

Human trafficking



What Happens to Human Trafficking Victims While in the Air Force, the topic of human trafficking was never talked about until my last years of active duty. Today the subject of human trafficking is being highly broadcast on many Armed Forces Network television commercials. The services provided by victims of human trafficking range from prostitution, to maid service, child labor, and even to child soldiering. Therefore, I was wondering what ever happens to victims that are lucky enough to be discovered and rescued from this crime. Thus further leading me to wonder what does the United States do with these people. Do we return them to their original country or do we let them stay in the U.

S. I decided to pursue the question, What happens to the victims of human trafficking upon being discovered To find the answer to my question, I decided to research the internet to learn more about this topic. My first source was from a website sponsored by a charitable organization for child trafficking. This site expanded my view of human trafficking because I was only thinking of victims being brought to the United States. While reading from this website, it talked about the victims being kidnapped, bribed, deceived, or forced from their homes and taken to brothels or labor camps within their own country. This information is starting to tug at my heart already. Human trafficking almost seems like a necessary evil but there has to be an alternative to this sad situation. More importantly, I also learned about how the victims in Asia are viewed.

??? In Asian cultures where women are deemed second-class citizens, women are considered cheap laborers for the slave trade industry because the sale of a woman is viewed as an insignificant loss to society??? (Warm

Blankets Orphan International, 2004). Even though I believe there are other alternatives, it is apparent these cultures use these women for their own economic benefit. I am now curious to learn about how other countries comply with human trafficking laws. While I was on the CNN website, I was devastated to learn that there are over 100 countries not in compliance (Department of State). Thankfully, our country is leading the way on this depressing tragedy. Next year the U. S. will be included in the annual Trafficking in Persons Report for the first time.

Additionally, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice commented the United States spends \$96 million to help other countries combat trafficking (Smialowski, B., 2005). I now wanted to get a more personal glimpse of the victims. I read the heart gripping story titled, "?? Slave in the Garage???" from Reader??™s Digest (Skinner). This story was about an Egyptian girl sold by her poor parents to be a rich couple??™s maid who moved to the U. S. The girl lived in a garage with just a mattress, lamp and bucket, and wasn??™t allowed to attend school. Eventually, she was rescued and the owners were prosecuted, imprisoned, and forced to pay \$76, 000 for her labor.

In this case, the girl was given the choice to either return to Egypt or remain in U. S.; she choice the latter. This story gives me a refreshing outlook because I never thought that victims were given a choice. I assumed it was the United States choice. What I found to be surprising was the vast amount of people being trafficked into the U. S.

; however, we rescue the largest percentage of victims in the world. ???

According to U. S.

Department of Health and Human Services, human trafficking is now the fastest-growing criminal industry in the world; the U. S. is a popular destination, with as many as 17,500 people brought in each year.

(Skinner, B. 2005).

I was so captivated by this story that I researched another victim's story. While reading the article, "For a Smuggling Victim, a Precarious Quest for Refuge" from The New York Times (Bernstein), I discovered that there can be differing views from the same government. This young girl from Honduras was abused by her parents and then smuggled into the U. S. where she was raped, drugged, and held captive.

Four years later she was rescued. However, two branches of government battled over her future. One branch focused on her health and well-being. The other branch viewed her immigration status as illegal and wanted to deport her.

In the end, the court decided to let her remain in the U. S. Surprisingly, she is scared to live her home in fear of being picked up by immigration. Also, it was disheartening to learn many victims are lured from their homes by labor brokers making false promises of high wages causing the victims to find themselves in a land where they don't speak the language incurring huge debts making it impossible to return home (Wehrfritz, Kinetz & Kent, 2008). I found myself wondering why is human trafficking so hard to stop. There are two sources I found discussing the reasons and obstacles behind the stoppage of human trafficking.

The first book, ??? Human Trafficking, Human Security, and the Balkans??? (Friman & Reich), describes the governments failure to respond to the rise of trafficking. This failure is caused by unwillingness to prosecute suspected traffickers, deportation of victims wrongly accused of prostitution, and the refusal to provide any type of immigration status. My second book stated, ??? Weak governance, be it the result of an ill-equipped public sector, corruption or conflict, is a major facilitator of trafficking. Many governments struggle to find the financial resources to equip a strong public sector.

Income fed to corrupt government officials effectively feeds the global trafficking industry, while trafficking helps perpetuate systematic government corruption??? (Cameron & Newman, 2008, pg. 103). This problem is further fueled by the crooked law enforcement officers, judges, and prosecutors who look the other way for personal greed. However, under the Victims Protection Act, October 2000, a new visa was created allowing trafficked victims to remain in the U. S. if desired (Brennan, 2008).

Although it may be impossible to combat human trafficking, it is good to know that our country leads the way in fighting this crime. Also, our country made it possible for many victims to have the choice to remain here or return home. In turn, I hope all other countries elect to practice the same policies our country has implemented.