

Agriculture by Marcia Merry

Africa starves, Russia stockpiles

The Soviets are importing U.S. grain in order to maximize investment in their current military buildup!

The latest projections of the World Food Council show that the Soviet Union will import 31.5 million metric tons of grain this year, and 33 million metric tons next year. These amounts represent over 16% of the current level of the annual world grain trade. If just half of the amount of Soviet grain imports went to Africa in emergency food aid, the worsening starvation there could be rolled back.

However, a look behind the grain statistics shows how deliberately both the African starvation policies and the Soviet grain imports are being guaranteed by key food-cartel companies steering Washington policies.

The Soviets are importing significant quantities of grain from the West in order to deploy maximum economic effort and resources directly into their military mobilization. Much of the grain imports is going into civil-defense food storage and meat production for long term freezer-locker storage. The Soviets are making no serious attempts to increase grain output to the level required for emergency aid and long-term contribution to the world food supply.

Starvation in Africa has reached holocaust proportions. Over 150 million people, resident in 22 nations, are facing desperate shortages, even death. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and other institutions are calling for emergency aid, but even their demands—set much lower than required for adequate nutrition—are not being met.

At the same time, massive U.S. grain acreage has been taken out of production over the past two seasons, threatening to create selected food shortages in the United States itself by 1985-86. This month, the new 1985 acreage reduction program was announced, with cash premiums offered to farmers who sign-up before the November elections. The world grain stockpiles are at severe security risk levels.

In an interview in *Pravda* the week of June 18, Soviet Prime Minister Konstantin Chernenko blames the capitalist nations for the "bitter exploitation of the developing sector." Chernenko praised the Soviets' "untiring, and one can say without exaggeration, energetic battle for stopping the arms race . . . helping to shift the huge material resources freed in this way . . . for aiding the people of the developing countries."

Soviet propaganda cynically blames Western "imperialist" nations for world starvation, without any mention of the exact individuals and food cartels (Cargill, Inc., Continental, Bunge, Louis Dreyfus, Andre, and others) which are both supplying grain to the U.S.S.R., withholding emergency aid to Africa, and cutting U.S. and European farm production.

The current U.S. Undersecretary of Agriculture, Daniel Amstutz, personally supervises all U.S. grain exports and acreage-reduction programs. He came into the administration in 1983, just before Henry Kissin-

ger started his climb back into the government by taking the chairmanship of the Bipartisan Commission on Central America, and serves U.S. farm and foreign interests like "the fox guarding the henhouse." Amstutz was with Cargill, Inc. for 25 years, specializing in international commodity brokering, and set up the commodities branch of the Goldman, Sachs brokerage house, which specializes in looting schemes in Third World nations.

In May Amstutz traveled to Moscow and guaranteed the Soviets all the grain imports they want. A month later, Amstutz went to Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia, for the 10th World Food Council meeting, and pompously said that the United States was doing everything it possibly could to aid Africa. He complained that "rapid population growth has all but wiped out production gains in many parts of the developing world."

The current round of high Soviet grain imports began in 1980, the same year the Soviet Union began their practice of keeping annual harvest information secret. The very first large-scale Soviet grain imports began during the early 1970s, when Henry Kissinger was Secretary of State. The Soviet imports—whether from the United States, Argentina, Canada or other exporting nations, have been guaranteed by the international grain cartels whose personnel and financing centers interconnect with political networks promoting "special relations" with the Soviets, including a Western nuclear freeze and the "reshaping" of NATO to decouple it from the United States.

Helping the Soviets with food technology and stock improvement have been the cartel company W.R. Grace, and Dr. Armand Hammer, the long time Soviet asset who, along with Cargill, Inc., now dominates U.S. beef processing, which he calls "the oil of the 80s."