



# SHEPHERDS SPEAK

## VOICES THAT CHALLENGE

Volume 5, Issue 6

THE NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

July 2007

*May Peace Prevail  
Upon the Earth*



UN

*International Day  
Of Peace  
September 21*

### Inside this issue:

From Sex Workers to Restaurant Workers, Global Sex Trade Is Growing	2-4 & 8
---	---------

From The National Coordinator	5
-------------------------------	---

Legislative Update	6-7
--------------------	-----

## Farewell Alison Prevost

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the departure of our lobbyist Alison Prevost. Alison has held the position of Lobbyist at the National Advocacy Center since September of 2002. She has done faith based advocacy using the lens of Catholic Social teaching, and Good Shepherd Spirituality.

Social justice has been her passion since she was a child. Nurtured by her early religious experiences as a volunteer in her church and civic organizations in her home town, she matured into an able spokeswoman for the poor and disadvantaged.

We will miss the enthusiasm, clarity and skill she brought to bear when calling our Good Shepherd People and Communities into action.



Alison Leigh Prevost

Alison has accepted a position at American University in Washington, DC. She will be the Project Manager for The Center For Democracy and Election Management. In this position she will be working on US election reform.

Please join the National Advocacy Center Staff in wishing Alison the best in her new position.

## Welcome Sr. Carol McClenon



The National Advocacy Center welcomes Sr. Carol McClenon to the staff.

Sr. Carol will be filling in for Sr. Gayle Lwanga, the National Coordinator, as she

returns to the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN to do research and write her dissertation.

Sr. Carol's firsthand experience working with women who have been trafficked will serve her well as she does advocacy on this important issue.

## From Sex Workers to Restaurant Workers...

*A thriving commerce in human beings is taking place behind the facade of most major cities and towns in the U.S. and worldwide. Activists are pushing back, but they need reinforcements.*

*This article is an excerpt from David Batstone's new book, [Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade -- and How We Can Fight It](#). Learn more about the book and the campaign it has launched.*

Twenty-seven million slaves exist in our world today. Girls and boys, women and men of all ages are forced to toil in the rug loom sheds of Nepal, sell their bodies in the brothels of Rome, break rocks in the quarries of Pakistan, and fight wars in the jungles of Africa.

Go behind the façade in any major town or city in the world today and you are likely to find a thriving commerce in human beings. You may even find slavery in your own backyard. For several years my wife and I dined regularly at an Indian restaurant located near our home in the San Francisco Bay area. Unbeknownst to us, the staff at Pasand Madras Indian Cuisine who cooked our curries, delivered them to our table, and washed our dishes were slaves. Restaurant owner Lakireddy Reddy and several members of his family had used fake visas and false identities to traffic perhaps hundreds of adults and children into the United States from India. He forced the laborers to work long hours for minimal wages, money that they returned to him as rent to live in one of his apartments. Reddy threatened to turn them into the authorities as illegal aliens if they tried to escape.

The Reddy case is not an anomaly. As many as 800,000 are trafficked across international borders annually, and up to 17,500 new victims are trafficked across our borders each year, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. More than 30,000 additional slaves are transported through the U.S. on their way to other international destinations. Attorneys from the U.S. Department of Justice have

prosecuted 91 slave-trade cases in cities across the United States and in nearly every state of the nation.



Like the slaves who came to America's shores 200 years ago, today's slaves are not free to pursue their own destinies. They are coerced to perform work for the personal gain of those who subjugate them. If they try to escape the clutches of their masters, modern slaves risk personal violence or reprisals to their families.

President George W. Bush spoke of the global crisis of the slave trade before the United Nations General Assembly in September 2003. "Each year 800,000 to 900,000 human beings are bought, sold, or forced across the world's borders," he said. "The trade in human beings for any purpose must not be allowed to thrive in our time." Of those individuals extracted out of impoverished countries and trafficked across international borders, 80 percent are female and 50 percent are children, according to the U.S. Department of State's "2005 Trafficking in Persons Report."

