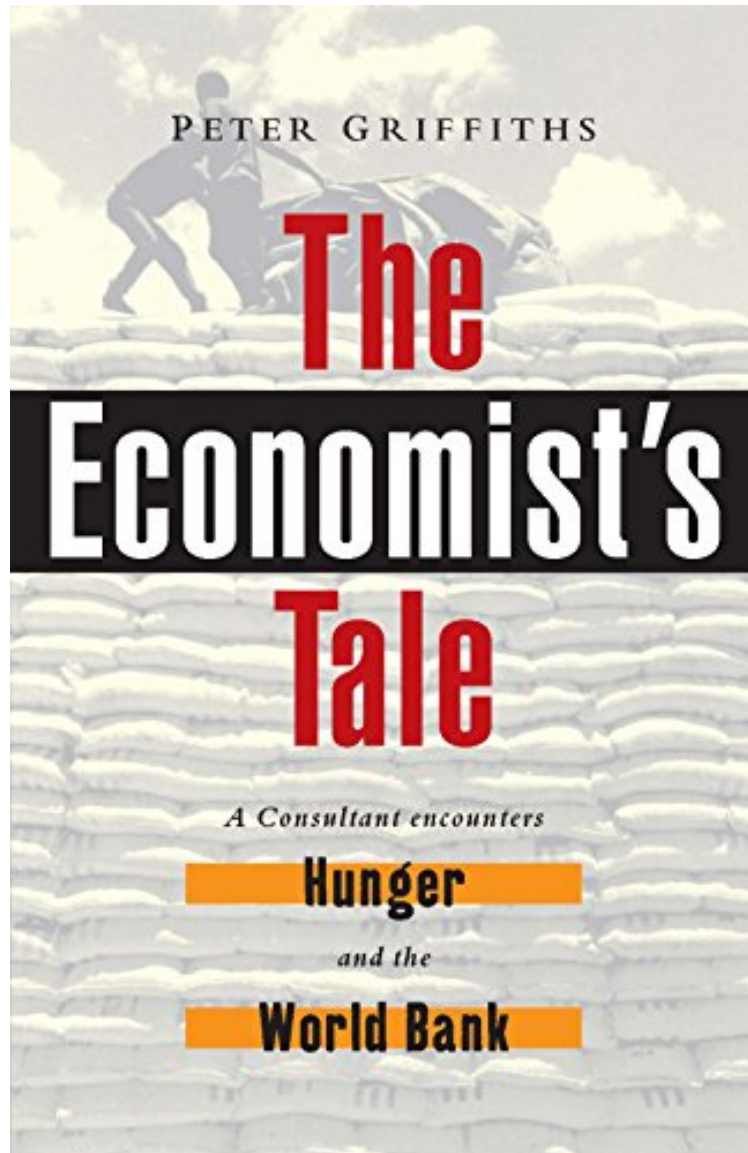


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The Economist's Tale: A Consultant Encounters Hunger and the World Bank

Peter Griffiths

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What really happens when the World Bank imposes its policies on a country? This is an insider's view of one aid-made crisis. Peter Griffiths was at the interface between government and the Bank. In this ruthlessly honest, day by day account of a mission he undertook in Sierra Leone, he uses his diary to tell the story of how the World Bank, obsessed with the free market, imposed a secret agreement on the government, banning all government food imports or subsidies. The collapsing economy meant that the private sector would not import. Famine loomed. No ministry, no state marketing organization, no aid organization could reverse the agreement. It had to be a top-level government decision, whether Sierra Leone could afford to annoy minor World Bank officials. This is a rare and important portrait of the aid world which insiders will recognize, but of which the general public seldom get a glimpse.