

set all free Conference 9th June 2007
Tackling slavery, exploitation and oppression in the 21st Century

Speech and Workshop Notes

Keynote Speech: Mr Richard Reddie, Project Director, set all free

Introduction

The **set all free** project was established by Churches Together in England to recognise the role of the Church in both slavery and abolition. It was hoped that the project could highlight how the abolitionists' values can transform our relationships on an individual, community and society level.

set all free's primary objectives are to Remember, Reflect and Respond to issues of freedom and equality – the Three 'R's – it's all about education.

REMEMBER – the horrors of the Transatlantic Slave Trade
– the abolitionists: black, white, male and female
– the role of the Church in both slavery and abolition

REFLECT – on the consequences of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery, e.g. racism, under-development, the impact of and on commerce

RESPOND – to legacies of slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade
– by taking action to end modern forms of slavery
– by working to effect healing and reconciliation

Setting the Scene

The Transatlantic Slave Trade was one of the largest forced mass migrations the world has ever seen. It lasted over four centuries; it uprooted Africans from their continent and forced them to work on plantations in the Americas. This form of labour exploitation stimulated the economies of all the European countries which took part in the slave trade, and in this country, it helped to finance aspects of the British Industrial Revolution – especially iron production and steam development which lay at the core of this change in manufacturing. Indeed, the slave trade had a tremendous socio-economic and cultural impact on this country. A lot has been said about the banks and insurance companies that owe their existence to the trade, and the port cities that were connected to it – we are in a town, Whitehaven, that is inextricably linked to the slave trade. But in truth virtually every area in this country was connected to the trade – it was a business and a lucrative one at that.

Birmingham for instance was the centre of the African gun trade. Guns were sent to Africa to foment wars among rival clans and tribes as well as police the slave trade. Wilberforce once said that if there were fewer guns there would be fewer wars in Africa. During the 18th century, the height of the slave trade, well over 100,000 guns were sent to Africa per annum. In Birmingham, around 5,000 people were involved in the African gun trade and it is estimated that over the lifetime of Britain's

involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade more than 20 million guns were exported to Africa.

Abolitionists

It is important for us to remember that the abolitionists were brave men and women who were ahead of their time on issues of slave trade and slavery, but very much of their time in regards to other social justice issues. It is important when we assess them to do so not through the lenses of today, because they will come up short.

I think it is important to point out that the abolition movement was not about one man, William Wilberforce. Although he played a key role in all of this, he was standing on the shoulders of giants. I think we need to avoid the lionising of one man as this does not tell the truth about the abolition movement. Christians are the most culpable of this – if they knew anything about their own history they would know that practically all the abolitionists were men and women of faith – so there is no need to hide behind the cloak of Wilberforce.

I have always been inspired by the Quakers who long before Wilberforce was born, had argued that what was morally wrong, could not be financially or legally right. The Quakers warned their brethren about the sin of the slave trade and encouraged Friends to divest from the slave trade and avoid the ownership of enslaved Africans. Then there was Granville Sharp who, at a time when Wilberforce was still in short trousers, used the law to stop Africans in Britain being forced into slavery in the Americas. Sharp was truly the defender of African rights in Britain. Then there was Thomas Clarkson, who to me was the real hero of the campaign. No one travelled further in amassing evidence about the horrors of the slave trade or perhaps worked as hard as he did to highlight the condition of enslaved Africans – he worked so hard he had a complete breakdown in the 1790s. It is ironic that, in this bicentenary year, I am not aware of a new publication on Thomas Clarkson. There are loads on Wilberforce, William Hague's biography was published last week, and books that were written twenty odd years ago have been dusted-down or spruced-up for the bicentenary. I think it is a real shame that Clarkson continues to be one of the unsung heroes of the abolition campaign. In regards to anti-slavery, Elizabeth Heyrick stands out as a woman of complete conviction and integrity. Her actions brought about opprobrium from the male abolitionists, Wilberforce in particular, because she argued for the complete, immediate emancipation of the enslaved Africans. Her work was suppressed by the official abolition society for being too subversive and the male abolitionists were encouraged not to speak at female anti-slavery meetings.

African Freedom Fighters

However, one aspect of the struggle that must be included is the role of the Africans themselves in bringing about their own freedom. Africans were never interested in just ending the slave trade – they wanted full freedom and they fought for their freedom from slavery at a time when many in Europe were debating whether the African had the capacity to handle freedom. Africans resisted slavery in Africa and leaders such as Agaja and Nzinga fought against the enslavement of their people. Slave revolts took place on board ships and continued in the Caribbean via men like Cudjoe, Cufee, Nanny, Accompong, Johnny, Quao – names that have been written out of history. It is interesting that these men and women were described as seditionists, malcontents and rebels in their time because they wanted to be free from enslavement.

Many were hunted down and hanged for their actions as criminals. We need to remember that transatlantic slavery was based on violence and terror and any act of African civil disobedience was punishable by death. No European abolitionist, not even Clarkson, faced being killed for standing up in public to demand their human rights. I have yet to mention the Africans in Britain such as Olaudah Equiano and Ottobah Cugoano who bought their freedom and joined in the anti-slave trade campaign.

Unfinished Business

Why did many believe that their work was over when the Act was passed in 1807 – they all knew full well that the slave trade act did not affect the myriad of Africans still languishing in slavery in the Americas? Why was it that even when they eventually campaigned for emancipation, they were only interested in gradual abolition?

Likewise a lot of the literature and iconography associated with the abolition movement was of its time, useful at that time in telling the world that Africans were human beings. However, when seen through today's lenses, they appear very offensive and historically incorrect. For instance, the Wedgwood anti-slavery Cameo of a kneeling African drew attention to the fact that Africans were made in the image of God and as such were human beings and entitled to be treated with dignity. Yet this image shows a cowering, subservient African man begging Europeans for his freedom.

set all free

At **set all free** we highlight the need to respond to modern day slavery and the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. In regards to modern day slavery, which is now a globalised activity that is no respecter of ethnicity, studies show that many aspects of this form of enslavement are rooted in discrimination, poverty and conflict. Moreover, this phenomenon has built upon the ideologies developed during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Because slavery is unfinished business, and the fact that the Church played a key role in working to end slavery in the past, we believe we have a responsibility to continue the work started by the Christian abolitionists over two centuries ago. Failure to act on any human rights abuse, which all slavery is, is an abrogation of Christian responsibility. I mention in my book that this year has seen a real focus on trafficking as the modern day equivalent of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Although I believe there are many clear parallels between the two phenomena, I do not think it is wise or respectful to make direct or like for like comparisons between the two.

Equally, in regards to modern day slavery I think it is ill-informed to play the numbers game and suggest that more are enslaved now than before. The context and motivations are completely different. How can you compare something that was deemed legal then, to something which is largely illegal now? How can you compare something which was industrialised and state-sponsored to something which is an international criminal activity?

Legacies

I think it is important that we focus on the legacies of the Transatlantic Slave Trade when we look at modern day slavery to ensure that we do not make the mistakes of

the past and finish off the work started by the abolitionists. Now, it is possible to set a person free from slavery, but still keep them enslaved. The obvious situation occurred in the Caribbean in 1838, when the enslaved Africans were set free. No real provision was set aside to help them navigate their way in this new life – they received no financial, emotional, spiritual or psychological rehabilitation. In fact, the same system, structures and ideologies that oppressed them in slavery continued to do so afterwards. As a result, Africans were materially and emotionally no better off afterwards. Moreover, some of the people who were involved in the initial anti-slavery campaign were interested in ending a human rights abuse, but not that committed to equality and social justice. As a result inequality and racism continued to flourish and this is the legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. If we are working to set people free, but failing to address the underlying reasons for their enslavement, our work is futile and we end up making the same mistakes as those in the past. The Transatlantic Slave Trade encouraged a belief that certain lives had less value than others – under the US Constitution; an African was 3/5th of a human being. Our work to help free others must be done from the standpoint that all life has value, that all men and women are created equally in the image of God, and that they have a God given right to live as free, equal men and women in a world that values each and every human life. This is as much a challenge to end the abuses of the enslavers as it is to us.

