

a better harvest in the 1992-93 season, just to name a few of the most pressing tasks.

There are staggering logistical problems and bottlenecks, because Africa has few harbors capable of receiving large quantities of commodities. Distribution internally in these countries is essentially assigned to the old rail networks which served the colonial powers in the last century. There are only a few links between north and south, because the rail lines were laid out in order to extract wealth from the land but not to distribute goods into the interior. Getting relief into the interior is a very difficult, but nonetheless feasible undertaking, and for this the world community must intervene.

Southern Africa. Overall, according to the World Food Program's analysis, the drought-threatened countries in the southern African region require about 4.2-4.3 million tons of food relief in the period between March 1992 and April 1993. So far, for free distribution among the poorest, who have no money to buy food on the market, 1,590,400 tons have been promised. In addition to the free food aid program there are 0.8 million tons of food promised to be available for purchase on the market. The total deficit therefore runs between 1.7 and 1.8 million tons.

Madagascar. In order to avoid mass starvation in drought-stricken Madagascar, the World Food Program has launched an appeal to world public opinion. About 700,000 people desperately need food relief, and it is expected that the number will reach a million by the end of the year. In all, 112,000 tons of food relief will be needed, of which only 33,000 is promised and some 6,000 tons so far delivered.

Horn of Africa. About 23 million people are threatened in this region with famine and starvation. Under conditions of drought, wars, and gigantic streams of refugees, the region needs as a whole more than 2.2 million tons of foodgrain deliveries. So far, some 1.6 million have been pledged, and only about 364,000 tons (as of June) actually have arrived.

West and Central Africa. Although in West Africa the food supply is somewhat good, both **Liberia** and **Sierra Leone** need food relief. In Liberia 750,000 people need food aid, and in Sierra Leone 290,000 people. In **Togo** further aid programs are needed for the population which is under the threat of civil war.

Measures against hunger

As early as July 1984 an Africa Commission of the Fusion Energy Forum of Germany had prepared an extensive memorandum on how to meet the emergency in Africa at that time. The situation since 1984 has rapidly worsened, yet the strategy laid out then is still timely and the suggested measures are more urgent than ever. A few of the key points were:

- An aid program is to be set up such that, from the beginning, it fulfills a twofold goal. It must, as quickly as possible, allay the acute crisis in nutrition, and at the same

Somalia must be flooded with food, to stop hecatomb

The devastating plight of Somalia's population of 6.7 million people has finally made it into the front pages of the American and European press. But while one-third of the population could die in the next six months, and at least 4.5 million are in need of emergency food assistance, Somalia is still being used as a pawn in a cynical power-play by the United Nations Security Council, U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Bush administration, and various European governments.

Despite the fact that for over one year the Somalis have survived with no government, no economy, and a civil war and drought as the realities of the day, the United Nations ignored the crisis, and in fact pulled out of the country, citing insecurity created by the armed gangs of men and youths roaming the cities looking for food. Now, suddenly, the Egyptian-born Boutros-Ghali has made Somalia a priority—but not for the massive quantities of food and other aid needed to prevent one of the worst holocausts of the century from taking place.

Rather, the new U.N. secretary general is seeking to use Somalia as a test case for promoting his new concept of the United Nations as a so-called "peacekeeping" force, with the capability of sending in troops and guards, "with or without" the agreement of the government of the country in question.

In addition, a U.N. mission assessing security for famine relief is examining a proposal to carve the shattered nation up into four separate zones, according to Reuters news agency, citing U.N. sources. They said the U.N. team discussed the plan with southern warlords in early August in Kismaayo, the country's second port.

Somalia is a country without a government, since

time shape the framework within which food production can quickly be increased and, in the long term, food self-sufficiency can be guaranteed.

- Distribution of food should be decentralized, i.e., it should be shipped directly to the affected areas. Mistakes in earlier food relief programs should be avoided, in which food was distributed centrally in specially set up camps to refugees from famine, who came there to search for food. It is obvious that this wrecks the social infrastructure of the country. The underlying principle of the aid program must be: Food must be brought to the people, not the people to the food.

