



Christian
Perspectives on
Public Affairs

evangelical alliance
uniting to change society



News and Christian Comment

The Vicious Circle?

It has been an extraordinary month in British politics, perhaps exemplified by Russian President Vladimir Putin's countering of questions about alleged corruption in Russian politics by asking about the British experience "including how it applies to Lord Levy."

Lord Michael Levy, chief fundraiser for the Labour Party and Tony Blair's unofficial envoy to the Middle East, was arrested on 12th July for his alleged role in the "cash for peerages" row. John Yates, the Metropolitan Police Assistant Deputy Commissioner is investigating alleged offences that may have been committed under the 1925 Honours Act.

The arrest of Lord Levy brought the police investigation into sharp public focus. As many as 48 people have been interviewed, apparently 13 of those under caution, though only two were arrested. Nearly a dozen detectives are said to be involved in the case and many hundreds of e-mails and party finance documents have been collected. Two files have already been sent to the Crown Prosecution Service. Even if no charges are brought the public relations damage for the Government and for politics in general could be enormous.

Mr Yates' inquiry hit the headlines previously when he said that it would be a problem for the Public Administration select committee also investigating this issue to interview Tony Blair, the implication being that the police wanted to leave the option of interviewing the Prime Minister open.

With the Prime Minister under so much pressure it might appear that the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have got off lightly. However, it seems that the police have interviewed more Conservative donors, officials and politicians than those in the Labour Party.

Despite the fact that all the main political parties could suffer from the scandal, the situation is especially damaging for the Prime Minister. The scandal broke when four businessmen who gave Labour £4.5m in unpublicised loans had their nominations for entry to the House of Lords turned down by the independent appointments commission. It appears they had been advised that they did not need to declare the money as they were not donations.

This flurry of lending to Labour coincided with the last General Election. It appears that loans were preferred in order to avoid the new regulations on the declaration of donations brought in by the Prime Minister himself in the 2000 Political Parties, Elections and

Referendums Act.

Commercial loans do not have to be declared, but donations above £5000 do. Storing up all this debt does not seem to be a wise long term move for our political parties. According to accounts submitted to the Electoral Commission the Labour Party is in the red to the tune of £27m following last year's General Election while the Conservatives owe £18m.

But back in the heat of the General Election campaign, and particularly one in which the Conservatives seemed to be able to raise more money than Labour, Tony Blair and Lord Levy appear to have decided to encourage undisclosed loans to raise the money that Labour needed to compete with the Conservatives.

Labour apparently was secretly loaned £14m ahead of the last election. The Conservatives were loaned £16m from 13 wealthy backers, while the Liberal Democrats have stated that they still owe nearly £1m to 3 backers. The 2000 Act talks about 'commercial loans' being the only ones allowed, but it seems unclear how exactly a 'commercial loan' would be defined by the courts, making the laying of charges difficult.

But whether there are prosecutions or not the political damage may already have been done, lasting damage not only to the Labour Government, but also to British politics in general.

However, despite the Prime Minister's difficulties, the wider question remains unanswered, namely how to pay for democracy when voters have turned off politics and no longer join parties.

As these kinds of scandals break, disillusionment with politicians deepens, which perpetuates still further the problem of party funding. This vicious circle will only get worse unless some radical thinking emerges from Sir Hayden Philips' ongoing inquiry into party funding. Considering the status of political fundraising in Italy, France, Germany and most noticeably the USA, it seems unlikely that there will be any easy answers for the United Kingdom and ironically in many ways it appears we are better than most.

However in an ICM poll for the *Sunday Telegraph* Labour are regarded by 56% of respondents as being as sleazy, if not more so, than the last Conservative Government. Unless the political culture in the United Kingdom changes to become more realistic, more honest and more open, then the vicious circle of decreasing public political involvement matched by rising political party desperation may end up being a plague on all our houses. With Labour still rivalling the Conservatives in recent opinion polls it would seem that moral corruption is now accepted almost as a way of life. It's just politics that suffers!

