

Zepp-LaRouche indicts West over starvation in the Horn of Africa

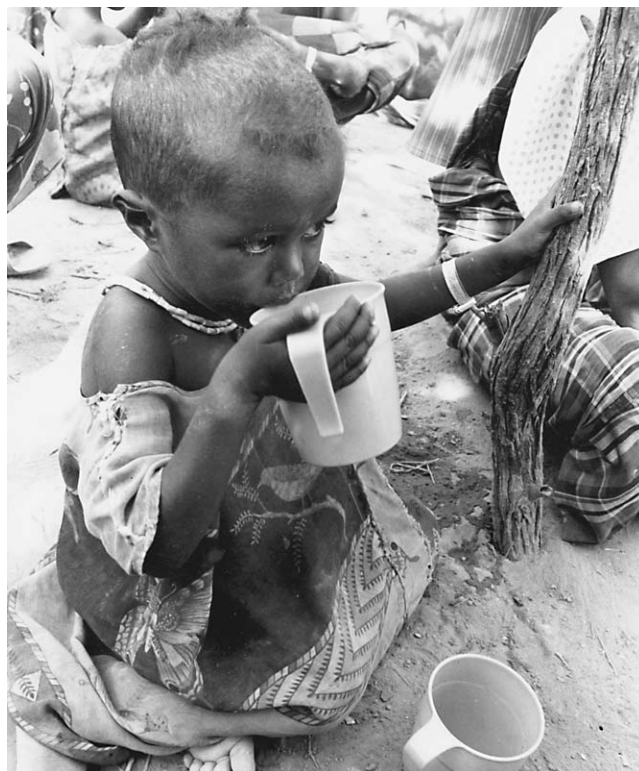
Helga Zepp-LaRouche, chairman of the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo), issued the following declaration, entitled "Indictment of Western Policy Toward Africa: Starvation in Ethiopia—Why Was Nothing Done in Time To Prevent It?" on April 14. Subheads have been added.

1. The catastrophic famine in the Horn of Africa, which has escalated in recent weeks, threatening 16 million people, especially in Ethiopia and Somalia, proves once again that the economic policies of liberalization and structural adjustment enforced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, are a complete failure. The Ethiopian government has been implementing so-called "economic reforms" under pressure from the West since 1992, reforms which are also called structural adjustment policies. And for that very reason, the government in Adis Abeba has been praised by international financial institutions as their new star pupil.

But if, after eight years of implementing the international financial institutions' recipes, 8 million people are now in acute danger of starving, then the question has to be finally posed, what sense these so-called market-economy reforms have in Ethiopia and other African countries. The occurrence of climatically induced drought in the Horn of Africa is historically known. So, why did Western policy for this region not insist, over the 1990s, on building the necessary infrastructure to protect the population from the consequences of such climatic changes as the current three-year-long drought?

Development sabotaged by globalization

Instead, the G-7 governments have fanatically held to their policy of globalization, thereby foiling the Ethiopian government's own efforts—efforts which, within the confines of current economic constraints, have been aimed at developing the country. It would have been necessary to aggressively promote large-scale transportation and water infrastructure, as well as the development of agriculture. But, Western governments, the IMF, and the World Bank insisted mercilessly on the servicing of foreign debt. Ethiopia has been forced to pay more than \$1.2 billion since 1992. The country's debt increased nevertheless, from \$9.1 billion in 1991, to \$10.1 billion today. Under such conditions, how is it supposed to be possible for Ethiopia to free itself from poverty and be able to combat natural catastrophes?



An Ethiopian child at a food station. The UN estimates that 12 million people are facing the immediate threat of starvation.

2. The aid has now finally begun, all too slowly, to flow in from the European Union (EU), the United States, and the United Nations Organization; but the question still remains, why our governments once again responded so late. The Ethiopian government's first call goes back to December 1998. The United Nations, at the latest since mid-1999, has also been warning that millions of people in the Horn of Africa are threatened by starvation. In December 1999 and in January 2000, the Ethiopian government again issued a call for the world public to come to its assistance. The fact that the media only take notice of a catastrophe once they can film dying children, sheds telling light on the low priority which politicians and the public in the Federal Republic of Germany, have given to the fate of the African continent.

