

vances of the Green Revolution, a global food shortage due to crop failures was a conceivable and often real threat. Today . . . it is highly improbable.”

The 1996 U.S. food position paper (points 4 and 7) is even more adamantly against national food self-sufficiency and sovereignty than the 1988 U.S. position, despite acknowledging there are 800 million people going hungry today. In the argot of free trade, food “security” for a person or nation, is equated with *access* to free markets, and *not* with the right to have or produce food. In the face of food shortages, the paper states, “Stabilizing population reduced the risks of food insecurity by reducing the number of people who need food” (“Annex II: What Factors Influence Food Security?”).

1990s: Globalism opposes nation-states

As of the 1990s, overall world food output volumes, and U.S. food production levels, are in decline. The food commodities cartels—posting record profits by controlling scarce food stocks, are expecting even more rights to control food,

enforced, for example, through the World Trade Organization, whose first world ministerial conference is Dec. 9-14 in Singapore.

In the United States, the 1996 Freedom to Farm Act (“Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996”) is phasing out all vestiges of support for farmers, and exposing them to food cartel “free market” rule. The United States’ own food supply is now heavily dependent on imports; America can no longer feed itself.

The U.S. 1996 food position paper praises imports, saying needs are being met “through a combination of domestic production and global sourcing” (“Annex III: The U.S. Record in Domestic Food Security”). The particular defense of “global sourcing” for U.S. food, is that it keeps food inexpensive for poor Americans; and it gives poor countries dollars in exchange.

The rationalization is, “The United States is a major importer of food from developing countries, providing them with valuable foreign exchange. . . . For fiscal year 1996, U.S.

Chinese spokesmen reject Lester Brown’s scenario

The Rome World Food Summit, and several other recent events, have been the occasion for leading officials and scientists of China to refute the charges made by Lester R. Brown, the U.S. environmentalist head of the Washington, D.C.-based Worldwatch Institute, that China has poor prospects for future food supplies, and is “guilty” of using up scarce food and resources. These charges were most fully stated in Brown’s book *Who Will Feed China? Wake-Up Call for a Small Planet* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995).

According to Brown, China is set to face a deep agricultural crisis, because its more prosperous people want more and better food; because the country has a shrinking land base on which to grow food, due to rapid urbanization and economic development; and because of an impending water scarcity and a slowdown in farm productivity. China’s food crisis will translate into a national security issue for industrialized countries such as the United States, Brown claims.

Spokesmen for China have dismissed the Brown scare, in the following instances:

- On Nov. 15, at the World Food Summit, China officially dismissed fears that agricultural problems could mean it would have trouble feeding people in the world’s most populous nation. Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng

told the summit that with increasing grain yields and exploiting more land, China can maintain its self-sufficiency.

“It is entirely possible for China to meet its food needs in the future,” Li Peng said, adding that “people can rest assured that, in the coming years, not only will the Chinese people maintain food sufficiency, they will also make contributions to food security in the world.”

- In October, at a forum in Beijing, Chinese economists took on Lester Brown by name, repudiating Brown’s principal premise, which is that industrialization at a rapid pace will lead to shortages of cropland and water, resulting in declining grain output. “What he has failed to do is to fully consider China’s potential agricultural resources and technical resources,” said Gu Haibing, professor at the national economic management department, China People’s University.

Chen Xiwen, director and researcher at the rural department, State Council Center for Development Studies, believes that, even given China’s existing domestic production capacity, consumption levels, and degree of dependency on the international market, China still does not constitute a grain security issue at the moment. “*Those who make projections should interpret the general trend accurately,*” he said (emphasis in original).

- In October, to further assure the world that China can achieve food independence, Beijing issued a “white paper” on food. The document declared, “China can achieve its desired total grain output target, if the annual average rate of increase in per-unit-area yield is 1% from 1996 to 2010 and 0.7% from 2011 to 2030.” The document added that much bigger increases are expected.