

Freedom, dignity and slavery in the modern world

**The Centre for Social Justice's
First Abraham Lincoln Address**

Rt Hon William Hague MP
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THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Hawkstone Hall
1a Kennington Road
London SE1 7QP

0207 620 1120 (t)

www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk

THE CSJ ADVISORY COUNCIL

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FREEDOM, DIGNITY AND SLAVERY IN THE MODERN WORLD

Rt Hon William Hague MP

Introduction

I am delighted to be with the Centre for Social Justice tonight and honoured to have been invited to give the first Abraham Lincoln address. It is highly appropriate that a body which promotes Conservative values combined with a strong sense of justice should launch a lecture series to be guided by the memory of Lincoln, and it is additionally fitting that we meet tonight in Hawkstone Hall under the Lincoln Tower, a gift from Lincoln's family and friends. I certainly hope this occasion will be more successful than a previous lecture delivered under another Lincoln tower, in Lincoln cathedral in 1237, during which the tower collapsed and buried part of the congregation. Abraham Lincoln's Tower is, as you might expect, a surer structure.

It was Iain Duncan Smith's decision and vision to establish the Centre for Social Justice. He is my successor, colleague and friend, and I admire him for many things, but I particularly salute the enthusiasm and success which this Centre has already displayed. Recent lectures and speeches by Michael Howard, Oliver Letwin and David Willetts, all under the auspices of the CSJ, have given new emphasis to the values in which Conservative policies should be rooted. The Centre has produced fascinating publications, by Iain and also by Tim Montgomerie, which have drawn the attention of British Conservatives to the lessons to be learnt from America. It is natural that we should also turn for part of our inspiration to one of the greatest figures in the history of our American cousins, for there is no doubt that Abraham Lincoln holds that rank.

Abraham Lincoln

Of course, Lincoln is best known for his extraordinary speech after the Battle of Gettysburg, a speech sufficiently near to being immortal that on the first anniversary of the September 11th attacks the Governor of New York decided he could do no better than to read it again:

'We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. That we here

resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.'

For one hundred and forty years this speech has been admired by people of all political views. Yet for us, there is particular common ground with Lincoln, for at the heart of his political vision was a belief in meritocracy and in the right of all individuals to succeed through industry, enterprise and self discipline. Essential to his hopes for poorer people in America was that a more market orientated society would bring about economic development and material advance. Lincoln's ten points included apparently enduring truths such as, 'You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong', 'You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer', 'You cannot help the poor man by destroying the rich' and 'You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves'. Ronald Reagan, the Great Communicator quoted these points with deference to Lincoln, the Great Emancipator and identified them as, 'a hallowed set of principles... to be recalled and repeated again and again to fortify America against a resurgent liberalism.' He was right, although it turns out that these statements, attributed to Lincoln, were actually coined by an obscure German Vicar over fifty years after Lincoln's death. But it is a tribute to a great historical figure that so many of his statements are the stuff of legend rather than genuine history. Lincoln is meant to have said, 'You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time', a truth which I hope will soon catch up with our Prime Minister, although there is no evidence that this statement originated with him, and also, according to anti-war protesters last year, 'There's no honourable way to kill, no gentle way to destroy. There's nothing good in war except its ending', although this statement was actually made by an actor paraphrasing him in an episode of Star Trek.

Yet the legend is in any case unnecessary when the history is so compelling. Lincoln's 1861 address to Congress called on politicians to, 'elevate the condition of men -- to lift artificial weights from all shoulders -- to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all -- to afford all, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life.' He held up his own advancement from extreme poverty as an example of what could be achieved. 'Twenty-five years ago', he said in a speech in Cincinnati, 'I was a hired labourer. The hired labourer of yesterday labours on his own account today, and will hire others to labour for him tomorrow. Advancement -- improvement in condition -- is the order of things in a society of equals.' He felt, and the world will always know it, that slavery violated the fundamental principles of fairness and self-improvement in

which he believed. As a young man, he saw slaves being chained, whipped and sold at auction in New Orleans, his friend recalling how a slave girl, 'was felt over, pinched, trotted around to show bidders that said article was sound.' Lincoln walked away from this inhuman scene with a deep feeling of hate, telling his companion, 'By God! If ever I get a chance to hit that institution I'll hit it hard!' No man has ever been truer to his word: three decades later he brought American slavery to an end. His own concept of freedom, dignity and slavery as witnessed in nineteenth century was therefore clear and sharply defined.

