



TIDAL *news*

Trade Injustice and Debt Action Leeds

SPRING 2003

Beware of the **GATS***

(* GATS is the World Trade Organisation's **General Agreement on Trade and Services** and it's got some nasty teeth)

According to the World Trade Organisation, the way to make the world a better place is to increase trade, to encourage more and more buying and selling and shipping things around the world. The trouble is that the driving force behind the WTO and GATS is big business, gigantic transnational corporations like Nestlé and Monsanto, which rake in huge profits from international trade.

These companies have little regard to the needs of the poor and the vulnerability of the environment, or to the democratic rights of people and their government to say what rules apply within their countries. So under GATS rules, laws and regulations can be overruled if a committee of trade lawyers in Geneva agree that they create an 'unreasonable' restraint of trade.

Examples of this could be rules to protect the environment by regulating the number of hotels that can be built near a national park, or laws to create employment and fight poverty by providing that foreign

companies should train and employ a certain proportion of local people.

An actual example is the ban on importing hormone-treated beef which was agreed by the European Union because of worries about possible dangers to health. This was challenged by the US on the basis that it prevented them from exporting beef to Europe and the WTO adjudicators upheld that challenge.

Developing countries have called for a freeze on negotiations until the effects of GATS have been properly assessed. Here in Britain, over 20 local authorities have passed motions expressing concern, including Leeds Council at its recent meeting on 15 January. Unions are fighting back, as are NGOs, led by the World Development Movement and the Trade Justice Movement. Nearly 300 MPs have signed an Early Day Motion, including most Leeds MPs, and MEP David Bowe has been active in Brussels.

Mary Keynes

ACTION

7 pm Thursday 20 Feb, Civic Hall

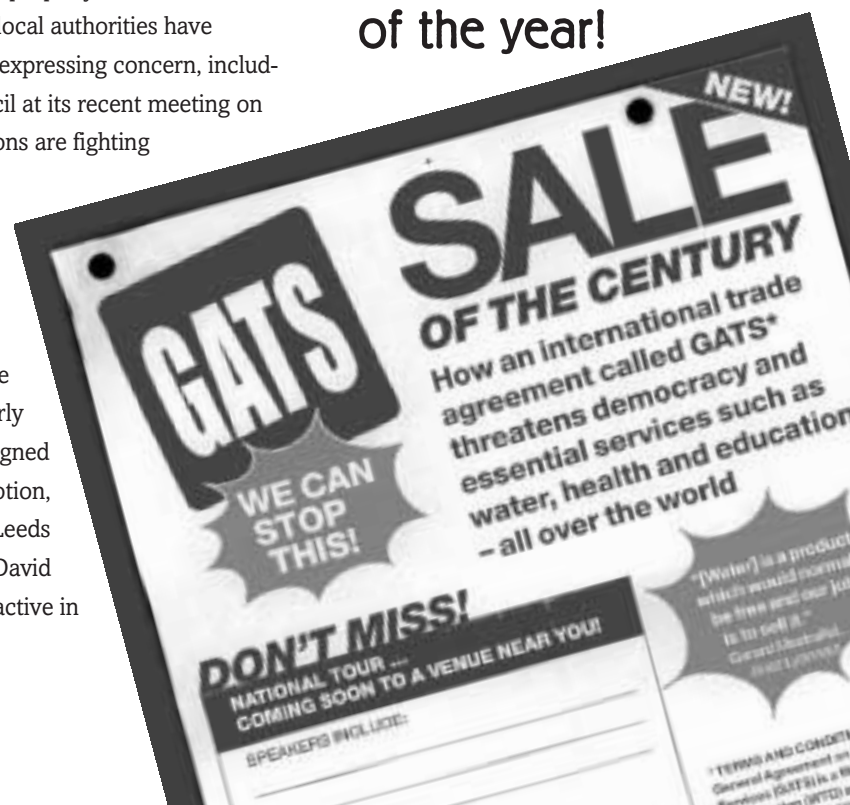
Sale of the Century:

Essential services under threat

Robert Giuseppe, President of the Government Workers' Union of Trinidad and Tobago will speak about the effects of GATS on the privatisation of essential services in Trinidad.

John Battle MP will chair the meeting, and others speakers include **John McDermott** (UNISON), **Beverly Duckworth** (WDM) and **Claire Nash** (Green Party Councillor). There will be time for questions and discussion. Campaign materials will be available for everyone.