PQ from Westminster

Reviewing Charitable Status

The past year has seen a number of major issues in which Christian groups have enjoyed high public profile. However, public campaigning is usually a last resort when it comes to helping to shape public policy, and Christians are quietly active most of the time in working with Government to help ensure that proposed legislation is appropriate. Much of this work is unacknowledged publicly, mainly because it involves trust and confidentiality in co-operative work and negotiation. The Charities Bill, now nearing completion of its Parliamentary journey, is one such example of effective public policy.

Four years ago, the Evangelical Alliance, together with its colleagues in Stewardship, worked in tandem with the Cabinet Office as it produced the consultative report 'Private Action, Public Benefit', recommending the first ever major review of charity law, calling for the replacement of existing 400 year-old definitions of charity, radical new legal types of company for charities and social enterprises, more transparent public information, and modernisation of the role of the Charity Commission. The resultant Charities Bill largely reflected the fruits of that work. It has remained largely unchanged during what has been a remarkably consensual Parliamentary scrutiny process.

The previous four 'heads of charity' - including 'advancement of religion' - will be replaced by at least ten new charitable categories, preserving existing purposes, but introducing new ones such as social and community advancement, advancement of health, advancement of culture and heritage, promotion of human rights and environmental protection. Of particular importance has been the new requirement for all charities to demonstrate objective and broad 'public benefit' in order to acquire or retain charitable status. Through annual reporting, all charities will now have to demonstrate they provide clear public benefit.

A Notable Double

There have been two recent notable public policy decisions. First, in relation to Sunday trading, second, in connection with assisted dying.

After months of consultation, involving Christian groups, trades unions and others, the Department of Trade and Industry announced that there would be no change to existing restrictions relating to Sunday trading in England and Wales. The decision was greeted by the campaign group *Keep Sunday Special* as "a victory for Britain's families" against the ever-encroaching powerful retail and supermarket world pursuing deregulated round-the-clock shopping. The campaign succeeded in generating strong Parliamentary support for the principle of maintaining a healthy work-life balance and warning of the negative social consequences of extending Sunday trading hours. Support came from the trades union sector. The DTI was apparently persuaded that not only did workers in the retail sector reject more Sunday working but 70% of the public did not want more Sunday shopping hours.

The campaign continues, and ongoing support will be necessary since it cannot be expected that the big retailers will concede defeat.

Another notable victory in the campaign against legalised killing came at the British Medical Association annual representative meeting at the end of June which voted overwhelmingly to reject any change in the law on euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide.

Key motions decided were:

- (i) ongoing improvement in palliative care allows patients to die with dignity; 84% for, 16% against
- (ii) physician-assisted suicide should not be made legal in the UK;

No legal presumption will any longer automatically qualify anybody. Instead, a reformed Charity Commission will be required to undertake a systematic and rolling programme to verify the public benefit of all registered and registering charities. Case law is seen as playing a continuing important role in this regard.

Whilst there is no room for complacency, religious organisations and churches should have nothing to fear from the switch away from presumption of public benefit for religion. The Government has been at pains to seek to reassure religious groups that the burden of proof will not be onerous, they will not all be forced to undertake community activities (though many of course already do so), and has readily accepted the principle that religion generally contributes to social and spiritual well-being so that, for example, religious services open to the public will be deemed to confer public benefit. Mission and evangelistic organisations can also expect to qualify without difficulty.

The Charity Commission will be responsible for drawing up guidelines to assist churches and others in meeting the requirements for demonstrating public benefit. The Alliance is already preparing for discussions with the Commission to ensure that the guidelines are appropriate. Though some churches and organisations have expressed alarm at the new burdens being imposed, in reality it should not be difficult for religious groups to demonstrate the necessary requirements. If they are ultimately unable to do so, notwithstanding guidance and appeals procedures, it is legitimate to inquire whether they should in fact be enjoying charitable status at the expense of the taxpayer.

The Charities Bill represents a good example of public policy work at its best. The Evangelical Alliance and Stewardship will be publishing appropriate guidance to churches and others in due course.

