

Furthermore, we don't want to give our foreign competitors an advantage over American workers and American businesses. Thousands of foreign travelers criss-cross the country every day. They and their employers know they've got to talk to Americans face-to-face to make sales here. That's why their governments—Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, France—permit 100-percent deductibility for business expenses. If we're to be competitive, we must level the playing field for our own businesses.

In September 1994, a survey conducted on behalf of American Express examined the impact of the M&E deduction on company spending, and the ultimate impact on the restaurant industry. The study was taken among small and mid-sized companies where the impacts would be more pronounced.

The findings indicated there is a high propensity or willingness to enforce behavioral change as the financial impact of the tax law is felt.

I am sure that if a study was conducted on the spousal travel deduction the results would be similar.

I ask my colleagues to support us in this effort and work with us to ensure that it is included in any middle-class tax relief legislation that comes before the 104th Congress.

CAROLINE COX AND CHRISTIAN
SOLIDARITY INTERNATIONAL
BRINGING HOPE TO THE SUFFERING

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 1995

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I commend to our colleagues' attention a speech given recently by Baroness Caroline Cox, Deputy Speaker of Britain's House of Lords, when she received the William Wilberforce Award.

The award, named after the great 19th century political reformer who dedicated his career to outlawing the slave trade in England, is given to a person who exhibits moral witness and willingness to stand up for unpopular causes.

Lady Cox is a woman with a heart for the suffering, the oppressed, and the persecuted. Her work and that of Christian Solidarity International, an interdenominational Christian human rights organization, has brought hope to thousands. I have travelled with Lady Cox and have been a witness to the way she ministers—showing love, respect, and compassion equally for the little children and high-level government officials. She is a woman who lives out her faith in Jesus Christ by doing what He admonishes in Matthew 25:

When I was hungry you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. * * * Whatever you do for the least of these, you also do for me.

The work of Christian Solidarity International may not be well-known to us here, but it is well-known to the Armenians in war-torn Nagorno-Karabakh who had their pain relieved when CSI brought desperately needed medical supplies to the tiny beleaguered enclave. It is well-known to the thousands of Russian or-

phans who without the help of CSI would have been left in mental institutions devoid of hope for a productive future. It is well known to the suffering people in southern Sudan whose voice has been heard due to the constant advocacy of Baroness Cox and the CSI team. And it is well-known to the Karen Christians in Burma who, as I am speaking, are fighting for their lives against the military junta that is battling for control in that country.

Baroness Cox responds in faith to bring hope to countless millions. She stands up for justice for the persecuted. In the words of Prison Fellowship founder Chuck Colson, "As William Wilberforce was a voice for the voiceless and stood against his party and fellow Parliamentarians in his campaign to end the slave trade in eighteenth-century England, so is Baroness Cox. With Christian compassion fused with fierce courage, Lady Cox continues to shun mere observation for frontline participation." William Wilberforce would have been proud.

WILBERFORCE AWARD BANQUET—PRESENTED
BY CHUCK COLSON, PRISON FELLOWSHIP

The following speech was given by the Baroness Caroline Cox of Queensbury, Deputy Speaker of Britain's House of Lords, on February 1, 1995 in Washington, DC, during the events surrounding the National Prayer Breakfast. Baroness Cox was honored for her courageous acts and stand for justice on behalf of the suffering and oppressed people of the world. In the words of Chuck Colson: "As William Wilberforce was a voice for the voiceless and stood against his party and fellow Parliamentarians in his campaign to end the slave trade in eighteenth-century England, so is Baroness Cox. With Christian compassion fused with fierce courage, Lady Cox continues to shun mere observation for frontline participation."

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I stand before you this evening filled with deep emotions. First, I feel both humble and proud to be associated with the name of William Wilberforce. Wilberforce used to be described as a "shrimp"; I feel about the same size as a shrimp in comparison with him and also with the distinguished predecessors who have been honored with the Award in previous years.

But I am also full of gratitude for the opportunity this occasion gives me to pay tribute to those in Christian Solidarity International (CSI) who make my work possible and, above all, I value the opportunity to honour the suffering people whom it has been our privilege to be with in dark and difficult days—people suffering from oppression, persecution, slavery and attempted genocide.

