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Promoting Social Justice, Human Rights, and Peace

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## **It Takes A Child: Craig Kielburger's Story -- A Journey into Child Labor**

Directed and Written by Judy Jackson (1998: 56 minutes)

Transcribed by Darrell Moen

### **PART ONE**

#### **India -- December 1995**

**Narrator:** When Craig Kielburger was only twelve, he decided to take a seven-week trip to South Asia. It was a journey that would have important consequences for the rest of his life. He went with 25-year-old Alum Raman, his friend and guide. He took a camcorder and made a record of all their experiences to bring back to Canada to show other children. Craig is fifteen now -- this is the story of his life so far.

**Craig Kielburger:** The only time I was actually nervous on my trip was that one second when I said, "Oh, God! What am I doing here? I'm 12-years-old and I've never taken the subway by myself." But after that, I loved it.

**Caption:** Number of unemployed adults in India: 55 million. Number of child workers: 55 million.

**Narrator:** Craig had become concerned about child labor through reading about it back in Canada. Now he wanted to find out everything he could first hand.

**Craig:** I had a million questions. I could have held a child there for hours and just asked them question after question after question. I wanted to know what it was like working under those conditions, how they felt getting up each morning knowing that this is what they were going to do, what their dreams were for the future. I wanted to put myself in their life for a day and learn what exactly went through their brain, exactly what they thought, exactly what they hoped, and exactly what they feared.

**Caption:** What is her name? -- Malliga

**Craig:** She sometimes cuts herself [working here]. It's quite dangerous if you prick yourself with some many kinds of diseases lately. Those are needles that she was sorting through. What are they used for?

**Unidentified man:** They collect the plastics.

**Craig:** What were the needles used for before?

**Unidentified man:** In the hospitals and by drug addicts.

**Craig:** Is she ever worried about the spread of viruses like AIDS because she said she cut herself before pricking herself?

**Unidentified man:** Yes, she will just wash it in water. She won't get any treatment for that. She'll just wash it.

## **Toronto, Ontario -- summer 1985**

**Marc (Craig's brother):** I would like to talk to you about a problem that many of us have -- baby brothers. One day I made a big mistake -- I asked my mom and dad for a baby brother.

**Craig's mother:** Well, it's too bad we don't have Craig (here) -- he's sleeping. It'd make a nice family picture.

**Craig:** My parents were both teachers, so as soon as they could they shipped me off to school. I used to go part-time and the rest of the day I would do things like watch my favorite TV show. I have the largest collection of comic books I think possible. I didn't have a comic hero, to tell you the truth, when I was growing up. I think the only hero I really had was my older brother.

## **Brick Kiln -- West Bengal**

**Craig:** The time that it really hit me how different my life was compared to the lives of these children was [when I visited] the brick kiln.

**Narrator:** The children here told Craig how they had been leased by their poverty-stricken parents as collateral. As bonded laborers working to repay the loans, they are forced to live here, earning a pittance. The bosses add the cost of food and board, so the debt is never repaid but passed on from parent to child.

**Caption:** Janri Raman

**Craig:** Can you ask him his age?

**Janri Raman:** I'm fourteen.

**Craig:** Was he born on the compound in the brick kiln?

**UInterpreter:** Yes, he was born here.

**Craig:** Has he ever gone to school?

**UInterpreter:** No, he hasn't.

**Craig:** The children in the brick kiln were the children who I think moved me the most. These children knew, children as young as five, six, and seven years old knew that for the rest of their lives they'd be working here in the brick kiln, that they knew that generation to generation this debt would be carried, and that even the day which they died they would live and work on this brick kiln.

**Craig:** How many hours does he work a day?

**UInterpreter:** Twelve hours a day.

**Craig:** I couldn't promise him that I would put him in my suitcase and take him back to Canada. I couldn't promise him a better life. But the one thing I can promise the children who I meet with is that I will take their stories and I will tell them to anyone who is willing to listen.