This work must be ongoing because efforts to end generations of exploitation will not be resolved within the space of a year. The bicentenary is an apposite moment where we can all commit ourselves to setting men and women free. We are all ‘our brother’s or sister’s keeper’. Just as a person cannot be a jailor without being in jail, we can never be truly free while our brothers or sisters languish in forms of enslavement. Our work is to **set all free!**

Keynote Speech: Ms Michelle Kelly, Curator, The Beacon Museum

Welcome

On behalf of the Beacon & Copeland Borough Council, welcome to everyone. I see it as my job, particularly to those of you who have travelled from further afield, to give you a very brief history of Whitehaven, highlight particularly its maritime and trading history and, of course, to highlight the links here with the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Introduction

Whitehaven is, first and foremost, a coal town. The Beacon sits on the site of the coal storage depot known as the ‘Staithes’. The castellated walls beyond are part of Wellington Pit (sunk 1838). The car park is on the site of Mount Pleasant – workers cottages for the mills and later mines. Coal wagon ways ran along the harbour where the road now is to bring the coal to the dockside. A hive of industrial activity.

Coal was the primary export out of Whitehaven for over 300 years. Whitehaven is situated on the Cumberland coal field, an area of 108 square miles of good quality coal. Sir Christopher Lowther first acquired the lands making up Whitehaven in 1600. He soon discovered the opportunities for coal extraction along with salt panning. Before that time Whitehaven was a small fishing hamlet with one boat ‘The Bee’ and just a scattering of cottages.

To take advantage of the possible trade opportunities in these two products Sir Christopher quickly expanded the harbour to make it more efficient. He built a new pier in 1634 and began to exploit the highly profitable coal trade between Whitehaven and Ireland. By 1700 Whitehaven was exporting 80% of Ireland's coal. By the 1720s mine workings were going out under the sea – a unique feat of engineering at the time, and Whitehaven's pits were said to be the deepest in the world.

Sir John Lowther (1642-1706), son of Christopher, expanded the coal mines even further and established the shipbuilding industries that would continue until the late 19th century. In the second half of the 17th century the population of the town grew from 250 to over 2000; up to nearly 20,000 by 1900.

Whitehaven & the Slave Trade

Whitehaven continued to expand under later Lowthers and became one of the most successful trading ports in the country. The new harbour and shipping industries paved the way for further trade and soon Whitehaven not only had a very successful coal trade but also a flourishing tobacco trade with Virginia and Maryland.

Isaac Milner, a native of Whitehaven living and trading in London, was encouraged by Sir John Lowther to persuade Whitehaven Merchants to become involved in the African trade.

Whitehaven was the only port in Cumbria involved and it was for a relatively small number of years. Historians tend to view Whitehaven's involvement in the transatlantic trade as an economic diversification by merchants at a time when coal or tobacco trade was in decline.

The well know merchant families (the Lutwidges, the Hows, the Flemings and the Speddings) were involved. Whitehaven was active in the slave trade in the years prior to 1720 and after 1750. In the years between the 1730s and 1740s the tobacco trade was booming – indeed Whitehaven is reputed to have been 2nd only to London in the tonnage it was shifting – and there was very little slavery activity.

However, the facts are that between 1710 and 1769 69 slave voyages were fitted out (1-2% of the total made by British ships) By comparison 1250 ships departed Liverpool, 500 from London, 470 from Bristol and 86 Lancaster in the same years.

A Whitehaven voyage lasted approx 14-16 months in total and as the century developed the ships got bigger. In 1710-21 the average tonnage was 65 which could carry 100 slaves. In 1760 – 69 the average was 110 tons, which carried 200 slaves. The largest slave ship from Whitehaven was the Venus in 1764 that carried 340 slaves, sold in Barbados.

Perhaps the most famous is the King George. 159 tons, built in 1762-3, she in fact made 2 voyages as a slaver, before resuming direct trade with Virginia. Owned by John Kelsick, one of Whitehaven's leading merchants, the King George was built at Whitehaven. She was later modified and operated as a normal cargo ship ending up carrying coals to Dublin. A model shows the cramped conditions below decks for the slaves and crew during her first two voyages.

Decline

Whitehaven's isolated position and lack of manufacturing businesses meant exports were not as profitable as imports. Ships left Whitehaven carrying clothing, linen, woollen cloth, iron ore, and manufactured goods such as rope, weapons, metal goods, leather items, furniture and utensils. Merchants had to source items from across the region and quantities were relatively small.

As a result, Whitehaven struggled to make the vast profits seen in Liverpool. The smaller number of ships sailing out of Whitehaven on the triangular route also meant that merchants were receiving less information about the location of slaves on the West African coast and could not keep up with the latest developments.

No slave ships set sail from Whitehaven after 1769 though ships continued to import sugar, rum and other exotic goods produced by slave labour.

Archives

A recent project funded by Creative Partnerships Cumbria (the Arts Council) has enabled much of the resource material held in archives, museums and private hands to be pulled together. This is available now online for those interested in Cumbria's involvement in the slave trade. Some of the documents make powerful reading.

Black People in Cumbria

The documents also reveal the presence of black people living locally. Although it is not generally thought that slaves were traded in Whitehaven, a small number of black people were brought to live in Cumbria. Evidence can be found, especially from parish records.

Cato Robinson was baptised in Whitehaven in 1773 as an adult. He was employed by Mr John Hartley. He married Mary Sharpe in St James Church in 1778 and had become a brewer. They had 2 children baptised in Whitehaven in 1779. He died in 1794 and was buried as 'a Negro pauper' in Workington.

Conclusion

I hope that has helped paint a picture of Whitehaven's development as a port and its involvement with the Slave Trade.

Our position here situated by the harbour certainly provokes the imagination back to that time. Looking upon the sugar tongue; imagining and seeing tall ships in the harbour.

The bicentenary provides the opportunity not only to examine, remember and acknowledge what happened 200 years ago, but also face up to issues of racism, fear and ignorance, immigration, and modern slavery, and offers us a platform to debate. We felt it was vital to acknowledge Whitehaven's links with Slavery this year especially. We've been involved in hosting the 'Legacy Exhibition' you see around you (Cumbria Institute of the Arts) but also many educational projects including the arts and archives, and a partnership with CLEO to produce a video conference presentation for schools based on the subject.

Keynote Speech: Mr Mike Kaye, Communications Manager, Anti-Slavery International

Trafficking in People

Anti Slavery International is the world's oldest international human rights organisation. It was founded in 1839 by some of the same abolitionists who campaigned for the end of the slave trade in 1807 and of slavery in 1833. While the legalised sale of human beings has been eradicated, slavery has not. Contemporary forms of slavery are defined in international standards and include bonded labour, forced labour, some of the worst forms of child labour, and trafficking.

Trafficking is the fastest growing form of slavery in the world today. Trafficking is the transportation of people from one place to another for the purposes of either sexual or labour exploitation. This is different from smuggling which involves the clandestine movement of people from one place to another for gain, but not their subsequent exploitation.

In December 2000, the UN adopted a **Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children**, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

'...the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.'

A spectrum of people is affected through various methods of coercion. Trafficked people are usually migrant workers. The migrant is offered a job with a good salary in the country of destination and they pay the trafficker a fee for finding the job, arranging transportation and, in some cases, obtaining travel documents for the migrant. Yet, on arrival the job they were offered does not materialise or the contract that they agreed to has been disregarded. However, they are in no position to refuse the trafficker who has several mechanisms for coercing them to work against their will:

- ***Implicit or explicit threat of violence.*** This can be directed at the migrant or at their family back in the country of origin to ensure compliance.
- ***Restrictions on freedom of movement.*** Traffickers may confiscate the migrant's identity or travel documents to control their movements and ensure that they do not try to escape.
- ***Debt bondage.*** They are in debt to the trafficker or their own family. They think that eventually they will be able to make money, but their debt is inflated through exorbitant charges for interest, accommodation, food, etc.