I would therefore like to spend some of my allotted time saying a few words about the work of CSI, without whom I would not be here tonight, and then to spend the rest of my time honouring those people whom we try to serve, who always inspire us with their courage, generosity, graciousness, faith and dignity.

CSI is an interdenominational Christian human rights organization which tries to help victims of repression, regardless of their colour, creed or nationality. But as Christians, we have an additional concern; we are reminded of St. Paul's message to the church in Corinth, that when one part of the body of Christ suffers, all suffer.

CSI's particular focus is on forgotten peoples in forgotten lands; on places which do not appear on your TV screens or the front pages of newspapers. We try to be with those who feel—and are—forgotten by the rest of

the world, including often, by the rest of the Christian church.

Many of the big humanitarian organizations have to respect political constraints, in order to accomplish their work. This means there are some people who are suffering in repressive regimes whom they cannot help. But we are free to put human rights and humanitarian need before political constraints and to go where others may not. This may involve some unorthodox behavior and some unofficial travel—but it gives us the priceless privilege of, as the British advertisement for a certain brand of lager beer claims, "Reaching those parts where others cannot reach."

Thus it is that CSI has made it possible for us to make several visits, for example, to some of the people of Southern Sudan, many of them have been cut off from other aid organizations by the brutal policies of the fundamentalist Islamic Government in Khartoum. The magnitude of the sufferings of the Sudanese people must rank amongst the greatest in the world today: with perhaps 1.5 million killed and over 5 million displaced by civil war. Many Southerners have been captured and enslaved by Northerners—so I believe the spirit of Wilberforce would be striving for their freedom as much as he strove for those who suffered as slaves in his own day. Just 2 Weeks ago, CSI organized another mission to people so cut off that they had absolutely no medicines; many were literally starving, many were naked and very cold as the temperatures fall steeply at night. We took medicines and we plan to return with more urgently needed supplies. We were also able to take with us the exiled Roman Catholic Bishop of El Obeid; I am not a Catholic, but I wish you could have shared with me the happiness of seeing the rejoicing of people who had not seen a Bishop or been able to celebrate mass for 20 years.

It was CSI who made it possible for me to visit the Karen people of Burma last November, an ethnic minority ferociously persecuted by the SLORC regime. Many have been forced into slave labour, others live as stateless, displaced people, trapped in the jungle. Recently, the SLORC Regime has stepped up its military offensive against the Karen, forcing tens of thousands more to flee as refugees to Thailand, and trapping many more behind their own lines, where capture will mean a fate worse than death.

It was CSI which reached the Armenian people in January 1992, when they were blockaded, besieged, bombed in their ancient homeland of Nagorno Karabakh, a beautiful part of historic Armenia cruelly relocated by Stalin as an isolated enclave in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has adopted an explicit policy of ethnic cleansing of the Armenians from Karabakh. Karabakh is a beautiful land with some of the most ancient Christian churches in the world, the Armenians being the first nation to accept Christianity. The Armenians who live there have been fighting for the survival of their families, homes, homeland and their—and our—Christian heritage. It has been a battle against impossible odds, like David and Goliath. 150,000 Armenians are defending their land against 7 million-strong Azerbaijan, helped by Turkey and literally thousands of mujahadeen mercenaries. In that bitter January, we found the besieged and blockaded Armenians suffering casualties caused by constant bombardment, without any anaesthetics or pain-killing drugs, with only vodka to try to relieve the suffering. Returning to Britain, I could not sleep thinking about their predicament; and it was CSI which, without the requisite money, responded in faith and enabled us to obtain supplies of morphine, cocaine powder (for

eye injuries), omnopon and fentanyl. The challenge of taking this consignment of drugs, street value incalculable, across Europe to the depths of Karabakh was rather daunting. God sometimes asks us to do strange things: I had to turn myself into an unofficial drug runner! But we were able to return to Karabakh within 12 days with those desperately needed supplies. If anyone would like to know how we did it, I am prepared to tell you the secret, for a contribution to our next consignment to Karabakh—our 24th—when we will be taking a team of Christian volunteers to build a rehabilitation center for amputees, because there are no facilities for artificial limbs in Karabakh, for the hundreds of people, including children, with amputations caused by the war.