The commerce in human beings today rivals drug trafficking and the illegal arms trade for the top criminal activity on the planet. The slave trade sits at number three on the list but is closing the gap. The FBI projects that the slave trade generates \$9.5 billion in revenue each year, according to the U.S. Department of State's "2004 Trafficking in Persons Report." The International Labour Office, in the 2005 report "A Global Alliance Against Forced Labor," estimates that figure to be closer to

## ...the Global Sex Trade is Growing.

a whopping \$32 billion annually.

"Ten Million Children Exploited for Domestic Labor" -- this title for a 2004 U.N. study hardly needs explaining. The U.N.'s surveys found 700,000 children forced into domestic labor in Indonesia alone, with staggering numbers as well in Brazil (559,000), Pakistan (264,000), Haiti (250,000), and Kenya (200,000). The U.N. report indicates that children remain in servitude for long stretches of time because no one identifies their enslavement: "These youngsters are usually 'invisible' to their communities, toiling for long hours with little or no pay and regularly deprived of the chance to play or go to school." UNICEF estimates that 1 million children are forced today to sell their bodies to sexual exploiters. In a single country, Uganda, nearly 40,000 children have been kidnapped and violently turned into child soldiers or sex slaves.

We may not even realize how each one of us drives the demand during the course of a normal day. Kevin Bales, a pioneer in the fight against modern slavery, expresses well those commercial connections: "Slaves in Pakistan may have made the shoes you are wearing and the carpet you stand on. Slaves in the Caribbean may have put sugar in your kitchen and toys in the hands of your children. In India they may have sewn the shirt on your back and polished the ring on your finger."

Widespread poverty and social inequality ensure a pool of recruits as deep as the ocean. Parents in desperate straits may sell their children or at least be susceptible to scams that will allow the slave trader to take control over the lives of their sons and daughters. Young women in vulnerable communities are more likely to take a risk on a job offer in a faraway location. The poor are apt to accept a loan that the slave trader can later manipulate to steal their freedom. All of these paths carry unsuspecting recruits into the supply chains of slavery.

"The supply side of the equation is particularly bleak," says Sen. Sam Brownback of Kansas. "While there are 100,000 places in the developed world for refugee resettlement per year, 50 million refugees and displaced persons exist worldwide today. This ready reservoir of the stateless presents an opportunity ripe for exploitation by human traffickers."

During the era of the American plantation economy, the slaveholder considered slave ownership an investment. The supply of new recruits was limited. The cost of extracting and transporting the slave, and ensuring that they would be serviceable by the time they reached their destination, was considerable. In the modern slave trade, the glut of slaves and the capacity to move them great distances in a relatively short period of time drastically alters the economics of slave ownership. Kevin Bales' description of modern slaves as "disposable people" profoundly fits: Just like used batteries, once the slave exhausts his or her usefulness, another can be procured at no great expense.

Notwithstanding these emerging trends in global markets, traditional modes of slavery also persist. Bonded labor has existed for centuries and continues to be the most common form of slavery in the world today. In a typical scenario, an individual falls under the control of a wealthy patron after taking a small loan. The patron adds egregious rates of interest and inflated expenses to the original principal so that the laborer finds it impossible to repay. Debt slaves may spend their entire lives in service to a single slaveholder, and their "obligation" may be passed on to their children. Of the 27 million people worldwide held captive and exploited for profit today, the Free the Slaves organization estimates that at least 15 million are bonded slaves in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

## From Sex Workers to Restaurant Workers, the Global Slave Trade Is Growing

Cont'd from pg. 4

In my journey to monitor the rise of modern global slavery, I had prepared myself to end up in the depths of depression. To be honest, I made some unpleasant stops there. But my journey did not end at despair. The prime reason: I met a heroic ensemble of abolitionists who simply refuse to relent. I felt like I had gone back in time and had the great privilege of sharing a meal with a Harriet Tubman or a William Wilberforce or a Frederick Douglass. Like the abolitionists of old, these modern heroes do not expend their energy handicapping the odds stacked against the antislavery movement. They simply refuse to accept a world where one individual can be held as the property of another.

