

Gene & Georgia Mittelman  
Distinguished Lecture in the Arts  
U. Roberto (Robin) Romano  
9.27.06 (9.27.06 Pix Final)  
Embargoed

Before I begin I'd like to thank the following for giving me the opportunity to address you tonight.

Gene & Georgia Mittelman, who so generously funded this lecture.

Peter J. Nicholls, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs,

David G. Woods Dean of the School of Fine Arts,

Steven Kern, Director of The William Benton Museum of Art

Richard A. Wilson, Gladstein Chair of Human Rights and Director of the Human Rights Institute

And

Salvatore Scalora the Retired Director of The William Benton Museum of Art. (Grazie Fratello mio)

I would also like to thank Shareen Hertel who has been a dear friend, colleague and fellow traveler on these issues over the past 10 years.

It is a privilege to be delivering the Gene & Georgia Mittelman Distinguished Lecture in the Arts.

(Lights down...Cue first image)



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(Run app 15 Seconds)

Behind me is an image of Allasane Kondogo, who at the time of this photo was 14 years old. Allasane began working at the age of 9 and has never been to school. He is one of over a million children who pick cocoa in the Ivory Coast.

(Image should be out at end of last sentence)

The photos that you will see tonight were taken on my last trip to the Ivory Coast a little under a year ago. I have interspersed them throughout portions of the lecture tonight so that you can get a sense of the children's lives and the circumstances they labor under that I am describing this evening. For all the policy, facts and figures you will hear tonight, I want you to see what the real cost is for these children.

I also want to mention that for reasons of safety and security, no photos of the quoted ex-child slaves in tonight's lecture will be shown. In the film I am

working on, their faces appear in silhouette. Many of the photos you see this afternoon were taken surreptitiously.

This lecture is advertised as

**Report from the Frontline:  
Child Slaves in the Cocoa Fields of the Ivory Coast...**

But it is really more than just about Slavery and child labor in the Ivory Coast. It is about all of us as well. It is about our being better global citizens.

So I want you to consider another title:

**An Ungraceful Distance**

I take this title from a line from Ralph Waldo Emerson's **Fate**

**“You have just dined, and, however scrupulously  
the slaughter-house is concealed in the graceful distance of miles,  
there is complicity... race living at the expense of race.”**

I think of this line always when I hear the voice of the enslaved cocoa worker Vincent from the Ivory Coast:

**“Tell them, when they are eating chocolate, they are eating my  
flesh”** ■

Because this is, in essence, what we are doing. Because we in the United States consume more than 50% of the cocoa produced in the **IVORY COAST**.

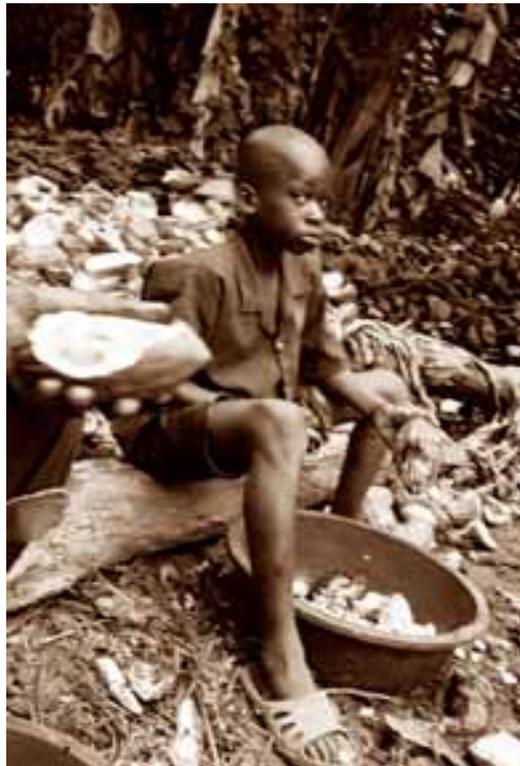
Under the guise of Free Trade and Market Liberalization the United States and Europe Union muscle through International Trade deals that favor wealthy multi and transnational corporations such as Nestlé, Mars, Hershey,

Archer Daniels Midland and Cargill; pressuring weak governments and colluding with others in the developing world to make the world safe for Globalization. This should lead one to think that the chocolate we eat shouldn't taste as sweet as it does.