- 65% for, 35% against
- (iii) voluntary euthanasia not be made legal in the UK; 65% for, 35% against
- (vi) non-voluntary euthanasia should not be made legal in the UK; 94% for, 6% against
- (v) if euthanasia were legalised there should be a clear demarcation between those doctors who would be involved in it and those who would not; 82% for, 18% against.

This outcome represented an overwhelming popular rejection and reversal of last year's controversial manipulated vote at a barely quorate meeting that bound the BMA to a position of neutrality on assisted dying. Peter Saunders for the campaign group *Care Not Killing* stated that this year's definitive result was crucial for political and public opinion: "the medical profession in the UK is now firmly united in its opposition to any form of euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide. This sends a very clear message to the public and to MPs - doctors who care for dying patients understand the serious dangers that would arise from legalising euthanasia. They have come to a clear conclusion ... that legalised killing would create more problems than it would solve. Their verdict - that we need better palliative care for the terminally ill - sends a clear message that what we need to do is to kill the pain and not the patient."

However, the *Care Not Killing* campaign continues with undiminished vigour since renewed attempts to change the law can be expected during the next Parliamentary session.

PQ from Westminster

Not my hoodie, but my character?

When the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, turned up at Bradford Diocese conference on youth work in his designer hoodie in May, he was not only giving his fellow clergy an object lesson in ecclesiastical dress with a pertinent social commentary on youth culture, but he was also unwittingly paving the way for David Cameron's latest discourse on the so-called modern 'hoodie' phenomenon.

At the recent (10 July) Centre for Social Justice symposium entitled *Thugs: Beyond Redemption?* a select group of voluntary sector workers and youth agencies professionals heard the Conservative leader articulate his new approach to neighbourhoods wrecked by vandalism, graffiti and the menace of youth crime and the need to 'understand' and 'love' juvenile delinquents. Unlike the 'short, sharp shock' approach of the Conservatives of previous years, the speech was trailed in the media with the dominant message being an exhortation to 'hug a hoodie' and 'love a hoodie'.

But what is David Cameron really trying to tell us about the so-called 'hoodies', education and the menace of youth crime?

Although Cameron's long-awaited afternoon speech was the highlight of the symposium, there were a number of high quality presentations from health professional in the morning.

Of particular note were the presentations by Professor Hilton Davies (Professor of Child Health Psychology at King's College London and a Clinical Psychologist with the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust), and Dr Felicity De Zulueta (consultant psychiatrist and head of the Traumatic Stress Service in the Maudsley Hospital).

Although David Cameron was very keen to stress the importance of trusting the 'real experts' in dealing with youth crime and disorder, the presentation by Hilton Davies seemed to treat this with a degree of caution. Indeed, Davis was arguing for a joined-up approach of radical partnership where the expertise and wisdom of parents also play a significant role in the collective arsenal of solutions and strategies to tackle youth crime and social exclusion.

Having seen the short video she used to illustrate the importance of attachment and emotional intimacy in the early development of monkeys, you were left with the distinct impression (especially if you were a parent) that maybe there was more to David Cameron's notion of 'hug a hoodie' than the morning's media sound-bite. Dr De Zulueta, a disciple of the psychologist J. Bowlby, gave a fascinating insight into how emotionally vulnerable young people are and the need for parents, teachers and society to respond to them in an emotionally intelligent way if we are to avoid some of the worst effects of youth crime and anti-social behaviour.

Reflecting upon scenes in the video portraying the destructive and anti-social behaviour of monkeys devoid of maternal touch, intimacy and other group attachment, one participant said: 'Of course, children are not monkeys.' Maybe this aspect of experimental psychology with monkeys was too reductionist for him in its implications for human social relations. But surely we are not so smart that we can't condescend to learn something instructive from the pedagogy of monkeys.

