

Attention Shoppers!

Behind the door of every Wal-Mart superstore lies a global empire of sweatshops where basic human rights are ignored and managers compete to exploit workers to the greatest extent possible.

No cliché or description can do adequate justice to the economic misery spawned by thousands of Wal-Mart stores metastasizing across the Canada and the U.S. Good paying manufacturing jobs in North America are disappearing faster than rain forests in Brazil as entire industries decamp for low wage locations to preserve their contracts with the price squeezing retailer.

China is now home to more than 80 percent of the 6,000 factories supplying goods to Wal-Mart. Labour and human rights groups routinely point to starvation wages and government indifference to horrific working conditions among reasons why Wal-Mart favours the world's most underdeveloped regions.

Using its vast purchasing power, Wal-Mart demands deep cost-cutting from suppliers - a strategy that rewards companies with the lowest wages and the least benefits while encouraging even more companies to move production overseas.

Teaming up for what is being called "the ultimate joint venture," China and Wal-Mart are threatening to set benchmarks for wages and working conditions around the world. From health care and pensions to workplace safety and consumer protection, Wal-Mart is leading the way in the race to the bottom.

The high cost of Wal-Mart's low prices should be reason enough for most community-conscious consumers to think twice before patronizing the mega-stores. For union members, the toll in lost jobs alone is reason to do everything possible to make their homes and communities "*Wal-Mart Free.*"

Have you heard?

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