

Human Trafficking: STOP THE DEMAND

In our first newsletter S Nancy Marie Jamroz described the trafficking of women and children in our society as, in the words of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "a crime against humanity." In this Article I will discuss an attempt by UNANIMA, a coalition of 16 women's religious congregations throughout the world to counter human trafficking through efforts to stop the demand for the purchase of women and children. UNANIMA initiated the "Stop the Demand" campaign in 2007.

UNANIMA works out of the framework that a society in which pornography and prostitution are tolerated causes a continuum that eventually leads to and promotes the demand for human trafficking. The UNANIMA campaign regards the buying and selling of human persons today's most common form of slavery. Moreover, human trafficking generates an estimated \$9.5 billion yearly. These profits encourage other criminal activities such as money laundering, drug trafficking, document forgery and human smuggling. UNANIMA works with the understanding that eliminating the profit engendered by trafficking will reduce this form of exploitation.

The "Stop the Demand" approach has yet to receive the same attention as that given to protecting and reassimilating victims who have already been trafficked. However, the experience of those who work with victims of trafficking indicates that, after a woman or child has been trafficked, the trauma they experience makes it virtually impossible for them to be reintegrated into a normal social life. Bringing an end to trafficking protects victims better than attempting to treat them after they have been traumatized.

According to their website, the UNANIMA campaign operates by the following principles which, if followed,



will stop the demand for human trafficking:

- ◆ Affirm the dignity of all human beings, especially women and children, who are the most vulnerable;
- ◆ Eliminate factors that drive global trafficking and prostitution and are linked with organized crime, particularly the illicit use of the internet, Remove the terms "industry," "client," "tourism," and "worked," which mask and trivialize the dehumanizing reality that women and children suffer from pimps, profiteers and users;
- ◆ Implement effective laws that criminalize buyers of sex and seize the assets of profiteers.

Recently, two different approaches to human trafficking, in the Netherlands and in Sweden, were analyzed and now serve as the basis for the UNANIMA campaign.

The "Swedish Model" Approach

Sweden uses a multi-pronged approach to curtailing demand which has led to a significant decline in sex trafficking into the country. Swedish law dictates

strong penalties against pimps, brothel owners and traffickers; however, legislators realized that supply is only part of the problem. Of equal importance is demand which is created when Swedish men buy women's and children's bodies and thus make trafficking of women and children into Sweden profitable. The legislators concluded that, along with the traffickers, buyers should be held accountable and penalized. In 1999, legislation was passed that requires the arrest and prosecution of buyers. This has led to a decline in sex trafficking into Sweden since the danger of prosecution coupled with diminished demand made Sweden unfriendly territory for traffickers. Simultaneously, Sweden initiated an intensive public education campaign against the demand for trafficking. Moreover, criminal penalties against prostituted people that were in effect prior to 1999 were eliminated and legislation directs funding of services for those who have been trafficked.

Sweden's Deputy Prime Minister, Margareta Winberg, states: "Sweden recognizes that full gender equality . . . cannot be brought about as long as a subclass of women and children are victims of prostitution and trafficking. Otherwise we allow for the exclusion of a separate class of women, especially those who are economically and racially marginalized, from the universal protection of human dignity enshrined in international human rights"

The "Dutch Approach"

According to Dutch law prostitution is legal. Moreover, prostitution is considered "work" and it is regulated as such. The Dutch believe that legalization of prostitution will curtail trafficking, child prostitution and organized crime. They do however have laws that criminalize traffickers using force or coercion. How has this approach worked? Since 1995, the Dutch sex industry has grown by 25 percent. Seventy percent of these prostituted people in the Netherlands are undocumented. The number of prostituted children in the Netherlands has increased from 4,000 to 15,000, with one-third of these children brought in from other countries.

In the past year, attempts to legalize prostitution have been gaining popularity, particularly in Canada, which will be hosting the 2010 Olympics. Proponents of legalized prostitution in the country contend that women within a legal brothel system would be protected with health care and the state would earn taxes from the "work" of the women.

An additional goal of UNANIMA's "Stop the Demand" campaign is the public exposure of those who create and participate in the demand in human trafficking. When a group of women in Ireland learned that a local bank was planning to invest in a legal brothel in Australia, they urged all their friends to withdraw their money from this bank. This move influenced the bank to reverse their decision regarding their investment.