Wilberforce and Other Conservative Party Social Reformers

Just as we, gathered in Hawkstone Hall, seek inspiration from Lincoln, so he gathered support for his own convictions from this country, and indeed, from this very place. For it was here that William Wilberforce and his colleagues held many meetings as part of the two great campaigns he waged throughout his life, one to combat the moral decay engulfing early nineteenth century England in the form of drunkenness, corruption, immorality, gambling and prostitution, and the other, from which the name of Wilberforce will never be separated, to abolish first the slave trade, and then the institution of slavery in the British Empire. Lincoln, in praise of Wilberforce, said that, 'all students must know about him.'

The attitudes of Wilberforce were very conservative on many social, and indeed political, questions – he was a friend and confidant of Pitt, Perceval and Canning but he saw, rightly, that a belief in economic freedom and political order was wholly consistent with championing the great progressive cause of that time, the outlawing of the slave trade. As we seek to combine Conservatism with compassion, we will find no finer personal example. Nevertheless, we should also acknowledge that Wilberforce is part of a proud Conservative tradition of thoughtful politicians who have taken major steps for social justice through policy action or personal commitment. It is a tradition which stretches on from Wilberforce to that champion of the Victorian poor, the Earl of Shaftesbury, the promoter of the Factory Acts and the Ragged Schools, improving the lives of perhaps three hundred thousand children. That tradition has reached modern times with figures such as Iain Macleod, who founded the charity Crisis in 1967 to improve the plight of London's homeless. Last month, Crisis Open Christmas operated from six venues around London with the main venue at the Millennium Dome in Greenwich. How ironic that a charity which sprang from Conservative compassion should find the first productive use for one of the most

spectacular examples of financial waste and the lack of any guiding thought or inspiration.

A Conservative's Understanding of Freedom in the Modern World

So the advancement of freedom and dignity, and hostility to slavery in all its forms, are integral parts of a Conservative past with which Abraham Lincoln is intertwined. Today, all politicians speak of freedom, and we all have our competing prescriptions for how it can be attained. Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke in 1941 of a world founded upon four essential human freedoms - freedom of speech and expression, freedom to worship God, freedom from want and freedom from fear. These freedoms are timeless and obvious enough. Sixty years on they are just as relevant and still frequently challenged. In 2005, freedom of speech is still denied to much of the world's population, the persecution of religious groups threatens the freedom to worship God, freedom from want is still sought by hundreds of millions and freedom from fear is challenged by terrorism, violent crime or the proliferation of nuclear weapons. That we all wish to advance these freedoms is not in doubt, and would, to a large extent unite left and right in Britain. But what are the particular freedoms which those who wish to stand in the tradition of Lincoln and Wilberforce must fight for today? What should be our own understanding of freedom, dignity and slavery, in our own modern world? I wish to argue that we have particular responsibilities to fight for freedom from dependency on the modern state, freedom from new forms of slavery generations after we thought it had been abolished and at the same time, vigorously to pursue the current heartening extension across the world of the freedom to vote.

The Freedom to Vote

For the first time in history, the majority of the world's people live in democracy. Of the world's 192 states, Freedom House now classifies 119 as electoral democracies, with 44% of the world's population living in countries classified as 'Free', 19% in countries described as 'Partly Free' and 37% in countries 'Not free'. On average, over the last fifteen years, three additional states each year have adopted minimal standards for free and fair elections. More people voted in 2004 than in any previous year in the history of the world, admittedly helped by the event of a general election in India. As is well appreciated, elections have been held in Afghanistan and among Palestinians. 2004 witnessed elections in countries as poor as Mozambique, and even a

new constitution allowing limited elections signed by the Sultan of Brunei. It would be easy to think that the world is now set fair for a steady progression to democracy which would see what Ronald Reagan described as, 'the most deeply honourable form of government known to man' extended around the globe with all that could mean for the struggle against war, injustice and corruption. Easy, but certainly wrong, for these statistics perhaps disguise the way in which the spread of democracy has stalled in many countries which have failed to extend the first steps to free elections or which have slipped back to authoritarianism. There have been reversions to military rule, such as in Pakistan, and elections in central Asia have sometimes resulted in dictatorships. Burma's military junta has maintained its grip, and with the re-election of President Putin in Russia, Freedom House changed the country's rating from 'Partly Free' to 'Not Free'. Democracy is also wavering in Latin America: recent events in countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua indicate that authoritarian populism is making a comeback, fuelled by corruption, sluggish economic growth and feeble leadership. In recent months, the holding of elections in Afghanistan, and prospectively in Iraq has been treated by many Western commentators as a matter of scorn. Democracy, we are often told, cannot be easily introduced into the Arab world.