- ***Fear of Authorities.*** Trafficking victims are often in the country illegally and therefore are afraid that if they go to the authorities to make a complaint or to seek protection they will be imprisoned or deported.
- ***Isolation.*** Typically the migrant will not know the language or country to which they have been brought and will have no money to live on let alone pay for a ticket home.
- ***Emotional attachment.*** The victim has an emotional attachment to the trafficker (who may be posing as a boyfriend) which the trafficker exploits.

What we know about Trafficking in the UK

Unpublished Government research shows that there were an estimated 4,000 victims of trafficking for prostitution in the UK during 2003 at any one time - a huge increase from the top estimate of 1998 of 1,420. Ten years ago roughly 85 % of women in brothels were British, now 85% are from outside the UK.

In 2006, the police announced that in a four month period Operation Pentameter identified 84 trafficked women including 12 minors. Between March 2003 and March 2006, the Poppy Project, which was set up to assist people trafficked into prostitution, had 454 referrals. 117 women received support, but around half did not meet the project's narrow criteria.

In relation to children, ECPAT UK's research from 2004 documents 35 cases of child trafficking in 17 London boroughs. Most of these children were trafficked for domestic work or for prostitution, but there were cases of trafficking for benefit fraud, restaurant work and involvement in illegal activities. 32 out of the 33 boroughs in London were concerned that they had a problem with trafficked children.

Trafficking for Forced Labour

In 2006, Anti-Slavery International published the findings of six months research on trafficking for forced labour in the UK. It identified 27 individual cases in which migrant workers had been trafficked for forced labour. Industries affected included agriculture, construction, food processing and packaging, care/nursing, hospitality and the restaurant trade.

Among the trafficked people were nationals of European, African, South American and Asian countries. However, certain nationalities were concentrated in particular industries. For example, trafficking into agriculture mainly affected individuals from Central and Eastern Europe.

Anecdotal information is available about people being trafficked and forced to work in motorway services, as casual labour in ports, doing laundry, etc. In several cases, information was received which indicated that people had been trafficked for illicit activities such as shoplifting, pick-pocketing and the sale of pirate CDs and DVDs on the street.

Mechanisms of Control

The migrants were compelled to work against their will in exploitative conditions through a variety of coercive mechanisms. The most common of these were debt bondage, the removal of their passport or the use of intimidation and threats.

Agencies commonly charged fees for arranging work which put the migrant workers in debt bondage before they arrived in the UK. These fees ranged from several hundred to thousands of pounds. Care workers from Bulgaria paid £2,000 for jobs to be arranged in the UK, which was then deducted from their wages including very high interest rate charges. A Polish woman was told that according to the law in the UK she had to pay £300 as part of facilitating a job as an au-pair. Additional deductions were also made from wages and often justified as a requirement under UK law (for taxes, worker registration, visa extension, national insurance etc.).

Removal of documents is also a key method through which people are controlled by their employers. A report produced by the NGO Kalayaan, which works with migrant domestic workers, found that, between 2001 and July 2003, 49 per cent of domestic workers registered with the NGO had their documents taken by their employers (511 people).

One of the domestic workers interviewed worked seven days a week, from 6am until all the family members went to bed (sometimes well after midnight). In two years, she was not allowed to take a single day off.

Several of the care workers had similar experiences, being made to work 95-97 hours a week without being entitled to days off. These workers were contracted by an agency to provide care in the home of clients, but the travel time between clients (often an hour) was not included in their work hours or their pay, even though the clients were paying the agency for the travel time.

Another case involved two Vietnamese men in their twenties who were recruited in Vietnam to work in a hotel in the UK. They paid the agent £18,000 to arrange the job and came to the UK under the work permit scheme with a promise to receive £4.95 per hour for their work. On arrival in the UK an agent met them at the airport and took their passports away from them. The men worked in a major hotel chain for two months without receiving any pay. All they were given was food. They attempted to organise a strike at the hotel, but almost immediately after this their families in Vietnam received threats. The men were too frightened to approach the Vietnamese Embassy or the police and only approached a Citizens Advice Bureau office via a Vietnamese speaking person they met on the street.

Conclusions

There are two key findings from the research:

1. The majority of the trafficked people identified in the report entered the UK legally. Traffickers are using regular migration routes and work visas, but using debt bondage, the removal of documents and migrants' uncertainty about their rights and status to subject them to forced labour. Many of the migrant workers believed they were dependent on their employer in order to stay in the country (e.g. for visa extensions). In other cases the employer retained the migrant's documents, sometimes claiming they had sent the documents to the Home Office for official purposes, until the workers became irregular.
2. None of the 27 cases were identified as trafficking cases by the agencies that initially recorded them. Furthermore, in the majority of these cases there is no information as to what has happened to the trafficked people. This reflects both a real lack of awareness about trafficking for forced labour amongst individuals in the

relevant agencies and also a lack of support services for the people affected. Often no effort was made to identify whether the person was trafficked or to try and provide them with some form of support.

One domestic worker interviewed in the research recounted her friend's experience: *"She managed to run away – through a window - from the family that treated her like a slave. She was terrified and had bruises on her body. Her passport was locked in the house. The policeman at the station asked her for her documents. She of course did not have them and wanted to tell him what happened, but he insisted on her documents first and said he must first know who she was."*

Even when agency personnel have concerns about the treatment of migrant workers they are unsure about what they can do about it or where they can refer them to for assistance. One social services worker who visited a factory saw that the supervisor had many passports locked in a drawer of his desk. He explained that it was a safety precaution, because there were cases of theft at the factory. The woman who worked for social services was worried about the workers, but did not know what to do and was advised by her supervisor not to get involved in such issues.

The Legal Framework and Enforcement of the Law in the UK

The UK introduced an offence of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and a separate offence in the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004, which covers trafficking for all forms of labour exploitation. Exploitation is defined as: slavery or forced labour; use of threats, force or deception to obtain a service; or a request or inducement to get someone to undertake an activity that someone who wasn't young, disabled or a family member would be likely to refuse.

These trafficking offences came into force in 2004 and both carry a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison. This means that the UK is complying with its obligations under the UN Protocol on trafficking (ratified in February 2006).

There have been 14 successful convictions for trafficking for sexual exploitation. Strong sentences have been upheld at appeal. However, Anti-Slavery International is not aware of any successful cases being brought for trafficking for labour exploitation.

In 2006, the Government announced that it would set up a UK Human Trafficking Centre which will be a dedicated national police led unit (which will co-ordinate with the CPS, immigration, etc.) and will have a mandate to pursue trafficking for both labour as well as sexual exploitation.

The UK Government has taken action against trafficking for forced labour. It passed the Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004, which establishes a system for registering labour providers in the agricultural, shellfish gathering and associated packing and processing sectors. The licensing system came into force in 2006.

Despite these positive initiatives there has not been a single successful prosecution brought for trafficking for labour exploitation since the offence came into force in 2004.

Issues which Need to be Addressed to Effectively Combat Trafficking in the UK

Protection and support

Identification, referral, protection and support measures are still inadequate for those adults and children trafficked into sexual exploitation and non-existent for those trafficked into labour exploitation.

- Ratify and implement the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005 which would provide adequate support and services to all trafficked people.
- Establish an independent National Rapporteur on Trafficking as a focal point for information; to foster co-ordination between different organisations and agencies; and to review government policy and make policy recommendations.
- Improve identification and referral mechanisms through further training. The identification of trafficked people and their referral for support is the responsibility of all agencies and individuals. It cannot be assumed that trafficked people will simply identify themselves as such to the authorities. An Anti-Slavery International training manual is found at:

www.antislavery.org.uk/homepage/resources/PDF/PDFtraffic.htm

Contradictions between migration and counter trafficking policy

UK policy focuses on trafficking as an organised immigration crime, but this misses the point that people can be trafficked through regular migration channels with the correct visas (e.g. nurses, agricultural workers, etc.) and can also come from EU states or have EU passports (Lithuania, Climbie, Birmingham raid).