But I am not going to issue an anti-globalization or anti-capitalist screed. I actually believe in globalization and capitalism, I just happen to feel, like Joseph Stiglitz, that in its current form Globalization is grossly mismanaged.

The university is now running a film series called **Why Do We Cry**. And this is appropriate for me because in my travels in the Ivory Coast and Mali what I saw and heard broke my heart and made me weep.

(Image Montage Total 30 Seconds- Each Image lasts 10 Seconds)



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I spoke with children who were trafficked and enslaved; children who were underfed and overworked and who were abused and crippled; children who had seen their friends beaten for trying to escape and some beaten so badly that they died. All of who worked on the cocoa farms and plantations of the

Ivory Coast so that we can give sweets to our sweet on Valentine's Day. Children who are tricked into working in Africa so ours can be treated with chocolate at home on Halloween.

These children inhabit the opposite pole from ours in the world of corporate globalization.

(Images should be out by now)

So we must ask ourselves what kind of a world do we want when we hear the following describing what happened to a child of eleven while he was a slave picking cocoa:

**I will tell you how I lost my arm. I tried to escape, but I could not. They caught me and tied me to a papaya tree and they beat me and broke my arm. From here my life was ruined. It was a shame. They beat me because I asked about food. . They take the juice from the cacao and put it in a hole in the ground to ferment. When it's fermented, it makes you drunk. It makes you dizzy, and sometimes it makes you fall down. When you fall, they think that you don't want to work. And they tell you to drink it in order to work. This juice also fills you stomach so that you don't get hungry. If you drank the juice and then fall down, they would come and pick you up and beat you. I used to dream horrible dreams that they were beating me and about many other things: the hard work, my family... I still have these dreams today.**

What you are going to see and hear tonight are a part of investigations and court cases here and in Europe about the use of child labor and slaves in the Ivory Coast and western Africa.

It is part of an ongoing series of reports, photo essays and a film that I am working on that the major corporations who trade in chocolate and other

commodities don't want made and neither does the government of the Ivory Coast.

This was made especially clear during my last stay in the Ivory Coast when a small contingent of FANCI troops, the acronym given for the Ivory Coasts Armed Forces, smashed the steel door to my hotel compound in Cocody and tried to shake me down, but as power and greed are what is being described here, I was able to use influence to 'negotiate' my way out.

And I was lucky, in 2004 Guy-André Kieffer; the leading investigative reporter who specialized in writing about commodities and economic and financial matters in the Ivory Coast disappeared. He was in the middle of an investigation into the chain of custody of the money in the cocoa industry; the 'filière' as it is known there, and it is reported that he uncovered a 'leakage' as high as 80% of the funds.

Where did the money go? What did it go towards? What happened to Kieffer, whose body was never found? Who were his killers? We may never know.

What we do know is that Michel Légré, brother-in-law of President Laurent Gbagbo's wife Simone, was the last person to see him alive and was twice questioned in Côte d'Ivoire by French investigating judge Patrick Ramaël. Légré said eight people were involved but Ramaël was not allowed to question them and later complained that Ivorian officials were "totally obstructing" his investigation.

The eight included economy and finance minister Paul-Antoine Bohoun Bouabré, Simone Gbagbo's security chief Anselme Seka Yapo, presidential defense adviser Bertin Gahié Kadet, national investment bank chief Victor Nembelissini, a pastor close to the Gbagbos, Moïse Koré, and two soldiers. ■

The reason I bring up Kieffer's case and list the prominent persons involved is to emphasize that it is not just the multinational corporations that want this story and others like it silenced, but it is also the government of the Ivory Coast that doesn't want anyone looking critically at its cocoa production and it sent a clear message that anyone who does look into it will suffer.

And all for good reason as you will find out, because the Ivory Coast produces almost half of the world's cocoa and the government of the Ivory Coast survives financially off of the sale of this cocoa, which represents 90% of foreign exchange earnings. This last figure comes from the CIA fact book.

Suffice it to say, this was and continues to be a very difficult story to get.