Don't miss out on TIDAL's first event of the year!



Europe-wide GATS Day of Action – Thursday 13 March

Here in Leeds, in the late morning, there will be a street theatre action by members of WDM, Friends of the Earth, People and Planet, and TIDAL. This will be followed by a delegation to the Director of the Regional Government Office.

Further info from:
tidal@leedschurchinstitute.org or
leedscentralwdm@beeb.net

ACTION

Debt & Trade campaigns February–June 2003

February

- Thurs 20 **'Sale of the Century: essential services under threat'**
7–9pm, Civic Hall, Committee Room 6
- Thurs 27 **50th Anniversary of the London Agreement**

March

- March to May **'Two sides of the same coin'**
G8 postcard campaign
- Sat 1 **'Live and let live'**
Christian Aid conference on AIDS, Bradford
- Thurs 13 **GATS Day of Action**
Regional Assembly office, Leeds city centre
- 3–16 **Fairtrade Fortnight**
See the Fairtrade Calendar on pages 4–5
- Thurs 27 **Queen's Petition hand-in**
Buckingham Palace

April

- Sat 5 **'Listening to Africa'**
Christian Aid conference, Skipton
- 12–13 **World Bank & IMF Spring Meetings**
Washington

May

- Sat 3 **Trade Union May Day March**
Leeds city centre
- Sun 4 **World Fairtrade Day**
- Fri 16 **A Day to Remember**
JDC event Birmingham
- 16/17 **A Day to Remember**
TIDAL event Leeds city centre
- Late May **TIDAL cyclists set off for G8 in France**
Leeds city centre

June

- Sun 1 **Global March**
Evian/Sciez, France
- 1–3 **G8 Summit**
Evian, France
- 27–28 **Trade Justice 24 hour lobby of MPs**
Leeds (and across the UK)
- Sat 28 **Trade Justice 'Weigh In'**
Leeds city centre (and across the UK)

Please contact Jane in the TIDAL office for further info about any of these events.

Hello again...

Hello and welcome to this bumper edition of the TIDAL Newsletter. TIDAL is well established now, and 2003 is set to be a busy year for campaigners on debt and trade in the Leeds area. So busy that we need 8 pages to tell you about everything that is going on! On the left is a calendar of events so that you can put all the dates in your diaries now. If you need any further info, want to offer to help, or if you have something that you would like us to include in the next newsletter, please ring the TIDAL office on the new direct number: 0113 391 7917.



We've accomplished a lot since the last newsletter. We made a splash in Dortmund Square about GATS, learnt about the situation in Nicaragua from agronomist Fatima Ismael, hosted the JDC Campaigners' Day, and listened to the delightful music of Italian composer and pianist Ludovico Einaudi. You can read all about these elsewhere in the newsletter.

My first baby is due at the end of February, so after getting this newsletter out to you I am going off on maternity leave, leaving the TIDAL office in the very capable hands of Jane, who many of you know already. There is so much going on though, that I'm sure I will see you – wrapped in red chains on 16 May or waving some scales in the air at the TJM 'Weigh In', albeit with the next generation of debt and trade campaigner on my back! See you in the summer!

Anne

Hi there! I'm Jane and I'm taking over as Administrator and Campaign Development worker from Annie while she goes on maternity leave. Many of you will know me by sight, if not by name, as I've been involved locally in the Jubilee 2000 debt campaign since the Birmingham trip in 1998. I'm also one of those Rickshaw Freedom Riders that cycled to Köln, Hull and Genoa.



I've been involved with the fair-trade movement for over ten years as a Traidcraft Rep. Since 2000 I've helped to set up and run The Beehive (see page 4) and for the past two years I've organised events there for Fairtrade Fortnight. I've also been a member of WDM for a long time and been involved in both groups in Leeds.

My work background is as a nurse and midwife, which includes a year in Guinea Bissau, West Africa, working with Tearfund. I still work occasionally as a midwife at St James' but changed my direction in 1999 when I started a full time degree in Development Studies (with Politics) at the University of Leeds. I graduated last year and I'm eager to use my knowledge, skills and energies as your new (temporary) administrator.

Looking forward to meeting you at future campaigning events, or at the office.

Jane

We have a new, direct phone number to put in your address book. Ring us on...

