

**Statement of Michael J. Horowitz**  
**Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**July 31, 2003**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to share information and my views on the issue that will best test America's capacity for decency and greatness – one that may also best determine the world's safety and security.

I'm particularly honored to participate in a hearing designed to expose the most corrupt aspects of North Korea's so-called "economy." A significant purpose of my testimony is to speak of a truly evil income-producing activity in which the Pyongyang regime is actively engaged, beyond its better-known export of missiles and drugs. There's a third export category which is a growing and increasingly important source of cash to Kim Jong Il and the leadership cadres around him: the export of human beings as slaves.

The Trafficking in Persons Office, in its June report issued pursuant to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, rightly listed North Korea as a so-called Tier 3 country. It did so because of two separate categories of deliberately enslaved North Koreans whom the regime literally "exports": women sold either as prostitutes or "wives" of rural Chinese men; and men "contracted" to work in Siberian logging camps. As to the women, human rights and religious observers have reported that tens of thousands of North Korean women are sold to brothels or to Chinese "snake" traders. Here's a report that appeared in August 2002 in the South Korean magazine *Women's News*:

The victims are reported to be sold to old bachelors or widowers in the countryside for 3000 yuan (a little over \$400) each and forced into marriage. According to a North Korean women support group, in most cases a few men from the same village pool their money to purchase one woman. If five men buy the joint ownership of one woman, the woman is forced to have sex with all five of them by night and take care of all five households and farms by day. There are cases where brothers buy and share one woman. A woman caught and sold to a village becomes an important village property. And so all the

villagers keep watch over the woman, making escape impossible. On top of this, marriage between North Korean refugees and Chinese nationals is not recognized by law, meaning that these women have nowhere to turn to for protection.

Originally reported by Claudia Rosett of the *Wall Street Journal*, the mistreatment and fate of men sent to Siberian logging camps is equally inhuman. Begun in the mid-sixties as a bargain between the regimes of Leonid Brezhnev and Kim Il Sung, father of North Korea's current "Dear Leader" dictator, the Pyongyang-Moscow labor program is now employed by the North Korean regime in part as a means by which it repays debts to Russia and finances trade barter with that country. North Korean loggers are housed in unheated facilities, often without windows notwithstanding 50 degree below zero temperatures. As reported by Human Rights Watch, men are required to work 16-18 hours a day, given almost no food, are of course wholly separated from their families and have their movements controlled by regime security guards. Other observers have noted that men seeking escape or asylum or even temporary respite from monitoring by their North Korean guards are routinely tortured and in most cases put to death. Needless to say, tens of thousands of "contract labor" men have died and continue to die in logging camps now estimated to employ no fewer than 15,000-20,000 men.

The above examples of deliberate, for-profit slave trade by the Pyongyang regime is and should be shocking to the conscience of all mankind. But there is an additional fact – *even more shocking* – that perhaps provides the best indication of what life is like inside the evil, lunatic regime of Kim Jong Il.

*In fact, knowing much of the death camp character of Russian logging camps, many men seek to work there as an alternative to continuing life inside North Korea.*

*In fact, knowing that they risk capture in China either by traffickers who will rape and sell them or by Chinese authorities who will return them to North Korea for certain imprisonment in gulags, many women seek escape to China as an alternative to continuing life inside North Korea.*

The reasons why people “choose” Siberian logging/death camps and fugitive lives inside China are not only, not primarily, “economic.” North Korean Christians routinely risk their lives to escape North Korea’s borders on any terms because they know that discovery of a bible which they or any member of their family may hold in secret will expose all of them to imprisonment and torture. Residents of portions of North Korea thought not to be sufficiently loyal to the regime also routinely risk their lives to escape because they know that the regime will initiate genocidal starvation campaigns on their villages. Others, human beings in the fullest sense of the term, crave basic freedoms and know they will be imprisoned and tortured for manifesting the smallest sign of that desire, and find it preferable to risk their lives to escape.

I also appear before the Committee today, Mr. Chairman, as a representative of an extraordinary group now being formed in the United States: the North Korea Freedom Coalition. Chaired by Concerned Women for America’s president, Sandy Rios, who has been to North Korea and the North Korea-China border, this coalition held its opening session last week. More than 35 religious groups pledged their active participation in the coalition, as did – *and this is critical* – representatives of the Korean American communities of the United States.

This coalition, which ranges from the National Association of Evangelicals to the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, from Korean American leadership groups of New York to Korean American leadership groups of Los Angeles, has an overarching, strategic public policy goal. It will passionately work to put at the core of U.S. foreign policy towards North Korea a commitment to address and ameliorate the human rights conditions under which those living under the Pyongyang regime must now endure. Put in other terms, the North Korea Freedom Coalition and its members will use every democratic resource at its command to ensure that no agreement with Pyongyang of which the United States is a part purports to exchange promises by Pyongyang not to export its terrorism for licenses and subsidies to the regime to continue practicing terrorism against its own people.

The Coalition also intends to work with church and human rights groups in South Korea to oppose the South Korean government’s current unwillingness to seek human rights and democracy for the people of North Korea. In particular, the Coalition intends to do all within its power to

broadcast and counter the seeming policy of the South Korean government to *maintain* the Pyongyang regime in power because it fears, based on the experience of West Germany following the collapse of East Germany, that freedom for its North Korean brothers and sisters will impose unduly costly burdens on the South Korean economy.

The Coalition will also focus on the condition of North Korean refugees and would-be defectors and will work to provide safe harbor protection for those starving and vulnerable victims. This will be done through calls to revise U.S. immigration law, through pressures the Coalition intends to place on the United Nations to more aggressively seek access to North Korean refugees in China, and through efforts it intends to make with the South Korean and Chinese governments to ensure fair, safe and legal treatment of North Korean refugees.

The Coalition expects to soon begin active work with Members of Congress to introduce and enact major legislation focused on true Korean Peninsular security and North Korean freedom. As indicated, any such legislation will contain provisions to protect North Korean refugees, and provisions restricting U.S. burden-sharing support for countries impacted by the North Korean economy to those actively committed to promoting North Korean human rights. In addition, the Coalition will support legislation to provide financial support for North Korea human rights organizations and will seek to ensure fulfillment of Chairman Lugar's recent request to Kofi Annan that the U.N. prepare reports on the North Korean gulag system, and will seek to mandate United States intelligence agencies to prepare similar, public reports. The Coalition will seek to expand Radio Free Asia and Voice of America Korean language broadcasts into North Korea, will seek authorization for the Commission on International Religious Liberty to hold educational hearings on religious persecution in North Korea, and will seek more active United States monitoring of North Korean drug smuggling activities.

But perhaps most of all, the legislation and the Coalition will seek to ensure that no financial aid will be given to the Pyongyang regime under any negotiated agreement to which the United States is a party unless the agreement ensures measurable progress in such areas as family reunification, expanded religious freedom, freedom to migrate by families of persons kidnapped by the North Korean regime, modification of the regime's definitions and prosecutions of "political crimes," active gulag monitoring

by outside bodies and monitored assurances that food aid to the regime actually goes to starving people on a needs basis.

The Coalition believes as, from all we know, what President Bush believes: That American interests are best pursued by respect for American values, and that American security in a post-9/11 world is best ensured by the spread of human rights and democracy.

I thank this Committee for holding hearings today based on those principles and thus believe that today's hearings will contribute both to American security and to the amelioration of the inhuman conditions which the current residents of North Korea must now endure.