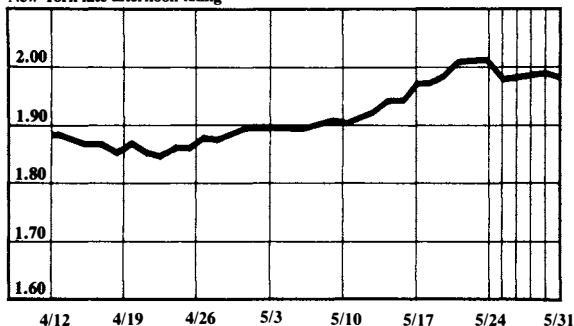


Currency Rates

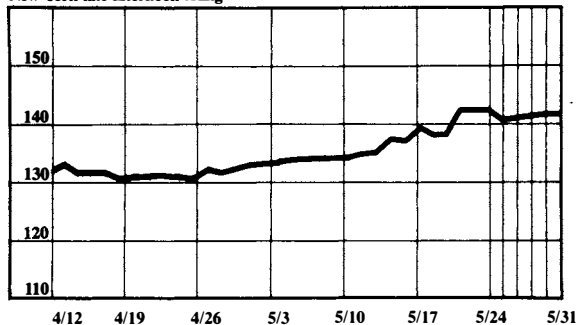
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



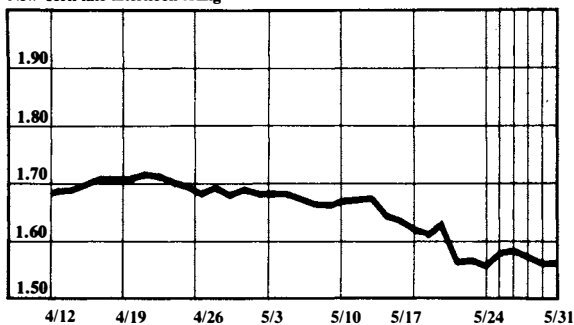
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



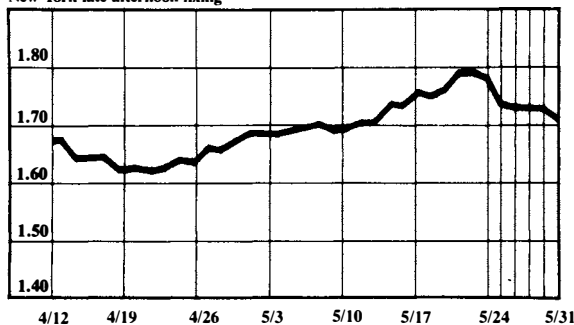
The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing



512 million have died of hunger this decade

by Marcia Merry

On May 22, the World Food Council opened a four-day international conference in Cairo, Egypt on world hunger. Although the proceedings have not been publicized in the general press, the wire services reported the message to the conference from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, sounding the alarm over world food shortages.

In a speech read on his behalf, President Mubarak said that 512 million people have died of hunger so far in this decade alone. He called for the industrialized nations to forgive some foreign debt of Third World nations, in order to finance food projects. In the prepared text, according to Reuters wire service, Mubarak said, "I hope your conference will be able to have contacts with the industrialized countries to give up a percentage of debts owed by the Third World countries to finance food projects."

The World Food Council is a U.N.-affiliated body. In April this year, it met in Rome with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and other agencies. At that meeting, James Ingram, head of the WFC, said that today there are 500 million people worldwide who are malnourished. The Rome group set the May 22 Cairo meeting to address the "political" issues behind hunger.

What these grim figures show is that almost 20% of the human race has been forced into hunger in this decade, and millions have died of starvation, due to the catastrophic decline in food availability per person, and the precipitous decline in the capacity to produce food. This crisis situation shows that the human race itself is threatened with self-extermination because of the moral lassitude in those parts of the world with the ability to reverse the crisis, and because of the self-feeding process of biological collapse.

The situation on the continent of Africa manifests the horror of the crisis. About one out of every four Africans depends on food imports, despite the vast fertility and potential fertility of the continent's soils. This decline and food dependency reflects the decades of World Bank and International Monetary Fund denial of agricultural, industrial, and infrastructural development projects (irrigation, transport grids, etc.).

Hard hit for food at present are the Mediterranean littoral nations of North Africa. Although last year's cereals harvest rose to 78.8 million tons—an increase of more than 18% over the previous year—the North African nations' harvests declined from a combination of drought, locusts, and other factors. There have been food riots in Algeria and Tunisia.