

ers' ability to pump water into elevated irrigated areas, since the pumps run on electricity. In times of drought, which Sudan is now experiencing, irrigated agriculture accounts for 30% of total food consumption.

Nor is it expected that Africa's oil producers—Nigeria, Gabon, Angola, Zaire, and Cameroon—will reap any benefit from the oil price rise. These countries are already producing at near capacity and, unlike Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, African oil reserves are primarily offshore and costly to develop.

More to the point, the IMF and World Bank are working to ensure that any increased profit from the oil price hike goes directly to paying the debt. Losing no time, in October, the IMF demanded that oil-producer Nigeria cough up more than \$1 billion in arrears, in anticipation of increased revenue.

On the margin of death

What then will Bush's war against Iraq mean for the 456 million people of sub-Saharan Africa? Given the fragility of the African economies, for many millions, it will mean the difference between barely scraping out a living and death by starvation, as the means of existence begin to evaporate. In this region today, only two countries out of 36—Mauritius and South Africa—register average life expectancies over 60 years of age. In Sierra Leone, people live an average of only 41 years.

In the United States, per capita energy consumption is 7,193 kilograms of oil equivalent. For two-thirds of the sub-Saharan countries, per capita energy consumption is below 100 kilograms, according to the World Bank. Only South Africa, with an energy consumption of 1,744 kilograms per capita, registers above 1,000. Even for Nigeria, one of the world's leading oil producers, per capita energy consumption is no more than 134 kilograms of oil equivalent.

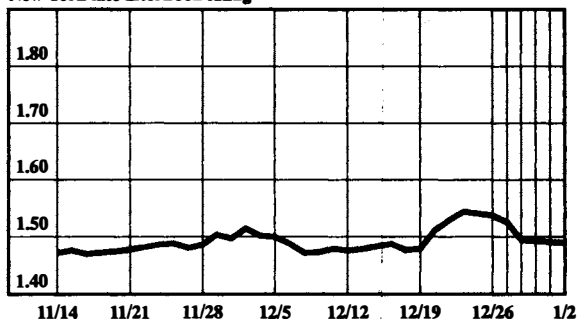
In the cases of Malawi, Togo, Kenya, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Mauritania, Senegal, and Liberia, energy consumption has already fallen in the 1980s, with Liberia cutting consumption by as much as 12%. In the cases of many countries, oil imports have also risen as a percentage of total merchandise exports over the last 25 years—by as much as four times for Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Benin.

Furthermore, in the last decade, many sub-Saharan countries—Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan, Liberia, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, and the People's Republic of Congo—have become increasingly dependent on imported food. Ethiopia's dependency upon imported grains has increased nearly tenfold in the last decade, and sixfold for Mozambique and Somalia. Nigeria has been forced to trade its oil for food, with food imports rising 400% over the last decade. With their export earnings wiped out by the oil price rise, governments will simply be without the means to feed their people.

Currency Rates

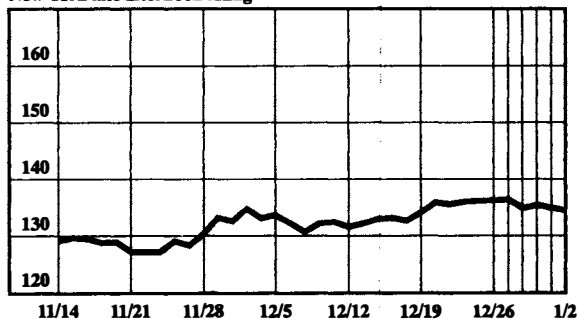
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



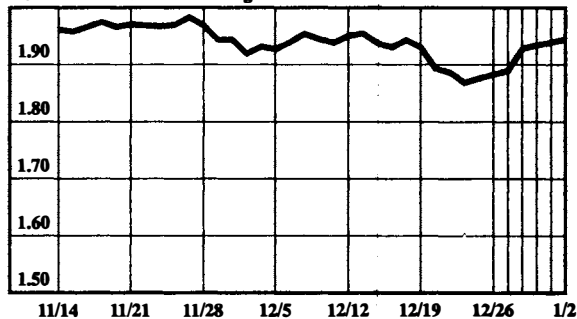
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