0113 391 7917

Someone to see you, Your Majesty

In 2002, Mothers' Union groups from around the Commonwealth and debt campaigners in Britain collected signatures for the Queens' Petition. In her Jubilee Year we asked that she encourage her ministers to secure deeper and wider debt relief for the millions of poor people in the Commonwealth and beyond who are still enslaved by debt.

We sent hundreds of signatures from Leeds, and our local MPs showed their support for TIDAL by signing the petition at the JDC Campaigners' Day in November (see photo).

The hard work paid off, and over 100,000 signatures will be handed to Buckingham Palace on Thursday 27 March. Representatives from Commonwealth countries will be there to hand over the petition.



A Day to Remember 16 May 1998

Five years on, JDC plans a mammoth reminder in Birmingham...

It's not often that people can say they changed the world, but that's exactly what a group of peaceful protesters did five years ago in Birmingham, 16 May 1998. Perhaps 'group' isn't quite the right word, for an amazing 70,000 of them formed the Jubilee 2000 Human Chain around the G8 Summit – the annual meeting of the leaders of the world's eight richest/most powerful countries – to demand an end to the crisis of Third World debt.

And change the world they did. Stunned by the depth of feeling expressed by this international mass gathering – involving participants from all walks of life, from across the political spectrum and from all the major religions – the G8 realised that the debt crisis had to be placed at the top of their agenda, and that hard cash was needed to solve it. One year later, following political movement within the UK and USA, the 1999 Summit in Cologne made its historic promise to write-off \$100 billion of poor country debts, via the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative (HIPC). Set against what Jubilee 2000 calculated was the \$300 billion of unpayable debt owed by the 52 poorest countries this sum wasn't sufficient, but at face value it was an undeniable stride forward.

Why then are debt campaigners returning to Birmingham on 16 May this year? Simply because that spirit of Jubilee 2000 lives on in the coalition that is the Jubilee Debt Campaign, and because there are thousands of people across the UK who will not rest until the blight of unpayable debt is finally and completely removed from the world's poor.

Less than 20% of unpayable poor country debt has been cancelled or agreed for cancellation to date. JDC – ie: the 90 local/regional groups and 60 national organisations that make up its membership – believes that full cancellation of these debts is not only morally justified but a necessary condition for there to be a realistic chance of eliminating poverty and promoting prosperity worldwide. All who share that vision are invited to join JDC in Birmingham

on 16 May for a Day to Remember or take part in your local event in Leeds city centre.

Ashok Sinha

Jubilee Debt Campaign

Birmingham 2003

Audrey Miller, who is organising the Day to Remember in Birmingham, sent us the following message:

ACTION

We've worn chains, made chains, been wrapped in chains and sent chains – all to achieve debt cancellation for the world's poorest people. Please help us to make the biggest red chain ever!

We want to make a huge impact, so we need as many families, groups, clubs and schools etc to take up this challenge.

Your links can be made out of any material you might have to hand. So far we have red chains made from plaited wool, material, plastic bags, corks, cotton reels, ribbon, and insulation tubes. We are sure you'll think of other items you can recycle into red chains.

Bring or send your chain to Birmingham for 16 May 2003 and help create this huge visual display. For more information on 'A Day to Remember', contact Audrey Miller at Jubilee Debt Campaign West Midlands, on 0121 471 4175, or jubileedebt@aol.com. Updates will be posted on the Jubilee Debt Campaign website: www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk

...and here in Leeds

TIDAL are planning a large-scale city centre street event to mark the 5th anniversary of the Human Chain in Birmingham. Full details in the next newsletter.

Watch this space, as this will be the big debt event in Leeds for 2003.



Free choccy @ Tesco's!

The Leeds Oxfam Group has been promoting fair trade at Tesco's on Roundhay Road for the last three years during Fairtrade Fortnight. We have a stall in the entrance with samples of all the Fairtrade products that Tesco's stock.

It's not too difficult to get shoppers to stop and taste our free chocolate samples – that gives us a few precious seconds to explain what Fairtrade is all about while they are munching away. We also give them free samples of tea and coffee. We've noticed that with each year, more shoppers are familiar with the concept and are usually

What's on: March 2003

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Mon 3 | ■ Fairtrade stalls, various supermarkets
■ Supermarket survey |
| Tues 4 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey |
| Wed 5 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey
■ Ghanaian cocoa producers visit schools |
| Thurs 6 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey |
| Fri 7 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey |
| Sat 8 | ■ Tasting event & puppet show, Leeds city centre |
| Sun 9 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey |
| Mon 10 | ■ Fairtrade Pub Quiz, The Royal Park, Headingley |
| Tues 11 | ■ Banana farmer from the Windward Isles |
| Wed 12 | ■ Fairtrade lunch at Harvey Nichols |
| Thurs 13 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey |
| Fri 14 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey |
| Sat 15 | ■ Event at The Beehive, Chapel Allerton |
| Sun 16 | ■ Fairtrade stalls
■ Supermarket survey |

very supportive. Now our job is to project the new international logo, and to decide which one of our members would look good dressed up as a banana!