And it was CSI which reached another, different kind of forgotten people: orphans suffering in the Soviet Union. During a Human Rights Conference in Leningrad in 1990, newly elected Russian Deputies asked us to investigate the plight of children taken into care, whom they suspected were incorrectly diagnosed as mentally handicapped or “oligophrenic”. Once classified, they were shut away in special orphanages, deprived of a proper education, often abused physically and by drugs. As they grew up, they were denied all basic human rights, could not vote or drive, and were forced to work in conditions which were, in effect, slave labour.

Children who resisted or ran away were sent to psychiatric hospitals, where they were often subjected to torture by drugs. I visited some of these children and returned to Britain full of anguish. Many seemed to be bright, able youngsters, but doomed to lives without hope. I will never forget the pale, haunted faces of Serge and Dmitri, two articulate 14-year-old boys in a grim psychiatric hospital, not mentally ill, but tanked-up with drugs and Dmitri's heart-breaking plea, ‘Please will you find me a mother? I want to get out of here!’

It was CSI who again reacted in faith and responded to a request from Russian colleagues who were deeply worried about the situation, by funding a visit by a multidisciplinary team to undertake research in orphanages in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The findings shook the system; over 2/3 of those classified and treated as “oligophrenic” were of average or above average mental ability. We published the findings in a report called ‘Trajectories of Despair: Misdiagnosis and Maltreatment of Soviet Orphans.’ This has since been translated into Russian and is serving as a basis for policy reform. Many children previously classified as oligophrenic have now been reclassified and can lead normal lives. We are also trying to establish projects in Moscow, with Russian colleagues, to help change the policy of child care throughout the Russian Federation.

So I would like to emphasize that I am honored to receive this award, not for myself, but on behalf of CSI. I was recently reading a biography of William Wilberforce and was struck by this sentence: ‘The man who resembled a shrimp . . . had shown the world that a righteous cause, coupled with determination and motivated by faith in a loving God, can produce miracles.’ (He Freed Britain's Slaves’, Charles Ludwig, p. 203.)

We in CSI always feel so inadequate; we are inadequate. But we hope God can use our efforts. I remember on my way into Burma, I was feeling acutely depressed as I thought, ‘What on earth can we do with our meager resources to begin to help the Karen people with their massive problems?’ Then in my morning Bible reading I found the message in Second Kings 4:42-44, the Old Testament forerunner of the parable of the loaves and

the fishes. A man with 20 loaves of bakery barley bread was told by Elisha to distribute them to feed a crowd of 100 hungry people. In a crisis of confidence, he asked what use they could be among so many; but Elisha replied, ‘Give it to the people to eat. For this is what the Lord says: They will eat and have some left over.’ And indeed they did eat and some left over. That message was a comfort. We in CSI hope that God can use our pathetic, meager resources in ways we cannot understand. At times it seems that the message on a notepad given me by my daughter could be our motto, ‘I do not believe in miracles, I rely on them.’

Before I conclude, I wish to pay especial tribute to those whom we have been privileged to meet and to be with in their dark and difficult days. I wish I had longer to tell you about their courage, generosity, graciousness and dignity. A few examples must speak for many more.

Come with me to Southern Sudan, where the people are dying around us from starvation and disease; those who are still alive are suffering from hunger, thirst, nakedness and the constant fear of attack and enslavement. But despite their suffering, they still smile with the famous Sudanese smile. Join me as the Bishop speaks to his people at mass in what they called their “cathedral” under a tamarind tree:

‘This most beautiful cathedral, not built with human hands, but by nature and by God, is filled with the people of God, and especially with children.

‘We must tell our brothers and sisters that the people here are still full of hope and that they still smile in spite of suffering and persecution.