But as you will come to find out, reporting on corrupt governments, US and European trade strategies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization as well as Trans and Multinational Corporations is a target rich environment when it comes to Economic Justice, Human Rights and what is referred to as 'free trade'.

But let's take a step back for a moment and contextualize what you are going to see and hear.

Africa is the forgotten continent, left behind in the globalization race. Most African countries have the highest level of poverty in the world; in fact, of the 40 poorest countries listed on the International Monetary Fund's Heavily Indebted Poor Country list 34 of them are in Africa.

And what accounts for this?

Surely slavery and the abuses of a colonial past, corrupt and weak leaders, a long and not very distinguished history of political interference by the US and European countries, a dependence on primary commodities, which is what economists refer to as the 'resource curse' and what can only be described as the greed of multinational corporations, account for some of the social, economic and political problems that plague these countries.

Further, Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) imposed by the World Bank and IMF have had a devastating effect on African economies and in many cases these programs have actually resulted in a reversal of development.

And finally, the failure of the World Trade Organization to honor its many promises to deal more fairly with the third world has only exacerbated the social and economic problems.

But it wasn't always like this.

In particular, the Ivory Coast was once the most prosperous country in all of Western Africa. After independence in 1960 its economy enjoyed a healthy growth rate of 7 percent that lasted for two decades, it had more schools per capita than any other African country and it boasted a 97% literacy rate. Its de Facto capital, Abidjan, was considered the Paris of Africa. It was cocoa that helped fuel this boom.

But consider the Ivory Coast of today; it is fast becoming one of the continent's next basket cases or what is euphemistically referred to as a 'fragile state' or HIPC, which means Heavily Indebted Poor Country in bureaucratic circles. What this is to say in plain English is that things are very bad for the people of the Ivory Coast.

Literacy is half of what it used to be and the incidence and intensity of poverty has doubled. Perhaps, not surprisingly to anyone hearing this, the Ivory Coast spends 5 times more on debt interest than on social services.

It has become something of a cliché to refer to 'Failed African States' but I and many others prefer to think of them as 'Systematically Dismantled States'. In the case of the Ivory Coast, in order to facilitate foreign investment, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank encouraged further trade liberalization, which led to the removal of all stabilizing systems and market protections. None of these was more harmful than the privatization of CAISTAB (Caisse de Stabilisation), the government's Stabilization Fund, which set the export prices for the crop year thus guaranteeing producers a stable income.

And only recently did the smoldering civil war between the Rebel North and Loyalist South, where arms were bought in large part with the proceeds from the sale of cocoa, come to an end by virtue of a shaky peace accord. A peace accord that still leaves the country divided with a sizeable UN force and France's Force L'Incorne monitoring the Zone de Confiance. And just last week Pascal Affi N'Guessan, the head of the Ivorian Popular Front FPI, said that these troops must go.

(Image Montage Total 30 Seconds- Each Image lasts 10 Seconds)



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A farmer and one time high-ranking police officer that I spoke with told me that the precipitous decline of the cocoa and other commodity markets preceded the war. It was his way of telling me that the economic collapse of the Ivory Coast particularly in the agricultural sector had helped fuel the unrest that led to the war.

And when I was in the western region of Duekoué I was greeted with the



following sight.

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The trucks that you see in the picture are halted at a roadblock and the truckers have just declared a strike.

The reason: the political boss of the region had just imposed another tax on the truckers under the guise of infrastructure investment. (Sounds like a World Bank euphemism doesn't it?) But really what it was a security tax, and it was made known to me that the money would go to purchase arms and pay for a private militia.

So let me state very clearly here that an unfair and mismanaged global economy leads to poverty, extreme suffering, hardship, state collapse, death and is even one of the root causes of war and destruction to millions.

And always, always, it is the children who suffer most. They are trapped in an economic world where greedy, often-criminal as well as very desperate people victimize the young and where international policy and assistance is so under funded, mismanaged and lacking in political will that it is of little help.

In 2000, the world's leaders gathered at the United Nations to announce the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>19</sup> To those of you who may not know exactly what the millennium goals are, they make up a broad and ambitious

agenda adopted by the United Nations in 2000. Chief among them is cutting poverty in half by 2015. They also call for achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and ensuring fairer trade in a global partnership for development.

