

September 3, 2003

Russ Farnham, Principal Planner
City of DeKalb, Illinois
Fax: 815-748-2359

cc: president@whitehouse.gov

Mr. Farnham:

Re: Horse Slaughter in America

It was with great regret that I read that you are permitting Cavel International to rebuild their horse slaughter plant and reopen for business in February 2004.

“ . . . no cause for the fire was identified by the DeKalb Fire Department or by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which was brought in to investigate the fire.” How unbelievably inefficient of them, but suspiciously convenient for Cavel.

This is a despicable industry. We here in Texas, who are fighting hard to eradicate it, know all too well what is involved. The majority of us believe that the horse slaughter business is a cancer on the soul of our great State.

Do not try to kid yourself this is a way of supplying food to those in need. You are supplying a market alright—to the elite. Horse meat goes for around \$15.00 a pound in France and Belgium, where it is considered a delicacy, just as it is in any country where it is sold and eaten. If they are so inclined, let them eat their own animals.

Insofar as your quote, “The jobs are very good jobs and they’re well-paying jobs,” it is anything but. Quite the contrary, it is a job with high turnover, where the workers are often paid minimum wage and who admittedly take their frustrations and hostilities out on the innocent horses who are their defenseless victims.

If you think for one moment it is not a brutal, repulsive business, listen to this quote from one such worker in a horse slaughter plant:

“You move so fast, you don't have time to wait till a horse bleeds out. You skin him as he bleeds. Sometimes a horse's nose is down in the blood, blowing bubbles, and he suffocates.”

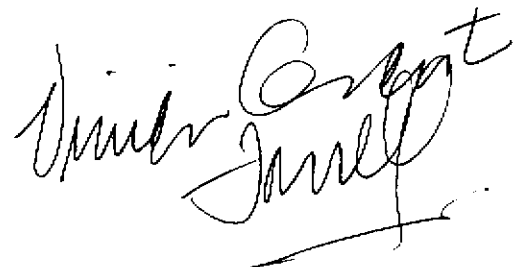
Additionally, there is a high accident rate, as the workers are required to deal with extremely sharp instruments standing a floor covered in blood and gore. What impact do you think this will have on your State's workers' compensation program?

Speaking of economics, how about the old “bottom line”? You are allowing this to go on—for what? So that all the profits can go into the pockets of these foreign-owned corporations? Didn't our President just state recently that he does not encourage us to do business with these people?

Your excuse that they are playing by the rules so you have to let them have the permits, etc. is revoltingly pathetic. How often have people who have “played the game” or “greased palms” still been denied?

I call upon you to do what is right, and reverse your decision.

Sincerely,
Vivian Grant Farrell

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vivian Grant Farrell". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script. There is a horizontal line drawn below the signature.