In fairness to David Cameron, he wasn't saying, as the media quoted, *All You Need is Love*, but what he did say enunciated an old truism slender on policy, programmes or resources that appears to depart from the traditional Conservative philosophy of the 'short, sharp shock' approach to youth crime. And whilst it is true that in some quarters Cameron's 'hoodies speech' was reported as 'his worst error to date' (*The Spectator*, 15 July), it is axiomatic that a precondition

for tackling youth crime and disorder is an understanding of 'the background, the reasons, the causes' why so many young people are going off the rails. Additionally, David Cameron is absolutely right when he says we've 'got to be optimistic about young people'.

Youth workers, teachers, church leaders and voluntary organisations often do what they do for young people because they believe, and often see, something redemptive in these encounters.

However, to say that 'hoodies are more defensive than offensive', or that they are 'a way to stay invisible in the street...to keep your head down, blend in, don't stand out' is probably overstating the case. As a former secondary school teacher in a challenging boys school in South London in the 1990s (the pupils often wore their hoodies then) I well recall a couple of pupils removing a laptop from a classroom during school hours, but their hoodies helped them evade CCTV detection.

Of course, not all kids we see 'walking down the road, hoodie up, head down, moody swaggering, dominating the pavement' are troublemakers and potential criminals. This was the point the Archbishop of York was making at the youth work conference when he said, "Ninety-nine per cent of those who wear hoodies are law-abiding citizens."

But the truth of the matter is that a small minority of them are; and the smart ones have cottoned on to the fact that some professionals have a panoply of theories (some of them specious) and social discourse to lessen (some might say excuse, but I'm not going that far) the weight of responsibility they might otherwise feel for their wrong-doing and anti-social behaviour.

As a former principal of a community school in South London, I often admitted youngsters who other institutions had given up on. Very few of them were feral, but the teachers administered what can only be called 'tough love'; anti-social behaviour was challenged, along with low expectations. The moral '3Rs' (right, 'rong and responsibilities) informed classroom conversations and school ethos.

Recently, a report from the Social Exclusion Unit entitled *Preventing Social Exclusion* reminded us of some of the causes and consequences of social exclusion. Among the causes were more youngsters being brought up in lone-parent household, fragmented communities and lack of 'concerted preventive' action by Government. Needless to say that the costs to taxpayers were staggeringly high. It was estimated then that the annual cost of school exclusions was £406 million; and the overall cost of crime to the UK economy was estimated at £60 billion per year.

Camila Batmanghelidjh, founder of the Kids Company in Camberwell, candidly said at the symposium that she felt 'like a prostitute' in the work she has to do to secure funding for her project to assist vulnerable young children. Interestingly enough, David Cameron's speech says little, or nothing meaningful, about resources and funding for the voluntary sector—the social entrepreneurs, 'the people doing the patient, painstaking work on the ground with young people'. Of course, you can't just throw money at youth crime. We also need better moral framework of respect and greater social responsibility. However, more resources aimed at the voluntary sector and a shift in spending from custody to prevention will certainly go a long way in tackling some of the underlying causes of youth crime and anti-social behaviour even though it probably won't stop youngsters wearing hoodies and our suspicion of what lies beneath this symbolic attire.

PQ from the Nations

Wales Jerry Springer the Opera

Jerry Springer Jerry Springer the Opera rolled into Cardiff on June 12th for a series of seven performances in the 1200-seat Wales Millennium Centre (WMC). Outside, a crowd of Christian protesters – estimates ranging from 600 to 1200 – were in fine voice singing hymns and demonstrating against the musical for its “blasphemous” depictions of Jesus.

The show, created in 2001, was the brainchild of Richard Thomas and Stewart Lee. From humble beginnings in the Battersea Arts Centre, it was soon playing to packed houses at the Edinburgh Fringe festival and in London’s West End. Acclaimed by the critics, it also won four awards at the 2004 Laurence Olivier Awards, including Best New Musical

In September 2004, it was announced that the show would embark on a nationwide tour, taking in 21 regional venues. Some Christian groups immediately lobbied for it to be cancelled, with nine of the original venues actually pulling out after threats of being picketed. The controversy surrounding the musical intensified in November 2004 when the BBC announced that it

was to be broadcast on BBC2 in its entirety. Tabloid papers, most notably *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail*, took the moral high ground and expressed their disgust that license fee money would be wasted on such profanity, concerned primarily with the “8000 obscenities”.