In 2006 we are no closer to achieving this in Africa as we were in 2000 and it is generally expected that unless a major push is put behind them, we will most certainly fail to realize them by 2015.

As Thabo Mbeki said last week in his statement at the opening debate of the 61<sup>st</sup> General assembly at The UN:

**Yet, this common commitment for a global partnership for development cannot be transformed into reality when the rich and powerful insist on an unequal relationship with the poor.**

**We, who represent the poor, know as a matter of fact that these billions of poor people are increasingly becoming impatient, because every year they hear us adopt declaration after declaration, and yet nothing practical is done to assuage the hunger pains that keep them awake at night. Only few and selected agreements are implemented, with outcomes that are clearly insufficient to alleviate the excruciating pain of their children who cannot cry anymore because to do so is to invite more pain. ■■**

The reality is that for all of the promises made, in the Ivory Coast, as in the rest of Africa, Child labor and trafficking is on the rise.

(Image Montage Total 30 Seconds- Each Image lasts 10 Seconds)



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It is now estimated that one out of every three child laborers lives in Africa even though the continent contains only 10 percent of the world's population.

And while the ILO has recently reported that the number of children forced to work globally is in decline, in Africa the number is on the rise where more than one in every four children below the age of fourteen works.<sup>12</sup>

The latest accounting by the United Nations puts the number of children under the age of 14 working in Africa at 49 Million<sup>13</sup>, 50% larger than the population of Canada, and a recent US State department Human Rights report cited a high incidence of child trafficking in West Africa. It estimated that 15,000 children had been sold into forced or bonded labor in the Ivory Coast, mostly young boys between the ages of twelve and sixteen.<sup>14</sup>

(Images should be out by here)

Slave labor has historically been a problem for the chocolate industry. Almost a century ago, the Cadbury Corporation was plagued by investigative reports on extensive slave labor, including slave child labor, on its cocoa plantations on the West African island of Sao Tome. Only after a consumer and media campaign lasting a decade did Cadbury finally agree, in

1908, to stop purchasing cocoa picked by slaves.<sup>15</sup> (If you want to know more about this I suggest you read Lowell J Satre's excellent book on the subject *Chocolate on Trial*)

Today, almost 100 years later, the problem still exists.

One child recounting his experience when he was 11 told me:

**If anyone said anything about salary, they would beat them. They would take us to a place and show us graves. They told us if we run away they would catch us and kill us and bury us there. The boy who arrived with me, they beat him to death.**<sup>16</sup>

What you have just heard is testimony from one of the John Does in the lawsuit being brought by the International Labor Rights Fund against Nestlé, Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland who are accused of aiding and abetting slavery and child labor in West Africa. I will not mention his name because he and others fear repercussions from the networks that traffic children in the region.

One of the reasons for this suit; the industry's failure to live up to its promises to help end slavery and child labor in the Ivory Coast.

In 2001 media exposés by Knight Ridder and others made public the existence of child slavery on Ivory Coast cocoa farms and created an avalanche of negative publicity and consumer demands for answers and solutions. Two members of the US Congress, Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa and Representative Eliot Engel of New York took up the issue by adding a rider to an agricultural bill proposing a federal system to certify and label chocolate products as "slave free".

The measure passed the House of Representatives and created a potential disaster for Mars, Hershey's, Nestle and other chocolate manufacturers. To avoid legislation that would have forced chocolate companies to label their products with "no child labor" labels (for which many major chocolate manufacturers wouldn't qualify), the industry agreed to a voluntary protocol to end abusive and forced child labor on cocoa farms by 2005.<sup>17</sup>

Would it surprise you that the Chocolate Manufacturers Association, or CMA as it is referred to in shorthand, hired former Senators Bob Dole and George Mitchell to lobby against the original bill?<sup>18</sup> Would it surprise you to find out that this ‘**voluntary protocol**’ has failed? Would it surprise you that the Chocolate industry has now been given a free pass until 2008 where it only needs to meet 50% of the original certification? Would it surprise you to learn that a special meeting with Senator Harkin and members of the NGO consulting boards was cancelled at the last minute 10 days ago because the Industry representatives were too busy?

It shouldn't.