It is important that such notions are rejected, and that departures from expanding freedom to vote are publicised and challenged. Rarely has there been a more heartening illustration of this than in recent events in the Ukraine. How can we ever forget the sign language news announcer Natalya Dmychuk who told Ukrainian voters after the rigged Presidential election of November, 'Do not trust the results that you see on the screen. Do not trust the results because they are lies. Yushchenko is your President'. Yet it is important to remember that there have been very different developments not far away. In Belarus President Lukashenko has ruthlessly entrenched his rule. Secret police pervade all aspects of life, political opponents have been persecuted or jailed, and freedom of information has been severely curtailed with opposition newspapers closed down. Increasingly megalomaniac and eccentric in his behaviour, Lukashenko last year held elections which observers found, 'significantly short of OSCE commitments for democratic elections'. Instances of fraud included ballots which were already marked 'Yes' to answer the question of whether Lukashenko could run for office again, before they were even handed out to the voters.

Abuses are not confined to countries widely known for their oppressive nature. They also occur in small pockets throughout countries we would now consider democracies. For example, in December the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka jailed former Minister, SB Dissanayake of the opposition United

National Party for two years imprisonment for contempt of court. His crime was to make a speech in which he was critical of the judges, saying that they had, 'made flawed rulings'. Mr Dissanayake has been one of the fiercest critics of President Kumaratunga and her ruling party. It is difficult to view his sentence as anything but politically motivated.

We should not, therefore, regard the argument for democracy as having been concluded and won. It is vital to give moral and political support to the introduction of democracy into Iraq and Afghanistan, pointing out as we do that some of the most effective advocates for democracy in Iraq are traditional Muslim leaders. It is important to focus international attention on respect for civil liberties and political rights in countries which have adopted the forms but not always the culture of democratic behaviour, and it is crucial to put the argument that democracy can bring not only freedom but also human dignity and wider economic benefits. In the book, 'The Democracy Advantage' it is pointed out that countries with below \$2,000 per capita GDP in constant 1995 dollar terms, which have turned to democracy, such as Latvia, Mozambique, Senegal and the Dominican republic, have achieved higher growth, lower infant mortality and higher life expectancy than those which have remained authoritarian such as Syria, Angola, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

The Freedom from Dependency on the Modern State

Expanding the freedom to vote must, then, always be at the forefront of efforts to achieve social justice. A further freedom of similar importance, and one which marks Conservatives out from those on the left is the freedom from dependency, meaning, in the modern world, dependency on the state. Long term dependency on welfare benefits robs people of their dignity and their ability to participate fully in life, generally causing damage to families, households and communities. No reform was trumpeted more loudly by the current British administration upon coming to power than radical reform of the welfare state and no reform has been more swiftly abandoned. In the UK one third of the population is now dependent on some form of state benefit. Britain spends three times as much per head on social security expenditure as both the United States and Japan, and twice as much as Australia, Ireland and Canada.

It is a fundamental part of the Conservative tradition of which I have spoken that government should help the most vulnerable by providing a safety net but not encourage a culture of dependency among the able. We must balance a progressive view of society's responsibility towards the poor with

the need to maintain personal responsibility and self-reliance, of which Lincoln was such an advocate. Policies which permit reform of welfare systems in line with these principles should be strongly supported, in line with policies towards savings, pensions and property rights which promote independence from the state. There is startling evidence from around the world of what can be achieved with the right approach. In the U.S state of Wisconsin, for example, the welfare system was transformed in the late 1980s onwards from one based on entitlement to one based instead on empowerment. Beginning with the basic premise that every person is capable of doing something, Governor Tommy Thompson explained that sending out cheques each month, 'expecting nothing in return and walking away from needs is hardly compassionate. That is apathy.' Instead of leaving people with little incentive to take control of their own destiny, his reforms encouraged people to take action to become independent. Under the 'Learnfare' program, welfare cheques were reduced if a child in the family missed three days of school in a month, under 'Work Not Welfare' participants were required to find a job within two years or lose their benefits. Other programmes required improvement of basic skills or community service in return for benefits. After ten years the welfare bills of Wisconsin were more than halved and tens of thousands of people have been lifted out of a generational cycle of dependency.