So what can we do to STOP THE DEMAND FOR TRAFFICKING of women & children?

UNANIMA suggests the following:

- ◆ Be aware of the situation of human trafficking and demand in the area where you live and work— Could human trafficking be occurring right before your eyes? Could you be contributing to structures (refer to the situation above concerning the bank) that support human trafficking?
- ◆ Use accurate language when speaking about human trafficking—for example, those who buy sex acts should be referred to as “perpetrators” or “exploiters” rather than “clients” or “buyers.” The victims of trafficking should be referred to as “women exploited in prostitution” rather than “sex workers.” Women and children are NOT a commodity.
- ◆ Protest against the commodification of women and children in the media.
- ◆ Support efforts to reduce demand and stop trafficking into regions for various sporting events: the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, B.C., Canada and the 2010 World Cup Soccer Tournament in South Africa.
- ◆ Support the efforts of UNANIMA and the newly established International Network of Religious Against Trafficking in Human Persons that was founded as a coalition of religious communities from all continents to fight against global trafficking.
- ◆ Read the monthly Stop Trafficking newsletter which is cosponsored by the Felician Sisters.
- ◆ For more information on the “Stop the Demand” campaign go to www.unanima-international.org.
- ◆ Most of the information for this article is from information received at a presentation given by representatives from UNANIMA in February 2008.

– S Maryann Agnes Mueller (LO)

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CLIMATE CHANGE: What can we do?

TWe are called as Christians, as Franciscans and as religious women, to stand for the integrity of all creation, protecting it and respecting it. The Vatican affirmed this truth in a statement at the United Nations on May 10, 2007: “. . . the earth is our common heritage and we have a grave and far reaching responsibility for our actions.” The *Pastoral Letter on the Christian Ecological Imperative* from the Social Affairs Commission, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, states, “The ecological crisis is a moral issue and the responsibility of everyone . . .” And, again, from the *Preamble to the Earth Charter*, “We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the people of the earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life and to future generations.”

This article will look briefly at climate change. For a number of years, ecologists, scientists, and conservationists have been informing us and warning us about what is happening to our earth. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released the following statistics on the science and impact of climate change:

- ◆ Eleven of the last twelve years have ranked among the warmest years in the instrumental record of surface temperature.
- ◆ Data since 1978 show that the annual average arctic sea ice has shrunk by 2.7% per decade.
- ◆ In Africa, by 2020, between 75 and 250 million people are projected to be exposed to an increase of water stress.
- ◆ Freshwater availability in Central, South, East and Southeast Asia is projected to decrease.
- ◆ In North America, cities that currently experience heat waves are expected to be further challenged by an increased number, intensity and duration of heat waves, with potential for adverse health impacts.

As religious women in the 21st century, we need to continue to stand up together with vision and courage for all of creation and be those forerunners for the sustainability of our earth as our Foundress, Blessed Mary Angela, was more than a century ago for education and justice for all.



So what is Causing CLIMATE CHANGE?

Greenhouse gases are a group of gases which can trap heat near the earth's surface. These greenhouse gases increase in the atmosphere by human activities such as: unrestricted deforestation, plundering of natural resources, industrial wastes, use of certain types of herbicides, consumerism, carbon dioxide emissions, and the extra heat from high levels of radiation. All this leads to what scientists call the gradual increase of the earth's surface, global warming. This warming places pressure on the earth's climate system and leads to climate change. (*The Weather Makers* by Tim Flannery).

There are also natural causes for climate change that include: volcanic eruptions, orbital variations and solar variations. These take place over millions of years. However, the intensity and rapidity of human activity on the earth leads to enormous changes: an increase in global ocean temperatures, the widespread melting of snow and ice that causes rising sea levels, extreme weather including droughts, heavy precipitation, flooding, heat waves, intense winds resulting in cyclones, tornados, hurricanes, natural disasters and the extinction of many animal and plant species. While in some

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cases the damage already done may be irreversible, in many other cases it can still be STOPPED!