The behavior of trans and multi-national corporations has contributed to the child labor and slavery problems by creating the conditions of producer poverty and engaging in trade practices such as speculation and stock manipulation that lead to low market prices and instability.

Just 12 companies including Archer Daniels Midland, Cargill, Mars, Hershey's and Nestlé control 80 percent of the world's cocoa harvest.<sup>19</sup> Mars executives have said that the amount of money the company earns trading cocoa futures is equal to what it brings in through its candy and pet food sales.<sup>20</sup> To give you some idea of the scope of this, understand that M&Ms were the world's top selling candy and in 2001 did 97.3 million dollars in sales.<sup>21</sup>

Nestlé, the world's largest food company, along with M&M/Mars and Hershey Foods, account for two-thirds of America's 13 billion dollar chocolate industry.

And to what end? - One million West African children toiling in the cocoa fields so that we can have the chocolate we love so much.<sup>22</sup>

(Image- Hold 15 Seconds)



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How do these children become slaves? This is a photograph of a common sight in western Africa: A street child. AIDS, lack of economic opportunity, falling commodity prices paid to farmers, cuts in spending on social services that include money for education and corruption at every level push many of these children out of their homes and even out of their own countries and into the workforce where they are easy prey.

Let me share with you what Madame Assitankeita Tigana, the director of CONSORTIUM AMIDEF/DENBAYUMAN, an NGO that deals with trafficked children in Sikasso, Mali. Told me:

**...There are many people who profit quite a bit from this trafficking. There are all types of people implicated in this scheme; there are many people that play a part in this organization. In the villages in Mali, as people know, children work hard, but they earn nothing. If you tell them**

**that of a place that every month they may earn 10,000 CFA (\$20), and that's 100,000 CFA (\$200) for ten months or 120,000 CFA over twelve months (\$240), the child is very excited to go. <sup>23</sup>**

In the words of another child who was trafficked a  
10:

**I left home because my father died and left our mother alone. She raised us, but she had little means. When I was ten, I left home to try and earn some money to help my family. When I got to Sikasso, I didn't know anyone. A locater found me at the bus station and asked me if I was looking for work. I told him that I was looking for work and he told me that he could take me to his brother in Ivory Coast. I told him that I could not go to Ivory Coast, that I had come to work in Sikasso. He told me that the work in Mali is not worth my trouble; that I should go to Korhogo, and when I get there, I could make lots of money. I told him that I could not say that this was true because I have never been to Korhogo and that I was too small to go. But I could not get away from him and he talked and talked and convinced ... me. He put me in his car and we went to Ivory Coast and sold me to a planter for 20000 CFA (\$40). <sup>24</sup>**

(Image Montage Total 30 Seconds- Each Image lasts 10 Seconds)



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I want to interject here that many of the children end up being trafficked through the ‘guares’ or bus stations, where many of them go to beg or look for paying work. It is here that the ‘locateurs’, a word that literally means ‘locator’ and who are the men who prey on these unsuspecting children and youths and take advantage of these children. They do so by promising them salaries they would be unable to make at home and other benefits, none of which the child will see.

For all of the laws and conventions banning child labor and trafficking, and there are many, the lure of good money, no matter how false the promise, is even something the parents and families of these children cannot refuse.

As Madame Tigana explains:

**When they hear this, even family member, cousins will say they must go. On the way, everything that the trafficker says to the child is aimed at keeping the child excited: “These people pay very well, good food is everywhere- meat, chicken, coca-cola...” Here in Mali, the child in the village is not accustomed to these things. So the child is very happy to go to Ivory Coast. From the moment that they leave, they feel that they have gained something. These traffickers, once they get close to the security checkpoints, they detour to in order to avoid them, to avoid border control. Once they get to the border of Ivory Coast, someone awaits them on the other side. The reason for this is because there is a system in place in Mali that regulates the border... This is why they avoid the border control checkpoint. Once the children have crossed the border, they see that they are completely alone. They are then taken to a warehouse and sleep there and the people who brought them disappear. And it’s another person who comes: ... this is all very well organized, very well structured. Each person has their role and each person has their part in it. So it’s another individual who ... gathers the children together in this warehouse. There are many children in this warehouse, sometimes more than 50, sometimes more than 100. The owner of the warehouse has his role to play as well. Now the planters come and see the warehouse owner and negotiate the price of the children. We know this because the children themselves have heard it... They told us that they themselves have heard “I cannot pay 75000 CFA, (\$125) lower the price.” From here the children are bought in this warehouse. In this way, children are sold. The children themselves can hear when they are negotiating the price and after that, upon agreeing upon a price, they will open the warehouse and give them the children for which they have paid. The children are then taken directly to the plantation.**