Policies focussed on reducing illegal immigration are likely to punish the trafficked person and ignore the fact that their rights have been violated. For example, the new offence of knowingly employing an illegal migrant worker and the Joint Workplace Enforcement Pilot to identify the exploitation of illegal migrant labour and “then deliver effective enforcement action”. Trafficking policy should focus on the forced labour outcomes rather than considering it only as an issue of organised immigration crime.

Increasing the opportunities for regular migration and ensuring that there is proper protection from exploitation for these migrant workers would reduce trafficking as it would negate the need for migrants to go to people who then turn out to be traffickers. It may also assist the long term development of countries of origin as remittances totalled \$80 billion in 2002 and are often more valuable than overseas assistance and foreign investment. Migrants contributed £2.5 billion more in taxes than they used in benefits in the UK in 1999-2000.

Recommendations

- Promote regular migration within the framework of the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families, 1990.
- The proposal to reverse the 1998 rule relating to migrant domestic workers should be dropped. Migrant domestics should continue to receive a one year visa with the right to change their employer.
- Establish a body, like the “Fair Employment Commission” as proposed by the Citizens Advice Bureau, to liaise between all the agencies that have responsibilities in relation to labour issues in order to ensure: an effective and

comprehensive system of inspections; investigation of complaints; advice, guidance and support for all migrant workers and employers; as well as a proactive approach to compliance and, where necessary, enforcement.

- Migrants who have been trafficked or are victims of labour exploitation should be able to stay in the UK to pursue compensation for the damages suffered regardless of their immigration status.
- Carry out research into labour and child trafficking in the UK (only organised immigration crime and off street prostitution market were identified as areas for research in the Action Plan).

Workshop: Modern Slavery (Mr Mike Kaye)

This workshop followed on from Mike Kaye's speech. The initial discussion centred on what slavery is and what it is not. Slavery was distinguished from refugee status. In the latter situation people are forced to leave their community as a result of a natural disaster or a conflict. They subsequently seek and obtain refuge and protection elsewhere where they remain. However desperate the situation might be they are not slaves. Slavery was considered to include:

- Bonded Labour
- Forced labour/Serfdom, a state in which 12 million people are currently estimated to exist.
- Trafficking (for sexual or labour exploitation)
- Physical constraint
- Ownership of a person by another
- Dehumanising as a commodity
- Child labour

Reference was made to the 1926 Geneva Slavery Convention of the League of Nations and the 1956 United Nations Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institution and Practices similar to Slavery. These are all set down in the 15 Articles of the 1956 Slavery Convention.

A discussion followed on awareness and seeking solutions to modern day slavery. It was re-emphasised that letters should be written to MPs that seek responses and to develop their interest in the subject.

People held in slavery can be found anywhere in the UK. It was pointed out that one place where people held in slavery are sometimes permitted to go is to church. It may be that unusual situations arise that provide 'tell tales'. Patience and befriending might, in time, give rise to information on restrained circumstances opening up in our midst.

Workshop: Racial Justice (Mr David King, Black Majority Churches Liaison Coordinator for Christian Aid & Chair of the Abolition Events Planning Group of the Council of Black Led Churches)

Introduction

'Racial inequality is a real and serious problem in Britain today. Black people are more likely than white to live in deprived wards; more likely to be unemployed; and less likely to achieve good qualifications at school and university. In many cases the gaps are widening. Even where there is progress, it is often slow.'

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Transatlantic Slave Trade

- 1562 - first English slaving expedition by Sir John Hawkins.
- Subsequently at least 9–15 million (perhaps 20-30 million) Africans captured, enslaved and transported to the Americas.
- Conditions on the Atlantic Crossing were horrendous – up to 1/3rd died during crossing.
- Africans were treated as cargo and became viewed as sub-humans.
- Even the Bible was used to justify the treatment e.g. the so-called “Curse of Ham” (Canaan was the one cursed).
- Slavery ended in 1830's. £20M compensation to slave traders, slaves got nothing!

Concealed History of African Achievement

- The Great Nubian civilisation (in what is now south Egypt/northern Sudan) was known for its gold, ivory stone, ebony and incense which was traded with its neighbours.
- West Africa – Ghana had a vast empire between the 9th and 13th centuries, generating wealth from its trade in gold, salt and copper and even human beings between Western Africa and the Middle East via Egypt.
- Ghana in the tenth century was “a highly advanced, economically prosperous country” Al- Bakiri.
- Evidence that East Africans were producing steel in carbon furnaces many centuries before Europe.
- Also, after the slave trade, blacks were not recognised for their great achievements e.g. Mary Seacole (when compared to Florence Nightingale).

When visiting Egypt today, this is what we see of The Sphinx of Giza:



This is what Vivant Denon saw in 1798 before the Sphinx was defaced:

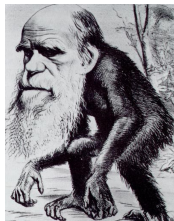


"The Colchians, Ethiopians and Egyptians have thick lips, broad nose, woolly hair and they are burnt of skin."

-- Herodotus, 450 BC

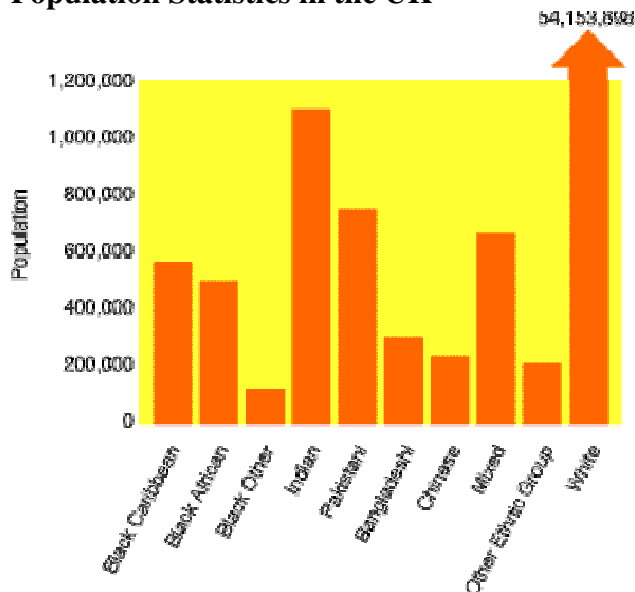
Darwinian Evolutionary Theory

- Charles Darwin's (1809 – 1882) theories promoted the idea that we evolved from animals.
- Black people came to be thought of as being "less evolved" than white people.
- Contrasts to the Biblical, traditional model that we all come from Adam and Eve who were made in the image of God.



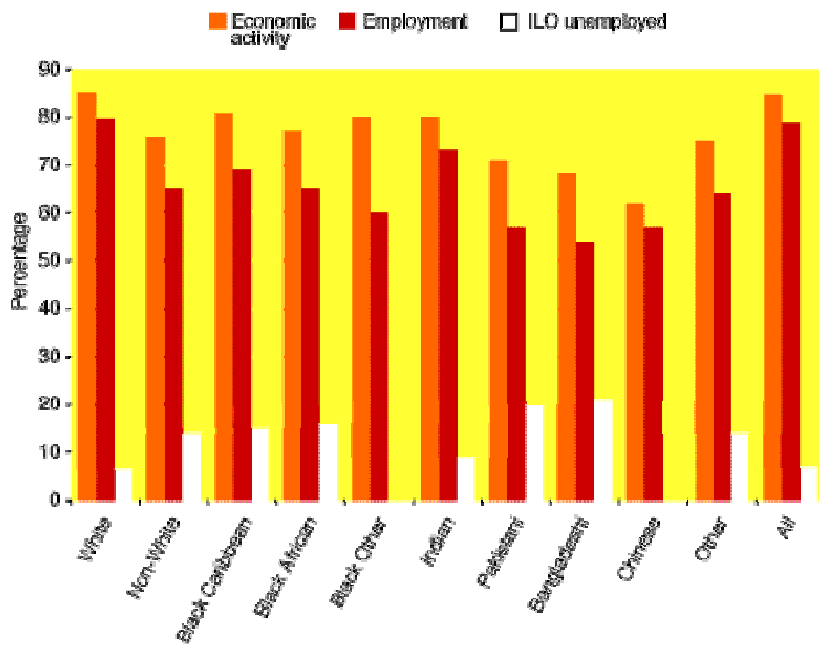
Caricature of Darwin as an ape in the *Hornet* magazine.

