

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ANATOLY KORNUKOV

**HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 11, 1998*

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, something very outrageous has just happened in Russia that should be an affront to all Americans.

As we all remember, on September 1, 1983, the Soviet Union shot down a civilian jetliner, Korean Airlines flight 007.

Well Mr. Speaker, the very general who gave the order to murder those civilians, including our friend and colleague Congressman Larry McDonald, has just been appointed by President Yeltsin as the new Chief of Staff of the Russian Air Force.

And do you know what? This general, Anatoly Kornukov, still doesn't regret that he gave the order. He still maintains the Soviet fiction that KAL 007 was on a spy mission.

That's right, 6½ years after Boris Yeltsin stood on that tank, and led the dissolution of the Soviet empire, old Communist thinking not only persists in Russia, it is in fact prevalent and is being rewarded by Boris Yeltsin.

And 6 years after we put Russia on the foreign aid dole, to the tune of over \$50 billion from American and Western taxpayers, this is the thanks we get.

It is time for this administration to put their foot down and demand the removal of this killer, otherwise there will be no more foreign aid to Russia.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ELAINE (DE LA TORRE) BERNARD AND CAROL DE LA TORRE OF GENESIS, INC.

**HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 11, 1998*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Elaine (De La Torre) Bernard and Carol De La Torre of GENESIS, Inc. for being recognized Business Women of the Year by the Central California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Top Female Owned Business by the California State Chamber of Commerce. As sisters and owners of Genesis, Elaine and Carol have made countless contributions to the community and are very deserving of recognition.

For the past 10 years, Elaine Bernard and Carol De La Torre have dedicated their lives to Genesis, Inc., a non-profit organization that provides residential treatment, foster care and supportive family services to children who have been sexually, physically and/or emotionally abused, neglected or abandoned. The Genesis goal is to serve in the Fresno county area and community by providing interventions and building blocks for area youth and families. From the moment Genesis group homes

opened their doors, there have been tremendous changes in the lives of many children.

Originally, GENESIS, INC. opened one residential group home in Fresno to serve female adolescents who were predominately Hispanic and under-served. The number of group homes has grown to six with over forty-two clients in placement. GENESIS also established three community schools to assist with their educational needs and goals. GENESIS has been committed to providing job opportunities to Valley residents and has prided itself on the ability to provide quality employment for both men and women of diverse culture and backgrounds. Furthermore, GENESIS has provided a learning environment for university interns and volunteers who receive valuable on-the-job training and experience under the supervision of highly skilled professionals.

The California State Chamber of Commerce recognizes one top female owned business on an annual basis. On September 19, 1997 Genesis incorporated received this award under the criteria of success and contributions to the community. Genesis was chosen among 30 other nominations from around the state of California.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I pay tribute to Elaine (De La Torre) Bernard and Carol De La Torre of Genesis, Inc. for over 10 years of outstanding community service. It is the leadership and care exhibited by these two sisters that warrant this recognition. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Elaine (De La Torre) Bernard and Carol De La Torre many more years of success.

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER EXPOSES LABOR ABUSES ON U.S. SOIL

**HON. GEORGE MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 11, 1998*

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the following article appeared in the February 9, 1998 Philadelphia Inquirer and describes the living and working conditions in the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). This article, "Your Pricey Clothing is Their Low-Pay" offers additional examples of the alarming conditions under which many workers in this U.S. territory toil.

Every independent reporter who has traveled to the CNMI to investigate the working and living conditions of the tens of thousands of imported foreign workers there—whose population outnumbered that of the U.S. citizens—has reached the same alarming conclusion: U.S. laws designed to protect workers on U.S. soil are not being adequately applied or enforced. Instead, this part of America has become an outpost for foreign investors, the construction, tourism and garment industries being the major suppliers of foreign workers. In the CNMI, Chinese labor bosses are able to "run their factories just as they would in

China—as virtual sweatshops." Because this is a U.S. territory, \$810 million worth of garments manufactured under these conditions in 1997 entered the U.S. duty—and quota-free and allowed to bear the "Made in USA" label.

One Chinese woman describes restrictive labor practices that include being forbidden from attending church. Another tells of working seven days a week and only occasionally getting a half-day off on Sundays. Human rights advocates say "many guest workers endure unpaid work, forced overtime, withheld wages and unsafe workplaces."

Many foreign workers live in "squalid shacks without running water, sufficient toilets or proper ventilation" but "are too deep in debt back home to risk getting fired" by speaking out about unfair treatment, poor working conditions, or improper wages. Indeed, many of these workers have sold their family's land, their homes, and have borrowed the money from loan sharks to pay recruiters who have promised them good, high-paying jobs in America. The workers must repay these loans or risk harm to themselves and their families.