**Once they have gotten to the plantation, it is a catastrophe.**

**25**

As another ex-child slave put it:

**There was a young man, and he left Mali to go to Ivory Coast to find work. When he got to the plantation, he could not work; he was feeble- he was not used to such hard work. They beat him and said that they wasted their money. He could not bear it- his body was frail. He died. When he died, we dug a grave and put him in it. One day, they came to me and they said, this boy is strong and healthy. If he runs, we won't be able to catch him. They grabbed me and held me and took my shoes and sliced my feet. They told me that I was no longer a good dancer. If you are the best dancer, your feet are in good shape... I also was not used to machete work and one day, I cut my leg with the machete. I went back to the house and they followed me and they beat me badly. If I was not a blessed child, I would have died that day.**<sup>26</sup>

These children are held hostage by armed guards and foremen night and day under the most deplorable conditions. Again I quote Madame Tigana:

**The children are not given food, and they wake up at 6 AM and work until 10 PM. They are beaten, there is no food, there are no clothes, and if they are sick they are not treated. Some of the children, if they refuse to work, are beaten to death. To keep the children scared and under control... traditional methods are used. Sometimes, when the children refuse to work, they bring a razor and slice their feet and put salt in the wounds so that they may not escape. They are used as an example to the other children to deter them from trying to escape as well. The children have no communication with anyone; they get nothing from no one. The plantations are isolated. In Ivorian plantations, you will only see the owner and the children. The children have no idea where to go, because they are in the middle of forest. There are no roads out, fields everywhere. And of these difficulties, these problems, the parents in the village have no idea- no idea that there are so many children trapped in Ivory Coast.**<sup>27</sup>

Now this is not just the Multi National's fault. They have been aided by pressure from the World Bank and IMF to open up the markets of the

developing world. These policies that have been instrumental in the over-producing of export commodities such as cocoa to help pay back the debt incurred by the developing countries like the Ivory Coast. Of course this reliance on export commodities and over production has had a number of negative effects. Basic economic sense tells us that with increased supply comes decreased demand so commodity prices drop. While the multinationals are enjoying near record profits cocoa is trading at around a 25-year low.<sup>28</sup> The Ivory Coast is the recipient of 6 Structural Adjustment Program and Enhanced Structural Adjustment Program loans to date and the economic outlook for the country only gets worse. There are also other collateral effects that these programs have to devastating effect in these countries.

IMF loans and bailout packages are destroying the environment. The IMF did not and rarely does even now consider the environmental impacts of its lending policies. Its focus on export growth to earn hard currency to pay back loans has led to an unsustainable liquidation of natural resources. One example often cited is the Ivory Coast's increased reliance on all exports that has led to a loss of two thirds of the countries forests. Deforestation has greatly endangered the eco-system, in many cases leading to or exacerbating conditions of fatal droughts and clean water access is already a desperate problem here.<sup>29</sup>

(Image- Hold 15 Seconds)



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In the photograph behind me you can see an example of this. Most of the forests in Ivory Coast were cut down in the 1980s during an aggressive development period, when logging companies stripped the land and peasants were invited by President Houphouet-Boigny to settle it. It is a practice that continues through today as you can see in this photo; you can still see residual majesty of straggler forest trees, remnants not valuable enough for use in French summer villas.

(Image should be out by here)

And the World Trade Organization continues to operate like an economic hit man on the economies of the developing, contributing to the disadvantage of the developing world, forcing children into work. In what Oxfam calls “Rigged Rules and Double Standards” multinational corporations take advantage of subsidies, tariffs and other trade barriers and often times contract with shiftless local companies. The result: driving prices and wages down so that families have no choice but to make their children work.

