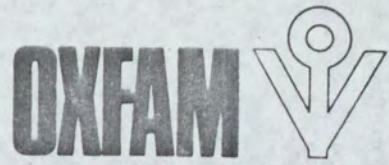


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10 NOV 1980

The Right Honourable  
Lord Carrington, K.C.M.G., M.C.  
Secretary of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
London S.W.1.

7 November, 1980

*You Foreign Secretary,*

*L.S.  
(Development Aid)  
Amd  
27/11*

I enclose a copy of the Memorandum we have prepared for our meeting on Tuesday, 11 November.

Please note that our colleagues in The Save the Children Fund have decided not to join the deputation.

We look forward to discussing the memorandum with you.

[Immediate to all]

PS / Mr Martin

*We spoke. Most of these points are already covered in your briefing, I gather.*

*Yours ever  
Brian W. Walker*

Brian W. Walker  
Director General.

- cc ✓ PS (2)*
  - PS/LPS*
  - PS/Mr Hard*
  - Sir P. Preston*
  - Mr Ainscow*
  - Mr Burr*
  - Mr Broderick*
  - Mr Bayne ERD*
  - Mr Evans*
- } ODA*

- SAM D.*
- C A F D*
- CCD*
- IPD*

*RM/L10/xi*

To: The Right Honourable The Lord Carrington,  
Secretary of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs.

From: A deputation of Overseas Aid Agencies, including OXFAM,  
Christian Aid and the Catholic Fund for Over-  
Seas Development.

M E M O R A N D U M

1. We are grateful to you for arranging this meeting and for allocating part of your hard-pressed time to hearing our views. We sought this meeting with you personally, because you are responsible in the Cabinet for our area of concern.
2. We wish to make four main points.
3. First, whilst registering our disapproval of the cuts you have made in the Government's overseas aid programme, this is not the principal burden of the case we wish to put to you this afternoon.
4. Nonetheless, we believe we are entitled at the outset to know why the proposed cuts in foreign aid, planned through to 1983/84, represent a further reduction of 14% in monetary terms as against 4% for all other areas of public expenditure cuts. Thus, during your tenure of office, Britain's aid programme has been cut by some 30%. Are we to assume that in this Government's scale of values, the relief of suffering and the sharing of the resources of our country, which remains one of the 12 richest nations in the world, with those who are infinitely poor, is four times less important than any other area of government concern? The government is actively discriminating in its economies, against those in most need. Worse, it is planning in its forward strategy, to extend that discrimination against the poor, beyond what the Government assumes to be Britain's present economic crisis. Why is this?

5. When almost all Britain's European and North American friends are increasing their aid to the Third World, why are we alone in decreasing our aid? As this appears to be settled policy, will the Government declare it no longer has, even as an objective, the allocation of 0.7% of Gross National Product to the Third World?
6. If that is a reasonable interpretation of the Government's position, how do we explain it to our constituencies, bearing in mind that, due to our oil revenues, Britain is the only major developed country running a current account surplus this year? According to the Financial Times this ran at \$1.6 billion for the first nine months of this financial year.
7. The Financial Times also points out that this surplus on our current account has been very much at the expense of the least developed countries since, in the last quarter, U.K. exports to those countries rose by 10% whilst imports from them rose by only 3%.
8. We do not support the Government in its decision to cut aid four times more than other budget heads. However, the principal points we are here to argue are as follows.
9. First, we wish to challenge the Government's attitude to the problem of the Third World. These have been deeply depressing. Nowhere was this point better demonstrated than at the United Nations Special Session in New York in September. Let me quote two typical press reports:

'With the exception of Britain's Development Minister, Neil Marten, whose speech has been greeted by friend and foe with bewildered scorn, everybody talks about the urgency of tackling a package to avert crisis and they cite the Brandt Report warning that the world's economy is breaking down .... Britain is widely identified

'as the top villain - it is the only major industrialised country actually cutting aid!'

Rosemary Righter, Sunday Times,  
7 September, 1980.

or, secondly:

'From the beginning, the US, with the support of the UK and West Germany which control the IMF and have been using it to further their control over the international economy, have been unwilling to change the structures or share power.'

C. Raghavan, Guardian Third World Review, 24 September, 1980.

or, again:

'The indications from Whitehall are that Mrs. Thatcher is well aware of the growing criticism of this country's aid policy, and does not care a jot about it'.

P. Keatley, Guardian  
6 November, 1980.

These are not quotations out of context and they certainly conform with the reports which all our agencies are receiving from our staff located across the world. Never before, in our judgement, has Britain's name and standing been so low in the opinion of so many people in so many parts of the world. People whose judgement we respect, are puzzled, saddened and angered by the image we are projecting of ourselves.

10. Decisions taken by the Government constantly reinforce this negative and unhealthy view of Britain. We are deeply concerned, for example, with British policy in Latin America. There has

/been

widespread criticism of our position, especially in the context of Claire Wilson's imprisonment and torture in Chile. An article by Hugh O'Shaughnessy in The Observer at the time reads:

'Claire Wilson will not have suffered in vain if her torture finally makes British people call into question that set of policies which have for years been committing us to tolerance, and at times active support, of reactionary regimes, not just in Chile but throughout Latin America.'

That article points out that the policy is not only morally dubious but has been 'disastrous in practice', involving the United Kingdom in arms and other deals with bankrupt military dictatorships or other authoritarian regimes shortly before they have been overthrown or collapsed.