As the article attests, the CNMI is hardly a good example of a situation we in Congress would want to emulate in our home States. Rather, it is an example of what can go horribly wrong when a U.S. territory government develops an economy based heavily on the importation of cheap, alien, indentured workers, who are granted no stake in society, and who are denied adequate labor protections by the local government.

Congress can, and should, take action to correct this situation. I have introduced legislation, HR 1450—the "Insular Fair Wage and Human Rights Act" that would place the CNMI immigration system under federal law, bringing the CNMI into conformity with every other U.S. territory. Further, this legislation will incrementally increase the local minimum wage until it reaches the federal level, and provide that garments only be allowed to bear the "Made in USA" label if all federal laws were adhered to in the manufacture of the garment.

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, Feb. 8, 1998]

YOUR PRICEY CLOTHING IS THEIR LOW-PAY WORK

(By Jennifer Lin)

SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLAND.— The rest of America may worry about losing jobs to Asia, but this lush island in the far western Pacific has created an outpost of Asia right on American soil.

Pacific Rim investors—primarily overseas Chinese and Koreans—have flocked to this U.S. territory, building a profitable world-class garment industry. They hire workers from China. They import fabric, buttons and zippers from China. And in many cases, they run their factories just as they would in China—as virtual sweatshops—ignoring U.S. laws designed to protect workers.

Even so, the factories can sew "Made in the U.S.A." onto clothing, skirt U.S. duties and quotas, and pay their workers far less than the U.S. minimum wage. Attempts to rescind those privileges have been opposed by several American lawmakers, some of whom have taken trips to Saipan paid for by the island government.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

The coveted "Made in the U.S.A." label is like a seal of approval for clothing-makers, implying that products are untainted by labor abuses the American buying public associates with garments made in Asian sweatshops. But it has lost much of its meaning in Saipan.

Such companies as J.C. Penney, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger and Jones New York have paid factories here to make their clothing under contract. The suppliers pay less than U.S. minimum wage and ship duty-free to the U.S.—giving them a decided advantage over competitors who make garments in the U.S.

Often it is impossible for American shoppers to know whether a "Made In U.S.A." shirt was sewn by workers in Philadelphia or by low-wage Chinese in Saipan. (Sensing problems, some U.S. companies have asked their Saipan suppliers to switch to labels that say "Made in the Northern Marianas" or "Made in Saipan.")

Last year, garment factories on the islands shipped a projected \$810 million in clothing to the U.S. mainland. Had the merchandise been treated like imports from Asia, the U.S. Treasury could have collected \$150 million in duties.

Most workers in Saipan's garment industry are Chinese, and 21 of the 26 factories are owned by Asian investors. China's giant, government-controlled textile industry has set up shop here as a way of avoiding strict U.S. quotas. Marianas Garment Manufacturing Inc., indirectly owned by the Chinese textile industry, hires all 500 of its workers in China and flies them here to sew "Made in Saipan, U.S.A." onto its clothing.

There is no other place in the United States or its territories like the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, a chain of 14 scenic islands, including the largest, Saipan, where more than 5,000 American troops died in a World War II battle.

It is the only place on U.S. soil where the local government can set its own rules on minimum wage, and one of two with its own immigration policy (along with American Samoa).

It is the only place where factories import entire workforces and can pay them \$3.05 an hour, well below the minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour in the United States and the \$8 an hour earned by the typical American garment worker.

And it is the only place where foreign workers outnumber citizens—about 35,000 "guest workers" to 27,000 U.S. citizens.

The Northern Mariana Islands offer just one example of how intense global competition combines with an ample supply of desperately poor laborers to perpetuate sweatshop conditions. Garment manufacturers hopscotch the globe in search of cheap labor, cutting deals with local contractors who promise ever cheaper and more pliant workers. When wages rise or workers become restive, manufacturers spread some of their work to the next cheap site, from Taiwan and South Korea in the 1980s to Mexico and Honduras today.

Often, the result is substandard working conditions and subsistence wages, despite campaigns by labor and human-rights groups that have improved the lives of many garment workers. The persistence of sweatshops preserves the low prices and wide selection Americans enjoy for imported garments. But sweatshops also make American-made garments less competitive while swelling American's massive trade deficit with the rest of the world—led by China.

What makes the Northern Mariana Islands unique is that manufacturers here rely not on local workers (who are U.S. citizens) but on imported workforces of impoverished laborers eager to toil for low wages, often under sweatshop conditions.