**Craig:** He does not know what a school is, at all. Has he ever been off the brick kiln?

**UInterpreter:** No, he's never been outside this compound.

**Craig:** When I was five-years-old, not only did I have no idea that children of my age didn't go to school, I didn't know that there was a world outside my neighborhood. At that age you assume that everyone is exactly the same as you are. There are people who live in another city? What's it like? You know, it must be strange, never mind in another country halfway around the world.

## **March Against Child Labor -- Calcutta**

**Caption:** Stop Child Labor

**Craig:** Kailash Saryarthy is the chairman of the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS). One of SACCS's roles is to organize raids to free children from bondage. Often children are working in factories under almost inhumane conditions that rival those of slavery.

**Kailash Saryarthy:** The Indian constitution guarantees the primary education of all children under 14. And that no child under fourteen years of age shall be engaged in

any sort of hazardous work. We are the world's largest democracy, yet 55 million children are living in slavery.

**Caption:** Kailash leads a raid to free children from a carpet factory in Uttar Pradesh.

**Craig:** Very few people are willing to conduct raids on these factories because the carpet mafia is notorious for its violence. Two of Kailash's colleagues have been killed while conducting raids on factories. I was not able to attend the raid because I was White and therefore I would draw too much attention to the crowd.

**Unidentified man:** Come on! Hurry up, let's go! We're taking you to your parents.

**Craig:** Many of the children had been held as virtual slaves, away from their families, friends, and childhood.

**Kailash Saryarathi:** It doesn't matter if you didn't get paid. Don't worry.

**Craig:** Many of the children had been given by their parents, used as collateral for loans. Others had never even received a penny for their labor.

**Kailash Saryarathi:** It was very unfortunate that you were not there, but it was a very successful raid. We were able to liberate nineteen children.

**Craig:** So, what's the master plan now? The children have been freed and we want to reunite them with their parents, but the village is quite far away.

**Kailash Saryarathi:** Hopefully tomorrow, we'll see the reunion of the mothers and their children.

## **Summer 1990**

**Craig:** In many ways, my brother Mark is the reason I got involved, and, you know, I'm very lucky to have him. When he was younger, he was involved in environmental issues. And I still remember when I was 8 years old, going to school with him, he'd give me a petition and he'd explain to me and I'd have to repeat what he said. He was the first one who opened my eyes to human rights issues.

## **Kailash returns the rescued children to their families**

**Craig:** The children that Kailash rescued were going home. They seemed traumatized and anxious to be reunited with their families who they hadn't seen for three years -- families who had been tricked into sending their children into bondage. They described the abuse they faced -- how, when they made a simple error, they would be humiliated and beaten.

**Kailash:** Of course, he is suffering from malnutrition (Munilal, aged 8). Most of these children suffer from lung diseases because of continuous inhaling of woolen dust. When we went to rescue these children yesterday, we found that the entire place was full of woolen dust. There was no proper ventilation and it was extremely unhygienic for the children. There wasn't even proper lighting, but these children had to work from morning until late evening. And they were given just one square meal a day.

### **The freed children return home.**

**Craig:** How many times have you driven children back to their parents and their relatives?

**Kailash:** I think I have driven back like this over a hundred times.

**Craig:** So how many children in total have you returned to their families?

**Kailash:** Well, so far we have liberated about 30,000 children in 15 years.

**Craig:** By the time we arrived at Munilal's village it was already dark.

**Ramata:** Munilal's village

**Kailash:** So now we are in the village of Ramata. These are villages that don't have any lights -- no electricity at all. Many of them have never seen a tube light or a light bulb in their life. Most of them have no idea of what a telephone is. Most of them have never been to a hospital -- there is no hospital, no approach road, there is nothing.

**Unidentified voices:** My son! Go, go, go! Let her hold her child. Come and sit here.

**Craig:** Even though I was sad saying goodbye to Munilal, a new friend, I was happy to see him again with his parents and his siblings, in the embrace of his mother. Through their desperate poverty, they had been forced to send him to a life of slavery. But I knew that they would never make that same mistake again.

