

A Genocide Unfolds, in Plain Sight (5 Letters)

The New York Times

December 1, 2005

To the Editor:

Re "What's to Be Done About Darfur? Plenty," by Nicholas D. Kristof (column, Nov. 29):

Having directly witnessed the tenuous situation in Darfur this past month, I am convinced that looming cuts in financing for humanitarian programs by the United States and Washington's lack of pressure on Sudan have the potential to topple the fragile humanitarian support system in place in Darfur, which would be disastrous for the two million displaced there and would lead to significant loss of life.

Financing cuts would also send the message to Sudan that the world will stand by and allow it to finish the job of genocide it started against the people of Darfur.

Members of the House should join the Senate and pass the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, or we as a country are complicit in the murder of untold thousands.

Lori Heninger

Jenny Perlman

New York, Nov. 29, 2005

The writers are, respectively, senior coordinator and program manager, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

•

To the Editor:

As Nicholas D. Kristof suggests, President Bush could refuse to acquiesce in the genocide of a people (in contrast to certain predecessors), this time in Darfur.

If he were to champion this cause now, he would surely be viewed as a humanitarian. This would require tremendous leadership and leading by example through United States financial support to the region.

The role of statesman may be tough, but surely President Bush could start by rolling back his administration's tax cut to the richest Americans to contribute to such a noble cause. The rewards to himself and to humanity would far outweigh the political damage to his dwindling base.

Wendy M. Geringer
Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.
Nov. 29, 2005

•

To the Editor:

Nicholas D. Kristof's most recent column about the genocide in Darfur, giving us a concrete plan for what we should do to stop the slaughter, finally motivated me to send e-mail messages to my senators and congresswoman asking them to act.

We just can't look away. Someday, it could be our children who are at risk, and we would ask how the world could ignore them.

Ken Swensen
Pound Ridge, N.Y., Nov. 29, 2005

•

To the Editor:

In October, I visited refugee camps in Chad with the president of American Jewish World Service and other rabbis.

If aid agencies are forced to withdraw from Sudan because of repeated attacks on aid workers, the Sudanese genocide will triumph, and hundreds of thousands of people will die.

Americans must demand United States leadership in securing an expansion of peacekeeping troops with a full mandate to protect civilians. They must also tell their representatives in Congress to support the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act. These are the essential next steps that we are morally obligated to take to ensure that "never again" is more than just words.

(Rabbi) Richard Jacobs
Scarsdale, N.Y., Nov. 29, 2005

•

To the Editor:

Nicholas D. Kristof leaves a critical question unasked. Why is genocide so disabling to decent human beings?

For a century, ordinary citizens and presidents have failed to do what we knew was needed to end genocides. After each genocide, we ask how other human beings could have perpetrated the atrocity. But we haven't asked why we, personally and collectively, were unable to act.

Sometimes the best way to deal with a disabling condition is simply to push through it. But it is also clear that millions of honorable and otherwise caring people have been unable to overcome humanity's genocide disability.

We need to ask new questions. If we don't acknowledge and understand our disability, we won't overcome it.

Marvin E. Krakow
Los Angeles, Nov. 29, 2005

- [Copyright 2005 The New York Times Company](#)