Faced with this destruction of the environment, we recognize our obligation to restore a healthy environment. Our Franciscan eco-spirituality challenges our lifestyles and our behavior. We can be a powerful force in our countries and our world. With our education, membership, resources and monies, we can continue to make a difference. We, as individuals, take the small steps, but as one Felician Franciscan Congregation, we can take giant steps. For individuals it can be overwhelming and paralyzing, but as a Congregation we can take this initiative and join with others to be *the* prophets for the earth. We applaud the efforts already taken by our Felician Sisters of the Coraopolis Province who are “Living the Gospel Green” because they incorporated eco-friendly technologies in the renovation of their provincial home. Our Buffalo Province is investing in geothermal power while renovating their home. There may have been less expensive technologies in the short run, but over the long haul, both provinces not only saved money, but also more importantly, they modeled an important step in protecting our environment.

We can also be involved by lobbying our governments to provide more legal and financial support to the environment and not be bullied to do otherwise by industry, individuals and governments. We need to vote for politicians who have a deep commitment to reducing carbon dioxide emissions. We can make long lasting efforts in financing and buying stocks in efficient, renewable technologies, for clean renewable energy, e.g. wind turbines, solar water heating, fuel switch from fossil fuels to agricultural wastes, and support of environmental groups such as “Friends of the Earth” and “Campaign against Climate Change.” We can check out Green Energy Suppliers, take measures to “green” our homes and ministries, take courses in order to offer training sessions for our associates and ministry partners, and plant many

trees. We look forward to the purchase of vehicles that will reduce or even eliminate the use of hydrocarbon fuels. Hybrid and electric cars are now on the market. The price will go down as more people invest in them. Let us show leadership instead of waiting until others drive the price down. Let’s continue to buy locally, advocate to cut down on transcontinental trucking, reduce the consumption of red meat and poultry, lower our thermostats, try alternatives to cleaning products, continue to recycle in more creative ways and eliminate lawn and garden pesticides. Check the links below to learn more about climate change and steps you can take to protect and respect all of creation.

– SM Jacqueline Keefe (CA)

Intergovernmental
Panel on Climate Change
www.ipcc.ch

UNEP and Greenpeace
www.green.tv/pole_to_pole

University of Chicago Interfaith Service
www.rei.uchicago.edu

Pope John’s Message
for World Day of Peace
<http://conservation.catholic.org>

National Council of Churches
Eco-Justice Program
www.nccecojustice.org

Time Magazine
www.time.com/time/2007/climate_change
www.stopglobalwarming.org



The Internet & Child Pornography

Buffalo News, Buffalo's leading daily newspaper, ran a series in October 2007 entitled "The Child Porn Pipeline," which detailed the explosion of child pornography on the Internet (Buffalonews.com/pipeline). Although the story was initially generated because of a noticeable increase in arrests in the local area for child pornography, it quickly became a national and international piece of investigative journalism.

Five years ago in 2003, Yakor Zalutarou, the figurehead of Regpay (Internet Company), in Minsk, Belarus, was arrested by United States law enforcement officials, for the manufacture and distribution of child pornography. Regpay had over 400 Web sites dedicated almost solely to child pornography. During an eighteen month international sting operation, Regpay pulled in \$7 million with 350,000 transactions at \$70 per subscriber.

Five Web servers in the United States hosted Regpay child porn sites: Cal POP.com (California), Rack Space (Texas), Verio Inc. (Colorado), Genisis 2 Networks (North Carolina), and SAGO Networks (Florida). The money was processed by First Data in Colorado, and then funneled to a Morgan Stanley-Dean Witter account in Washington, D.C. which transferred funds to a branch of Deutsche Bank in the United States and then wired to Mr. Zalutarou's account at Aizkraukles bank in Riga, Latvia. According to Mr. Zalutarou, most of the money now resides with organized crime in Russia.

Between one-third to one-half of the 90,000 customers listed reside in the United States. The United States

has the dubious distinction of having the most paying customers of child pornography, as well as providing the Internet servers to host the child pornography sites and the credit card clearinghouses which channel the money. According to Internet Watch Foundation (United Kingdom), 62% of child porn on the Internet is provided by US Web servers. Russia, along with former Soviet bloc countries, produces most of the commercial driven child pornography that is found on the Internet.