The islands' garment wages are far higher than the 20 to 50 cents per hour paid in the world's lowest-paying countries. But the exemptions from U.S. standards—and the direct pipeline to the U.S. retail market—more than compensate. The transplanted Asian garment industry here is growing at a rate of 45 percent a year, according to the U.S. Commerce Department.

In an effort to promote economic growth, the exemptions were negotiated by island leaders and approved by Congress in 1976, a year after islanders voted for U.S. commonwealth status. (The United States seized control of the islands from Japan after World War II.)

Island leaders argued that the territory in 1976 was too underdeveloped to afford the federal minimum wage. Islanders also were intent on controlling immigration. With a population in 1976 of only 14,000, the islands feared being overrun by Asians trying to migrate to the United States but getting no farther than Saipan.

(American Samoa has a small number of Chinese workers, but most of its "guest workers" come from neighboring Western Samoa and Tonga.)

Island leaders say they need the exemptions to protect their economy. Employers contend that locals do not want the back-breaking, low-wage sewing or construction jobs that go to outsiders.

Foreign laborers are so hungry for work that they pay thousands of borrowed dollars to middlemen to get them jobs. Once here, many live like indentured servants.

Coming from China, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, they sew clothing, build factories, clean houses, cook meals, wait on tourists, work as hostesses in karaoke bars, pave roads and guard hotels. Critics—including President Clinton—charge that the Northern Mariana Islands are flouting basic American values. Clinton has chastised the island government for importing destitute Asians despite an unemployment rate of 14 percent among natives on the islands, where 30 percent of all citizens live below the poverty line. In a letter last May, the President called labor practices on the islands "inconsistent with our country's values."

On Jan. 14, a bipartisan U.S. congressional commission noted that "only a few countries, and no democratic society, have immigration policies" as open to abuse as Saipan's. The commission recommended extending U.S. labor and immigration laws to the islands—reforms also proposed by the Reagan and Bush administrations.

Pending in Congress are bills that would gradually raise the islands' minimum wage to the federal level, impose federal guidelines for immigration, and restrict the use of the "Made in the U.S.A." label.

The Marianas government has hosted a steady stream of congressional visitors, at an estimated cost of more than \$500,000. The Roll Call newspaper reported that in the last year, seven lawmakers, 75 aides, five spouses and one child—House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R., Texas) took his daughter—have traveled to Saipan, at a cost of about \$5,000 a person. Typically, the visitors stay in beachfront hotels, tour new factories, and visit golf courses and coral reefs.

"Everybody cries 'junket,'" said Tony Rudy, DeLay's press secretary. "... The fact is that our schedule was filled with meetings from top to bottom."

Rudy said DeLay toured factories and spoke with workers, who told him they earned more in Saipan than they could in their native countries.

"If you bump that up to \$5 or whatever an hour," Rudy said, companies will "just take the next plane over to the Philippines, where they can pay \$1 an hour."

In a letter to officials in Saipan in June, DeLay and House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R., Texas) said any legislation that would harm the islands' economy runs counter to the "principles of the Republican Party." Adam Turner, a spokesman for Juan N. Babauta, the Marianas' representative in Washington, said only "a handful" of Saipan's factories could be considered substandard.

"Hopefully," he said, "the local government will do a better job cleaning it up."

In fact, most of the islands' impoverished garment workers are grateful to earn \$3 an hour. But they work on U.S. soil, and it is indisputable that conditions in many plants here would not pass muster in America.

Eric Gregoire, who until November was a human-rights monitor for the Catholic Church, said some workers are forbidden by their Asian bosses to come and go as they please or to live as freely as people in the United States.

"We're all for economic prosperity, but you have to look at the other side of the ledger," said Allen Staymen, head of the office dealing with U.S. territories for the U.S. Department of Interior. "Slavery also was a very prosperous economic system. Prosperity in itself doesn't justify behavior that is not acceptable in the United States."

In just 15 years, Saipan has built a flourishing garment industry from almost nothing. Its factories employ about as many people as does Philadelphia's beleaguered apparel-and-textile trade, which has lost thousands of jobs to overseas competitors.

"It's an absolute insult to American workers and American taxpayers that you would be able to make these products using harshly exploited individuals and foreign workers and then get all the benefits of using the 'Made in the U.S.A.' label," said Rep. George Miller (D., Calif.), who is pushing to take away most of the islands' privileges.

