

## Strike a blow against corruption

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*From Mr Michael Littlechild.*

Sir, I welcome your call for the rest of us to follow the US's lead in passing, and now effectively applying, anti-corruption legislation ("**Battling bribery**", editorial, February 16). As someone whose job involves picking over the corruption controls of multinationals in less developed countries. I find the UK's record on this subject not just laggardly but downright embarrassing.

We understand that the Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform now has serious intentions to legislate. This is our chance not just to play catch up but to leap-frog the US and many other countries. We must abandon the absurd notion that corruption applies only if public officials are on the receiving end. As well as doing deals with governments, multinationals generally issue the biggest private contracts available in a developing country. We must make sure there is fair access for local suppliers who are too honest, or too poor, to pay the bribes.

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