Population Statistics in the UK

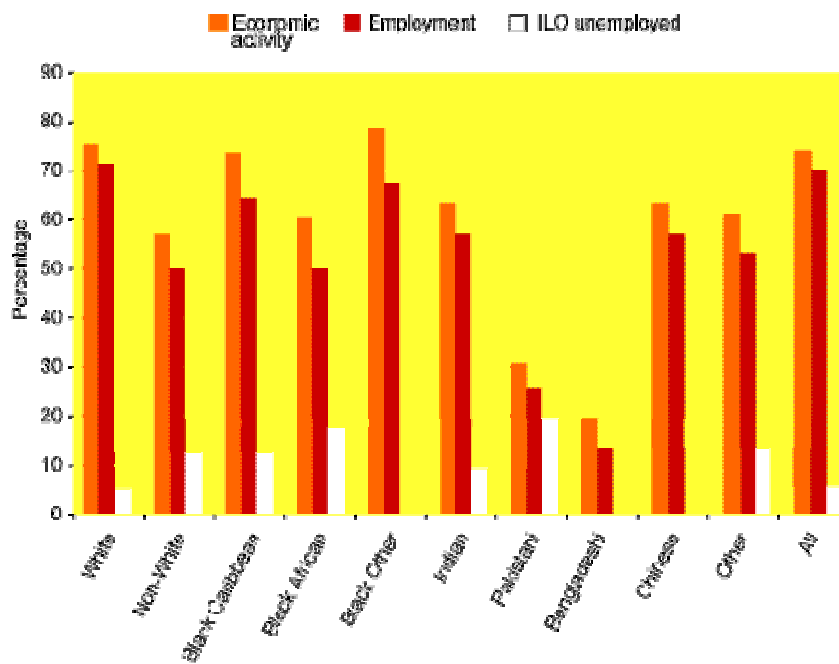


Source (diagrams above & below): Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics

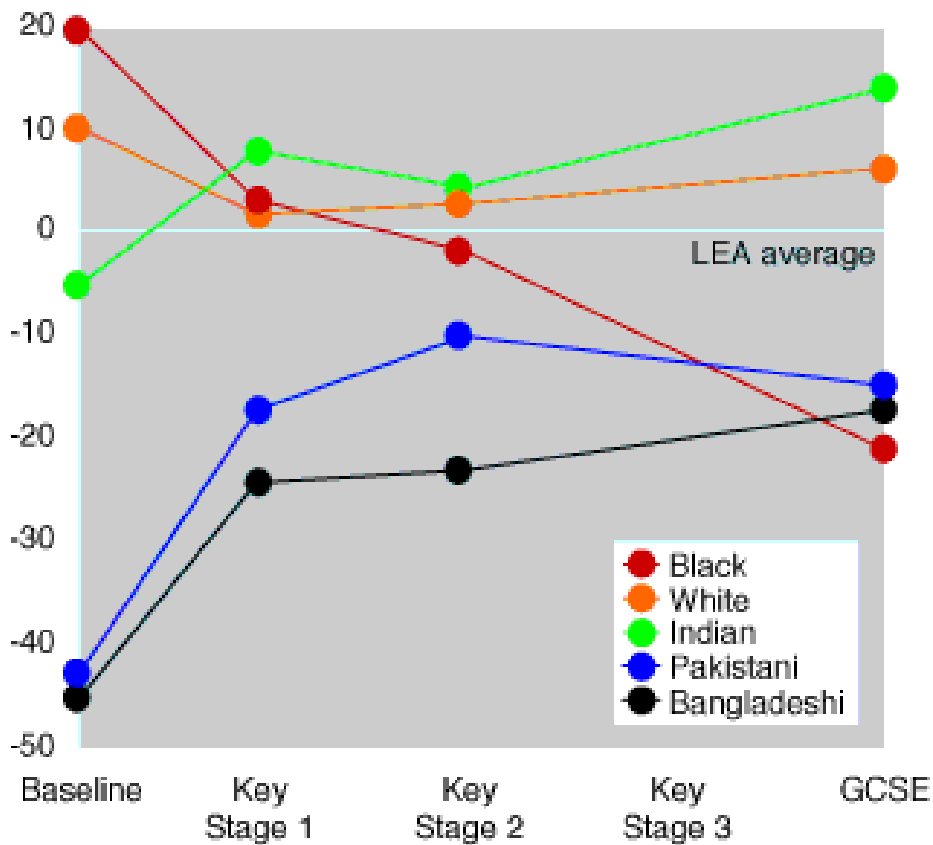
Employment Statistics – Men (UK)



Employment Statistics – Women (UK)

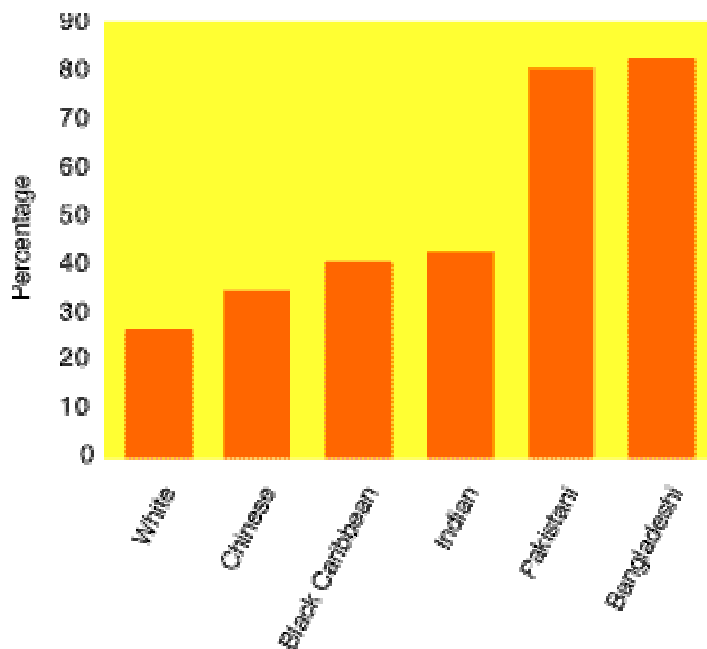


Educational Attainment from Age 5 to GCSE



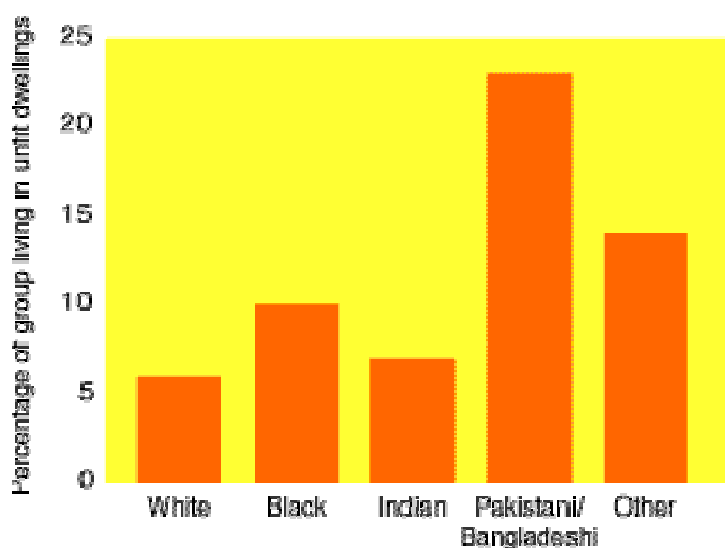
Source: *Educational inequality: mapping race, class and gender*, David Gillborn and Heidi Safia Mirza, Ofsted, November 2000

People Living in Households with less than half the national average income



Source: T. Modood, R. Berthoud, et. al., *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*, London: Policy Studies Institute, 1997.