Spokesmen for several U.S. companies said their monitors have found no evidence of substandard conditions in island plants that sew their garments. "We do monitor those factories where we do sourcing in the Marianas, and to date have had very satisfactory results," said Wes Card, chief financial officer of Jones Apparel Group Inc. of Bristol, which retails the Jones New York label.

One of the biggest island factories is Marianas Garment Manufacturing Inc.—indirectly owned by the China National Textiles Import & Export Corp. (Chinatex), a behemoth that handles \$1.2 billion in Chinese textile exports to the world, much of it to the United States.

Robert O'Connor, a Saipan-based attorney for the company, denied that the factory, known locally as MGM, is tied to the Chinese state-run textile industry.

"The name Chinatex has never had anything to do with this corporation," O'Connor said.

In fact, all of the individuals listed as directors and officers of the Saipan factory are executives with the Osaka, Japan, branch office of Chinatex.

Wu Yong, president of the MGM factory, said in a telephone interview from Osaka that Chinatex opened the factory because shipments from Saipan are not controlled by U.S. quotas on textile imports. The United States sets comprehensive limits on shipments of clothing coming from other countries in order to protect U.S. textile jobs. The factory uses labels that say "Made in Saipan, U.S.A." and "Made in the U.S.A."

MGM is one of several garment factories charged in recent years with violations of federal labor laws. In 1992, the island government accused the Chinese factory of keeping two sets of books and paying sweatshop wages—half of the territory's minimum

wage, which was \$2.15 an hour at the time. In September, the company settled the charges by paying \$1 million in back wages.

"That happened five years ago," Wu said through an interpreter. "It's not happening anymore."

Far from Saipan's luxury hotels are what the U.S. Interior Department calls "labor camps," home to 20,000 Asian workers. The fortunate ones get dormitories with bunk beds and communal bathrooms. Others find themselves consigned to squalid shacks without running water, sufficient toilets or proper ventilation.

Young Chinese women spend their days hunched over sewing machines under fluorescent lights. The hours are long and the conditions sometimes harsh, but few complain. They are too deep in debt back home to risk getting fired.

Some Chinese men said they paid \$7,000 apiece for construction jobs, while Chinese seamstresses are charged from \$3,000 to \$4,000 each for passage here—often as much as they will earn in a year after paying taxes and fees for room and board. The money goes to Chinese government middlemen, who secure passports and arrange jobs.

Once here, guest workers are vulnerable to exploitation. Human-rights advocates say many guest workers endure unpaid work, forced overtime, withheld wages and unsafe workplaces.

A seamstress from southern China said she is forced to work seven days a week at Micronesian Garment Manufacturing Inc., one of the largest factories, with nearly 300 workers. Occasionally, she said, she can take a half-day off on Sunday to wash her clothes or write letters. Several workers said the garment factory, controlled by Hong Kong and mainland Chinese investors, would not grant overtime unless the women met their daily quotas. Typically, if a worker falls behind, she must reach her quota on her own time just to qualify for time-and-a-half overtime pay.

Steve Yim, a Hong Kong-based management consultant for Micronesian Garment Manufacturing Inc., confirmed that workers must meet their quotas before they can earn overtime but denied that women work for no pay in order to fill their daily quotas.

"I'm not aware of it," Yim said, adding that no one was forced to work overtime, "but if they are willing to work seven days, we don't prohibit them. We can't stop them."

Guest workers are reluctant to speak out, because they know their employers can send them packing with one day's notice.

"It's not a job market where if they don't like it, they can leave," said Gregoire, the human rights worker. "You're going to sit there and endure whatever you have to endure." Most workers from China are required to sign contracts with the Chinese government, vowing to obey the laws of the United States, Northern Mariana Islands—and China.

A two-year contract for one Chinese carpenter forbids him from engaging in "any political or religious activity." He cannot take drugs, watch "sex movies," fight, get drunk or "fall in love or get married." Some garment-industry executives say conditions are improving as manufacturers become more attuned to American labor practices.

Eloy Inos, an executive with Tan Holdings Corp., the largest garment-maker on Saipan, said the garment factories help create ancillary work in shipping, insurance and other support services. He said some problems had been caused by Asian manufacturers' unfamiliarity with U.S. labor standards.

"They've since learned and have changed a lot, although at times the changes were painful," Inos said.

But restrictive labor practices persist in many garment factories here, despite limited reforms and continued pressure by human-rights groups. Recently, Chinese women were forbidden by their employer from attending a Christian church. The church's Korean pastor had to remind the South Korean factory manager that people in the United States are free to practice religion.