**Munilal:** Many years have gone by. I suffered a lot. I didn't get any food.

**Munilal's mother:** Didn't you get enough food?

**Munilal:** No.

**Kailash:** He said that it was very bad and that he saw his mother in his dreams. And she also said the same thing, that she saw her son in her dreams.

**Narrator:** Seeing children freed from bondage was very important for Craig. His reason for coming to India in the first place had been reading an article in a Toronto newspaper about the murder of another freed carpet worker who had been speaking out. Iqbal Masih was 12 when he was killed, the same age as Craig.

## **Ontario Federation of Labour -- November 21, 1995**

**Craig:** A young boy from Pakistan, named Iqbal Masih, told the world how at the age of 4 he was sold into slavery for less than \$16,000.

**Narrator:** Inspired by Iqbal Masih, Craig had started speaking out about child labor even before he went to India. With a group of friends, he founded an organization called Free the Children.

**Craig:** It is a youth group dedicated to the elimination of child labor and the exploitation of children. You may be thinking, "Well, you're only 12 years old. This is a big problem. What [do you think] you can do to help?" First, I would say that being 12 years old is no excuse -- no one has a good enough excuse for ignoring these child workers' problems. We also have a fund raising campaign in which we're trying to raise \$10,000 for these children. Who will help these children if we don't. Thank you very much.

**Ontario Federation of Labour representative:** The board has just voted and we will donate \$5,000 to your cause right off the top. Thank you very much for your talk.

**Unidentified speaker:** We'll match that with a donation of \$5,000.

**Craig:** A little shocked would be an understatement -- I honestly thought that I was going to faint. I'm not joking -- I honestly did.

**Caption:** Craig raised \$150,000 for child labor projects

**New Delhi January 1996:** Rehabilitation center for rescued children

**Craig:** I wonder if any of the children we dropped off a couple of days ago have arrived here yet.

**Narrator:** After they met their families again, the rescued bonded laborers come here for up to six months of vocational training and psychological counseling. The training gives them a chance for a future.

**Caption:** Free the Children has raised money for another rehabilitation center.

**Kailash:** He is an unfortunate boy (Nagapur, aged 14) who has been branded by red-hot iron rods by his master because he helped free his younger brother and another

friend of his. He was caught and his hands and legs were bound by rope and they burned him with hot rods in several places, including his neck. He was in such severe trauma, he was not speaking a single word, not crying, not smiling, no emotions, no feelings, but after three weeks of continuous psychotherapy he was able to speak again.

**Craig:** What were his first words?

**Kailash:** Someone saw him singing a song.

**Craig:** Can he sing that song [for me] now?

**Nagagur (singing):** If you want to live -- live with a smile, live with love. Don't cry. Don't shed tears. There are storms. There are disasters. In life, there are ups and downs. But don't shed tears -- smile.

**New Delhi January 10, 1996:** Jean Chretien Leads Canadian trade mission

**Narrator:** Foreign business is attracted by cheap labor. Craig wanted to take Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien to the street to talk to a child who has to work to survive. But the Prime Minister's office said that he was too busy with important meetings. So Craig decided to hold his own press conference.

### **Night before the press conference**

**Craig:** Well, I thought that child labor was off in the dark factories and that the police just basically didn't have the political will to go out and seek and rescue those children. But, for example, in Nepal I found that it's quite openly practiced. When I was going to see one of the NGO schools, just driving down the street you could see the children working as street vendors, you could see the children breaking bricks by the side of the road, you could see the children working as temple helpers, which is actually a kind of taxi where they hang onto the back and collect money from people and they often fall on and get run over. I'm now preparing for a show called "Politics" and other interviews that are coming up. We're now just typing up for the press conference -- and this is going to be an all-nighter.

### **Press conference: New Delhi, January 11, 1996**

**Asmiata (Kailash's daughter):** I call for the total boycott of goods made by child labor like carpets, garments, etc. I also appeal to you to look for the "Rugmark" label that guarantees adult labor is employed in making these carpets. I also urge the Prime Minister of India to seriously look into child labor problems and use his good offices for the total elimination of child labor.

