Child Labor Essay, Research Paper

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English 1301, AP-4

5 December 1999

Child Labor

In America, people believe that child labor does not affect them, not realizing that the Persian rugs they put their feet on are made by suffering children in a dark, small room. They don?t realize the soccer balls that their children are kicking around outside are made by children themselves, who slave away for little or no pay at all. In 1999, ap-proximately 250 million children are employed or enslaved across the world for little or no money at all (Gay 23). Imagine how these child workers are depraved from experi-ences the joys of childhood. These poor children never get to play outside or enjoy a simple game. Child labor is a harrowing experience for anyone involved in it. In order to end this travesty of child labor, the world must unite as one to create coalitions and companies that aid child laborers.

All over the world children are laboring for little or no money. Desperate families sell their children in order to get a loan from corrupt employers. The child is treated like a slave; he has no say in the matter and can be forced to work up to 18 hours a day, seven days a week (Barry 1). The conditions of these children are of great public concern. U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich and other notable politicians attempt to end the suf-fering of these impoverish children. Several companies and organizations are also con-cerned with the squalor these workers live in and their staggering working conditions. They attempt to not purchase products made by child laborers (Boukhari 2).

Children all over the world are suffering from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse that transpires from child labor. Physical abuse is common place in sweatshops where children work. If the child becomes too slow, or makes a mistake or whines, the child could be beaten, tortured, or slaughtered (George 35). Small children are forced to climb under dangerous working machines and handle hazardous items with bare hands. But even worse is the sexual abuse of children. The unscrupulous employers often pur-sue children as sexual prey, raping boys and girls everyday. Children are forced to live in brothels and have sex with men up to six times their own ages (Boukhari 4). Many of the carpet factories serve as enlistment centers for brothels. The only money these girls make is usually less than 15-cent tips from clients (Berry 2). Even after the child breaks free from the horrors of child labor the memories and emotional scars from the physical and sexual abuse are embedded in their mind forever.

Children should not be forced to suffer adult maladies. Imagine a child aged seven, who is supposed to be full of vitality and energy, having arthritis, bad back, and cataracts. These are just some of the maladies that child laborers in Indian rug shops suf-fer from. Children often have to work in closet sized rooms, hunched over and squinting from lack of light. The woolen fluff they work with causes skin rashes and lung compli-cations (Williams 18). An even more serious malady happens on the sugar plantations in Brazil. The children use machetes, large knives, to cut the sugar cane crop. This poses a serious threat. Children have cut off appendages, mutilated themselves, and even killed themselves (Gay 14). Children toiling in Cambodia brick factories drop heavy bricks on their bare feet and hands. No child should be forced to suffer such health complications.

Since several countries refuse to buy products created by child laborers, the countries that employ children have faltering economies. An example of this is how there is a coalition called the Foulball campaign that ?ensures that ?children would not longer kick around the balls made by impoverished children half a world away.?(Berry 3)

This has lowered the amount of soccer balls purchased from Thailand. Reebok and Nike have guaranteed that children did not make their soccer balls. Another company that puts a dent in the economy of rug based markets, is the Rugmark Corporation. This also puts a guarantee that their rugs were not made by child laborers. In 1999, over 250,000 Rug-mark rugs were imported to different countries (4). These companies, along with others, are adversely effecting the countries that employ child laborers.

Despite the fact that child labor is a vile and immoral practice, it can be stated that it is cheap labor. The children often work for little money or even no money at all. The children can work for their entire lives without pay, which saves an enormous amount of money for the employer. They are saving money on employment in order to make more products. Which in turns allows the consumer to own more products that are made im-morally.

Even though child workers do not attend school, their unnaturally hard labor can be educational. A child could learn how to weave, haul bricks, cut sugarcane, or even stitch a soccer ball. These trades can stay with them their entire life, along with the emo-tional scars. Such useful trade will surely allow the child to lead a successful productive life. This labor also teaches responsibility and respect. The child will learn how to work hard and earnestly, or suffer the consequences. Child labor teaches children responsibil-ity and a useful trade.

If there is no stop to child labor and no effort is made between the countries of the world, child labor will spread to every nation in the world. Envision the United States of America, the land of the free, home of the brave, a country that takes pride in it?s liberty and constitutional rights, with children working till all hours of the night making us clothing and sports equipment. Child labor is an infectious disease; it must be stopped before it reaches its height.

The consequences of the spread of child labor is grave. There will be revolts from mentally disturbed children. The AIDS virus will reach an all time high from the sexual abuse, and the world would have to live with no morals. By the time the children reach adulthood, they will be tired, deformed and mentally unstable from the abuse and hard work they did in their childhood. It is plain to see that the little advantages that child la-bor has is overshadowed by the dire effects that will come.

In order to stop the decadent policy of child labor, the world must work as one and create coalitions and companies. An example of a company that is attempting to put an end to child labor is the Rugmark Corporation. The Rugmark Corporation makes highly profitable rugs that are promised to be child labor free. The Foulball campaign seeks to eliminate the use of child labor in the manufacture of soccer balls. The Foulball campaign generated almost immediate publicity, thousands of soccer players from both the United States and Europe requested that child labor was to be eliminated from soccer ball manufacturing. The Foulball campaign hopes to spread this practice to other balls such as baseballs, footballs, and basketballs. Another company that works against child labor is UNICEF. UNICEF works to protect children all over the world. It raises money to save destitute children. But we need more campaigns to end child labor. We must force other countries to abide by international law. The only way to stop this problem is to unite as one and perform together. Child labor is a horrible affair that must be stopped for the good of the entire world.