union. This brave act of defiance against their employer, its company-selected, government-dominated union, the local government, and global corporations like PUMA and Cintas—which contract with the factory—set off an international pressure campaign to demand that Matamoros Garment, PUMA, Cintas, and the Mexican government respect the workers' right to form an independent union. And it demonstrates that when workers around the world organize to demand better working conditions and democratic unions, the international anti-sweatshop movement will use its strength and resources to help them win power on the job.

Garment factories in the Mexican state of Puebla captured global attention after workers at the Kukdong (now Mexmode) factory staged a similar strike in 2001. These workers eventually formed the first worker-controlled garment union in the state. Puebla is home to tens of thousands of garment workers in Mexico, which is now the No. 2 exporter of garments to the U.S. In contrast to the economic success of the garment industry in the state are stark labor conditions and state authorities that are notorious for their willingness to use heavy-handed repression against labor movements. Two years ago, a similar demand by Matamoros Garment workers for back pay ended when police raided the peaceful protest, leaving a number of workers wounded and many locked out and never paid.

Matamoros Garment is located in Izúcar de Matamoros, in southwest Puebla. Although PUMA had audited Matamoros Garment on September 11, 2002, "to ensure that strict social and environmental policies are practiced" and had declared that working conditions and employee relations were "satisfactory," workers felt differently. Workers stated that they walked out of the factory because of problems such as: 1) having to work three weeks without pay, 2) illegally low wages, 3) forced overtime, 4) being locked in the factory, 5) verbal abuse from management personnel, 6) unhealthy cafeteria conditions, 7) a lack of transportation to and from work, and 8) the denial of freedom of association due to a protection contract signed between the factory and the government-controlled union, Sindicato Francisco Villa of the CTM federation.

Five days following the workers' strike, PUMA removed all of its labels from the factory citing "production delays." This set into motion heightened management repression of worker organizing, specifically threatening the workers' new independent union Sindicato Independiente de Trabajadores de la Empresa Matamoros Garment (SITEMAG). Due to international pressure, two weeks later PUMA conducted a company audit to investigate the charges

that it had purposely stopped production in retaliation for the workers' actions. And once again PUMA attempted to re-write history, including denying that workers weren't paid three weeks' wages and even asserting that the company-selected union was "overwhelmingly" supported by the workforce.

For most of February, at least 12 different men have followed SITEMAG leaders home from work and union meetings. These leaders, the majority of whom are women in their twenties, are quite frightened by this intimidation and demand that the harassment stop. SITEMAG leaders and the CAT have met with government officials to denounce this harassment and intimidation.

On February 19, 2002, the CAT released "The Crisis Facing the Matamoros Garment Workers: CAT Investigation Challenges Company Findings," a response to several public statements released by PUMA. Then, on February 24, representatives of the CAT and the European Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) met with PUMA in Germany to restate the Matamoros Garment workers' demands, asking that PUMA 1) place new orders with Matamoros Garment, 2) agree to independent monitoring of its Corporate Code of Conduct, and 3) create the space for fair, secret ballot union elections. The next day, the CAT and the CCC held a press conference demanding the same. Later that day, PUMA agreed to place new orders and discuss independent verification of its reintegration into the factory. The workers and their international supporters are still awaiting proof of PUMA's intentions.

### What You Can Do!

The goals of the Matamoros Garment workers are to get PUMA to put work back in the factory and agree to independent verification. They are also looking to put pressure on other brands sewn in the factory, including Cintas, One, Baby Phat, Blue Threads, & Love Match. Furthermore, the Puebla State government & the local Izúcar de Matamoros government need to live up to their responsibility to protect the citizen workers of Matamoros Garment, denounce the harassment of union leaders, & legally recognize the workers' independent union if their right to freedom of association is truly to be recognized. Contact PUMA & the Puebla labor board to support the workers' demands.

- PUMA A.G., Reiner Hengstmann, Global Head of Environmental & Social Affairs, Fax: 011-49-9132-81-2246, Email: reiner.hengstmann@puma.com
- Junta Local de Conciliación y Arbitraje, 7 Norte 205, Colonia Centro, Puebla, Puebla, México, Telephone: (011) 222-232-2551

*By William Kramer, UCLA Labor Center, Los Angeles, CA, in collaboration with El Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador (CAT), Puebla, Mexico. Photo of Matamoros Garment Factory, courtesy of CAT. Full article at [www.sweatshopwatch.org](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org).*

## Jordan—Continued

“I want to go back to India,” one of the workers says standing in front of the police station, “But I have no ticket, no ticket. No work permit to work.”

### Free Trade Carrot and Sanctions Stick

Jordan’s Textile Trade Union has no problem with the current situation. The union’s President, Falthalla Omrani flew to Washington for the Free Trade Agreement’s signing ceremony. “You have to start somewhere,” he says. “Jordan needs foreign investment. We need factories.” Analysts here say that for decades the government has controlled unions here, with more militant activists languishing in prison for years.

