

Asda Wal-Mart: global experts in exploitation

"Asda (part of US firm Wal-Mart) workers get minimum wage whilst the Wal-Mart CEO rakes in \$17.5 million.

"Child Labor Law violations and anti-union policies in the USA.

"Asda Wal-Mart makes a big deal of its low prices, but behind the bargains exists a trail of exploitation and hardship. Asda Wal-Mart is riding roughshod over workers on a global scale" - Louise Richards, War on Want.

Since 1999 Asda has been owned by the US superstore corporation Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart is enormous (in 2004, almost 10 percent of everything imported to the United States from China was imported by Wal-Mart), and brutally anti-union.

Wal-Mart is the world's largest retail company and its constant drive for the

lowest prices has led to poverty wages and sweatshops conditions for its workers and those that work in the Wal-Mart supply chain. Wal-Mart management is threatening the rights of workers even further by cutting break time, removing grievance mechanisms and reducing workplace health and safety standards.

Although the company's CEO, Lee Scott, was paid more than \$17.5 million during 2004, workers' wages are on average 20% lower than the standard in the industry. Managers are told to keep labour costs at less than 8 percent of in-store sales, and they must also be reduced by 0.2 percent annually. This drives managers to over-stretch their workforces, to cover chronic staff shortages, and in some cases, to break the law employing children and undocumented migrant workers.

One audit of 25,000 employees in 128 Wal-Mart stores in the USA found 1,371 violations of child labour laws, including minors working too late, too many hours and during school time. It also found 60,000 instances where workers were forced to work through breaks, and 16,000 through meal times. Wal-Mart's anti-union policy is a central part of its drive to minimise their costs. Wal-Mart

equips managers with its 'Manager's Toolbox to Remaining Union Free', which states: "Staying union free is a full time commitment. Unless union prevention is a goal equal to other goals and objectives in the organisation, management will not devote the necessary day in, day out attention and effort."

And it is a miserable life for those who work producing the goods for sale in Wal-Mart:

"China Labor Watch report detailed the mistreatment of workers in a factory making small toys for Wal-Mart. As of early December 2005, violations against workers at the Lungcheong factory were as follows: the systematic denial of

maternity leave, work-related injuries leading to termination, illegally denying health insurance, enforcing mandatory overtime work and insane quotas, and employer underage workers."

"In Swaziland, a worker at a Wal-Mart subcontractor earns 53 cents per hour; in Indonesia, 46 cents an hour; in Nicaragua, 23 cents an hour; in Bangladesh and China, 17 cents an hour."

No Sweat demands an end to exploitation and the violation of workers' rights! **The right to join a union!**
A living wage for all workers!
Safe working conditions and an end to inhuman hours!

about no sweat

No Sweat is an activist, campaigning organisation, fighting sweatshop bosses, in solidarity with workers, worldwide. Sweatshop labour is modern, global capitalism stripped bare. From the small, backstreet sweatshop to some of the biggest corporations in the world - child labour, forced overtime, poverty wages, unsafe conditions, harassment of women workers and intimidation of trade unionists are commonplace. **No Sweat stands for workers' solidarity, a living wage, safe working conditions and independent trade unions**

We aim to:

- **Make solidarity with sweatshop workers and their organisations**
- **Help unionise sweatshops in Britain**
- **Publicise, expose and help stamp out sweatshop employment.**

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