In the long run, Britain is now heading in the opposite direction with the plundering of successful private pension schemes and the extension of means tested pensioner benefits reducing incentives to save and leaving future generations more dependent on the charity of the state. This is perhaps the single most damaging policy of the Blair government since it affects tens of millions of people for decades into the future, and it creates a trend which is difficult to reverse. The measures the Conservative Party have now proposed to introduce Lifetime Savings Accounts and improve the basic state pension are to be strongly applauded, and are perhaps one of the most single important reasons for voting to change the government at the next general election.

In Britain, the sale of council houses in the 1980s has left us well acquainted with the importance of property rights and home ownership in providing personal responsibility and ending dependency. Yet vast numbers of human beings still have no such rights, even though the evidence of the positive effects of granting them has become compelling. Mozambique is a case in point: a country where Marxist governments and civil war had left property rights non-existent. Since then, the creation of occupancy rights, codified in law in 2000, and the new ability of investors to buy long leases, have fostered confidence and investment. From an extremely low base, economic growth in

Mozambique has been in double digits in four of the six years. Such successes are rare in the region. A recent study of nineteen African countries that had passed laws to create property rights found that eleven had done absolutely nothing to put these laws into practice. Without personal independence, economies do not grow. As events in Zimbabwe have shown, rulers who do not respect property rights swiftly impoverish their people.

The ambition to reduce to dependency on the state should be a driving principle of modern government, permitting at the same time lower levels of tax which are also essential to freedom and prosperity. Government should act to strengthen civil society, giving back responsibility to families, churches and communities, both to temper the market's cold calculations and to bring human sensitivity instead of the arbitrary rules of government. One example of how to achieve this is the Compassion Capital Fund introduced by President Bush, which has so far allocated \$99 million to faith-based and community organisations to provide, among other things, drug treatment centres and job training programmes.

Freedom from Slavery in the Modern World

The scope to fight further for freedom and dignity for hundreds of millions of people and to do so according to principles which Lincoln would recognise is therefore immense. But what of slavery in the modern world? At school we have all been taught that slavery is a thing of the past, and that Wilberforce and Lincoln were among the heroes who eradicated its evils from the earth. Yet the harrowing truth is that today, in a new form, there are an estimated twenty-seven million slaves around the world, generating roughly \$13 billion a year for their owners. In fact, there are more slaves today than all the people sold from Africa during the time of the transatlantic slave trade. The legal argument has been won: laws against slavery exist in every country. The moral argument against such a thing is, of course, enduring: slavery is inhuman and wrong. The economic argument with which Adam Smith moved opinion in the 18th century is as powerful as ever: 'a free worker is superior to a slave as constraint never makes a man inventive, zealous and intelligent.' So who are the millions of slaves in the modern world and why are their numbers growing?

Many of them are held in bonded labour, particularly in South Asia, after having been tricked into taking a loan. To repay the debt many are forced to work long hours, often seven days a week, every day of the year. They receive basic food and shelter but may never pay off the loan, which can be passed down to further generations, even though the value of their work is

invariably greater than the original sum of money borrowed. In addition, modern slaves are the victims of forced labour - people who are illegally recruited by individuals, governments or political parties and forced to work, under the threat of violence or other penalties; those involved in early or forced marriage – sometimes forced into lives of servitude, often accompanied by physical violence; those included in slavery by descent - where people are either born into a slave class or are from a group that society views as suited to being used as slave labour; and those trapped in child labour, including working in mines, with chemicals, or with dangerous machinery.

Human Trafficking

We must be careful, of course, about applying to all societies the standards which our own prosperity has led us to expect. But what is particularly concerning today is that the combination of these age old habits with the development of a global economy is leading to expanding opportunities for ruthless slave owners, particularly through human trafficking, demonstrating that man's greed and willingness to prey on the vulnerable remains as strong as ever. The child workers and bonded labourers of poorer societies are being moved into richer societies, there to be exploited in an utterly unacceptable fashion with traffickers using deception and violence mercilessly to destroy their victims' dreams of self-improvement and a better life. The trade in human lives is estimated to be worth \$9 billion a year and is a rapidly expanding criminal industry, thought to be the third most serious behind drugs and arms. This is because high profits can be made with little or no start up capital, profits can be derived over a sustained period from the same victims – unlike drugs which are quickly used up – and the risk of prosecution is usually negligible. This is an industry closely connected with money laundering, drug trafficking, document forgery and sometimes to terrorism. According to the U.S state department, some three quarters of a million people are being trafficked across country borders every year. 70% are forced into the commercial sex industry and half of all victims are children.