Kru Nam is one of those abolitionists who operate on the front lines in the fight against sex slavery. She is a painter with a university degree in art who launched a project to reach street kids in Chiang Mai, the second largest town in northern Thailand. Once she turned the kids loose with paintbrushes, they created a series of disturbing images that added up to a horror story.

Kru Nam soon realized that most of the kids did not come from Thailand. Most came from Burma, with a sprinkling of Laotians, Vietnamese, and Cambodians tossed in the mix. The Burmese boys spoke of a well-dressed Thai gentleman who had visited their village in the south of Burma. Accompanying him was a 14-year-old Burmese boy who wore fine-tailored clothes and spoke Thai fluently. The man told parents that he was offering scholarships for young boys to attend school back in Thailand. "Look how well this child from your region is doing," he said, pointing to his young companion. "If you let me take your son back to Chiang Mai, I will do the same for him." Many families agreed to let their sons go with the Thai man. Once they reached Chiang Mai, the Thai man immediately sold them to owners of sex bars and brothels.

*Imagine we lived in rural Tennessee in 1855 and Harriet Tubman came to our door, asking us to join the Underground Railroad.*

The boys living on the streets were the lucky ones; they had escaped. They told Kru Nam that many more boys remained captive. Her blood boiled. She could not stand by and do nothing.

Kru Nam did not exactly have a plan when she marched into the sex bar for her first raid. Only her mission was clear: rescue as many of the young boys as she could find. One by one she approached a table where a boy sat and calmly said, "Let's go, I'm taking you out of here." Several moments later, she was leading six little boys out the door and to her safe house in Chiang Mai.

Kru Nam made several more impromptu raids. Eventually, owners put the word out that they would kill her if she walked into their bars. Deploying a fresh strategy, she organized street teams to scour the night market of Chiang Mai and connect with young children recently off the bus from the northern Thai-Burmese border. Recruiters for the sex bars also trolled the streets on the hunt for vulnerable kids. It became a life-and-death contest to find them first.

One day it struck Kru Nam that if she moved upstream before the kids hit Chiang Mai she would have an edge over the recruiters. So she moved about 40 miles north to the border town of Mae Sai, a major thoroughfare for foot traffic between Burma and Thailand.

In Mae Sai she set up a shelter to take in kids on the run. Nearly 60 boys and girls today find safe refuge each night at Kru Nam's shelter. She has had to move her safe house several times. Neighbors on each occasion have forced her out; they do not want "these dirty kids" living on their block. So Kru Nam purchased a block of land some 15 miles outside of Mae Sai. She does not have the money she needs to buy a proper residence, so for the time being Kru

Cont'd pg. 8

## From the National Coordinator Justice, Peace and Solidarity in the Americas and the Caribbean



Good Shepherd Justice and Peace Contacts for the Americas and the Caribbean gathered in San Cristobel, Guatemala May 13th to 19th, hosted by Sr. Sidney Fallas, Central America Unit Leader and Sr. Marta Iris Lopez, Guatemala Leader.

The group gathered in order to look at justice and peace journeys as units, regions, and finally as the larger region of the Americas and Caribbean.

Sisters and Good Shepherd People participated in discussions and exercises led by Sr. Clare Nolan, Good Shepherd NGO-UN Representative and Sr. Shalini Podimattam, Good Shepherd International Office for Justice, Peace and Solidarity in Mission (JPSM Office).

One of the meeting outcomes was the formation of a



new Regional Secretariat for Justice, Peace and Solidarity in Mission Team for the Americas. Members of the team are: Sr. Aurea Marques, Recife Unit Leader, Sr. Ines Lopez, Chile, Sr. Graciela Menezes Perera, Argentina-Uruguay, Sr. Deborah Isaacs, Canada, and Dr. Roland Jorge Veliz, Bolivia.



