

countries without touching the debt question. "What is the sense of making donations in food and projects to Somalia . . . while the IMF forecloses on Somalia's bed and mattress?"

By the time Somalian President Barre met with Craxi and Forte to discuss the issue on Feb. 10, terror was everywhere evident among the IMF's supporters in Italy, not so much over the amount of money involved, as over the political implications: Italy might create a precedent, breaking the usurers' front which has been systematically destroying the Third World to preserve a bankrupt monetary system.

The treasury ministry informed the media that the plan was just "a wish of Forte and we do not know anything about it." The foreign ministry was more sophisticated, planting a series of articles in the press with the usual format, "Foreign ministry circles think. . . ."

The frankest spokesman of this "thinking" was Claudio Lanti of *Il Giornale*: "If such a decision is not agreed to at the international level, our relations with the rich and developed North would suffer. Paradoxically, France, Germany, Great Britain and above all the United States, would find themselves exposed to the risk of censure for not following the Italian example, and someone would be forced to follow it unwillingly. Italy would be considered responsible for the unilateral break-up of the common front of the creditors. It is a subversive decision, a slap in the face of the international institutions. In the eyes of the world, such a step would break one of the fundamentals of international morality!"

The fight continues

Lanti concluded with a denunciation of "who's behind all this": "Only the Vatican would be enthusiastic for such a decision." *La Repubblica*, the paper of the Freemasonic-liberal lobby, wrote: "We have information that the moratorium is not the fruit of the demands of Somalia, but a decision of the [Italian] government. If we establish this precedent . . . what consequences will this have for our relations with the other creditor countries? How can we block the 'avalanche effect?'"

Wrote Fiat magnate Gianni Agnelli's *La Stampa*: "For sure, the U.S. would not like it while they are trying to solve the debt problem with the Baker Plan. The banks would not like it either."

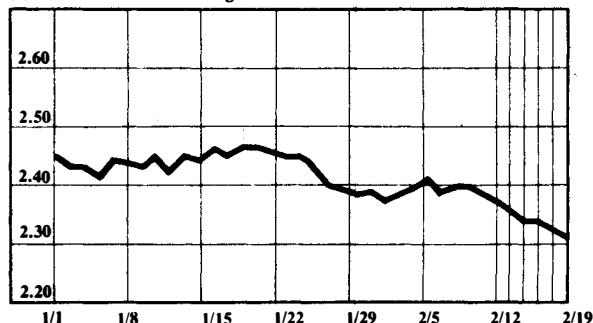
The final assault came from—who else?—Amnesty International. AI organized a press conference in Rome to complain that Somalia has three "political prisoners." The notorious clown of the drug lobby in Italy, Marco Pannella, denounced "the intolerable scandal of Somalian military expenditures" and attacked Forte for "structural intervention" instead of "emergency aid."

The final communiqué from the Craxi-Barre talks stated, "Reflection on the moratorium is not complete, but will be deepened in conjunction with multilateral initiatives." That is, the fight continues.

Currency Rates

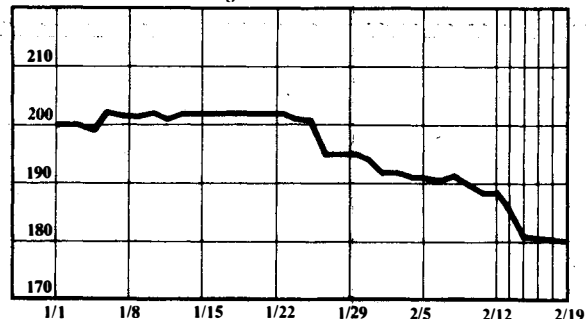
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



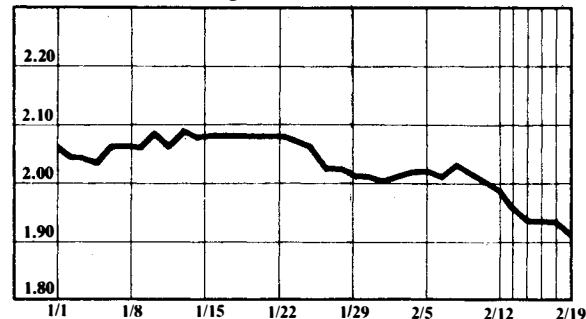
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing

