

The **AIN'T I A WOMAN?!** Campaign

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 12, 2009

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**** PRESS RELEASE ****

LIBERTY APPAREL GARMENT WORKERS DECLARE MONUMENTAL VICTORY FEDERAL COURT DECISION TO CHANGE THE FUTURE OF NEW YORK'S FASHION INDUSTRY

Workers are announcing a victory in the Federal Court decision in the case of Zheng v. Liberty Apparel that will have a huge impact throughout the fashion industry. The case was presided over by Judge Richard Sullivan at the Southern District of New York Federal Court. The jury found in favor of the 25 garment workers for claims of flagrant labor violations. They ruled that the manufacturer Liberty Apparel and its owners Albert Nigri and Hagai Laniado knew about the sweatshop conditions in their factories. Moreover, the jury found that Liberty Apparel had functional control over the terms and conditions of their subcontracted workers. Workers are owed nearly \$600,000 in damages. The workers were represented by Gladstein, Reif, and Meginniss.

It was nearly 10 years ago that the garment workers labored over 80 hours a week for an average of \$3 per hour. For months they were not paid any wages at all. Liberty Apparel's representatives promised them that if they finished the clothing, they would be paid. Instead, the factory closed down, owing workers hundreds of thousands of dollars in wages. For nearly 10 years, Liberty Apparel has used the court system to drag out the case and delay responsibility. Today, owner Albert Nigri continues to use well-known sweatshops to produce clothing for his other label Pretty Girl. However, this decision will set a legal precedent for the entire apparel manufacturing industry where it is customary for companies to evade responsibility for the sweatshop conditions in their subcontracted factories.

"I was only a teenager when I started working at Liberty Apparel. Now after ten years, I am able to share this long-awaited victory with my family, my co-workers, and other garment workers," said Ling Nan Zheng, Liberty Apparel garment worker and representative.

"I am extremely happy about this victory. This will finally open up the door for other workers in the industry to seek justice!" said Feng Yin Jiang, former DKNY garment worker.

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