The treatment of people on arrival in the developed world is unacceptable in the extreme. In June last year, fifty-nine Peruvian men, women and children were rescued from a trafficking ring, having been held captive for up to four years, in Long Island, New York. They had worked in two and sometimes three jobs a day, handed over their pay to their captors, eaten meagre rations and had been subject to constant threats. Traffickers had told these people that they could not leave their houses until they paid off debts, but the debts never seemed to be reduced and the victims were never told how much

they still owed. Their passports were confiscated, along with the deeds to their homes and land in Peru as collateral on the smuggling fees. The traffickers threatened to throw their families who remained in the country out on the streets if they fled. Such cases open a window onto what has become an immense industry.

More commonly they involve the sex industry such as the case of Katya who was told that she could make good money as waitress in the Netherlands and as a result left her home and two year old daughter in the Czech Republic. A Czech trafficker drove her along with four other young women to Amsterdam where, joined by a Dutch trafficker, she was taken to a brothel. She was told that if she did not comply her daughter would be killed. She only escaped after years of threats and forced prostitution.

Often slave traders are aided by corrupt officials as recent events described in the NY Times at the Chai Hour II Hotel in Phnom Penh demonstrate. Cambodia is a country which is rapidly becoming notorious for sex slavery. At the Chai Hour II dozens of teenage girls dressed in skimpy outfits stand soullessly behind a glass wall, each with a number. The customer orders a girl by number and the manager delivers her to a private room. A Cambodian police report describes the Chai Hour II as a place for the, 'confinement of human beings for commercial sex' and 'trafficking and sale of virgin girls'. Last month a top ranking female officer ordered a raid on the Chai Hour II and rescued eighty-three girls, taking them to a shelter. The next day, the traffickers struck back. Around thirty raiders, some dressed in military clothing and driving at least one car with military licence plates, broke down the shelter gate, beat up one woman on the staff and took all the girls back to the brothel. The female police officer was reprimanded for ordering the raid on the Chai Hour II and even briefly suspended from her post.

The recent tsunami tragedy in Asia has brought the world's attention to the issue of child trafficking, which is a crucial part of this vast industry. And in Britain we are far from immune to the horrors of human trafficking, with even the Home Office estimating that 1,400 women are trafficked into the UK each year, probably a gross underestimate. At the Poppy project, a UK safehouse for trafficked women, an employee said, 'We are seeing a horrifying amount of trafficking into London. We see women who have been raped on the way here, as a way of 'breaking them in'. We see women who have been stabbed, burned with cigarettes, beaten up, beaten with chains, thrown out of cars, tortured... They are threatened constantly, their families are threatened. The traffickers tell them, 'No one's going to help you, no one's going to believe you. You're an illegal immigrant.'

It is indisputable that these modern forms of slavery are growing around us, even as we imagine we enjoy a world that has steadily become more free. It is a form of slavery very different from the one which Lincoln and Wilberforce fought to destroy, but it is equally heartless. Tragically, large numbers of economically and socially vulnerable people around the world makes today's slaves cheaper than they have ever been. An average slave in Lincoln's time in the American South, cost between \$1,000-\$2,000, three to six times the average annual wage of an American worker at the time. Today a slave costs an average of \$90, and they are therefore no longer an investment worth maintaining. If they get ill, are injured, outlive their usefulness, or become troublesome to the slaveholder, they can be dumped or killed. So while the slaves of the nineteenth century came with a high purchase cost and generated low profits, the slaves of the twenty-first have a low purchase cost and produce very high profits. In old slavery, legal ownership was asserted, where as in new slavery, it is denied; in old slavery the slaves were maintained, but in the new slavery, they are disposable. The new slavery is a new evil which those who believe in freedom and dignity, and in a capitalist society which is fair to all, must now stir themselves to destroy.