We also had the opportunity to visit an indigenous village where the local Good Shepherd Sisters lived and ministered to the

people of Chimaltenango, Guatemala.

The Sisters have a feeding program for mothers and children. Every day they serve a nourishing meal of meat, vegetables and rice. The sisters also have a ministry to women who are prostituted.

The women receive counseling at a local clinic in the village. Sister Marta Iris also said that the sisters visit a



project where women weave cloth.

The poverty of Chimaltenango was crushing. Most



of the houses in the village had no electricity or running water. The group was struck by the affection that the women of the village had for the sisters who lived with them.

## Legislative Update by Alison Prevost

### Appropriations Bills Move Forward

Since the House and Senate passed a budget agreement in May, work on the annual appropriations bills has gotten underway. The House has moved more quickly than the Senate. It has already passed nine of eleven bills out of committee and six of these on the House floor, while the Senate has yet to consider an appropriations bill on the floor. In contrast to the significant cuts of recent years and those proposed in the President's budget, this year's appropriations bills include some very modest funding increases.

Although different in some details, the House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bills both include increases for community health, children's programs, mental health, community services, and a number of education programs. Many of these "increases," however, simply undo previous cuts. Modest increases have also been included in housing, juvenile justice, and VAWA appropriations.

Despite the need for this new funding, President Bush has threatened to veto any appropriations bill that exceeds his funding requests and some conservatives are mounting an effort to sustain a potential veto. While the President continues to accuse Congress of "overspending," it is important to note that most of the extra funding provided by Congress is needed simply to prevent cuts and maintain current service levels, which themselves are inadequate. A showdown between the President and Congress is possible before the end of the fiscal year (Sept 30th) and will likely force Congress to again rely on continuing resolutions to provide extra time to complete all of the appropriations bills.

### Housing

For the first time in many years, there is a lot of

action in Congress on housing issues thanks to the leadership of Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA), the new chairman of the House Financial Services Committee. This year the House has already passed bills to reform housing finance agencies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (H.R. 1427) and the Federal Housing Administration (H.R. 1852)—both of which include new investments in affordable housing for low-income families. In addition, the House recently passed legislation to reform the Section 8 Housing voucher program that includes the authorization for the first new vouchers in many years.

The most recent development was the introduction by Chairman Frank, along with 16 bipartisan co-sponsors, of the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act of 2007 (H.R. 2985) on June 28<sup>th</sup>. This legislation would provide a dedicated source of funding to produce, preserve and rehabilitate 1.5 million units over the next 10 years that are affordable primarily for extremely low income people and help begin to address the affordable housing crisis faced by low-income people in our country.

While the Senate has yet to take up any significant housing legislation, the productivity of the House is generating significant momentum for much needed progress on affordable housing in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress.

### State Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization

After months of negotiations, the Senate Finance Committee released an outline of a bipartisan agreement on SCHIP reauthorization the week of July 9<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, this agreement falls short of what many advocates have been promoting as it provides only \$35 billion in new funding, fails to expand coverage to legal pregnant women and immigrant children, and would likely cover less



## Legislative Update Cont'd

than 3 million of the currently uninsured children.

A Finance Committee mark-up is scheduled for July 19<sup>th</sup>, but few changes are likely to be made to the agreement in committee. It is unclear when the bill will come before the full Senate floor and what amendments will be possible. Senate leaders hope to pass a bill before the August recess.

In the House, little information has been released about legislation, though Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell (D-MI) has indicated a desire to pass SCHIP reauthorization before the August recess. Both House and Senate negotiations have been complicated by the President's threat to veto any bill that he thinks costs too much. The President's budget included only \$5 billion over 5 years in new funding for SCHIP, while the congressional budget resolution called for \$50 billion. Advocates have argued that at least \$60 billion is necessary just to ensure that all currently eligible but unenrolled children (roughly 6 million of the 9 million uninsured children) are covered. The next several weeks will be critical in determining how much progress the federal government will make toward covering all kids.