At another South Korean garment company—formerly S.R. Corp., now Coral Fashion Inc.—workers were told that they could leave their barracks only twice a week for one hour. Violators "will be barred from going out the barracks indefinitely," the company wrote in a notice posted on Feb. 6, 1997. The factory has since been warned by local officials that it is against the law in the United States to lock up one's workers.

## FOOD CHECK-OUT DAY

### HON. JON CHRISTENSEN

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 11, 1998*

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, Monday, February 9th, was "Food Check-Out Day." "Food Check-Out Day" marks the day when most Americans have earned enough money to pay for all the food they will consume for the year. American families spend just 10.9 percent of their disposable income for food compared to 15 percent in France, 18 percent in Germany and 33 percent in Mexico.

Besides supplying the country with an affordable food supply, the American farmer provides jobs to workers off the farm. For each dollar spent on food in this country, only 23 cents goes to the farmer; 77 cents goes to food marketing, processing, retailing, generating thousands of jobs for American workers. In my State of Nebraska, 1 out of 4 jobs are tied to agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the farmers and ranchers from my State. Without their hard work and dedication to agriculture, the United States would not have the safest, let me reiterate the safest, and most affordable food supply in the world.

## CHRISTA CARPENTER'S AWARD WINNING ESSAY

### HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 11, 1998*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share the following essay with our colleagues. It was written by one of my constituents, Ms. Christa Carpenter, and won first place in the March for Life national essay contest commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of legalized abortion in the United States. I believe she presents a compelling argument in support of the sanctity of all human life.

#### WE MARCH ON FOR LIFE AND TRUTH

God's truth is eternal, absolute, universal, and impartial. It is our most powerful weapon in the battle to end abortion. During the past twenty-five years of the murdering of our brothers and sisters, His truth has been marching on in the pro-life movement.

Our Faith tells us that a pre-born baby, from the moment of fertilization, possesses a

soul, and is created in the image and likeness of God. Despite the physical condition of the baby, or the circumstances of conception, all are equal in the sight of God. Whether deformed, retarded, black or white, protectors of life must keep in mind that Christ's truth is without exception, and all pre-born babies possess the right to life. There are no exceptions, no compromises, when it comes to the life of ANY baby.

The Catholic Church proclaims that all men are "obliged to honor and bear witness to the truth". In fact, it is our duty to defend the pre-born. St. Thomas Aquinas states, "As a matter of honor, one man owes it to another to manifest the truth."

Abortion is a direct violation of the truth. The entire platform of the pro-abortion movement is based on lies. Their many statements such as "It's a woman's body"; "It's a blob of tissue"; "The mother's life is at stake" are attempts to justify the murder of a pre-born human being. Abortion can never be justified, for everyone knows in his conscience that it is wrong.

These remarks have been proven wrong by people who have LIVED Christ's truth. The most vivid example in my mind happened two years ago during my Mother's crisis pregnancy, when her water broke and she went into labor prematurely. The doctors refused to give her medical treatment to help save my twenty-week old pre-born brother, John Paul. They said my Mother would die if the pregnancy continued, and declared she should have the abortion for the "sake of the mother".

With the help of many friends, Mom was able to stay at home, never leaving her bed for ninety-three days. Our family endured many trials to keep my brother alive. We were rewarded when he was delivered at thirty-three weeks, for this was long after the time the doctors said he would be dead. He lived twenty-three hours, and received Baptism and Confirmation before he went "straight to Heaven". Many in the world took our experience for a failure, but we take comfort in the fact that John Paul is a saint, and sees God "face to face". Thanks to the truth we learned from those in the pro-life movement, we know Christ's truth. It conquered the lies of the pro-death world in the case of my Mother. She is living proof that the "life of the mother" exception is just an excuse to kill a baby.

Defenders of life, world-wide, have shown their commitment to the truth by sacrificing their time and comfort for the abolition of the Massacre of the Innocents. Actively they protest at abortion clinics, and present the pro-life message at every opportunity: on television, in newspapers, on radio, and in schools.

More often than not, we never see the "fruits" of our endeavors. Some say our efforts in the pro-life movement will never be able to stop the mass murder of children throughout the world. Yet, whether representatives of His truth are the majority or the minority; whether abortion increases or stops entirely; whether we have no political support or have the help of the entire government; His TRUTH will perpetually reign supreme. When it comes to the life of a baby, all know that a baby is a child created in the image and likeness of God, and abortion is the murder of that precious infant.

This battle may ensue for our lifetime or for the next generation to come, but His truth will ultimately "set us free" from the evil of abortion. Advocates of life, take heart: for as His truth is marching on, our God is marching with us.