

[PDF] The Road To Hell

Michael Maren - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: The Road to Hell

Author: Michael Maren

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Description:

Before you mail another check to Save the Children or join the Peace Corps, read this book. Michael Maren shows that the international aid industry is a big business more concerned with winning its next big government contract than helping needy people. The problem isn't a lack of charity missions in the Third World, but that the best intentions of these idealists are often inadvertently destructive, thanks to a deadly combination of their naiveté and the willingness of native elites to exploit them. Maren spent many years in Africa living this life. This is a splendid, literate, muckraking memoir of his experiences. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly Despite the overstated title, this book is a forceful and disturbing portrait of Western intervention in Somalia, plus an investigation of underscrutinized aid foundations. Perhaps because of the book's ambition, Maren's narrative is disjointed, but readers will find it

worth the effort. "[D]oing relief and development work in the context of oppression is counterproductive," he asserts, and his personal experience in Somalia, where, after a Peace Corps stint in Kenya, he returned as an aid worker and journalist, bears this out. While the Cold War fueled aid to Somalia, much of the aid was channeled by local power brokers to further their own ends. Indeed, while Somalia was once self-sufficient, it is now chronically dependent on imports of foreign food. Maren is equally scathing about prominent charities such as CARE and Save the Children, which he terms mercenaries more concerned with self-perpetuation than actual famine relief. CARE, he charges, once shipped food to armed fighters in Somalia, while Save the Children "projects don't work." His portrait of the aid biz emphasizes that it is driven mainly by grain-trading companies eager to unload excess capacity, even as their advertisements feature starving victims. Maren's brief report from Rwanda suggests that there, too, aid is falling into the wrong hands and thus financing a war. Maren maintains that journalists are too dependent on such aid organizations to properly evaluate them, and he proposes that an independent agency be established for that purpose. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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