**Craig:** The worst type of child servitude is bondage. When a child is sold into slavery, the child is shackled and chained in many cases, can not see his [or her]

parents, and is forced to work long hours in unsafe working conditions for little or no pay.

**Unidentified reporter:** Craig, let me just ask a question. Obviously, it's a cause that no one can question, but are you certain that you're not being exploited by adults in any way? Could you run this campaign?

**Craig:** Actually, I'm the founder of the organization Free the Children so I've done it totally on my own will, and it's a completely youth-run organization. So there are no adults with political means behind the scene trying to press us.

**Unidentified reporter:** So what do you want to say to the Prime Minister who's probably listening tonight.

**Craig:** Basically, I want him to at least raise the issue. Forget being the Prime Minister for a second -- just simply as a Canadian, it's his moral responsibility to do this.

**Unidentified reporter:** Have you tried to reach to Prime Minister -- to meet him?

**Craig:** Yes, I have faxed and written to the Prime Minister requesting to meet with him. Unfortunately, he said his schedule is too booked and he did not have time to meet with me.

### **Prime Minister Chretien met with Craig five days later**

**Craig:** We just finished meeting with the Prime Minister. I got out most of my points. He said, "Well, it's a complex issue. Things like this take time. We do quite a bit -- we do this and we do that; which Canada does and I'm very happy that it does that. But there's much more that Canada has to do. So far, I'm rating this trip a 9. This trip has been really great and I've enjoyed it a lot. And meeting the Prime Minister wasn't half bad either.

**Unidentified television newscaster:** He upstaged the Prime Minister during Team Canada's trade trip and catapulted the issue of child labor onto the national agenda. Well, today 13-year-old Craig Kielburger came back to Canada, saying his fight is far from over.

### **January 30, 1996**

**Craig:** When I saw not only my friends and family waiting for me [at the airport] but also the press, in a sad sort of way, it dawned on me that so often the press thought that young people weren't capable of doing this type of thing, and I think that being young did give us an advantage. Well, there's no question that one of the reasons that the media was so interested in Free the Children was because it was children helping children. And this was a new phenomenon; it was strange that



children would care enough to get involved. They didn't realize that, you know, children deep inside wanted to help and wanted to participate.

## **April 29, 1996: Washington D.C.**

**News reporter:** There's a reason that Craig Kielburger is trying to find his way through the corridors of Congress. In the attempt to shut down Third World sweatshops full of child labor, these are the corridors of U.S. power.

**Craig testifying before Congress:** You have the power in your words, in your actions, and in your policymaking to bring hope to children for a better future.

**Craig:** I think the press was an important tool and was beginning to realize that the children involved was not just a group of children in Toronto but children from around the world.

**Unidentified man:** He's been essential; I mean, there's been a lot of adults who are also well informed by seeing things first hand or whatever and they've not been able to draw the attention and appeal that Craig has.

**News reporter:** Now, Kielburger is helping to set up American chapters of his organization, working to establish labels for products not made by child labor.

**George Miller (U.S. Senator):** It's a very, very powerful vehicle that you're creating here if, in fact, you can move children in this direction to take action.

## **PART TWO**

### **Toronto, Canada**

**News reporter:** The youth group, Free the Children, says the Canadian government is undecided about whether to endorse the Rugmark label, which ensures through factory inspections that child labor is not used in imported carpets. So today, they held a press conference to introduce the label to Canada themselves.

### **Rugmark Press Conference, October 30, 1996**

**Daniel:** Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. This is Akron and I'm Daniel from Jeremy Public School. Today, we'd like to inform you about what Rugmark is. Rugmark is an internationally recognized trademark that is out to make people aware of which rugs are made with child labor. In the long run, it is also out to eliminate child labor altogether.

**Craig:** Whenever you buy a carpet, you're making a statement that you do not want children to be exploited, that you care about the children of the world, and that you're willing to stand up and ensure that they have their rights [protected].