In the United States, law enforcement services have identified 500,000 individuals trafficking child pornography on the Internet. However, due to lack of resources, less than 2% of child pornography cases are investigated annually. In 2006 the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), arrested over 1,500 suspects for child pornography compared to 68 people arrested a decade earlier, a 200 percent increase! According to the task force on Internet Crimes Against Children from the United States, 1,500 undercover police from 18 countries searched the Internet for free child pornography over the last 3 years. They received 14.2 million offers from 1.4 million people. Fifteen years ago, before the Internet existed, there were 300 victims of child pornography. Now, according to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) they have identified 1,100 victims with at least 100,000 yet to be identified. The NCMEC, reports that the majority of child pornography depicts children aged 13 and younger, with an increasing occurrence of infants and toddlers. Moreover, commercial child pornography is more hard core and violent than the free trade sites.

In the US, Internet service providers are responsible for reporting suspected child pornography to the NCMEC. However relatively few comply with this regulation except for the larger companies like

AOL and Yahoo. NCMEC has a CyberTipline on its website (www.missingkids.com). US law makers want the Internet industry to take a more active role in monitoring and reporting offenders. The service providers, on the other hand, state that the proposed reforms are too expensive, violate privacy, and/or make them vulnerable for liability.

Globally, 180 countries have no laws against child pornography. There are 125 countries where possession of child pornography is legal including Russia, Mexico, Brazil and Kenya. In 2006, Poland reported 516 cases of child pornography and 1,507 cases of child sexual exploitation. A 2005 United Nations Special Council stated that in Brazil, there is an atmosphere of impunity for sexual exploitation of children and young persons. Canada's 2004 General Social Survey reported 61% of sexual assault victims were under 18, although the same age group represents only 21% of the population. In Mexico there are federal laws against child pornography but only one documented arrest. The government estimates 20,000 children are sexually exploited annually. Kenya's specific problem is child prostitution, with 30% of girls 12-18 engaged as part/full time sex workers in the coastland areas.

According to the International Labor Organization, 30,000 girls under the age of 19 are engaged in prostitution. It is estimated that Russia houses between 2 and 5 million homeless children in the country. The Moscow Human Rights Research Center estimates 50,000 children run away annually from abusive homes. The Russian Statistic Committee reports 800,000 abandoned children. Looking at these statistics, it is easy to understand why Russia is the major producer and distributor of internet child pornography with such a vast pool of vulnerable children. The Ukraine, according to domestic and foreign law enforcement agencies, is a significant source of Internet child pornography. Estonia has no data specific to child pornography but is cited as a source, destination and transit point for sexual exploitation trafficking.

Many factors contribute to the proliferation of child pornography on the Internet. The breakdown of

political, social, judicial, and economic systems are all major contributors to this plague of the wired global network. The signs of the times cannot be ignored; the children who suffer cannot be ignored. We have the opportunity to elicit change, to provide spiritual direction and renewal, to be a voice heard by those who can effect change. Go to one or more of the websites listed below for more information, and to take action to stop child pornography.

— S Kathryn Marie Augustyniak (BU)

WebResources

Brazil:	www.brazil.gov.br ; www.senado.gov.br/sf
Canada:	www.parl.gc.ca
Estonia:	www.valitsus.ee ; www.gksoft.com/govt/en/ee
France:	www.gksoft.com/govt/en/fr.html www.assemblee-nationale.fr
Great Britain:	www.gksoft.com/govt/en/gb.html
Italy:	www.gksoft.com/govt/en/it.html
Kenya:	www.parliament.go.ke
Mexico:	www.senado.gob.mx www.cndh.org.mx
Poland:	www.sejm.gov.pl www.senat.gov.pl
Russia:	http://russia.rin.ru
Ukraine:	http://portal.rada.gov.ua/ www.gksoft.com/govt/en/ua.html
United States:	www.senate.gov www.house.gov
Governments on the World Wide Web:	http://www.gksoft.com/govt
United Nation:	www.un.org
UNICEF:	www.unicef.org www.calib.com/nccamch
International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children:	www.icm-ec.org



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Abbreviations

Rome, Italy – RO
Kraków, Poland – KR
Livonia, Michigan, USA – LI
Buffalo, New York, USA – BU
Chicago, Illinois, USA – CH
Przemyśl, Poland– PR
Lodi, New Jersey, USA– LO
Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, USA – CO
Warszawa, Poland– WA
Enfield, Connecticut, USA – EN
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