Incidence of Households living in unfit dwellings and poor neighbourhoods



Source: Office for National Statistics, *Social trends* 30, London: ONS, 2000, p169.

Conclusion

FREEDOM does not necessarily equate to JUSTICE.

What Jesus intended:

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10b

Group Work

From the presentation, identify 7 possible/potential racial justice issues. Choose at least 3 of these issues and discuss possible causes of that issue (from a racial justice standpoint) and ways we can address it.

Discussion

In the discussion following the group work, the main thing highlighted as leading to racial injustice was education. We need to know about black history but it should not be thought of as a separate subject. More problems occur in deprived areas and so these areas need to have positive discrimination when it comes to resources. A higher percentage of black men are to be found in the prisons, mental hospitals etc than would be expected from their population numbers. They are often absent from the family. This leads to a lack of role models. A possible cause of black men's lack of involvement in family life could be that under slavery men had no role and this devaluing of black men's role has continued. We need to have more black people as teachers, police officers etc. Black people need to be seen to have a greater role in society.

Workshop: Sex Trafficking (Ms Joan Wager, Methodist Women's Network)

Methodist Women's Network Social Action Project 2005-2008

'Encouraging, enabling and equipping the Methodist Church to take action on the trafficking of women and girls in Europe' through:

Educating, campaigning, raising awareness, encouraging a response, by:

- Organising local events
- Recording action taken
- Writing letters to MPs, MEPs, local press
- Publicising in churches
- Discovering ways of standing alongside the most deprived women of Europe
- Twinning links with a group or church in a country which is a source of trafficking.

The Facts

- 2m people trafficked each year worldwide
- 1.2m are under 18 yrs
- 77% are female, of whom
- 87% trafficked for sex industry
- 20,000 women trafficked into Europe
- A woman can be bought for up to £8,000
- 3rd largest illegal industry in world

The Causes

- War/conflict
- Ethnic victimisation
- Abuse
- Poverty
- Violence
- Rape

The Promise

- A better life
- A job and money to send home
- Excitement and travel
- Love and safety

The Reality

- Physical violence, deprivation
- Sexual abuse, rape
- Possible pregnancy, forced abortion
- Forced sex in a brothel
- Threats, lies, deception, humiliation
- Fear, exhaustion, isolation

The Legacy

- Fear of authority
- Fear of deportation
- Fear of reprisals against family
- Fear of punishment and retribution
- Re-living trauma
- Depression, insecurity, guilt, shame
- Substance abuse, possible suicide

In Cumbria

DC Lee Johnson is overseeing Operation Pentameter in Cumbria:

‘Although there has been little intelligence of such activities in Cumbria in the past, we are currently investigating whether there are premises where trafficked individuals

are housed and offered out. We are still investigating the extent of the problem in our county and are giving support to the national campaign.’

Agree – Disagree Continuum

Members of group were asked to place a marker on the ‘Strongly agree – strongly disagree’ line according to their reaction to the following statements:

1. It is the responsibility of governments in those countries from which women are being trafficked to stop it happening.
 2. Men create the market for sex-trafficking – it is they who should be targeted in any campaigning.
 3. Although pimps are often condemned they actually provide a protective function as well as organising and managing.
 4. Prostitution has always been around and always will be. That is a fact we have to accept.
 5. It is hard for churches to become involved in this kind of issue because people involved in trafficking and prostitution are outside the church.
 6. Women who come to Britain illegally deserve to be deported if they are found to be working as prostitutes – even if they are victims of sex-trafficking.
 7. This subject is not really an issue for Cumbria because there are no ‘red light districts’ here.
 8. ‘Football and sex belong together’ claimed a lawyer when a mega-brothel was provided next to the World Cup venue in Berlin. This is probably true and we are wasting our time campaigning against such developments.
 9. The problem is women coming to the UK from elsewhere – trafficking would not be able to operate without them.
 10. Girls who are involved in prostitution are from dysfunctional families and are willingly drawn into prostitution.
 11. Most clients of prostitutes would object to the violence of traffickers and reject prostitutes who had been forced into it.
 12. Overcoming trafficking must be linked to a global strategy to tackle poverty.
- Different responses led to discussion about the complexity of some statements, how attitudes are affected by prejudice, experience or lack of it, etc.

Information Exercise

Each person was given a news item or a report on some work an agency has done re sex trafficking. After reading, they shared briefly with the person next to them. They were asked to write words or short phrases on a flip chart to show any feelings, reactions, important facts, etc. The responses included the following:

- Victims of: abuse, circumstance, our prejudice
- More awareness needed
- Anger
- Shame
- Bewildered
- Frustration at indifference
- Challenge culture, do not collude
- Human trafficking is a crime based on deceit, exploitation and often extreme brutality
- Drop in the ocean can be start of an action

- Prostitutes' clients charged with rape
- More information about protection for children
- Abuse of trust at all stages

The following points were made from group:

- Why are people not warned in their own country?
- People may feel it is not going to happen to them and are desperate to get away from lives that offer no hope.
- Males (especially boys) are also trafficked for sex.
- One person was impressed by what the Church in Bangladesh does if people who have been trafficked are returned home.

Action

- **Ask questions:**
MP, MEP – use to lobby govt.
Use local MP surgeries
Police/local authority involvement
- **Be aware:**
Yourself and others
Locally, nationally, internationally
What are various agencies doing?
- **Converse:**
Culture shift – especially young men
Paying for sex?
Talk about issues and make others aware
- **Do something:**
Keep pressure on MPs
Contact organisations
Child sponsorship, Fairtrade, etc.

Focus on one or two things – safe houses, links with police, find a support group locally to keep each other motivated to act.

Links to specific countries – Network developing links with Ukraine.

Workshop: Trade Justice (Ms Bridget Burrows, CAFOD Campaigns Team)

What can we say about the Transatlantic Slave Trade and modern trade injustice?

Definition of slavery: the legal ownership of another person. Slavery is different from other forms of subordination, injustice and inhumanity.

Caution! What we can't do:

- Slavery as metaphor, e.g. "These trade conditions are slavery."
- Slavery as direct cause, e.g. "Slavery caused the current system."

What we can do:

- Show slavery leaves legacies.
- Draw comparisons and echoes between what things were like then and how things are now.

What sort of questions could we ask?

- How has the way things are produced, and the economic system, changed?
- What does that mean for the workers and their lives?
- Who has power, and what does this mean for those that don't?

Then and Now: Slave Trade in the Caribbean

1600s – 1700s:

- Create Caribbean economies reliant on just one crop grown for export.
- Top products: Sugar, coffee, tobacco, molasses & rum.
- Profits essential in funding England's industrial revolution.
- Large plantations, with owners overseas, managed by local agents.

Why slavery?

- Large amounts of cheap land available. European immigrants able to become landowners themselves. Nobody to be workers.
- Huge amounts of labour were needed for the plantations.
- Big profits to be made for Europeans.
- Only way to stay competitive was to also use slaves. Western Africa became the new source for slaves to meet the demand for labour.

1800s: When slavery was abolished, production halved.

Then and Now: After Abolition of Slave Trade in the Caribbean

1807: 'Abolition of the Slave Trade Act'. But, did not stop slavery or Britain profiting from it.