The perception that Muslim and Hindu protests were resulting in official climb-downs, while Christian protests were going unheeded, was leading to a growing sense of frustration among many.

Protests increased when the BBC announced that the show would be broadcast on January 8 2005 as part of an evening devoted to Jerry Springer. Concerned Christians contacted the Evangelical Alliance’s offices in Whitefield House. This prompted the Alliance to view the play in its entirety and the following day an in-depth article was posted on the Alliance’s website, providing a synopsis, outlining the main points of contention and offering a Christian and artistic critique. The opera may not have been to everyone’s taste, but it was important that Christians and others were aware of its content as they continued to respond. The Alliance entered discussions with BBC programme directors arguing that on the basis of the BBC’s own charter the show should not be aired. Appeal was made to the responsible self-censorship rooted in the BBC’s accountability as a public service broadcaster for taste, decency and regard for avoiding potential unnecessary offence.

The BBC’s board of governors were ultimately not for turning, despite receiving 63,000 protests against the decision to broadcast the opera. The ongoing protest ironically had a significant impact overseas, leading to the withdrawal of backing for a planned run in Broadway, with sponsors fearing a backlash from the American right.

Judith Isherwood, Chief Executive of the WMC, defended the decision to bring Jerry Springer to Cardiff. “The inherent risks in creating successful contemporary opera are enormous, and ones that can attract new, young audiences are quite rare and I believe deserve to be supported. Jerry Springer the Opera is a bold new work that

delivers the Centre’s aim to present a diverse range of works, from those that are pure entertainment, to those that are thought-provoking and challenging”

Challenging it was... and controversial. The seven Cardiff performances, compared with the other venues where the show had performed in the tour, had seen:

1. More letters of protest
2. More letters of support and encouragement for the venue
3. The greatest number of protesters outside
4. The greatest number of ticket sales.

The protest on Monday June 12 in Cardiff was successful. Many non-Christians commented on how moving it was and how it showed strength, but was not menacing. The media, notoriously unpredictable, gave favourable coverage to the protest.

With focus on mobilising a strong Christian protest in Cardiff, the sense of anticipation was palpable. As the opera’s only visit to Wales, the media’s attention was also aroused and ample column inches

were devoted to it by the local press. The Archbishop of Wales, Barry Morgan, put the cat amongst the pigeons in an interview with the *South Wales Echo*, saying that the show was “blasphemous”. Further coverage was given to a letter, signed by over 100 local church leaders, and submitted to the WMC, demanding that the show be cancelled.

Because the WMC was aware that the show was offensive to many Christians, Judith Isherwood approached the Evangelical Alliance Wales and Churches Together by way of offering an olive branch.

The idea of allowing a stall throughout the week inside the centre was suggested, as was holding a debate after the last performance on

the Saturday. The Alliance and Cytun felt that this was a positive way of responding to the situation and the Alliance Wales provided church contacts to staff the stall and suggested names of panellists for the debate.

Eight of the larger evangelical churches in Cardiff rose to the challenge and between them staffed the stall throughout the week, engaging both members of the public in conversation and, occasionally, members of the opera’s cast (including “Jesus” himself).

For the debate, three Christian leaders were invited onto the panel, along with Michael Bogdanov, the show’s director, and co-writer Richard Thomas, an “atheist with Buddhist inclinations who had thrown his hat in with the surrealists”. About 300 people turned up for the debate, although only about ten were there as Christians.

The show was critiqued from an artistic perspective, and its content and accuracy were also questioned and debated. The Christian presence in the debate itself was indeed valuable, but perhaps just as important was the relationship forged with the WMC’s management team, who were grateful for dialogue with Christians leading up to, and during, the Jerry Springer week.