Joan Machin

Time for Change

Trade for Change's education project, Time for Change, has been working with 13 Leeds schools (primary, secondary and a special school), enabling them to become Fairtrade schools. This means they must...

- link Fairtrade into the curriculum (Geography PSE and RE are favourite areas, but doing art projects around Fairtrade packaging are ways other subject areas have been involved)
- be active in supporting Fairtrade (eg: setting up a Fairtrade tuckshop, or stocking Fairtrade bananas)
- spread the Fairtrade message to the wider community (eg: giving away free samples at parents evenings, serving Fairtrade tea and coffee to visitors).

Many schools are holding Fairtrade days, where the pupils will spend all day going to different workshops where they learn how it feels to be unjustly treated in a trading system, through simulation games, and get to make Fairtrade banana smoothies! These activities, combined with sustained input from other areas in school, should mean that Fairtrade is for life and not just a Fortnight!

Hannah Dalrymple
Education Worker,
Trade for Change

Bananafarma

The Fairtrade Foundation has invited a banana farmer from WINFA (Windward Islands National Farmers Association), to visit Britain as part of Fairtrade Fortnight. The farmer will be coming to speak in Leeds on the evening of 11 March. Look out for more details on this event.

Fairtrade

3–16 March



Be @ the Beehive!

Perhaps you've never heard of it – we're very tiny and not very organised!

- It's a shop – but a lot more
- A café – but not quite
- A trading place – but no-one gets ripped off
- A passion – but in a very relaxed way
- A dream – but a trip to reality
- A business – but not for profit
- A tiny place – but with large hospitality

We set up The Beehive at the end of October 2000 to run as a temporary venture for one year (but we're still here) – the aim being to sell as many Fairtrade goods as possible and to be based in the local community. The shop sells food, beverages, crafts, gifts, recycled paper and environmentally friendly cleaning products. The café sells drinks, sandwiches, toasties, home-baked cakes and other snacks.

So why not pop in to see us – you'll always find a friendly welcome!

The Beehive is situated in Chapel Allerton, on Potternewton Lane, just along from the Shoulder of Mutton pub and opposite Technorth. Opening

Fortnight



hours are 10.30am to 4.30pm Tuesday to Friday and 10am to 5pm on Saturday. (In Jan & Feb we're closed all day Tuesday, reopening on Tuesdays for Fairtrade Fortnight.)

The Beehive
67 Potternewton Lane
Chapel Allerton, Leeds 7

Tel: 0113 2622975

Email: TheBeehive@fish.co.uk

Jane Speight

Ghanaian cocoa farmers visit Leeds

Two Ghanaian cocoa growers are on a tour of 'Divine Cities', one of which is Leeds, during Fairtrade Fortnight. Divine cities are those targeted by the Day Chocolate Company as places to sell their Divine chocolate bars.

The two women (50 and 14 years old) are part of the Kuapa Cocoa company which co-owns the Day Chocolate Company. They will be visiting schools and will take part in the survey to see which supermarkets stock Fairtrade products.



There is a crisis destroying the livelihoods of 25 million coffee producers around the world. The price of coffee has fallen by almost 50% in the past three years to a thirty-year low. Long-term prospects are grim.

Developing-country coffee farmers, mostly poor small-holders, now sell their coffee beans for much less than they cost to produce. Families dependent on money generated from coffee are being forced to take their children out of school. They can no longer afford basic medicines and are cutting back on food. The coffee crisis has become a development disaster as people, communities and even entire countries face ruin.

At the other end of the market, the four largest international coffee companies are making huge profits on their coffee products. Between them, Kraft, Nestlé, Sara Lee and Proctor and Gamble buy nearly half of the world's coffee beans and each have coffee brands with \$1bn or more in annual sales. Yet by paying the lowest possible price for the coffee beans, the companies have turned their backs on the human catastrophe at the

heart of their industry. Up until now, rich countries have stood by complacently and let this happen.