- Britons owned plantations.
- Illegal slave trading carried on for 60 years, despite Royal Navy patrols & fines.
- Bonded labourers, particularly from India, imported to the islands. A bonded labourer is under contract to work for an employer for a specific amount of time to pay off a passage to a new country or home. Typically the employers provided little if any monetary remuneration; however, they were responsible for accommodation, food, other essentials, and training. Upon completion of the term of the contract the labourer sometimes received a lump sum payment such as a parcel of land or tools and was free to farm or take up a trade of his or her own. The system of power it created was often an opening for physical, sexual, and verbal abuse, as well as legal abuses of contract. Indentured servants may be forced to purchase goods or services from the employer in exchange for an extension to the period of their indenture, which could thereby continue indefinitely. Indentured Servitude was not the same as the apprenticeship system by which skilled trades were taught, but similarities do exist between the two mechanisms, in that both require a set period of work
- Slave-grown cotton & sugar still sold in Britain.

1833: 'Slavery Abolition Act'. This act gave all slaves in the British Empire their freedom.

- Compensation for slave owners equivalent to £1 billion now.
- The freed slaves received nothing.
- Former-slaves continued to work on same plantations for very low wages.
- Slaves made 'apprentices' to their former owners.

1850s: Banana trade begins.

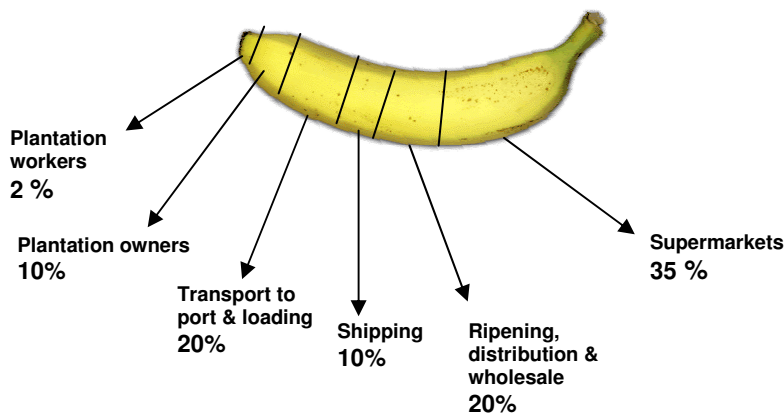
1890s: Bananas replace sugar as Jamaica's top export.

Then and Now: Current Banana Trade

2000s – Huge power & money in few hands:

- 5 companies have 80 % of the banana trade - Dole Foods (USA); Chiquita (USA); Del Monte (Mexico); Bonita (Equador); Fyffe (Europe).
- Control whole banana 'chain': from growing to distributing to shops – so they make all the money.
- 75 countries' income from bananas is 4 % of what top 3 companies earn.
- Europe imports 35%, and the US 35%.

The Banana Split



Then & Now: How are Plantation Workers' Lives Different?

- Long hours – often 10-12 hour days.
- Low wages that are getting lower, e.g. in Costa Rica, wages have gone down by 40 % since 1998.
- Firing permanent workers - same workers, short-term contracts for lower pay.
- Pesticide poisoning, causing chronic health problems, including sterilisation.
- Migration, causing break down of family structures, leading to alcoholism, prostitution. Echoes: Slave trade effects on families and communities.
- Technically, they can get another job, but is this realistic? For 15 Latin American and Caribbean producer countries, several million people depend on the international banana trade for their livelihood.

Changed Ownership, Different Economics?

- Companies constant drive to increase profits.
- Move to where labour cheapest - poor countries with less rights for workers.
- Threat of moving company to another country - keeps wages & workers rights low.
- Current world economy encourages this.
- Multinational companies been selling plantations - to wash hands of bad press - locally managed instead.

Is this system another kind of economic bondage?

Chocolate in Ivory Coast

Cocoa was first introduced to Europe in the fifteenth century by Christopher Columbus who brought some back to Spain after his travels in the "New World".

1880: Cocoa arrived in Ivory Coast.

- Ivory Coast now produces 40 % of the world's cocoa.
- 33 % of Ivory Coast's economy is based on cocoa. Highly sensitive to changes in world market prices for cocoa.

Bitter taste: Forced child labour

- 15,000 child slaves may be in Ivory Coast (Save the Children, Canada).
- Price of cocoa beans has fallen from 32p to 25p per pound in the last 10 years.
- Low prices encourage use of child slave labour.

Not a fair price

- 90 % of world cocoa is grown by small farmers.
- In Ivory Coast, prices dropped after agriculture was deregulated.
- Previously, the cooperatives had given farmers access to negotiate collective crop prices.

Ivory Coast has historically been reliant on exports, whether it was coffee, timber, or cocoa as the country focused on an outward-oriented pattern of development. There are about 600,000 cocoa farms in Ivory Coast (Child Labour Coalition). A British TV documentary, "Slavery," claimed 90% of Ivory Coast cocoa plantations use slave labour. Most are young men and boys from impoverished areas in Benin, Togo and Mali. They are enticed by traffickers who promise them paid work, housing and an education. Instead, they are sold to Ivory Coast cocoa plantation owners who beat them into submission and offer no pay for gruelling 18-hour days. After "Slavery" was televised in Britain in 2000, horrified consumers bombarded the country's biggest chocolate manufacturers - Cadbury, Nestle and Mars - with demands for "clean products" which are untainted by slave labour. West Africa's cocoa plantations have long been ill-reputed for their use of forced labour and child labour, giving chocolate a bitter taste. In 2001 the global chocolate and cocoa industry was also urged to address the deeper socio-economic problems that are behind the use of forced child labour on cocoa plantations. A UNICEF study reports that 200,000 children are trafficked yearly in West and Central Africa. In addition to the illegality of trafficking and hiring child workers, the implicated cocoa farmers subject the children to inhuman living conditions.

Chocolate in Our Shops

- £35 - Average annual wage for cocoa growers in West Africa - 'wage slavery', i.e. where a person must sell their labour-power, submitting to the authority of an employer, in order to merely subsist. You don't receive the full compensation for your work, often because the employer takes excessive profits.
- \$1.3 million - Amount the CEO of Nestle was paid in 1999. The ratio of average chief executive pay to worker pay was 431 to 1 in 2004.
- £4.53 billion - Sales of confectionary in the UK in 2005.
- UK is the 3rd largest consumer of chocolate.
- 3 top companies: Cadbury Schweppes, Mars UK and Nestlé Rowntree.

"I don't know what chocolate is." Diabate has worked countless days harvesting cocoa pods, but has never tasted the finished product.

Unfair Trade Rules

As a legacy of colonialism and slavery, poor countries are stuck producing basic agricultural goods. Basic goods are everything unprocessed: e.g. cotton, green coffee beans, sugar, bananas, gold, lead (compared to manufactured/higher goods: e.g. instant coffee, tomato ketchup, T shirts, electronics parts).

They are stuck because of the unfair trade system:

- Rich countries put a higher tariff for poor countries trying to sell them higher goods, than on basic goods. This stops poor countries industrialising.
- Prices have fallen for basic goods. Basic goods have declined in value on the world market. This means you can grow twice as much coffee, but it is worth less, so you get less money in the end. Basic goods are very vulnerable to this kind of price shock.
- Being forced to open their markets.
- Power imbalance in world trade negotiations – so the status quo is maintained. The inequality reproduces itself.

Africa Losing Out

Africa's share in world exports fell from 6% in 1980 to 2% in 2002.

Falling prices

- The prices of cocoa, coffee, lead, palm oil, rice, rubber, sugar and tin were 50% lower in 2000 than in 1980.
- Ghana increased cocoa production by 30% between 1996 and 2000, but a 40% decline in price in the same period means that they made less!

Making debt worse

- This has made Africa's debt position much worse.
- 37 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) obtain 50% or more of their earnings from agricultural goods.
- In 2001, cotton prices fell by 19%. Burkina Faso had to get loans of £60 million.

Poverty getting worse

- Living standards in most poor countries are lower now than they were 30 years ago.
- If trade for Africa had remained at 1980 levels, the current level of income per person would have been 50 % higher.

How can the values that motivated the abolitionists be applied to injustice & exploitation today?

