

DOMESTIC POLITICS

Cambridge Residence Suspected of Housing Sweatshop

CAMBRIDGE, MA — Federal agents raided an alleged sweatshop ring on Thursday, citing allegations of “deplorable” labor conditions from undercover agents. In addition, authorities

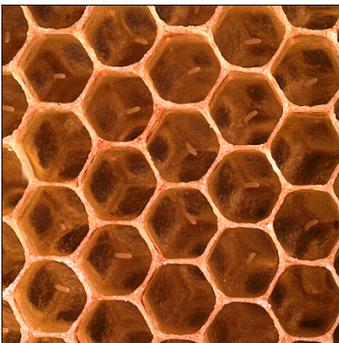


have issued warrants for the arrest of one individual living on the property, who allegedly accepted gifts of a sweetened liquid in exchange for protecting the shadowy network. Newspaper reports have identified the

man as David A. Smith, who fled from authorities following questioning. He was last seen carrying a smoking canister and wearing a suit of protective netting. Among the items seized in the search were beeswax, nectar, and 11 kg of honey.

According to investigators, the crowded labor conditions were even more severe than those seen in sweatshops overseas. One witness, who agreed to comment only on the condition of anonymity, described a grueling work environment, in which female workers were made to vigorously flap their wings to regulate the factory’s temperature. Other workers were forced to engage in ritualistic waggle movements of the abdomen. According to Sheila Gates, an expert on women’s rights in the Kennedy School of Government, “Compulsory waggle dances are demeaning to female employees, and should be a red flag to human rights agencies everywhere.”

While the conditions of the factory were startling, nothing prepared investigators for the realization that most of its 20,000 enslaved residents were the children of a single mother, whose untamed, promiscuous sexual escapades with rogue drones have over-crowded the hive and resulted in its conversion into a slave labor camp. “This is the height of irresponsibility,” declared



David E. Robinson, spokesman for Focus on the Family. “If only their mother had showed even a modicum of sexual restraint, instead of non-stop, selfish copulation, this entire tragedy might have been averted. How could she possibly have sent even ten of her children to college?”

Nathan Schumacher, a professor in Harvard’s Graduate School of Education, agreed. “One of the most haunting aspects of this case, if you ask me, is this persistent fixation that the children have with hexagons,” he said. “Everywhere you look, these children were repeating the most perfect, regular shape you can imagine. They were looking inward — searching for something in the beeswax bigger than themselves, something to transcend their lives of deprivation and onerous labor. In better circumstances, might some of these kids have become composers or poets or mathematicians? We’ll never know.”

According to authorities, there are already signs that some of the children’s troubled lives have taken a dark turn. Detective Ralph Jefferson described a chilling incident following the raid, just as authorities were preparing to rescue the children from the dwelling. “Out of nowhere,” he began, trembling, “the female workers leaped upon us, blindly thrusting their abdomens into our flesh, eyes wide with determination and a terrible knowledge beyond their years.” Added Jefferson, “The memory still stings. It hurt us more than it hurt them.”

What would possess a mother to enslave 20,000 of her children? Elizabeth Vale, an expert in criminal psychology at Harvard, believes that she may have a clue to the answer. “When you look at this woman’s behavior, it’s like she thought



she was a queen or something. Here she is, with her every need taken care of, as much power and sex and honey as anyone could ask for. She thought she could go and play the CEO and get away with it. But she was wrong.” Added Vale, pausing to lick her thumb and forefinger after inserting it into some of the seized honey, “This is an outrage.”

This is not the first time that a sweatshop has been shut down in Cambridge. The last incident occurred in late 2006, when authorities raided an organic chemistry laboratory on Oxford Street and liberated 10 of its graduate students.