Oxfam wants a decent cup of coffee and a decent price for coffee farmers. The coffee industry and rich country governments urgently need to face up to this crisis. Oxfam is proposing a coffee rescue plan, which will make the market work for farmers, poor country governments and consumers.

Stir it up...

You don't have sit back and let this crisis continue. As a consumer, you have the power to do some thing about it today. You can buy coffee that carries the Fairtrade mark. And you can add your voice to Oxfam's campaign by phoning 01865 312 610 or visiting www.maketrade4fair.com.

Andrea Hill, Oxfam

ACTION

Fairtrade pub quiz

Pit your wits against other fairtrade fanatics! The quiz will take place in the Cellar of the Royal Park pub, Headingley, on Monday 10 March, from 8pm. There will be lots of prizes, most of them edible, and all of those with the sweet taste that only comes from fair trade!

Leeds Shopping Guide

TIDAL are hoping to join forces with other groups across Leeds to produce a *Leeds Shopping Guide* to fairtrade, organic and ethical outlets. It will include the results of the Supermarket Survey – so please lend a hand if you can!

News in brief

■ Old rainbow J2K scarf getting a bit scratty? New JDC scarves available for only £4. Contact Jane in the TIDAL office. Get one in time for all the TIDAL events that you're going to attend this year!

■ Many thanks and a very fond farewell to June Kettlewell, of the Mothers' Union, who has finally stepped down from the TIDAL Steering Group after years of committed campaigning. June was one of the original members of the Jubilee 2000 group and her valuable input, hard work and smiling face will be sorely missed.

■ We have a new face on our Steering Group. Congratulations and welcome to Andrea Hill, who is the new Campaigner at Oxfam. Her predecessor, Paul Hook has moved down south to work for Compassion in World Farming.

■ The Manchester Jubilee Debt Campaign group is following in our footsteps and is testing the waters on a joint debt and trade campaigning group. There are whispers that the North-East group is considering it also.

■ Volunteers needed! As you will see, we have a jam-packed calendar of events and campaigns planned. We are looking for help for all of them – from envelope-stuffing to stewarding to collecting petitions. We are also looking for some administrative help. If you are a whiz with filing systems we want you! Play your part in putting the world to rights by putting our filing cabinet in order. Contact Jane in the TIDAL office.

■ JDC Head Office is recruiting for three new part-time jobs: an Information & Communications Officer, an Administrator, and a Self-Employed Event Co-ordinator. For further info, call JDC on 020 7922 1111, or download the Job Profile(s) via the website (under "Get Involved").

Noticeboard:

■ 20 years on, Bradford WDM is still going strong. For information about monthly meetings (next one 3 March), please ring David or Molly Somerville on 01274 543646. Lifts available from Bradford station.

■ South Parade Baptist Church holds a development prayer group every 2nd Monday of the month. The next one is on 10 March. All welcome.

■ Those wonderful people at Riding Lights Theatre Co are putting on a play about issues of injustice and the way we engage with the lives of people in the developing world. *The Fun of the Fair* is at the Friargate Theatre in York, 6–8 & 13–15 Feb. Tickets £7.50 and £5 from 0845 961 3000.

■ Anyone know where the big TIDAL banner is? It seems to have gone walkabout. Last seen at the Debt in Africa day in Cardigan Community Centre.

London Agreement 50th Anniversary

On 27 February 1953

ACTION

the rich world recognised that it was in its own best interests to break Germany's indebtedness. Through the 'London Agreement' its debts were slashed, and it only had to pay back what was left if it could afford to do so. Within a decade, Germany was no longer in debt.

50 years later the rich world claims to recognise that the cycle of debt must be eliminated in Africa and the rest of the poor world as a matter of justice, development and global security. This can happen. It can be afforded – easily. With enough political will, a process can be created to cancel Africa's debts and ensure that the proceeds are spent transparently and under local control, to save lives, tackle poverty,

provide education and safeguard natural resources.

Send your MP a London Agreement, 50th Anniversary letter, pointing out that...

■ For reasons of self-interest, the West ended Germany's debt crisis in 1953. This and the Marshall Plan provided the basis of Germany's present day economic success.

■ For reasons of mutual interest, the rich world must end the African debt crisis. Gordon Brown's Marshall Plan for Africa must be accompanied by full cancellation of the continent's debts if there is to be any chance that Africa too may gain prosperity.