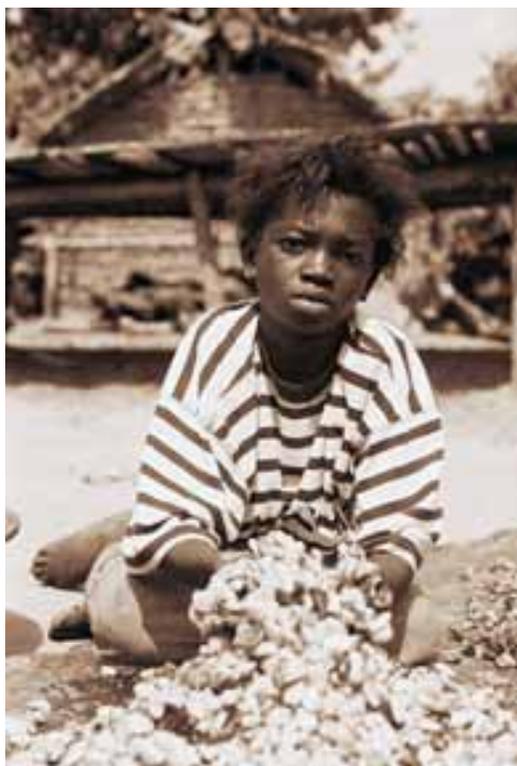
Now International Aid and Trade are trumpeted as the twin supports of development, but today they are more like the Scylla & Charybdis guarding the entrance to the global economy. Policy and unthinking greed have collided to create a poverty bomb. Unfair Aid in the form of subsidies and development schemes and unfair trade in the form of tariffs and barriers have crashed together with devastating effect on the economies of the developing world. How unfair? After all the promises made in Doha and Cancun about lowering trade barriers to the developed world the United States and the EU have actually doubled their subsidies. The agricultural subsidies for all of Africa only total a billion dollars a year. In the United States alone, this year’s subsidies will hit 20 Billion Dollars for US Farmers.

30

(Image Montage Total 30 Seconds- Each Image lasts 10 Seconds)



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How can we expect an African farmer and his family who live on less than 2 dollars a day to compete fairly with that? How can we expect the family to survive without their children working? None of the farmers I spoke with want their children to work.

Now let me state clearly that I am not adverse to subsidies, especially to small farmers, I just want subsidy parity.

As it stands right now corporations keep 70% of the cocoa profits while the farmer receives only 5%. This is barely enough to buy the seeds and fertilizer the Ivory Coast farmer needs.

(Images should be out by here)

In my conversations with Chef Bangali, a local farmer, he told me:

**The price that we want is a price that is fair to us, but it will not be too much. We only want a little. We'll give you cacao for 1000CFA, which is \$2. That would be good for us (laughter all around).**

**You know that if you get your hands on something, you want it to be the best part, but if you get frustrated, you'll grab what you can get. We know the price of cacao in America! We work so much in the fields, and they want to come and buy it for 250 or 300 CFA, which is 50 or 60 cents. Does that seem fair to you?**

**And even if we can get 300 CFA or 60 cents, then really that's OK.**

**When the buyers come in, we argue the price, but we're tired: you have to pay the "*mana furu*"; if you have money, you spray insecticide; already you've spent 200 CFA or 40 cents. And later, after all this work, you find that no one wants it. At first you could find laborers who would work your field for 500 CFA, meaning less than a dollar. We beg the buyers to buy at 200 CFA or less than 50 cents. The government also is no help. The government sets a fixed price, but the buyers come and tell us that the government gives them no money and they will not pay the government's price. <sup>32</sup>**

What Chef Bangali wants is what all farmers' want and that is a fair price

Which brings me to the section of this lecture I like to call: **what you can do.**

And that is: **Support Fair Trade.**

Fair Trade has the potential to be a turning point in the way the global economy works and you can do something about it. It allows you to be a good global citizen and a responsible consumer ... it is a way for us to say... this is the kind of world we want. And it works. Both in Ghana, where the Kuapa Kookoo cooperative is thriving and in the Ivory Coast, where Kavokiva has built schools and is constructing a medical clinic in the region around Daloa, fair trade is making lives better for the farmers it serves.