**Free the Children member:** We're kids. We don't have voting rights. We have very little rights. We're doing something that the adults should be doing to begin with. They should think about this: hey they're kids, they can't vote, they can't do half the things they can, but they're still putting in this effort put an end to a horrible thing. Why can't [or won't] the adults do that, with all the rights they have?

**Free the Children member:** Yeah, you know, you can take Craig as an example. He's only 13 or 14 years old and look at what he's got done.

**Caption insert:** Craig has since traveled to over 20 countries meeting with working children and the media.

### **Press Conference (Campos, Brazil)**

**Craig:** The basic reason children are being hired is because they are peaceful and committed and they cannot organize trade unions, so they're cheap labor. What we have to do is take these children out of these harsh working conditions and place them with adult relatives, and pay the adults decent wages and provide safe working conditions so that the children in turn can go to school, breaking the cycle of poverty. That simply comes down to a question of political will and societal will.

**Caption insert:** Craig's trips are paid for by those who invite him.

### **Child sugarcane workers (Campos, Brazil)**

**Craig:** It crosses the line. Cutting a meter of sugarcane, they receive only one cent. So offer, eventually, a future in which children do not have to work like this. But at this point, many have to work -- they have to work, in many cases, to help their family survive. However, child labor and child abuse cannot be tolerated if it crosses that line; if it becomes exploitation and it becomes abusive, it must be stopped.

### **Raoul Wallenberg Foundation (Stockholm, Sweden)**

**Craig:** In 1990, leaders from around the world gathered together and they drew up the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which lists the most basic rights of children including the rights to an education, the right to be protected from abuse and exploitation, the right to be treated with dignity. Seven years have past, and yet child abuse still continues. These children have little faith in politicians and fancy lawyers and conventions drawn up on their behalf. As children, we simply do not want to be the passive recipients of kindness.

## **Meeting with street kids (Salvador, Brazil)**

**Craig:** There are times when I do get a bit frustrated and sometimes I wish I could just go off and do my own thing and just meet the kids on my own. But I do realize that with every speech I give I can reach a hundred, two hundred, a thousand people. Through the media, we can reach an enormous number of people.

**Craig (with interpreter):** Have any of their friends been seriously beaten by the police or even killed?

**Street kid:** A policeman smashed my friend against a streetlight and his ribs were broken. Many of my friends are dead.

**Craig:** They were shot or something by the police or by others?

**Street kid:** The police.

## **The Maurizio Costanzo Show (Rome, Italy)**

**Craig:** The first concrete result we've had is working with the law [prohibiting sex tourism] that you mentioned. This law has been passed in Canada and eleven other countries, but here in Italy this law does not exist. And when I met with various [Italian] Senators, this is one of the points that I wanted to bring up -- to try to bring it here also.

**Maurizio Costanzo:** And what did our Italian Senators have to say?

**Craig:** They all said that they would look into it. And I hope that means when they look into it, they will definitely ensure that it comes to Italy.

**Caption:** The Italian sex tourism law was passed a month later.

**Craig:** If no change were coming about, would I continue to do this? No. I'm doing this for an issue I care strongly about. [And things are changing.] And that's the reason why I continue. That's what makes it all worthwhile. As long as the media present the facts truthfully, as long as the media act responsibly, then I think the media are doing their job. And if they do present the issue, that will challenge people to take action.

**Craig:** How much are you paid per day on average working here?

**Child worker:** Sixty cents.

**Craig:** We at Free the Children are receiving thousands of letters from children around the world saying, "Tell me what I can do to get involved. I want to help to change the world."

**Craig (being interviewed for Brazilian television):** What we have to do is take government money and invest it in education, in providing job training skills, to help these street children.

**Brazilian news reporter:** Everybody knows that, but nobody does anything here in Brazil.

**Craig:** Meeting these street children in Brazil, I learned to laugh. You know, that's their gift to me. And going to meetings and taking their voices and repeating what they said to me is the vital point, and that's my gift to them [getting their voices heard]. I want to be able to give them something, and I can't always promise them a project to help them in the neighborhood will be created, I can't promise them that their government will bring about change, but at the least, the little I can do is [to tell their stories to the rest of the world].