See the JDC website for more details on this letter-writing action. If you don't have access to the internet, please contact the TIDAL office and we will print off the appropriate information and send it to you.

TIDAL pedals debt again

Leeds Jubilee Cyclists are planning to ride again, to this year's G8 summit in Evian, France. This time we are planning to unite the two groups of Leeds cyclists, Bill Phelps' Rickshaw Freedom Riders (but without the rickshaw this time), and Roger Harington's Speedy Cyclists, to carry the Drop the Debt message together to Hull, Zeebrugge and then across Belgium and France to the shores of Lake Geneva. We reckon on covering an average of 50 to 60 miles per day, leaving on Thursday 22 June.

This is a 100% TIDAL event, as many of these cyclists are members of the TIDAL Steering Group.

As before, we'll be campaigning to Drop the Debt before, during and after the ride, and will be looking for sponsorship to raise funds for Debt campaigns in Leeds, in Britain, and in the indebted countries of the South. Leeds' twin town, Lille, is on our route, offering an opportunity for serious campaigning.

After the violence of Genoa we had some serious doubts about continuing this particular form of campaigning. These doubts have been shared by other groups,

with the results that this year the NGOs will meet at Sciez, some 30km away from Evian, thus avoiding the mutual provocation between some marchers and the security forces that produced such tragic consequences at Genoa. But there will be the usual march on the first day of the Summit, and a huge Jubilee Chain will be the motif of the march.

Anyone who is interested in joining the ride should contact Jane (0113 391 7917, TIDAL@leedschurchinstitute.org) or Mary (0113 262 3330, leedscentralwdm@beeb.net).





Jon Mitchell bares all for justice in Dortmund Square. And even the man with the barrel joined in!

TIDAL makes a splash

Thanks to everyone involved in the SPLASH day in Dortmund Square last October... to the water carriers from different parts of Leeds... to the weatherman who gave us a bright and beautiful day... to Bill and his Bath... to the many helpers who dressed up as taps, handed out leaflets, gave instructions in water carrying... to WDM who produced the ideal action card at the exact right time... to the organisers who brought it all together... and to the public who joined in the spirit of the event with gusto. The day succeeded in showing many people how basic services like water cannot be taken for granted, and how such services are threatened by the GATS agreement of the World Trade Organisation.

Tip the scales with TIDAL!

There's no rest for those fighting the wicked! You can have a couple of weeks off after calling for the debt to be dropped at the 16 May event and during the run-up to the G8, and then we need to make some noise about trade justice!

ACTION

We're planning two big events for the end of June, in conjunction with the Trade Justice Movement. Put the dates in your diaries!

27-28 June 2003

24 hours for trade justice

The idea is that every single MP in the UK is lobbied on trade justice issues over a 24-hour period. This will mean visiting them in their constituencies between 12 noon Friday 27 and 12 noon Saturday 28 June, or bringing them together in one venue.

28 June 2003

Weigh in for trade justice

At events and gatherings all over the UK, at exactly 12 noon, thousands will stand together holding high sets of scales – the TJM international symbol for trade justice. Let's fill the streets of Leeds and show how important it is to us in Leeds that unjust and corrupt rules of trade are changed.

We will give you more details of these events in the next newsletter, but if you want to get involved, please ring or email the TIDAL office.

We'd like to spend your money (please)

Firstly, many thanks to those of you who responded so generously to our request for donations in the last newsletter. As with any organisation that relies solely on donations, funding our work is an ongoing issue. If you agree with the aims of TIDAL and think that we are effective in fighting for the end of poverty and injustice, open your wallets!

In order to be able to plan our campaigning, we need funding on a regular basis. At the moment, we only have enough money in the bank to continue our work for two more months. We have around £100 a month in regular donations (standing orders) but we need around £800 per month to keep the office open. Producing each newsletter costs around £550.

In the past, you have always responded magnificently to requests for funding. With your money we have been able to maintain an office, and an Administrator. (Leeds is the only local debt or trade group in the whole country that has a paid member of staff.) Because of this resource, and the dedication and commitment of the steering group and you the supporters, we are viewed and have a reputation as being one of the largest, most active and effective campaigning groups in the whole country!

We need your money! Please think about donating regularly via a standing order. Fill in the form that came with the newsletter, or ring Jane in the office on 391 7917 to have a form sent out to you. Every £5, £10 or £50 per month that you pledge will allow us to plan ahead, and carry on campaigning. Thank you.