Overwhelmingly, though, Jordanians oppose both the Free Trade Agreement with the United States and the peace treaty with Israel. Most Jordanians would like to bring back the trading regime that was in place before George Bush Sr. declared war on Iraq in 1991. Before the Gulf War sanctions, Jordan ran a brisk \$1.2 billion trade with Iraq. Now, that trade has been cut by more than half. The official unemployment rate is 20 percent. Most observers think the real rate is much higher.

In the Bacca Palestinian refugee camp outside Amman, locally owned factories that used to sell to Iraq are shuttered, their work-force laid off, their equipment for sale.

Navri Sarisi is President of a community center at the Bacca Camp. Like many people here, he believes the United States is trying to set up a relationship between Israel and Jordan similar to the one between United States and Mexico. He notes the minimum wage in Israel is eight times the minimum wage in Jordan.

“The trade agreements came by force of the United States,” he says, “and the best example are these Qualified Industrial Zones. The Israelis are investing money in very cheap labor where people work long hours. They are getting free access to the U.S. market duty free and customs free and this contributed largely to the collapse of the locally based industry.”

When the US launched its war on Iraq in 1991, Jordan took a massive hit. King Hussein refused to support the American invasion and in retaliation the Bush Senior Administration cut off all US aid. With trade with Iraq a fraction of what it once was, the country has been forced to turn to the West — to Israel and the United States — for economic partners. Critics worry that this comes at a high political cost.

“The government (of King Abdullah) is trying to shift Jordan from a pro-Arab country to a country that gives in to what Bush wants and what (Israeli Prime Minister Ariel) Sharon.” says leading opposition politician Laith Spilat.

*By Aaron Glantz. Full length article available at CorpWatch [www.corpwatch.org](http://www.corpwatch.org) dated February 26, 2003. Aaron Glantz, Producer of Free Speech Radio News, is currently reporting on the war on Iraq from Turkey and Jordan.*

## Campaign News

### El Monte Slave Sweatshop Workers Finally Get Green Cards

Last Fall, the 71 Thai immigrants who were freed over seven years ago from slave-like working conditions near Los Angeles were granted permanent residency by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. When notified that she will finally receive her green card, Sirilac Rongsakare said “I am happy, happy, happy” outside a Los Angeles garment factory where she now works. The workers’ struggle ignited activism around domestic sweatshops. The mostly women workers were forced to sew garments for as little as 60 cents an hour in a compound surrounded by razor-wire and armed guards. After being freed, the workers began a legal battle to recover their lost wages and win damages for violations of their civil rights. After nearly four years of litigation, the workers won a \$4 million settlement from several of the companies whose garments they sewed. For more on the El Monte workers’ struggle, visit [www.sweatshopwatch.org](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org).

### American Samoa Sweatshop Owner Found Guilty

The highly anticipated trial of Kil Soo Lee, owner of the Daewoosa Samoa garment factory in American Samoa, came to an end in February 2002 when a federal judge found Lee guilty of abusing over 200 workers from Vietnam and China. The workers faced slave-like conditions, beatings and near starvation, while producing clothes for major U.S. retailers like J.C. Penney and Sears. U.S. officials hailed the verdict as a victory in confronting human trafficking. The former Daewoosa Samoa workers have achieved justice in the criminal prosecution of the sweatshop owner. Lee will be sentenced in June 2002 and faces sentences of up to 20 years for several charges of involuntary servitude and other offenses. For more on the Daewoosa Samoa workers’ struggle, visit [www.sweatshopwatch.org/somoa](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/somoa).

## Resources

• **Made in Southern Africa** is a new report by the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO) in the Netherlands and the Trade Union Research Project (TURP) in South Africa, which documents the findings of a two-year research project that investigated garment industry conditions in Swaziland, Botswana, Mauritius, Madagascar, and Lesotho. Available at [www.cleanclothes.org](http://www.cleanclothes.org).

• **Low Pay, High Risk: State Models for Advancing Immigrant Workers' Rights** is a new publication by the National Employment Law Project, which provides examples of how states and localities can enact legislation and policies that benefit low-wage immigrant workers, including undocumented workers. Available at [www.nelp.org/pub229.pdf](http://www.nelp.org/pub229.pdf).

• **Voices from the Margins: Immigrant Workers' Perceptions of Health and Safety in the Workplace** is a new report by the UCLA Occupational Safety & Health Program, which studied immigrant workers in 6 industries in Southern California and documents their challenges and provides policy recommendations. Available at [www.iosh.ucla.edu](http://www.iosh.ucla.edu) or 310-794-5964.



**SWEATSHOP WATCH**<sup>TM</sup>

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## Join Sweatshop Watch!

Sweatshop Watch is a coalition of labor, community, civil rights, immigrant rights, women's, religious & student organizations, and individuals committed to eliminating sweatshop conditions in the global garment industry. We believe that workers should be earning a living wage in a safe and decent working environment, and that those who benefit the most from the exploitation of sweatshop workers must be held accountable. Please join us by becoming a member. Either send in this form with a check or make a contribution from our web site [www.sweatshopwatch.org](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org) with your credit card.

Yes! I want to join Sweatshop Watch. Enclosed is my \$20 membership.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable and send to:

SWEATSHOP WATCH

310 Eighth St., Suite 303, Oakland CA 94607