

# Sweat shops denounced

By Cedron Williams  
Contributing Reporter

Images of children packed into factories, working in dangerous conditions for minimal wages seem to be a thing of the past in these modern times, but such conditions have not been eradicated, said an activist who lectured at the university Jan. 21.

Michael Posner, a renowned human rights activist and a professor at Columbia University, discussed the practices of sweat shops in a presentation titled "Labor Rights: Our Human Rights."

Only during the last 20 years has there been action to combat corporations and underground systems that hire men, women and children to work for wages well below the minimum. Sweat shops are most prevalent in countries that have few laws in place to protect workers and countries that deny workers the ability to form unions, he said.

Some companies use children for their small hands to sew and assemble the more intricate products. After several years, the children's hands are so wrought with arthritis that they are no longer useful, so companies recruit new workers.

President Clinton announced in his Jan. 19 State of the Union ad-

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President Clinton

dress that the country "will work with the International Labor Organization on a new initiative to raise labor standards around the world."

"This year, we will lead the international community to conclude a treaty to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world," the president added.

Clinton also allocated \$25 million to support ILO's effort in developing countries to ensure basic labor protections, safe workplaces and the right to organize.

Workers' unions, corporations and other activists are working to regulate the labor practices of American companies that do business overseas. Participation is not mandatory though, which means there is still a problem of attracting corporations to abide by ethical standards, Posner said.

Posner's team intends to promote a league of corporations that will

enact ethical labor practices in doing business. Costs to form this league are still an organizational problem, however. Posner speculated that this may cause participating companies to raise prices slightly.

Although the sweat-shop problem exists primarily among companies in the apparel industry, merchandise companies may be vulnerable if they do not participate, as alleged activity involving sweat shop labor is damaging to the corporate image, he said.

After Posner's speech, the floor was opened for questions and comments.

One Winston-Salem resident said that his loved ones work in Chinese sweat shops and that the shops provide the money they need to support themselves. Sweatshops exist because there is a readily available population of unemployed workers willing to provide labor, the resident said.

Although Posner did not specifically mention the financial crisis of Asian markets in his arguments, some experts think it plays a vital role. The ILO has urged Asian governments to establish unemployment insurance and take other emergency precautions, because the immediate outlook is discouraging.

# WORLD WIDE

## Earthquake, landslides kill 1,000 in Columbia; 180,000 left homeless

AREMENIA, Colombia — After the massive earthquake that struck Colombia Jan. 25, the last thing residents needed was a rainy day. However, a downpour the next night slowed rescue efforts and drenched the estimated 180,000 people left homeless by the quake and the landslides following the disaster. The quake registered a six on the Richter scale.

An estimated 1,000 people are dead, according to Capt. Ciro Antonio Guiza, Armenia's deputy fire chief. The government has had to resort to leaving bodies in the streets covered with plastic and blankets. "We don't have enough coffins to bury the dead," said Quindio state Gov. Henry Gomez.

Officials ask for donations of refrigerated trucks to preserve the bodies and prevent a possible epidemic.

President Andres Pastrana has declared most of western Colombia a disaster area to speed up relief efforts.

This quake is the deadliest for Colombia since 1875, when there were approximately 1,000 casualties in a town on the Venezuelan border.

## Virginia House rejects proposal to make box turtle its state reptile

RICHMOND, Va. — Virginia's House of Representatives voted 52-45 to kill a measure to declare the

eastern box turtle the state reptile.

"Is this really a suitable symbol for the great commonwealth of Virginia?" Republican Leo Wardrup asked during the debate.

While the matter was being discussed, an observer cried for "turtle power!" causing the delegates to giggle. Speaker Thomas Moss Jr., a Democrat, struggled to regain order in the House.

The turtle proposal was initiated by Democrat George Grayson last year at the request of children who brought him an injured turtle. The debate was shelved until this year.

Following the rejection of the turtle bill, the House moved on to the soil debate. Republican Joe May proposed that Pamunkey soil be officially honored by the state. The soil won preliminary approval with a 53-37 vote.

## Pennsylvania man invents story of robbery to avoid wife's wrath

FREDRICKTOWN, Pa. — John Symecheck was charged with filing a false report after telling the police that he was robbed walking home from a bar in Millsboro, Pa. Symecheck said three men took \$300 from him and then forced him to perform sexual acts. The police doubted the story after an investigation, and Symecheck confessed to concocting the story so his wife wouldn't find out that he spent \$100 purchasing alcohol.

Compiled from news services.

# Gym Jams

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work with us. We had a lot of involvement, both from the students and on the administrative side. If every thing works out, what we feed back to them on Feb. 10 will be a reasonable facsimile of what they had hoped for. There's been a lot of effort on our part to be fair," Holmes said.

Although formal changes to the security measures at Gym Jams will not be implemented until after the meeting, several of the suggestions made by the students were put into action at a Gym Jam held Jan. 16 in honor of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and as part of the week's activities.

One of these changes pertained to the cost of security incurred by the organizations. Previously, fraternities and sororities had to pay for half of the cost of security at their events, and the other half was paid for out of a social-enhancement fund.

Under the new system, each organization can have two parties in which security is completely paid for. After that, the groups must pay for half of the cost. Hall said this will save the groups approximately \$250 each.

Another change implemented at the Martin Luther King Gym Jam dealt specifically with the number of officers present at the event, an issue paramount in the minds of many of the groups' leaders.

Normally, a minimum of five police officers is required at the Gym Jams, which Hall and others say is unnecessary. At the Martin Luther King party, however, three officers were present, and the organiza-

tions were permitted to patrol the back doors themselves.