Combating Human Trafficking

How can this be done? It is encouraging that awareness of this problem is increasing, and the cogs of government departments around the world are beginning to turn in response, albeit at a typically slow governmental pace. Combating the trade in human lives which is now acknowledged to be rife across Europe is meant to be, 'one of the highest priorities' of the new European Commission. Its proposals are awaited. America and President Bush have to date led the effort to raise awareness and combat human trafficking, giving nearly \$300 million in the last four years to assist anti-trafficking programmes in 120 countries. President Bush used his 2003 address to the UN to highlight this issue – the first time any world leader has brought this kind of attention to human trafficking to the United Nations General Assembly. New schemes such as Rugmark allow people buying handmade Indian rugs to look for a special tag guaranteeing that they have not been made by child slaves. And the media have been active in raising the issue: the drama series 'Sex Traffic' broadcast on Channel Four was described as, 'harrowing', 'thought provoking, daring and frightening'.

Enforcement of existing laws is obviously vital to addressing this problem. But it is also important for Conservatives to provide solutions to these problems which allow more people to escape poverty in their own countries and to

strengthen families and communities so that fewer people are involved in the awful decision to sell their own children for money. New work is being done in this regard by the Government of Ghana, which has encouraged parents who sold their children to traffickers to bring them home in exchange for business assistance, job training, micro-credit facilities and assistance with school fees and uniforms. The powerful human motivators of freedom and dignity must be used in addition to law enforcement to combat modern slavery. Italy has provided funding to a project in Morocco intended to provide gainful employment that will prevent victims from being trafficked. The Fairtrade label under which chocolate is sold, certifying that the cocoa has not originated from plantations using child slaves, is another example of a market based approach. This is a way in which we can all make a small difference. By changing our purchase habits we can influence the supply of these goods, targeting the trade profits of those who use slave labour. Other societies can be helped with a very small capital input. For example, in 1991, the South Asian Coalition on child servitude established a vocational rehabilitation centre for freed persons, providing vocational and literary training as well as human rights education. In merely four years the centre had produced one thousand trained activists who worked to combat bonded labour. Most of them were economically independent in their own native villages and were able to help their communities stand up for their rights.

Last October, in this very hall, members of the Centre for Social Justice staff team took part in a conference on human trafficking. Out of that conference – organised by Protest4 – has emerged the possibility of putting beer mats, or other publicity, into London pubs and clubs. The publicity would seek to inform potential users of sex-trafficked women about the nature of this modern form of slavery. Men who use a trafficked sex worker are not providing money to needy people. They are feeding an ugly industry that abuses vulnerable, sometimes desperate women from poor countries. This Protest4 campaign – supported by the CSJ – is a brave one and I wish it every success

It is a challenge for us all to think of new and innovative solutions to this pressing and alarming problem, and to base those solutions on personal independence, tackling the problems at source, rather than rely on a heavy handed state simply to suppress its symptoms. For it is clear that the population expansion in the world, concentrated as it is in some of the least developed areas, with tens of millions of people being displaced to urban centres where they feel powerless, in societies where government corruption allows slavery to go unpunished, means that this evil will grow rather than shrink in the years ahead. In facing such a challenge, we should be fortified by the knowledge that we are part of a political tradition which has shown the

appetite and solutions to provide people with more opportunity and freedom. When people are denied the right to vote, when they live lives of dependency or when they are enslaved, it is a gross affront to our fundamental ideals of freedom and dignity.

Conclusion

In 1852, Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave from the southern states who became a leader in the abolition movement, was asked to give a keynote speech by the city fathers of Rochester, New York, during the fourth of July celebrations. In front of the whole town he rose to deliver a scathing attack:

'What to the American slave is your fourth of July? ...your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty an unholy license... your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, your religious parade are...bombast, deception, impiety and hypocrisy.'

Let us strive so that we can live honourably and never be accused of such things again. In Lincoln's words, 'In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free.'

This is a continuing task, and I hope I have persuaded you that there is so much more yet to do. For fifty years, activists in this country worked tirelessly to end slavery in the British Empire. None of them gained a penny by doing so, yet the blaze of passion they felt for the cause burnt strong and brightly within, never fading and acting as a beacon to those at home and abroad. In Lincoln's House Divided speech he said, 'Our cause, then, must be entrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends -- those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work -- who do care for the result.'

I trust and believe, far beyond the Centre for Social Justice that all Conservatives will rise up and continue in this endeavour, for we are part of a noble tradition of people whose hearts are in their work, who do care about the result.