**Caption:** Craig goes to an alternative school that allows him to study on the road.

## **The Dalai Lama**

**Craig:** Your Holiness, over the past two years I've had the opportunity to meet children who work in exploitative and abusive conditions. How can these children grow up to be peaceful when all they've ever known is violence?

**Dalai Lama:** It is possible to change this. We must accept this part of our society and must bring them into our society with caring.

**Craig:** If we had health care and if we had education, then it would be different -- it would be different for everyone in Brazil.

**Free the Children -- Brazil:** We want health care! We want education!

## **Mary Ward Catholic High School**

**Jack Nigro (teacher):** I think some adults are threatened by people like Craig. Craig has brought to light an issue that society in general has chosen to sweep under the rug. For some people, when they're involved in an indirect way, like some of the major manufacturers and other interested groups, it's embarrassing for them and I guess they'd rather not have somebody like Craig expose some of things that have been going on. I sometimes feel a bit sorry for Craig because he has many things going on at the same time. He does a wonderful job of balancing all of them, but there are so many things going on.

## **The Kielburger's home (Free the Children Headquarters)**

**Craig:** It's a normal household. And at the same time not every household has fifty young people running through it for a barbeque and preparing for a conference dealing with the elimination of child labor. So it's the normal household where you have the fun, the studying for homework, the young people coming over for pizza parties, but at the same time, you have the other side of it where it's an office -- it's where Free the Children is run. So, you know, it's a whole family effort. Because of that everyone loves what they do, and everyone believes in what they're doing.

**Caption:** Marc Kielburger is now at university. He volunteers in his spare time.

**Fred Kielburger (Craig's father):** I'm Fred -- I'm Craig's dad. At the moment, I'm providing moral support. I pick up, I help out, I do whatever has to be done -- I guess that's essentially it. You know, we can be very cynical and think the world is a mess, but on the other hand, young people who have that idealism and are not as cynical as we tend to become in life, they then can rally their peers, people of their own age, and take a hand in trying to change the world for the better.

## **Free the Children Summer Barbeque**

**Caption:** Children in more than 20 countries are involved. Members have petitioned government and business leaders, opened two schools in India, gathered evidence on kidnapped children in India.

**Craig:** There are some people out there who look at Free the Children and say, "Oh, it's a phase. It won't do anything. It's just a bunch of young people who'll change and go onto the next phase in a matter of weeks. And the funny thing is, two years later, we're stronger than ever. Last week, we got over 500 letters from the United States alone. Never mind, you know, those letters from Poland and Chile and Hong Kong and Singapore.

**Free the Children member:** How did you get started in it?

**Free the Children member:** Well, I knew about it from my older sister who was in it the year before I started. And when my school started it, they asked who would like to be in it.

**Free the Children member:** Craig came [to our school] and spoke just to our class. It was more like a discussion, almost. And everybody liked what he was saying, but nobody wanted to give up his or her time to do it.

**Free the Children member:** It's really hard to deal with fund raising and things. You think each thing will take you a day, so you plan many things but in actual fact they take you a week to plan, then you want to keep it going.

**Free the Children member:** Have you ever had bake sales? Those really help because people will just volunteer and bring in baked goods and then those will sell really quickly.

**Free the Children member:** We raised about \$2,000 having a "free jeans day".

## **Free the Children Summer Workshop**

**Craig:** Of course we are children, and we don't have all the answers. We're trying to learn. And the only way we can gain credibility is if we know the issue inside out. If we look into our own lives and ask the hard questions, if we look at our country's policies, you know, our trading policies [should be] fair -- why are these multinational corporations going into "developing" countries and paying wages that these people can't even survive on. They have to send their children out to labor. Why do the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, bodies that are controlled by the rich countries, force industrializing and poor countries to cut their social services to the absolute bone, and to cut money away from the education and health care [needs] of children? It's because of our decisions, our decisions here in the North also.