### CNMI Legislation Introduced

Since our last newsletter, which featured information on the testimony of Sr. Stella Mangona, Lauri Ogumoro, and K.E. before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on human trafficking in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Senator Akaka (D-HI) has introduced legislation to extend federal immigration controls over the CNMI and help stop labor abuses.

The bill, S.1634, provides a framework for more regulated and accountable immigration and labor systems, including an outline of a transitional guest worker program and a plan to grant legal status to a number of long-term foreign workers. A hearing

on this new legislation is scheduled for the week of July 16<sup>th</sup>. The National Advocacy Center is preparing a written statement to encourage the inclusion of adequate protections for workers and stronger measures to prevent trafficking, greater accountability and penalties for employers, and improved access to services for victims of human trafficking in the legislation.

### Comprehensive Immigration Reform Fails in Senate

Despite the hard work of many advocates and intense negotiations and debate, comprehensive immigration reform legislation failed to gain enough support for passage in the Senate and will likely be shelved until after the 2008 election. Though imperfect, the Senate bill would have presented a path forward for needed reforms and offered an opportunity for many undocumented immigrants to come out of the shadows.

Unfortunately, the Senate debate was compromised by a vocal anti-immigrant minority that played on the fears and economic insecurity of many Americans and often demonized immigrants. Even more disappointingly, the rancor the immigration debate is spilling over into other areas. A number of anti-immigrant and harsh enforcement amendments are being offered to a variety of bills and there is greater reluctance to improve **legal** immigrants' access important human service programs such as SCHIP and Food Stamps.

In the absence of comprehensive reform, the National Advocacy Center will continue to work against punitive enforcement-only legislation, support smaller positive steps such as the DREAM Act for undocumented students, and educate about the need for a holistic and compassionate approach to resolving our country's immigration problems.





**NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER  
OF THE SISTERS OF THE GOOD  
SHEPHERD**

504 Hexton Hill Road  
Silver Spring, MD 20904  
Phone: 301.622.6838  
Fax: 301.384.1025  
E-mail: info@gsadvocacy.org

*"Charity and Justice bind us to each other."*

*St. Mary Euphrasia (Foundress, Sisters of the Good Shepherd)*

*National Advocacy Center*

*Editor: Staff*

*Staff Writers:*

*Sr. Gayle Lwanga National Coordinator*

*Alison Prevost Lobbyist*

*Marilyn Riffkin Office Administrator*

**SHEPHERDS SPEAK** is a free publication to help keep friends informed of the National Advocacy Center's work. Donations to help cover costs are greatly appreciated. Contributions can be mailed to the above address. If you would like to receive the newsletter via e-mail, please contact Marilyn Riffkin at [mriffkin@gsadvocacy.org](mailto:mriffkin@gsadvocacy.org) Send your full name and e-mail address.

## **Global Sex Trade Growing** cont'd from p.4

Nam and the children will live on the land in temporary shelters.

Kru Nam is irrepressible. She does not have a large organization standing behind her -- a skeletal staff of three assists her and she receives modest funding from a tiny nongovernmental agency based in Thailand. What she does have is a burning passion to rescue young boys and girls so that they do not fall into the treacherous control of slaveholders. Her passage from a single act of kindness to fighting for justice on a grander scale is the quintessential story of the abolitionist.

The abolitionists working today are truly extraordinary, but they cannot win the fight alone. They are overwhelmed and beleaguered. The size and scope of Kru Nam's project is about the norm for abolitionist organizations. They sorely need reinforcements, a new wave of abolitionists, to join them in the struggle.

All of us wonder how we would have acted in the epic struggles of human history. Imagine we lived in rural Tennessee in 1855 and Harriet Tubman came to our door, asking us to join the Underground Railroad. Would we have stood up and been counted among the just?

There are times to read history, and there are times to make history. We live right now at one of those epic moments in the fight for human freedom. We no longer have to wonder how we might respond to our moment of truth. Future generations will look back and judge our choices, and be inspired or disappointed.

This article is adapted from David Batstone's new book *Not For Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade--and How We Can Fight It* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2007).