Lindsey Pearson, Chair of TIDAL

ACTION

Coffee crisis in Nicaragua

When Fatima Ismael came to Leeds in October she was able to tell us directly the effect that the coffee crisis is having in her country, Nicaragua in Central America. She works for SOPPEXCA, a cooperative of coffee growers in the north of Nicaragua who sell some of their coffee to fairtrade companies.

She told us that over the last three years the low price of coffee has quite literally been a matter of life or death. Those coffee producers (mainly cooperatives made up of small-scale coffee farmers) which were already selling to fairtrade companies, or who received a premium price because they produce organically, have been able to survive. The rest, mainly workers on larger,



(Photo: Julia Powell, The Fairtrade Foundation, 2002)

less environmentally-friendly plantations, lost their work and not only had to withdraw children from school but often lost their homes and any way of gaining a livelihood. Many ended up on the streets of Matagalpa, a city in the northern mountains of Nicaragua, begging for food for their children and living under makeshift shelters made from anything they could find. There have been numerous cases of deaths from hunger amongst these unemployed coffee workers. Now that the crisis has been dragging on so long, it is no less acute, but people are finding whatever ways they can to survive. Fatima told us that many young girls have been driven into prostitution.

The tragedy is that this is so avoidable. The price of a cup of coffee has not gone down for us at the consumer end of the chain, so in the middle the multinational companies are raking in the profits.

And then there's tea...

We followed a thin, red soil track into the forest. Brilliantly coloured butterflies the size of plates fluttered by and rays of sunlight filtered through the trees that were towering above us. In the midst of the forest we were met with the warm hospitality of farmers from the Small Organic Farmers Association (SOFA) in Sri Lanka.

SOFA has a total of 340 farmers that are split into 10 democratic societies. They supply TeaDirect and other Fairtrade companies. The normal market price of green tea is 27 Rs per kilo. The Fairtrade buyers give the farmers 43 Rs, with some buyers also donating funds to NGOs for a support programme for the tea growers. Unfortunately, not all of the tea is needed by Fairtrade buyers. What is left has to be sold at the cheaper price.

Each society of farmers decides how they would like to spend the extra money generated from Fairtrade. Over the past few years the priority has been to use the extra money to develop their plots of land by buying new tea plants and cows (to produce manure). Some of the money has also gone into a social fund to buy a communal tent and chairs for weddings (instead of having to hire them each time).

If you wish to find out more about SOFA or contribute towards their work with a donation to buy some cows, contact me on 0113 2740332 or jozart@fish.co.uk.

Joanna Brown

Witness first-hand the consequences of the unjust terms of trade and the positive results of fair-trade in Nicaragua. The Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign is offering the opportunity to go on a fairtrade work study tour this August. Live and work with fairtrade coffee producers for 2 weeks and spend a week on a study tour, finishing with a fairtrade forum. The trip is from 26 July – 18 August and you need to raise around £1,200. Ring 0207 272 9619 for further info.

ACTION

Fatima wants more people to start buying fairtrade. At the moment, only a part of what her cooperative produces is sold on fairtrade terms and there are many other cooperatives which would qualify to sell fairtrade but the market is not there yet.

What Fatima's visit brought home to me was that at good times buying fairtrade products contributes to positive development and to people being more able to determine their own lives. At times of crisis, as now for all those involved in coffee production, it is a matter of life or death.

Sarah Fishwick

Some useful contacts...

In the UK the Jubilee torch is carried on by the **Jubilee Debt Campaign**. TIDAL is a member, along with most of the same national and regional groups who were part of Jubilee 2000. PO Box 36620, London, SE1 0WJ
Tel: 020 7922 1111 Fax: 020 7922 1122
assistant@jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk
www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk

Trade Justice Movement

... calling for fundamental change to the unjust rules and institutions governing international trade, so that trade is made to work for all.
c/o The Fairtrade Foundation, Suite 204, 16 Baldwin's Gardens, London, EC1N 7RJ
Tel: 020 7404 0530
Email: mail@tjm.org.uk
www.tradejusticemovement.org.uk

TIDAL

c/o Leeds Church Institute, 20 New Market Street, Leeds, LS1 6DG
Tel: 0113 391 7917 Fax: 0113 391 7939
tidal@leedschurchinstitute.org