

'Food for Peace' mobilizes to restore farming

by Marcia Merry

A new international campaign to stop hunger was launched at a two-day conference Sept. 3-4 in Chicago on the current world food crisis. Called "Food for Peace," the meeting drew over 400 farm leaders and others concerned about the rapid collapse of world agriculture and the deterioration in foreign relations and threat of war. There were 10 nations and 30 states represented; the participants concluded the conference by founding a permanent organization dedicated to overthrowing the present policies and dominance of the International Monetary Fund, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the related food cartel firms now destroying agriculture and the food supply.

The motivation for almost every person involved was the belief that existing institutions—defense treaties, trade relations, credit institutions, scientific centers, even governments—are disintegrating, and worsening the chances to restore infrastructure and agriculture output. *EIR* contributing editor Christopher White, in a keynote address to the gathering, warned that it is only a question of when, not whether, the shaky stock markets, the world debt structure, and the dollar system itself, will explode. Once this happens, any new détente policy with the Soviet Union will be no shield and comfort to a collapsed and vulnerable Western civilization.

The world economy is physically disintegrating, as measured by the simple ability to eat. Under heavy debts and national austerity conditions policed by the IMF, total world grain output has fallen below average annual consumption needs for the past two years, and grain stocks are falling to historic lows. For an adequate diet, the world needs to be producing about 3 billion metric tons of grain annually. Two years ago, the world output was about 1.7 billion metric tons, and last year, the estimate was 1.6 billion tons. This year, less than 1.3 billion tons will be produced.

Despite this, Washington and the EC headquarters in Brussels are ordering new land set-asides and other anti-production programs for 1989, and the IMF is ordering Third World nations to continue to reduce domestic consumption and produce food for export, under whatever primitive conditions the food cartel



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Before the opening of the science panel at the Food For Peace conference, Sergio Almaraz, a spokesman for the Cárdenas campaign of Mexico, addressed the meeting on the Mexican economic situation as his companions displayed a banner of their movement. Seated at the dais are (from the left), EIR weather researcher Rogelio Maduro; Gerald Rose, chairman of the panel, Fusion Energy Foundation (West Germany) director Jonathan Tennenbaum, food irradiation expert Martin Welt, and farm organizer Billy Davis.

companies dictate. At the same time, millions of tons of Western grain are pledged for shipment to the East bloc.

In mid-December, the GATT talks are to convene in Paris on the cartel objective of coercing nations to eliminate all national programs that protect their own farm sectors and food supplies. For example, a Morgan Grenfell bank official announced through the London *Times* in mid-September that no one should ever again regard Sudan as a potential breadbasket for Africa, because debt payments—increasing in Sudan at the rate of 10% annually—come first, even in the face of disaster.

The Food for Peace campaign, whose founding documents are summarized below, is dedicated to countering this usurious perspective, before it is too late.

The scope of the world food and farm crisis has reached the stage that farm capacity, as well as annual output, is being eliminated. A conference panel devoted to first-hand nation-by-nation reports presented a picture of vast numbers of farms shutting down, mostly because of bankruptcy. Accompanying this is a shutdown of the farm supply industries—machinery, fertilizer, and farm-related health and education services.

Weather affected

The profile of crop reduction, idled land, and deforestation is such that extreme variation in weather patterns has begun to occur. For example, in North America, about 90 million acres of farmland is idled each year under a combination of government land set-aside programs and the Conservation Reserve Program, which permits only *non-food* groundcover. This cuts the rate of evapotranspiration from

groundcover to the degree that standard local weather patterns will be accentuated—drier or wetter.

The deforestation process has proceeded so widely in the Brazilian Amazon rain forest that the location and function of the “Amazon High”—one of the world’s major pressure zones—has been altered, and larger-scale weather patterns are affected.

The conference heard presentations on these phenomena, and in contrast, various of the scientific solutions available to produce food and even ameliorate the weather. Carol White, the editor of *21st Century Science and Technology* magazine, summarized a perspective of deliberately developing the biosphere in her conference presentation.

Resolutions were also passed in favor of an emergency mobilization to provide food relief to the millions now suffering in Sudan and Bangladesh, and to eradicate locust swarms in northern Africa, before the scourge spreads on an unprecedented intercontinental scale.

Since the conference, the battle lines have been even more clearly drawn. On Sept. 12, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released its latest official estimates of U.S. and world food output and stocks. It simply lied, to downplay the crisis at hand. The North American drought, it estimated, had reduced total grain output this year by only 31%. State and local harvest reports prove the situation is much worse. The Sept. 14 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* criticized the USDA report for inaccuracy, but then voiced the present IMF policy: “Prices for agricultural products have to rise significantly in the coming months to damp down internal as well as external demand, and by that, to try to balance the supply that exists in reality with the most important demand.”