## **Manila, Philippines, autumn 1997**

**Narrator:** A few weeks later Craig was able to get away from the glare of the spotlight for once and back to what he considers his most important work -- continuing the research -- through meetings with exploited children in the Philippines. For once, there were no speaking engagements, and the press didn't even know of his extended visit.

**Caption:** There are 5 million working children in the Philippines.

**Craig:** You know, I'm always amazed with a lot of reporters who ask me, "How many world leaders have you met? How many people have you met who have over a billion dollars worth of assets?" I don't care, actually. No matter what, I prefer meeting with children.

**Narrator:** Craig has come to learn more about children who are forced to work selling their bodies in order to survive. Father Shay Cullen is an Irish priest who runs a center in Olongapo called PREDA, which helps girls rescued from the sex trade.

**Craig:** The reason I love meeting with the children so much is because what they stand for and how amazing they truly are. Just look at the girls at PREDA and how they've been able to overcome their problems.

**Father Shay Cullen (PREDA Founder and Director):** The Philippines has become a center of child sex tourism. And many, many foreigners do come here to seek out minors and to sexually abuse them. The poverty makes the children vulnerable. The police are very lax. They know that the prosecution can be bribed if they are caught. And they [foreign men] do things here that they would never do in their own countries. The majority of children who we find coming from the commercial sex industry or even in child labor situations, 95% are coming from the rural areas. There is no land reform, the people don't own their land, and they cannot produce enough food to even feed themselves anymore. They have a landlord who takes away maybe 30% or 40% of what they produce. They're impoverished and they're hungry. They can't go to school. So they have some relative living in the slums in Manila and they go to the slums [to try to survive]. And from the slums they're on the streets and the pimps are there to pick them up.

**Narrator:** Father Shay conducts undercover operations himself to rescue children. He poses as a pedophile and uses a hidden camera to collect evidence for the police who work alongside him. He asked Craig to come along and see for himself.

**Father Shay Cullen:** So see the evil world and we're just trying to come to grips with it. And hopefully, in the end, win out. I regret having to do it and am quite disgusted when I hear what these people are doing, offering me children for sale. Being sold like vegetables in the market, trying to bargain the best price they can get to sell these children as sex workers.

## **Father Shay rescues two girls from the sex trade**

**Craig:** It was quite a bit of a surprise actually when Father Shay mentioned that I would be able to participate in the raid firsthand. He disguises himself as a pedophile and negotiates over the price of a child. I think Father Shay is a pretty amazing person. I'll never forget talking to those two girls about their lives and what forced them into the sex trade, and just waiting for the police to rush in. I never was really scared because all I had to do was simply go into MacDonald's if anything got out of hand. The person who really had to worry was Father Shay because he was sitting among the pimps and negotiating the price of two girls. All they simply had to do was to draw a gun and he would be at their mercy.

**Father Shay:** How old are these girls?

**Unidentified pimp:** They are young. They are not really working girls. You see them -- they are beauties. Really natural. No nothing regarding makeup.

**Father Shay:** Hey, how much are we going to spend on this?

**Pimp:** \$200.

**Father Shay:** For the whole thing?

**Pimp:** Oh, yeah.

**Father Shay:** Okay, let's do it. Is that \$200 for each?

**Pimp:** No, you get both for that amount of money. It's a done deal.

**Father Shay:** If all goes according to plan, the police will be standing off in their vehicle. When we more or less reach the deal, then the children will leave to go into one of the vehicles. Then the children will be safe and they'll be able to give the signal. Then the police simply move in.

**Caption:** Two men were charged with selling minors for sex.

**Craig:** I managed to make it to the van with the girls. They were very frightened.

**Michelle (aged 15, rescued in the raid):** We were the ones who worked hard and they're [pimps] reaping the benefits. They don't know what it is like to go with these men. They don't care about us, even if we get killed -- they still get the money. Even when I'm sick I do it because if I don't make money, how will I live? How will I survive? I ran away from home. My stepfather raped me. I had big dreams. I want to finish my studies. When I was at Montessori school, I never had to pay tuition because I was awarded a scholarship. This job is just too dangerous.