Finally, the Martin Luther King party continued until 2 a.m., whereas most previous Gym Jams must shut down at 1 a.m.

Hall said she was pleased with the changes that were made for the event, but she is also cautious about considering it a victory until she sees how future parties are handled.

"The Dr. King celebration worked out very well, but of course that was also a collaborative effort by a lot of organizations. We're still waiting to see how it will work when individual organizations try to have parties. Hopefully the same rules will apply," Hall said.

Leaders of the black fraternities and sororities await the meeting next month, hoping that any other remaining issues will be resolved.

Hall said that, for the most part, she would be satisfied if the changes implemented for the Martin Luther King party would stand. However, she also said that there is room for improvement in one other area.

"One of the main things that we think could still be better is the situation at the gatehouses," Hall said. "There were a lot of students from off campus trying to get in to come to the Gym Jam that were really given the third degree. There was a little too much questioning, and it caused a big holdup as people tried to get to the party."

"The people at the gatehouse had been informed that we were going to have a party, so students who were going there should not have had to go through such a hassle. We think the gatehouses could be a little better organized," Hall said.



Amer Khan/Old Gold and Black

## It's been a hard day's night

Two construction workers take a break after a day's work on the building between Carswell and Calloway Hall. The construction is expected to be completed by the time students return in August.

# POLICE BEAT

## Student cars damaged in two hit-and-runs

An unidentified driver hit a student's vehicle parked in Lot U, near Palmer Residence Hall, and left the area between 5:50 p.m. and 5:55 p.m. Jan. 21 without reporting the incident.

A similar incident occurred between 12 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Jan. 24 in Lot M.

A license tag was removed from a student's vehicle between 3 p.m. and 11:50 p.m. Jan. 24. The vehicle was parked in Lot M, adjacent to Reynolda Hall.

## Damage

Two students playing football accidentally ran into and damaged another student's parked car between 4:30 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. Jan. 19. The car was parked along Gully Drive.

Someone removed a screen and entered a Taylor room through an open window between 6 p.m. Jan. 23 and 3 a.m. Jan. 24. Nothing was missing from the room.

An emergency telephone was removed from a wall at Polo Residence Hall between 5 a.m. and 6:26 a.m. Jan. 24.

A student reported finding a small plastic bag containing a substance, which was later identified as marijuana, at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 20 along a sidewalk near Taylor.

## Miscellaneous

A woman drove to the University Parkway entrance and told the gatehouse officer she had been assaulted at 4:25 a.m. Jan. 24. The

Winston-Salem Police Department was contacted to handle the incident since the woman was not a student and it did not occur on campus.

A Winston-Salem police officer gave a student a state citation for driving after consuming alcohol at 1:20 a.m. Jan. 22. The officer had followed the student onto campus and stopped him at the University Parkway entrance. The incident was forwarded to Harold Holmes, an associate vice president and the dean of student services.

University Police escorted an intoxicated student home after he was seen walking along University Parkway near campus at 1:23 a.m. Jan. 24. The incident was forwarded to the dean's office.

At the University Parkway entrance, a student was given a ticket for not having a valid gate pass. The incident, which occurred at 11:58 p.m. Jan. 23, was forwarded to the dean's office.

Two similar incidents occurred at the University Parkway entrance Jan. 24. The first incident occurred at 11:45 p.m., and the second at 12:30 p.m.

University Police handled 65 calls between Jan. 18 and Jan. 25, including 11 incidents and investigations and 44 requests for service.

# ADAPT

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decline into disability" that often occurs in overweight senior citizens afflicted by the condition. The tendency is that as pain in the knees increases, physical activity decreases and those affected become less and less mobile, entering into a gradual progression of decline. Messier's vision, inspired by his friend's casual comment, is to slow this process down.

Already more than 250 senior citizens have become involved since September, and a total of 300 are expected to be by the conclusion of the study in 2001. The participants walk, lift weights, modify their diets and receive nutrition counseling for the next two years to determine whether the effects include a reduction in the amount of pressure on the knee, thereby improving the quality of life.

Messier says he hopes to give overweight senior citizens afflicted with the condition "more years of an active, independent life."

"Over a short period of time, we have already seen some of the study's population lose weight and improve physical function. We hope to see the trend continue," Messier said.

Last semester, 15 undergraduate students, nearly all of them HES majors, worked on the project, many of them applying it toward an independent-study credit.

"Working with ADAPT gives students a great opportunity to gain experience in the health and exercise field, and they really help us get things done. We couldn't do without them," Messier said.

The students play an essential role in working with patients, he added, allowing "more one-on-one contact with individuals to keep them coming back regularly."

Often, knowing that they would see a certain young friend was what made the senior citizens willing to come back to campus again and again for tests, he said.

Senior Meredith Burleson, a HES major who worked with ADAPT last semester, agreed with Messier.

"I really enjoyed working with people outside the Wake Forest community. It was a good experience for me as I prepare to go into physical therapy, and it meant a lot to me to work with the patients," Burleson said.

Anyone over 60 years of age, who is overweight, can walk without assistance and has a mild to moderate case of osteoarthritis is eligible to participate. There is no charge to take part and transportation is available. The last study, with a group of 50, will commence in May or June.

A few spaces also remain for students wishing to gain biomechanical lab experience in a state-of-the-art facility.

To participate in the study, call the ADAPT recruitment center at (336) 777-3258.



## Lap it up

A student gets a good long look at the bottom of the pool as she swims laps in the pool in Reynolds Gym. Many students find exercise to be a refreshing part of their daily routine.

Jane Osliis/Old Gold and Black