Ironically, perhaps the last word should go to Jerry Springer himself. Shortly after the BBC screened the opera in January last year, he stated “I wouldn’t have written it. I don’t believe in making fun of other religions”.

The perception that Muslim and Hindu protests were resulting in official climb-downs, while Christian protests were going unheeded, was leading to a growing sense of frustration among many.

PQ from the Nations & beyond

Northern Ireland It's only words...

It is funny how seemingly innocuous words can suddenly take on a whole new meaning. Take the words 'traditional route'. In most places in the world that phrase would warrant no comment. In Northern Ireland however the phrase undoubtedly raises eyebrows and evokes memories of disputed parades followed by civil unrest. This time ten years ago the country was reeling in the aftermath of 'Drumcree II' – the year thousands of Orangemen congregated on a hill outside a church in Portadown; the year the police reversed their decision and allowed the Orange Order to march down the nationalist Garvaghy Road. Supermarket shelves stayed empty as blockades prevented the replenishing of supplies. Ten years later and Drumcree drew only passing attention from the media and the 'traditional route' is one which continues to end at a police barrier.

During his speech to the Independent Orange Order on 12 July Ian Paisley announced that Sinn Fein would enter Government 'over our dead bodies'. Over the years he certainly could never be accused of 'mincing his words'. And if it feels like the leader of the DUP has found renewed zeal he certainly has a new focus for his attention – to help the families of the 'Disappeared'.

In Northern Ireland the word 'Disappeared' means years of sorrow for families whose loved ones literally did vanish at the hands of

Republican terrorists – bodies never to be recovered. Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams recently claimed that the way the IRA dealt with the bodies of the 'Disappeared' was a human rights abuse. Are our memories so short that we forget his own involvement with the organisation responsible? He also referred to people who had been involved in the killings as 'primary sources'. Words are carefully chosen in an attempt to dehumanise the whole situation. For the families of the 'Disappeared' the heartache continues.

Dates and times can take on whole new meanings too. Perhaps 24 November is your birthday or a special anniversary. Since Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern announced a few months ago that this is the appointed 'make or break' date for the Assembly, 24 November has been saddled with the burden of the future of Northern Ireland.

The Bible says many things about the words we use. The writer of Proverbs reminds us that 'reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing'. With only four months to go until that date in November the Secretary of State, direct rule ministers, party leaders, politicians, church and community leaders would do well to remember that 'a gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger'. Words should not be used to gloss over the legacy of the conflict, nor should they be manipulated in an attempt to craft the future.

Religious Liberty Pakistan

Pakistan was originally created as a land for Indian Muslims, although it was not founded as an Islamic state. Article 20 of the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees every citizen the right to profess, practice and propagate their religion, although the reality for minorities, including Christians, is very different as the Blasphemy Law and 'Hudood' Ordinances severely limit religious freedom. Using these blasphemy laws to justify their actions, Muslim extremists and religious leaders have attacked churches and killed Christians throughout the country. In November 2005, 3,000 militant Islamists attacked Christians in Sangla Hill and destroyed Roman Catholic, Salvation Army and United Presbyterian churches. In February 2006, churches and Christian schools were targeted in protests over the publication of the anti-Islamic cartoon in Denmark, leaving two elderly women injured and many homes and properties destroyed. The blasphemy laws are frequently used to settle personal scores, which have little or nothing to do with religion, or used to target religious minorities, for example in the case of Christian convert and political activist Yasaar Hameed. Hameed has faced blasphemy charges since 1993, and is now seeking asylum in Holland since under Pakistani law, blasphemy against Muhammad carries the death penalty. No blasphemy convict has been executed since the law was established in 1986, but extra-judicial killings of blasphemy prisoners are common. Extremists murdered Hameed's Christian younger brother in March 1998.

Those who are accused of blasphemy are often subject to attacks from extremists as even the judicial system struggles to counter such acts, with blasphemy cases attracting scores of agitators disrupting court proceedings, shouting slogans and demanding the death penalty. At least 23 people involved in blasphemy cases have been murdered in Pakistan, according to the National Commission for Justice and Peace. A quarter of the victims were Christians, although Christians constitute less than 2 percent of the country's population.