‘Those smiles put us to shame. Your people have suffered slavery, but you are not slaves to the world but children of God, our God who has told us we can call Him “Abba” or “Father”. Christianity gives us liberty; therefore we are no longer slaves but free: children of liberty, freedom and truth. But we live in a bad world. Many of your people have been sold into slavery. But for me that is not to become a slave. Slavery is not a matter of the colour of the skin. The real slave is a person who lives in sin; who does injustice to brothers and sisters; and who kills them. That person is a slave to sin.

‘Some people feel naked because they have no clothes and they try to cover themselves because of their embarrassment. But this is not real nakedness. True nakedness is to be without love. Therefore to be clothed in love: this is Christianity. It is not a shirt that you can take on or take off; but to wear the faith and love of the Christian faith is as a way of life and witness to it, even to those who do not believe in Christ.

‘So as we go away, do not think we leave you or forget you. There are still many good people in the world and you will be remembered as people who are closest to God because you are carrying the cross, every day obeying Christ's command to take up His cross and to follow Him. We will pray for you. But prayer without action is dead, as faith without deed is dead. Our love will be in action for you. I came, saw, heard, touched, and I am enriched.’

Now please come for a brief glimpse of the Christian church amongst the persecuted Karen people of Burma. Just one image: I and my CSI colleagues (a splendidly inter-denominational mixture of Pentecostal, Evangelical, Russian Orthodox and myself (Anglican ‘Unorthodox’), went to worship at the nearest church in the jungle—a Baptist church. A Bell was sounding out—a bell made from a Burmese bomb. A modern-day

symbol: instead of swords into ploughshares, bombs into bells. But sadly, now, the bombs are raining down on the Karen and they need our prayers as many suffer the afflictions of war, or as slaves inside Burman, or as refugees in Thailand.

Finally, our Armenian Christian brothers and sisters in Karabakh. Those who have heard me speak before will have heard examples of their faith and their witness to a love which transcends suffering. I only have time for one vignette. At the beginning of the process of attempted ethnic cleansing, Azerbaijan undertook a series of deportations of entire villages. They were brutal operations, in which innocent villagers were rounded up, many were maltreated, some murdered; homes were ransacked; then the people were forcibly driven off their land, unable to take anything with them. After one of these terrible events, at Getashen, a farmer managed to escape into the mountains. On top of a hill there he saw a fruit tree in blossom and looked for solace under this tree; only to find as he approached the tree a little five year old girl hanging from its branches, her tiny body cut in two. As he looked upon the little girl, he swore revenge. Two years later, he and his comrades had the opportunity to take back an Armenian village taken by the Azeris. He now had the opportunity for revenge. With tears steaming down his face, he told me: ‘But I couldn't make myself harm a child—I failed and was unable to keep my vow.’ I replied, your reward will be crown of glory. He in turn replied, ‘That crown we wear is a crown of thorns.’

Those whom we are privileged to meet during CSI's ministry are indeed wearing their crown of thorns with great dignity. They suffer from man's inhumanity to man, like those for whom William Wilberforce felt so deeply and for whom he fought so valiantly. These words of the Bishop of Karabakh speak for them all, with their affirmation of faith, their challenge to us, and their magnificent, resounding commitment to that love which must be the hallmark of Christian faith and witness:

‘The help of God is great and immeasurable when the human heart turns to Him with fervour. Our nation has again begun to find its faith and is praying in churches, cellars and in the field of battle, defending its life and the life of those who are near and dear. It is not only the perpetrators of crime and evil who commit sin, but also those who stand by—seeing and knowing—and who do not condemn it or try to avert it. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. We do not hate: we believe in God. If we want God's victory, we must love. Even if there are demonic forces at work, not only in this conflict, but in other parts of the world, we must still love.’

So, I finish by thanking you for the great honour you have given me, and for the opportunity to honour others who carry forward the spirit of William Wilberforce. May I leave you some lines by John Harriott, SJ, quoted by Max Warren in an article in ‘New Fire’ (Winter, 1975, p. 453):

Let us open the clenched fish and extend the open palm.

Let us mourn till others are comforted, weep till others laugh.

Let us be sleepless till all can sleep untroubled.

Let us be frugal till all are filled.

Let us give till all have received.

Let us make no claim till all have had their due.

Let us be slaves till all are free.

Let us lay down our lives till all have life abundantly.