3. The criticism launched against the Ethiopian government, especially by the sanctimonious media, regarding the tragic war with Eritrea, that it somehow did not do enough to counter the drought, is hypocrisy. For, the West itself is largely responsible for the conflicts in this part of Africa. These conflicts all stem from the fact that the British government, and parts of the U.S. government, have, over a number of years, formed a geopolitical front against Sudan, in Uganda, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. In this Western policy, the sovereignty of African nations carried no weight, but rather only the potential to influence political leaders in the direction of a strategy of conflict. This policy led to catastrophe in the

Horn of Africa, as surely as it did in the Congo, in the Great Lakes region, and in Angola. The current Eritrean leader's adamant refusal to accept compromises to end the war, is the price we must now pay for this failure of Western policy toward Africa.

4. We call upon the German Federal Government and the EU, at the very least to now seriously consider the Ethiopian government's present proposals for rapidly alleviating the urgent need, and to respond magnanimously to those requests. That would require up to 1 million tons of food, and \$450 million for comprehensive measures to ensure supplies of fresh water, health care, and shelter for the refugees. According to the Ethiopian government, in addition to the airlift into the Ogaden, which is needed right now, the ports of Djibouti and Berbera on the southern coast of the Gulf of Aden have enough facilities to receive the goods needed.

5. People are now dying in the Horn of Africa for lack of water. Just a few weeks ago, people in Mozambique and in southern Africa were drowning in flood waters. The crucial question in both cases, is why the economic infrastructure of these countries is insufficient to protect the population against such foreseeable catastrophes. The answer is to be found in the cynical character of the policy of globalization, and in the recipes of the IMF and the World Bank. Over the past 25 years, these institutions have robbed Africa of the opportunity to develop economically.

The German Federal Government also has to face the fact that the West has lost its moral credibility in Africa. For many years now, the West's main concern has been not development and peace, but rather only control and exploitation of raw materials. The rhetoric enunciated by the Federal Government about a partnership with Africa, cannot hide the fact that this partnership has failed to challenge the fundamental thrust of Western policy.

A radical change in policy is needed

6. We demand that there be a radical rejection of the IMF's disastrous Africa policy. The European decision to postpone discussion of the debt question until the next summit meeting in 2003, is naked hypocrisy. Africa's \$350 billion debt burden must be written off entirely. But this will only happen in the context of a reorganization of the world monetary system, without the IMF and World Bank. We need government agreements on a New Bretton Woods, a new worldwide monetary system, as the foundation for a new, just world economic order. We need a re-regulation of world trade, with capital controls and protective measures for the domestic markets of developing countries. Africa must finally get the chance to develop continent-wide infrastructure, without which neither the development of modern agriculture and industry, nor a victory over poverty, are possible. Only a perspective of real economic development which improves the population's living conditions, can give hope to the people in the nations of Africa. That is also the prerequisite for settling Africa's so many armed conflicts, because *peace means development*.

BAC extremists to gather in Bratislava

by Our Special Correspondent

As the world economic-financial crisis and strategic situation worsen, the more extremist elements among the British-American-Commonwealth (BAC) policy elites are making some ominous moves in Central Europe. *EIR* has learned that on April 28-30, the Washington-headquartered New Atlantic Initiative (NAI) is scheduled to hold its annual meeting in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. The NAI leadership comprises some of the most avid Western advocates of "radical free market" and "expansion of NATO" policies. That it would choose to meet this year in Slovakia, indicates that there is intense pressure on that nation, to adopt the policy combination of "free market reforms" and NATO membership.

This comes at a time when there has been widespread opposition expressed across the political spectrum in Slovakia, to the NATO war in Kosovo. Also, Slovak sources stress that the country is in such awful economic shape, that it cannot sustain the austerity that would accompany the usual free-market package of "free trade," "privatization," and the like.

It also comes at a time when there is a highly unstable strategic situation in crucial regions such as the Baltics, Ukraine, and the Balkans. For the NAI lunatics to be sticking their noses in this flight-forward manner into Central and Eastern Europe, could be a detonator, for very unpleasant things to come.

Thatcher, Kissinger, and the BAC mob

The NAI was originally known as "The Prague Initiative," because its founding meeting in May 1996, pompously entitled "The Congress of Prague," was held in the Czech capital. The organization was founded by a U.S.-based devotee of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, John O'Sullivan, of William F. Buckley's neo-conservative *National Review* magazine. Its founding was an obvious counter-move to the strategic and economic policies centered around the development of the Eurasian Land-Bridge; its first meeting was held almost simultaneously with a conference on the Eurasian Land-Bridge in Beijing, at which Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche spoke.

In Prague, Thatcher was the keynote speaker. She raved that "NATO's role should be expanded. It must be prepared to go out-of-area." To bolster her ravings, she quoted from 17th-century bestialist British philosopher Thomas Hobbes, and from writer Rudyard Kipling, a romanticist of the British Empire in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The NAI's executive director is Jeffrey Gedmin of the