Little evidence is required to make a charge under these laws, and in a

Pakistani court a Christian man's testimony is worth half of a Muslim man's and a Christian woman's testimony is worth only a quarter, making it difficult for a non-Muslim to counter an accusation against them. The law requires a rape victim to produce four male Muslim witnesses who are "truthful persons" and "abstain from major sins" and as a result, many Christian women are raped and not able to obtain convictions against the perpetrators and instead, the victim is charged with having illicit sexual intercourse. A Pakistani women's aid organization reported 2,412 abductions of women and children nationwide in 2005, and the Peace Council of Pakistan found that nearly 50 percent of women who report rape are jailed under the country's Islamic Hudood Ordinances that criminalize extra-marital sex.

As Pakistan applies to join the new UN Human Rights Council, there are fresh calls on Government to improve human rights protection in Pakistan. Human rights organisations in Pakistan are calling on the Government to improve treatment of religious minorities and women, and to make specific commitments in support of human rights. The Pakistan Asian Christian Welfare Organization has issued an appeal to churches and Christian communities around the world to join them on Sunday, 6 August 2006 during their worship in praying for the persecuted church in Pakistan. Please pray in particular for the following issues highlighted by Christian Solidarity Worldwide and the Pakistan Asian Christian Welfare Association:

- The hundreds of young Christian girls who are gang raped and subjected to forced conversion to Islam
- The network of churches in Pakistan who provide hope and life for 10 million Christians in Pakistan
- For the Government of Pakistan to provide protection to Christians as well as Muslims from terrorists
- Those who wish to destroy the pluralistic character of Pakistan's supposedly multi-faith society

Your chance to get involved...

Don't Stand in Silence



Right now over 200 million Christians in at least 60 countries around the world are persecuted and silenced because of their faith. They desperately need someone to speak up for them.

Don't Stand in Silence is a campaign run by Christian Solidarity Worldwide, a human rights organisation which specialises in religious freedom, works on behalf of those persecuted for their Christian beliefs and promotes religious liberty for all.

CSW will be running roadshows in eight cities across the UK which will feature international guest speaker, the prominent Chinese house church leader, Deborah Xu, alongside CSW's Mervyn Thomas and Stuart Windsor. The programme will also include sung worship, a time of prayer and advocacy presentations. Entry is free but registration is required. For more information please go to www.dontstandinsilence.info

In the name of the father?

in the name of the father

In the last 12 months, the Gay Police Association has recorded a 74% increase in homophobic incidents, where the sole or primary motivating factor was the religious belief of the perpetrator.

Verbal abuse and physical assault against gay men and women is a criminal offence and should always be reported to the police.

Discrimination against gay people in the workplace is also unlawful and should be reported to employers, who have a duty of care to prevent it.

Homophobia can never be justified and must never be tolerated.

www.report-it.org.uk

gay police association gay police association in scotland gay police association in northern ireland

This advert appeared in an insert to *The Independent* on 29 June sponsored by Lloyds TSB Bank. The astonishing implication is that Christianity is responsible for abuse and violence against gay people. The advertisement could be illegal. Concerned readers may consider joining the Evangelical Alliance in directing complaints to the Advertising Standards Authority, Lloyds TBS, *The Independent* and their local police station.

PQ 2006 ©Evangelical Alliance
All rights reserved. Nothing in this publication may be reprinted without the express permission in writing of the copyright owners. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the evangelical alliance.

Editor Don Horrocks
Contributors: Rebecca Chapman, Don Horrocks, Karen Jardine, R. David Muir, Jim Stewart, Gareth Wallace

Evangelical Alliance UK
Whitefield House 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT
Tel 020 7207 2100 Email info@eauk.org

information

For information on these and any other political issues, please contact our information line on: 020 7207 2129 or pub-aff@eauk.org

