

# The Telegraph

## What is the best way to help the world's deserving poor?

Africans do not want or need Britain's development aid.

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7:01AM BST 22 Aug 2010



13 Comments ([http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/letters/7958485/What-is-the-best-way-to-help-the-worlds-deserving-poor.html#disqus\\_thread](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/letters/7958485/What-is-the-best-way-to-help-the-worlds-deserving-poor.html#disqus_thread))

SIR – The parlous state of the public finances in Britain provides the perfect opportunity for British taxpayers to end their half-century-long experiment with "development aid", which has, since its inception, stunted growth and subsidised bad governance in Africa.

As Africans, we urge the generous-spirited British to reconsider an aid programme they can ill afford, and which we do not want or need. A real offer from the British people to help our development would consist of the abolition of the Common Agricultural Policy, which keeps African agricultural exports out of the European marketplace.

It is that egregious policy, combined with the weight of regulations, bad laws and stifling bureaucracy, subsidised by five decades of development aid, which prevents Africans from lifting themselves out of poverty.

Andrew Mitchell, the Secretary of State for International Development, speaks about a "moral imperative" to combat poverty around the world. We could not agree more. The British have a unique opportunity to cut the deficit and help Africa: please, ask your new government to stop your aid.

**Andrew Mwenda**

Editor, Independent newspaper, Uganda

**Franklin Cudjoe**

Executive Director, IMANI Center for Policy and Education, Ghana

**Kofi Bentil**

Lecturer, University of Ghana and Ashesi University, Ghana

**Thompson Ayodele**

Executive Director, Initiative for Public Policy Analysis, Nigeria

**Temba Nolutshungu**

Director, Free Market Foundation, South Africa

**Leon Louw**

Law Review Project, South Africa

SIR – I agree with Alasdair Palmer's view (Comment, August 15) that the most likely explanation for the lack of public donations to Pakistan is the visible corruption which has accompanied previous disaster appeals.

I most certainly am one who said to myself that I would never again donate my hard-earned cash, having watched

television reports of the selling of grain clearly marked as "aid" in the markets of African countries; the people of Kashmir still living in tents in the depths of winter, two years after the earthquake struck there; and the people whose homes were swept away in the Asian tsunami having their claims ignored in an attempted "land grab" for the best coastal spots by unscrupulous hoteliers.

Nevertheless, a week ago, having watched the disaster unfolding on the news, I found myself dialling the disaster relief telephone line in tears and donating again.

### **Judith Rixon**

Market Deeping, Lincs

SIR – The poor response to the flood appeal for Pakistan is because every school in Britain is on holiday.

There would not have been a school in the country (including my two-year-old grandson's nursery) that didn't launch an assembly appeal, cake sale, bring and buy, sponsored silence, bounce or walk for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

In the school where I teach, a post-assembly collection sent over £1,500 to that appeal.

When schools return in September, there is no doubt that giving will increase in support for Pakistan. Children and young people respond generously to the suffering of other young people.

### **Coral Greenwood**

Heswall, Wirral

### **I burnt the Royal arms from Harrods**

SIR – Your columnist Mandrake implies that the Royal family removed the royal warrants that were once displayed on the facade of Harrods ("Last obstacle keeping the Windsors out of Harrods", August 15).

This is not so. I ordered their removal. Later, I had them burned. They were a curse and business tripled following their removal.

With regard to the two memorials within the store to the memory of Diana, Princess of Wales and my beloved son Dodi, they are precious to very many people. When I created the first of them, in the week after the tragedy in Paris, I intended it to be temporary. But so many people came to visit, and appreciated finding a focus for their grief, that I have never found it in my heart to remove it. The memorial lies at the bottom of the Egyptian escalator which is a listed monument and I believe the new owners of Harrods regard it with the same reverence as the thousands who visit it every week.

The beautiful statue of the Princess and my son, raising their hands to a seagull, not an albatross, evokes the memory of their last summer together in the Mediterranean. It is the only memorial to the Princess in this country, if one discounts the misconceived municipal waterworks in Hyde Park that every year causes casualties among the

children who slip over when paddling in it.

Every day, people come to see that statue and add their names and comments to the scores of books of condolence that have been filled during the last 13 years. Unless and until this country gives the Princess the thanks and devotion she deserves in the form of a fitting public memorial, this statue, Innocent Victims, should remind the world of what was lost when two young people, on the brink of happiness together, were killed.

I believe it is improper for a highly respected newspaper to employ such ignorant columnists who write such rubbish. With regard to the Royal family visiting Harrods again, I doubt they would dare to show their faces.

