

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## INTRODUCTION OF BONDED CHILD LABOR ELIMINATION ACT

**HON. BERNARD SANDERS**

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 15, 1997*

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, it is an outrage that American workers must compete for jobs with as many as 200 million defenseless children working around the world today without any hope of ever seeing the inside of a classroom. Many of these abused children are making products exported for sale in our shopping malls, sporting goods stores, and oriental rug shops all across America. Even some of our Fourth of July fireworks were most probably made by children in India, China, and elsewhere.

Consider the plight of millions of child laborers, some as young as 4 years old, who are sold into virtual slavery, that is, bonded and indentured laborers, and chained to looms for 14-hours a day hand knotting the oriental rugs that grace the foyers and living rooms of countless homes and offices all across our country.

Exploited children toil in factories, mines, fields, at looms, and even in brothels, sacrificing their youth, health, and innocence for little or no wages.

They are hand-stitching the Nike and Adidas soccer balls that our kids practice with every day. The very same soccer balls that were used at the Atlanta Olympics last year.

They are sewing the blouses and slacks that Kathie Lee Gifford was paid \$7 million a year to promote for Wal-Mart stores until she was embarrassed last year.

They are making Mattel Barbie dolls that little girls all across America play with every day.

Sadly it took Kathie Lee's embarrassment in the national media last year for many Americans to confront this dirty little secret of the global marketplace: millions of Americans are buying soccer balls, toys, and clothing for our own kids that are made by brutally exploited children in many of the foreign countries with which we have growing trade deficits.

This situation is totally unacceptable and there are actions we can take to stop this affront to basic human decency.

That is why I am sponsoring legislation—the Bonded Child Labor Elimination Act—to prohibit the importing of any products made by child slaves.

This bill deals with one of the most outrageous forms of exploitation in international trade today—imports made by bonded children who are sold into slavery, some as young as 3 years old.

It would amend the Tariff Act of 1930 which for decades has banned the importing of products into America that are made by adult prison or forced labor. It would simply extend that ban to products made by bonded child labor.

I firmly believe trade is not an end in itself, but a means toward attaining more economic

justice, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability in the U.S. and the global economy.

To knee-jerk free traders, I say that hundreds of millions of children working in hazardous jobs in back alleys instead of going to school is unacceptable.

That these defenseless, exploited children should be forced to work under brutal conditions that can kill or maim them for life is outrageous.

That most adults turn a blind eye to this cruelty and provide a market for this suffering is inexcusable.

The fact that current trade rules at the GATT and World Trade Organization go to great lengths to protect property rights, while ignoring the rights of working people, especially children, says much more about the heartless priorities and greed of doctrinaire free trade advocates than their logic and ethics.

Inside and outside the halls of Government, we have the power to change this sorry state of affairs. Access to the American marketplace is powerful leverage that should be used to encourage foreign producers and importers to treat defenseless children with dignity and not contempt.

We cannot accept any longer the shameful, outdated trade policies that force American workers to compete with exploited children. Ask yourself this question: what does it say about our country that we have numerous import laws and consumer campaigns to protect endangered plants and animals, but we have no law or consumer campaigns to protect children consigned to practical slavery?

Some teenagers in Vermont have already begun to speak out and demand action in defense of kids overseas who cannot help themselves. I applaud their human rights leadership and hope more of you will report on their efforts and get involved yourselves.

## EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE ON THE DEATH OF MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 11, 1997*

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the passing of the beloved Mother Teresa, the Catholic nun who labored and loved the world's poor for over 5 decades. The Prime Minister of India, I.K. Gujral, stated that "The world is mourning." He could not have been more correct. Indeed, people all over the world were deeply saddened on September 5, 1997, and many continue to mourn today.

Mother Teresa was a woman who is truly destined for sainthood. "To God there is nothing small," Mother Teresa once quipped. While Mother Teresa was not an imposing fig-

ure physically, people that knew her personally—those who struggled by her side—commented on the strength, empathy and dignity she radiated. She was a gentle giant that truly did the Lord's work. Mother Teresa performed the work that many people only pay lip-service to. She said: "I see God in every human being. When I wash the leper's wounds, I feel I am nursing the Lord himself. Is it not a beautiful experience?"

Mother Teresa nurtured and cared for the dispossessed, the downtrodden and the poor in India and the rest of the world. She was the Lord's foot-soldier par excellence.

One of my favorite anecdotes about Mother Teresa tells of her cleaning and caring for the infected wounds of an individual in her care, when an onlooker commented that "I would not do that for \$100,000." "Neither would I," she proudly responded. In many respects, Mr. Speaker, this summarizes her life, her mission. Mother Teresa's spirit may have left her body, but her image and memory will remain forever.

I will end my comments by offering a prayer Mother Teresa composed. It is perfect in many ways.

Make us worthy, Lord,  
To serve our fellow man,  
Throughout the world who live and die  
In poverty or hunger.  
Give them, through our hands  
This day their daily bread,  
and by our understanding love,  
Give peace and joy.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ELLA IRENE FRIERSON ON HER RETIREMENT FROM MID-CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY HEAD START PROGRAM

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 15, 1997*

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the tremendous contributions Ella Irene Frierson has made to the Mid-Cumberland Community Action Agency and to her community.

After 27 years of service with Mid-Cumberland Community Action Agency, "Miss Ella" is retiring at the end of this year. She is presently the Head Start Program's assistant director. Previously, she worked in the Head Start Program as a teacher and health coordinator.

Ella has given much to her community, to its families, children, and individuals in need. She currently serves as board member and secretary for the January Street Mission, a religious mission program serving residents of Franklin Heights and January Street public housing. Ella is a member of the Holiday High School Alumni Association and the Criterion Literary and Art Club. Both organizations provide scholarships to local high school seniors. She is also a member of the Mid-Cumberland

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