Fair Trade sets a minimum market price paid to farmers, along with their quality premiums. When the price rises above those levels, Fair Traders agree to pay extra above the contract price to keep all the players committed to the system. Fair Trade also requires the importer to provide pre-financing that allows the farmers to pay for the harvesting and processing of their crop without over reliance on local moneylenders, unpredictable banks or erratic trade policy. In order to participate, farmers must be organized into transparent, democratically run cooperatives. And I want to emphasize the terms transparent and democratically run, because so much of what happens in the AID and Trade racket isn't.

Fair trade is a global economic model where people centered development is at the heart of the system, rather than the current 'trade and aid' or 'trade not aid' models of economic global 'tough love'. Rather than allowing the lords of poverty to manipulate the 'free market' with subsidies, misplaced aid and poorly thought out development schemes that encourage the worst kind of capitol flight, fair trade builds Economic Justice into its business model.

In 2000, Fair trade cooperatives produced 89 million pounds of cocoa. Unfortunately they were only able to sell 3 million pounds at Fair Trade prices.<sup>33</sup> As long as the major corporations in the chocolate and cocoa industry continue to refuse Fair Trade, little will change on the cocoa farms.

As my friend Dean Cycon, one of the 100% fair traders likes to say: **We humanize the commodity rather than commodify the human.**

And most important, Fair Trade pays farmers enough so that their children can go to school. (Image- Hold 15 Seconds)



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So I'd like to close the lecture tonight with this image. I had just finished eating dinner with the person who had been responsible for the rescue of some of the child slaves whose words you have heard tonight and I decided to walk back to my hotel, as is sometimes my want when I travel. As I turned the corner I came upon this scene.

Now let me set the stage. I am in Sikasso, Mali. It is a major transportation hub in the south of the country and it is also the center of a lot of the trafficking that goes on. It is well past 10 in the evening. And yet here is the Hunger for Education. Three boys and a young girl are working on a piece of slate that is leaning against a wall. Just outside of the picture is a teacher who is coaching them through a math exercise. This is the image we should be seeing if our global economic priorities were in the right order. It is this image that gives me hope.

(Image should be off by now)

If not the world we inhabit will continue to echo this child's words who was enslaved when he was 10:

**My childhood was wasted. How can I have known that I was going to suffer like that? I have nothing; if I could get a little money then I may be able to have something to do for my future. The reason I went to Ivory Coast was to earn something, but I earned nothing. It was the worst thing that could have happened to me. I want to say this, I have no house, I have nothing. I think of the problem of a house and the problem of money. If I were to be able to build a house and find some transportation then I would be happy. If I got these things that I could maybe open a small store and sell things and assure my future- because I have nothing. When I go to bed at night, I cannot sleep thinking of these things. The things that I thought that I would be able to have, I cannot get them. I worked so much; I am tired, for nothing. At night when I go to sleep, I am always waking up. I cannot sleep because of this. <sup>34</sup>**

Thank you for letting me share these words and images with you tonight.

Notes:

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## **Links:**

Equal Exchange

<http://www.equalexchange.com/>

Global Exchange

<http://www.globalexchange.org/>

International Labor Rights Fund

<http://www.laborrights.org/>

Oxfam

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/>

World Cocoa Foundation

<http://www.worldcocoafoundation.org>

Anti-Slavery International: Slavery in the Chocolate Industry

[www.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/main/Activities/07\\_ChocolateOnMove.pdf](http://www.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/main/Activities/07_ChocolateOnMove.pdf)

CIA World Factbook: Ivory Coast

<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/iv.html>

World Bank

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTDEBTDEPT/0,,contentMDK:20260049>

United Nations Millennium Goals

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

UN GA 61<sup>st</sup> session, Thabo Mbeki

<http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/61/gastatement19.shtml>

ILO: The End of Child Labor: Within Reach

<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.INDEXPAGE>

Senator Tom Harkin

<http://harkin.senate.gov/specials/20011001-chocolate.cfm>

International Cocoa Organization: Prices

<http://www.icco.org/prices/pricesave.htm>

Global Exchange: Top Ten Reasons to Oppose the IMF

<http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/wbimf/TopTenIMF.html>

Fairtrade Labeling Organization

<http://www.fairtrade.net>

Amnestie Canada

<http://amnistie.qc.ca/traite/>