

Editorial

Feed North Korea now!

EIR learned in mid-May that it is Britain's Lady Margaret Thatcher, her protégé Sir George Bush, the Anglo-American NATO military bureaucracy, and the "old guard" of the Republican Party, who are exerting pressure on Seoul's Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), to prevent the necessary food shipments to North Korea. Yet, as Helga Zepp LaRouche said on May 9, unless at least *1 million tons* of grain are moved in quickly, over 20 million of North Korea's 24 million people, could die within months.

North Korea faces "a famine ticking away like a time bomb," Tun Myat, head of the transport division of the UN's World Food Program, told a news conference in Beijing on May 12, after a two-week visit to North Korea. Myat said that the famine appeared to be "in slow motion," because the entire population, including the military, is sharing what small amounts of food they have. Unlike in most famines, he said, where the poor die rapidly—setting off alarm bells—the entire population is jointly growing weaker and weaker. When the dying begins, it will be too late, and on a scale perhaps never before seen.

Minute food rations are being mixed with "tree barks and leaves," Myat said. "But not in the way that we would imagine anybody eating barks and leaves. It is done in a fairly . . . systematic way, fairly sophisticated way. Stalks of corn, cobs of corn, empty pea and bean pods, mushroom stems and whatever would have at best been used for animal feed, are now being milled into powder."

The nutritional value of the alternative food is not known, and Myat said it was difficult to say when the "point of no return" would come.

Chinese sources on the North Korean border are already reporting instances of the robbing of fresh graves for cannibalism.

Other recent eyewitnesses have described the situation as "one of the biggest humanitarian disasters of our lifetime," as Catherine Bertini, executive director of the World Food Program (WFP), put it April 28; or, as "a rapid descent into hell," as U.S. Rep. Tony Hall (D-Ohio) said on April 8; and, as a "catastrophe," as Yasuo

Tanaka of the International Red Cross said on April 4.

The WFP estimates that North Korea needs 1.3 million tons of imported food aid urgently. The WFP has appealed for 200,000 tons, worth \$96 million, but has received only \$38 million to date, of which the United States is contributing 60,000 tons of corn valued at \$25 million. Speaking for the Anglophile point of view at the U.S. State Department on May 8, spokesman Nicholas Burns repeated his insistence that the United States will not "tie" food aid to political demands. Pressed, however, by reporters as to why America is sending 60,000 tons, when 600,000 or more is the appropriate response, Burns clarified that only such token amounts will be given. Regarding substantive amounts of food needed, he said, "No way . . . are we going to put into North Korea billions of dollars of American or Western or Asian money, either bilaterally or multilaterally, to subsidize a communist economic system."

Leading Korean-American religious figures insist that President Clinton "personally, as a Christian," wishes to send massive food aid, but Republican Congressional opposition, and that of the State Department and the Pentagon, make it impossible. This is also part of the Bush crowd's "anti-China card" to harm U.S.-China relations.

Japan's 2-million-ton rice reserve, and that of South Korea, must provide for immediate needs, because there is no time to ship from distant America; Washington could then reimburse its allies. A constant stream of anti-Pyongyang vitriol from Seoul's KCIA is said to be the reason for the South Korean and Japanese governments' refusal to act. Yet, an analyst at *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Britain's military journal, revealed in mid-May that the KCIA is being manipulated by Thatcher, Bush, and allies such as Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence Eagleburger, who sought to have North Korea bombed in 1994.

These same moral imbeciles are trying to bring down President Clinton's administration. A catastrophe of such immense proportions would certainly help them. The appropriate response is for the United States to tell its allies immediately: Let us ship that food.