11. The treatment of the Brandt Report is another significant example of the Government's generally negative attitude towards the problems of the Third World, even when financial considerations are not immediately involved. Even if the Government feels unable to implement any of the recommendations at this time, they could still have done much more to endorse the urgency of the need for action and to encourage public discussion. As agencies we do not agree with the whole of the Brandt Report and we believe important points have been omitted from it, or underestimated in it - not least that real aid to people in need is not to be equated with aid to the Governments of those people. Nonetheless, Britain, with its colonial past and its utter dependence upon trading, ought to be taking the lead presented by Brandt, making the issues of the Third World central to Government strategy.

12. Yet again we would cite the Government's attitude to Zimbabwe as one we cannot support. What is the justification for the Government's niggardly attitude to the needs of Zimbabwe? In contrast to the success of your Lancaster House talks, you now propose to make only £75 millions available over the next three years (including £20 millions to compensate white farmers), when the much smaller Malawi has been promised £55 millions over a similar period? What is the rationale for this decision? An extra £½ million was offered to Non-Governmental Organisations for Zimbabwe by the Overseas Development Administration, but when OXFAM applied with several projects for some of this amount the rules were so strictly applied that very little additional support has, in fact, been attainable. //
13. The Government's decision in September at the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Conference to reduce our contribution to the Commonwealth Technical Co-operation Fund by 20% justified the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth's reference to the "appalling parsimony" of the richer industrial countries of the world. }
14. The decision to squeeze the British Broadcasting Corporation's World Service is in this same vein. Here is a British asset without comparison in the world. An asset relied upon by people denied freedom in their own countries in many cases. Yet instead of expanding and capitalizing on that asset, the Government cuts and restricts it. //
15. Thus, if the Government is determined to reduce their help to the poor by a factor of 3 or 4 times more than other areas of public expenditure cuts, then it is all the more important that we seek a dramatic improvement in the quality of what aid is allocated. And this is our principal point.

Yet it is precisely here that the Government has declared its firm purpose to subordinate aid to the poor overseas, to Britain's industrial, commercial and political objectives. If the Government is determined to tie aid to British products, we would wish for a separate and indentifiable aid budget to be allocated purely for humanitarian purposes, controlled and administered separately, and for that declared purpose. We would rather see a significantly reduced aid budget which generously helped the poor, than a budget which maintained the fiction of aid, and which has little to do with the purposes of the considerable public support enjoyed by each of our agencies. We do not wish to hang an entire argument on the \* *bring below* notorious case of the Club Méditerranée\*, but many tied projects administered by the Overseas Development Administration have little to do with meeting the needs of the poor and the dispossessed. Frequently they have the reverse effect.

17. Finally, it is in this same context of urging a change in the Government's attitude to the Third World, and of improving the quality of aid so that what aid is available does benefit the poor, that we would also urge the cause of development education and public opinion-forming in this country.

18. Paragraph 41 of the Communiqué from the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference at Lusaka in August, 1979 gives specific attention to this point:

'Heads of Government considered that a continuation of slow growth in the global economy would further damage the prospects for reducing poverty and raising living standards in developing countries. Such a continuation would also be contrary to the economic interests of developed countries and could have adverse effects on the economic, social and political structures of all countries. The circumstances called for bolder endeavours and a new approach to the formulation of policies and to

/improving

improving the public understanding of the need for change in the countries participating in the inter-dependent international system. For the decision-making process to be sufficiently responsible, it would require better information and involvement at the highest possible level.'

19. The Government has taken the line that Development Education in the United Kingdom is a matter for the Voluntary Agencies and not for the Government themselves. However, at the time when it was decided to close the Overseas Development Administration's Development Education Fund, that Fund was disbursing grants at an annual rate of £600,000; and plans for following years envisaged a significant increase up to over £2 millions by 1982. It is absolutely not possible for the Voluntary Aid Agencies in the United Kingdom to fill a gap of that magnitude. To take a specific example, the Government is at present proposing to cease its support for SEAD (Scottish Education Action for Development) in the spring of 1981; and for CWDE (Centre for World Development Education) in the spring of 1982. Both are bodies which operate at a national level and which, taken together, cost more than £200,000 per annum to run at today's prices. It is not going to be possible for the agencies to take on these additional financial burdens. We are already doing all we can to keep alive projects and programmes which were originated with the help of Overseas Development Administration funding.
20. We recognise that the Government has taken an initiative to provide alternative funding by commissioning the Wells Organisation to survey the feasibility of raising money from industry. We are also aware that Wells have replied that they see no possibility of industry responding to such an appeal unless the Government is seen to be providing matching funds from its own resources.

*Brief  
no 2.*



21. We would urge, therefore, that the Government must continue to accept a responsibility for funding Development Education in the United Kingdom; and that the Overseas Development Administration should prepare proposals for discussion with other interested parties, such as the Department of Education and Science (and its equivalents in the other member countries of the United Kingdom), the voluntary agencies and the CWDE and SEAD.
22. In conclusion may we summarise?
- (a) We oppose the disproportionate scale of cuts to overseas aid.
  - (b) We seek for significantly improved quality in the spending of aid in favour of poor people, rather than governments and, if necessary, in the establishment of a special budget for such genuinely humanitarian aid.
  - (c) We request that you should seek a reversal of what appears to be a deeply negative attitude by the Government to the Third World and to aid generally.
  - (d) We urge that development education and public opinion forming in favour of the Third World in this country should be a prime concern of Government in which we are willing to play our full part.

We are grateful to you for receiving this Memorandum.

7 November, 1980