**M. Al Fayed**

Honorary Chairman, Harrods

London SW1

**Flying home**

SIR – Your report on RAF TriStar jets breaking down on the way to Britain with returning troops onboard (“Troops pay for own flights back to Britain”, August 15) reminded me of a similar incident following the Falklands war in 1982.

I was returning home from Ascension Island on a TriStar jet carrying 250 soldiers when we landed at Dakar to refuel. On landing, the aircraft was directed to the furthest corner of the airfield where we were ordered to disembark and stand in a storm drain, out of sight of the terminal buildings, while the aircraft was refuelled.

We were then told the aircraft had broken down and it would take 30 hours to send a new part out from Britain. Thankfully, the Senegalese allowed the British soldiers to be taken by bus to a remote hotel, out of sight of the local population. On arriving at the hotel, the squaddies immediately made their way to the beach – littered, as it was, with topless young ladies (mainly German and French tourists) enjoying the sunshine.

After five months in the Falklands, the young soldiers were a little boisterous and the ladies quickly vanished into their cabanas, shrieking with alarm. Still wearing full combat gear, the soldiers made their way to the poolside bar and quickly started to sample the local ale.

An hour or so later, the soldiers were in excellent spirits when I was amazed to note the young ladies emerging from hiding and diving into the swimming pool. The soldiers cheered and clapped and the young ladies responded by giving a show worthy of the finest Soho had to offer.

When the soldiers finally crawled back onto the TriStar, none were complaining about being delayed on their flight home to Britain.

**Capt P. J. Newton**

Chellaston, Derby

SIR – I was surprised to see senior officers of the Royal Air Force agreeing with others of the Royal Navy (Letters,

August 15), that this country's nuclear deterrent was first provided some 40 years ago by Polaris. Not so. Our nuclear deterrent was first provided from 1957 onwards, 53 years ago, by the Vulcans, Victors and Valiants of the Royal Air Force – the V-Force.

I spent many days living in flying kit for 48 hours at a time to ensure that we could be airborne in minutes, carrying a nuclear weapon to planned targets, which helped to ensure the safety of this country.

**Flight Lt Noel Steel (retd)**

Oakley, Bedfordshire

SIR – British officers of the Indian army were once frequent correspondents in your Letters page but they are now a dwindling number. They would have challenged the assertion that the defence of Singapore was weakened by the “desertion of many Indian ... soldiers” (“Last stand for the 'Forgotten Army' ”, report, August 15).

In fact, General Wavell reported to the War Cabinet in September 1942 that Indian soldiers were not deemed responsible for defeat.

**Sandip Sarkar**

Rettendon, Essex

**Iranians want new leaders, not bombs**

SIR – Christopher Booker's article on the future of Iran (Comment, August 15) was a refreshing read. As an Iranian, I am often saddened and perplexed as to why the Foreign and Commonwealth Office here has gone to such lengths to appease a regime which is a threat both to the people of Iran and the international community.

One only needs to look at the murders that the regime committed to realise the danger of its possessing nuclear arms. This is a regime that is quite prepared to risk the lives of millions of its people to pursue its fundamentalist policies and export terror abroad.

Iranians have shown that they want and deserve domestic regime change. Maryam Rajavi, the Iranian opposition leader, is right – rejecting foreign war and instead advocating democratic regime-change by the Iranian people and their organised resistance.

**Hanif Jazayeri**

London NW9

**An apology withdrawn**

SIR – Sir John Houghton (Letters, August 15), the former IPCC Chairman, challenges the use of the quote, widely

attributed to him that: "Unless we announce disasters, no one will listen." He insists he said (and the record confirms this) that: "If we want a good environmental policy, we'll have to have a disaster."

This is a distinction without a difference. Either way, he is saying that the IPCC needs disasters to convince the public of the need for climate mitigation.

As someone who used the slightly incorrect quotation (in my Bruges Group book *Cool Thinking on Climate Change*), I now feel vindicated, and I withdraw an apology I made to Sir John for misquoting him.

**Roger Helmer MEP (Con)**

Market Harborough, Leicestershire

**Sweatshop uniforms**

SIR – Once again supermarkets and other retailers are vying to offer the cheapest school uniforms.

Some are so low in price that they make me very uneasy about their origin. Times may be hard in this country but we should not seek to prosper at the expense of the vulnerable.

Wouldn't it be a good idea if uniform retailers were asked to publish the country of origin of the garment, a declaration that no children were used in the manufacturing process or supply-chain and the hourly rate paid to the factory workers?

**David Nesbitt**

Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire

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