**Father Shay:** I'm Father Shay. We're always trying to get these pimps. Listen to our advice so that you'll have a future.

**Caption:** Michelle went to a shelter to decide whether she wanted rehabilitation at PREDA.

**Father Shay:** You know, those pimps just don't care. This guy was telling me, "Father, I'm sorry, it all just happened. I've got six children." And I said to him, you know, would it be all right with you if somebody bought your child? And he said, "No, no I wouldn't sell my own child." And I said but you do it to these other kids. And he had no answer to that.

**Craig:** Well, it's great that he's confessed though because you can take that and definitely get a conviction.

**Father Shay:** Well, yeah, I think these guys deserve to go to jail. We have to get them out of circulation.

**Craig:** No question. No question at all.

**Narrator:** Back at the center, Father Shay asked Marlene Capio, who had been taken by foreigners to Germany and forced to work there as a sex slave, to show Craig PREDA's Wall of Shame.



**Craig:** So could you explain what's on these two boards?

**Marlene:** This picture is of a man from Britain. And these are four children who were victimized by that man.

**Craig:** I think Marlene is an example of how strong some of these children really are. I mean, imagine this, as a girl who ended up being forced into prostitution on the streets at an early age and wounded up as a prisoner in Germany and forced to take customers, and through all this she still has the strength to testify against the criminals, she still has the strength to rebuilt her life, she still has the strength to hope for a better future. Then later, I saw Marlene on the floor crying. It's all seems so strange how all of a sudden this came to be -- this shit.

## **PREDA Primal Therapy Session**

**Father Shay:** When the memories of the past come back, it's like they're having a terrible wound and that the poison is still inside the wound -- it has to be lanced in order for the poison to come out of the wound. And it's only then that healing takes place.

**Craig:** I understand that it's all part of the rehabilitation process and the therapy process, but as I sat there it was very saddening to see that although they'd come so far, some of the children have been here for two or even three years, they still break down and cry uncontrollably. For myself, it was very sobering and it was very painful to watch. It's something that will certainly stay with me for a long time.

## **Patayas Dump -- Manila**

**Caption:** 2,000 people live here scavenging to survive.

**Craig:** Going to the garbage dump. What we saw there were children who were spending their entire lives rummaging through literally mountains of trash and searching through the scrap metal, the garbage, the medical wastes, the food, and they're searching for their livelihood. It always does affect you. And in some cases, it affects you in different ways. In some cases, it angers you. It makes you want to go to the top of a roof and shout. In some cases, it just makes you want to break down [and cry]. You can become as angry as you want and as frustrated as you want to be and you can cry until you can't cry any longer, but you know what, that won't change the situation.

**Craig:** And how much do you make at the end of the day when you've sold everything that you've arranged here Jeffery?

**Jeffery (age 8):** One dollar a day.

**Craig:** They don't want to be seen as little creatures that need help. They don't need more pity. You took the fun out of their lives and you have to give them something in return. The only gift that you can give them in return is taking action in your own way. In my case, going back to Canada and sharing my experiences with Free the Children and challenging all the members to work harder. Or it may be taking action in other ways.

**Craig:** Have you ever been off the garbage dump? Have you ever left the area of the compound?

**Dennis (age 11):** Not yet.

**Craig:** Do you ever think you'll be able to leave this compound?

**Dennis:** No.

**Craig:** I've traveled to many countries around the world and I've had the opportunity to meet hundreds of children who work on the streets, or the brick kilns, or the sugarcane fields, or the garbage dumps, and no matter how much I try and no matter how many hours I spend with them, no matter how many times I go to their homes and ask them about their lives or about their families, I will never really understand their reality. But I can always try. There is a big need out there. And, you know, we're not only talking about "help" with more money or more projects, because a lot of these children no matter how much they search, you know, they'll probably find the minimum amount of food to survive, but what they cannot find through all their searching and all their scavenging is they can't find love in a lot of cases.