



FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 2005

Hail To The Chief

by Michael in New York on [6/10/2005 12:40:00 AM](#)

President Bush did something good: he reached an agreement with the UK to offer **significant debt relief to 18 countries**, with more likely to follow. Bush's usual hedges during the recent Bush-Blair press conference led me to believe he was gonna keep studying the issue, the way he's been studying global warming for the past five years. (Bush will keep on studying global warming until the flood waters have submerged the Lincoln Bedroom.)

But in fact it masked serious negotiations where Bush insisted on the manner of debt relief (countries cancel the debt, with the US agreeing to recompense them) and no sell-off of gold reserves by the IMF. This will wipe out \$16.7 billion in debt for these countries, most of which are in Africa. It seems at first blush to be a wholly positive step.

Now how about taking more positive steps on that little case of genocide in Darfur, the wholesale raping of a country in Zimbabwe and the starvation and AIDS pandemic (a fight in which Bush has done more harm than good)?



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