"We didn't escape slavery to come to this. We support making poverty history but what we have here is the chance to stop making poverty the future."

Renwick Rose, small banana farmer from Windward Isles, 2005

Consumers have great power

- Sales of Fairtrade products have doubled every two years since 2000.
- 33 % of all Windward Islands bananas carry the Fairtrade Mark.
- Since December 2006 all Sainsbury's bananas are now Fairtrade. Sainsbury's sells 10 million individual bananas each week.

But we cannot do everything!

Fairtrade is still only 1% of world consumption, but 55% of that is to Europe!

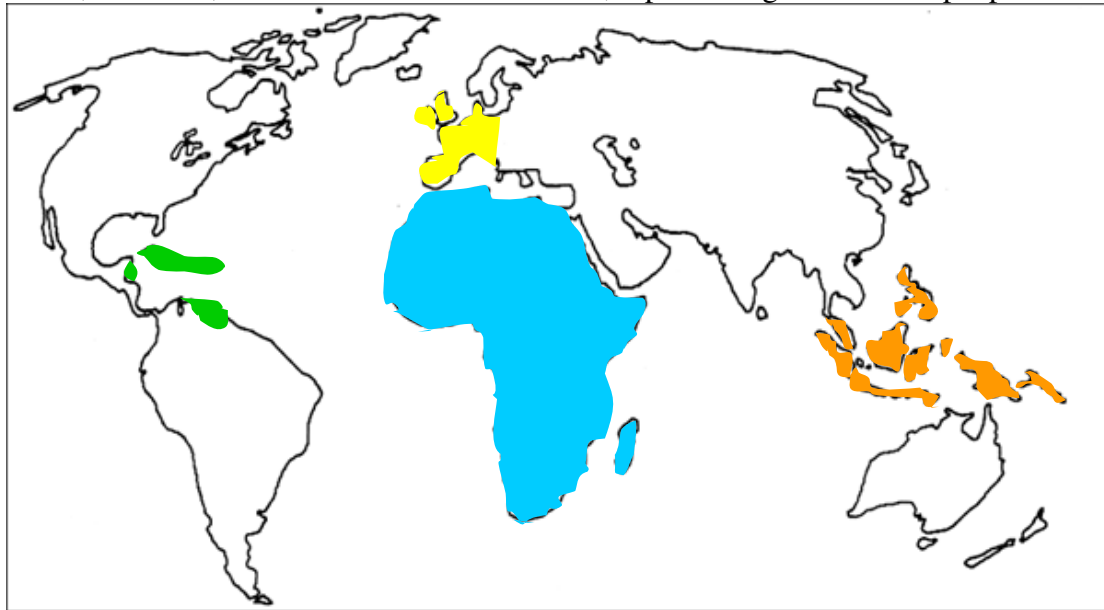
Governments, companies and high street supermarkets must act.

Supermarket Power

Bananas are the single most profitable item passing through the check-outs in British supermarkets, accounting for 1% of all sales. As they are part of the 'basic shopping list' they are used in price wars between the supermarkets. Supermarkets take between 35% and 40% of the consumer price, compared to around 2% going to pay the wages of the men and women who do the hardest work – inside the plantations. 75% of all groceries are sold by just four big retailers - Tesco at 31%, Asda/WalMart and J Sainsbury at 16% each, and Morrisons at 12%.

Government Power

The UK Government is negotiating trade deals with 75 of the poorest countries in the world, in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, representing 750 million people:



Caribbean: Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.

Africa: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Pacific: Cook Islands, Timor Leste, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs):

What's wrong with these trade deals at present?

They are unfair:

- Despite the name of 'Economic PARTNERSHIP Agreements' these trade deals are between very unequal partners.
- They would pitch very poor and very undeveloped producers into direct competition with European industries that have benefited from years of investment.

- In agriculture, poor countries' farmers, who receive no government support, may find their markets flooded by heavily subsidised agricultural products from the EU, destroying their market and means of earning an income.

They are also being rushed:

- Unlike the World Trade Organisation negotiations which have dragged on for years, these trade deals between Europe and poor countries have to be completed by December 2007.
- The need to campaign is urgent; in just one year they may be signed and sealed.
- Poor countries may have to open up to 90% of their economies to European imports in just 10 years – far too quickly to give them the chance to compete on an equal footing, damaging farmers' livelihoods and fledgling industries, and exacerbating poverty.
- The EU is insisting on a very fast timetable for the negotiations, and offering no alternatives to EPAs.

They are underhand:

- Poor countries stood together at the World Trade Organisation and refused to start talks on new areas of trade (such as investment, competition and government procurement).
- But now the EU is pushing the same plans through Economic Partnership Agreements, where the poor countries have less bargaining power.
- This is despite these countries making very clear they do not want to negotiate on these complicated, extra issues.

They will hurt the poor.

So, what can we do?

- Write to supermarkets.
- Send CAFOD EPA postcards to the UK Trade Secretary.
- Send an email to German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Workshop: Migrant Workers (Canon Alan Robson, Lincolnshire Chaplaincy Services & Mr Mohammed Dhalech, AWAZ)

Alan introduced a case study from Lincolnshire where he has been involved in agricultural chaplaincy for some years. Lincolnshire has many migrant workers, mostly involved in agriculture for some of the major employers but also in tourism. Gangmasters employ both good and bad practice and vary greatly in the numbers of people employed. Churches have been particularly involved with showing films in workers' languages and providing meals. The main issues are around accommodation, remittances home (banks have improved their practices), translation, and for some people child care. Integration Lincolnshire is an umbrella company linking public, private and voluntary sector suppliers that was set up to serve multicultural workers through: coordinating the provision of welcome packs; planning to provide emergency accommodation, particularly if an employer closes down; giving advice; and training migrant workers to be qualified translators. It hopes to become a social enterprise run by migrant workers.

Mohammed has been commissioned by Voluntary Acton Cumbria to map the current situation and support needs of migrant workers in Cumbria. There were around 3,000

migrant workers in the county at the end of 2006, the biggest group being from Poland. Around 45% are women and there are relatively few couples or families. In east Cumbria they mainly work in hospitality and in the west in processing and warehousing. A number of workers, many of whom are highly qualified, have quickly progressed to managerial roles. Issues are: accommodation and overcrowding (low wages make it difficult to pay economic rents and private renters often prefer couples or families to single people); driving (where misunderstanding about documentation often leads people into court); domestic violence; and language (some employers provide language lessons whilst others depend on courses arranged by colleges, Eden Rural Foyer etc).

Cumbria County Council leads a range of organisations to provide welcome packs in several languages with others available through the website (www.cumbria.gov.uk). The Cumbria Multicultural Service, from its Barrow base, is mainly involved in advocacy, with points in Maryport, Penrith and Windermere. There is a need for more of a one-stop shop approach from all sectors.

There are a number of self-help groups such as a Polish local web based bulletin board. Recruitment is now largely through links with friends and relatives in people's home countries. The Catholic church have two Polish priests in the diocese who celebrate monthly masses in a number of places, but because of working patterns these are not always accessible to people.

Social integration is difficult because of long working hours and a lack of families with children (who would be involved with local schools). The workers' recognition scheme is not operating efficiently. Training done for one employer is not usually accredited or recognised by another. Some employers are open to discussion about improving facilities and others not, whilst some want to know where to report exploitation.

The discussion ranged widely: from legal migrant workers, to refugees, to illegal immigrants, to the activities of the British National Party locally. There was considerable experience of racist attitudes to offcomers but also examples of good practice. In one case the beat bobby comes into a factory to help acclimatise newly arrived workers, also pointing out where they might not be welcomed. Some community groups are forming. Ambleside churches have run successful welcome events but feel there is little general mingling. Providing a meal or party can be successful. Just talking can transform suspicious attitudes. This is easier for families. Places to come together such as internet cafes are helpful. Local underlying racism needs tackling through education (groups such as AWAZ can help). We must challenge myths. The Cumbria Attitudes Survey will show whether any progress is being made.