- In order to accomplish this, food must be delivered

President Mohamed Siad Barre was ousted 18 months ago. The country has been in a state of civil war since, with tens of thousands perishing in the conflict. But as drought conditions have advanced in eastern and southern Africa, and as the economy of Somalia has been completely wiped out by the clan warfare, famine and diseases such as tuberculosis have spread dramatically throughout the country in the last three months. It has been estimated that up to one-fourth of all children in Somalia under the age of five have perished already.

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, 1.5 million are in immediate danger of starvation in the weeks ahead, with millions more perishing in the months to follow. The Red Cross has also estimated food relief needs to be in the order to 50,000 tons per month, but only about 15,000 tons per month are moving into the country. The United Nations' special representative for Somalia, Mohamed Sahnoun, states that at least 4.5 million people are in need of emergency food assistance, and that relief agencies are barely able to supply one-fifth of the country's food needs, according to the *Washington Post* Aug. 11.

Several well-publicized incidents of looting or attacks on food convoys have been used to buttress demands by the U.N. and the Bush regime that U.N. peacekeeping troops and guards be sent in large numbers into the country before more food can be shipped. Somalia has therefore become a crucial test case for the new secretary general's efforts to eliminate national sovereignty under the name of "peacekeeping." In the case of Somalia, which has no functioning government, the U.N. and the Bush regime are now demanding that their forces be sent in, without the prior agreement of the warring factions.

This was spelled out Aug. 3 by James Kunder, director for disaster assistance of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). At a special State Department briefing with the press corps, Kunder reported back on a two-week assessment team trip into the Horn of Africa.

He noted that "virtually the entire economy [of Somalia] consists either in protecting relief food—that is, the hiring of armed guards for relief convoys—or attacking those convoys." Despite his admission that "most of the food has gotten through to somebody who can use it," he insisted on the deployment of troops, "with or without" the permission of the different factions. Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.) has also introduced a resolution calling on the U.N. to deploy troops.

At a meeting in late July of the House Select Committee on Hunger, Assistant Secretary of State John R. Bolton took the position that the peacekeeping mission was the first priority.

But the president of Doctors without Borders, which has had volunteers in Somalia since January 1991, disagreed. Said Rony Brauman: "It is imperative to flood the country with food, so that it ceases to be a high-stakes item, stolen by those with weapons. Only by making food readily available will it be possible to ease the tensions caused by shortages."

Even the U.N. special envoy, Mohamed Sahnoun, the former Algerian ambassador in Washington who in principle backs Boutros-Ghali's call for troop deployment, stresses that the food must come first, before security can be established. According to an interview published in the *Washington Post* Aug. 11, Sahnoun states: "Wherever there is a scarcity of food, you're going to have a security problem. You can't escape the fact that people will fight for food. These people have guns—and each one of them has a family to feed."

Moreover, David Bassiouni, U.N. coordinator for humanitarian assistance to Somalia, stresses that military intervention without agreement between the two principal opposing sides would be dangerous. "We might find ourselves trying to take over the country and fight our way through, and then the humanitarian operation would become secondary," he told the London *Financial Times* July 29.—*Dana S. Scanlon*

together with the means of transport, so that it can actually be brought to the most remote regions. Special trucks and overland transport vehicles are needed for this, and at times, helicopters and airplanes will also be needed, in order to get the relief to regions where it cannot otherwise be conveyed. In the meantime, road building and earthmoving equipment must be brought to the site, together with the relevant technical personnel, in order to build roads and bridges over which the food can be delivered. This relief infrastructure can then, in the next phase, be used as farm machinery and so forth to build up a goods-producing economy. The same trucks which today deliver grain or milk powder, tomorrow can be

carrying fertilizer and farm machinery.

- Ships with a 30,000-40,000 ton capacity such as for example the LASH (Lighter Aboard Ship), must be put into operation. These can transport a series of boats, which are already loaded with grain and which at the point of debarkation can become independent on the inland waters with the help of tugboats. The so-called "Ro-Ro Ships" (Roll-on/Roll-off), which can be loaded both fore and aft and can carry their own ramps, can transport trucks loaded with grain. A 20,000-ton ship can carry 250-300 trucks, loaded with food and other commodities, to their destinations.

- At the same time "long piers" should be towed to