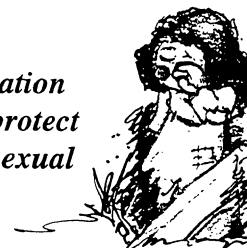

THE PROTECTION OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION



DCI-Australia recently made a representation to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Mr Phillip Ruddock, urging governmental action to protect children brought into Australia by non relative Australian nationals for sexual purposes.



DCI's representation followed the recent reporting of a South Australian case involving a 13 year old Solomon Island child who was brought to that State by two men who persistently abused him. In its representation to the Minister, DCI highlighted Article 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which enjoins State Parties to protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation. DCI recommended to the Australian Government that it adopt the following measures to protect immigrant children from predatory sexual behaviour:

- (a) develop a screening process that is more rigorous in cases where visa applications are made by non-legal guardians to take a child from his or her country of domicile;
- (b) examine the national database of known or suspected paedophiles before granting visas

- (c) check State child protection and police records where the adults live
- (d) train Immigration Department personnel to be aware of the behaviour of paedophiles
- (e) ensure follow-up by State and Territory Child Welfare Departments of children granted visas to travel with non-relatives. DCI also recommended that the issue of immigrant children being sexually abused and exploited by non-relative Australian nationals be referred to the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators (SCCSISA).

If you would like a copy of DCI's submission to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, contact the National Office on ph:(02) 6257 6422, fax:(02) 6257 6722 or by email: dci-australia@netinfo.com.au

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SCCSISA has refused to discuss this issue.

DCI'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE GLOBAL MARCH AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

DCI's involvement in the campaign against child labour in Australia, the Asia Pacific region and globally is gaining momentum. Since the Australian Government appears determined to ensure that child labour considerations do not interfere with international trade, DCI is giving high priority to ensuring that community concern about this children's right issue is not ignored.

DCI-Australia is a founding member of a national campaign coalition, The Australian Child Labour Network. This network aims to educate the public about child labour and to pressure governments through media, meetings with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and by publishing reports and policy statements. Child labour was a focus in DCI's Alternative Report about the Australian Government's implementation of the CROC. Internationally, DCI is involved in preparations for the Global March Against Child Labour. This March is supported by non-government organisations, notably Anti-Slavery International and the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude, and international trade unions like the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation. It is anticipated that the March will start in diverse countries and arrive in Geneva in June 1998, when the International Labour Organisation conference will consider a proposed new convention on the most extreme forms of child labour. DCI's concern is to emphasise child involvement in evolving strategies to address child labour. The Global March will be launched in Australia on 20 November 1997 and will take place here in March 1998.

If you wish to obtain further information on the March or to be involved in DCI's contribution to this worldwide event, please contact DCI-Australia on ph: (02) 6257 6422, fax: (02) 6257 6722 or by email: dci-australia@netinfo.com.au