

# Food Aid and International Hunger Crises: The United States in Somalia

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*ABSTRACT International food aid has long been known to be motivated by domestic and foreign policy objectives as well as humanitarian concerns. The policy objectives sometimes complicate delivery of emergency food, and lead to situations that result in adverse effects on the economic and agricultural systems of recipient countries. Despite the long history and extensive documentation of such effects, they were observed to occur once again during the 1992 Somalia intervention. This intervention encountered many frequently described barriers to effective use of emergency food aid. It also set a new precedent; for the first time, troops were deployed to enforce the safe delivery of food. This action led to the creation of an army of occupation engaged in military conflict with the very people it had come to serve and, eventually, to further deterioration of the country's food economy. The Somalia intervention provided further evidence for the need to uncouple humanitarian food aid from other policy objectives, and to design and manage emergency and long-term food aid programs to maximize benefits, minimize adverse consequences, and strengthen local agricultural production and marketing systems.*

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On December 3, 1992, during his last weeks in office, U. S. President George Bush ordered 28,000 U. S. troops to be sent to Somalia to ensure that United Nations (U. N.) food aid reached the starving people for whom it was intended. The troop deployment was said to be temporary, perhaps even to end before January 20 when the new President was to take office. Within just a few months, the U. N. was calling for additional troops to expand its multinational peacekeeping force to more than 30,000 (Prial, 1993), the 4,000 U. S. troops that remained in Somalia were leading U. N. military actions to capture and punish the leader of one particular Somali political faction, and the Pentagon was expecting American troops to remain in Somalia "until violence is quelled" (Schmitt, 1993c). In October 1993, a raid against that faction caused numerous American casualties (Cushman, 1993a), and elicited strong Congressional and public opposition to further military presence (Krauss, 1993a; Ayres, 1993). In response, the President announced that American troops would be withdrawn entirely from Somalia by March 31, 1994 ("House Rejects . . .," 1993).

Although the initial purpose of this action was said to be humanitarian — to relieve widespread famine in

Somalia brought about by the chaos induced by civil war — this goal appeared to many observers to be insufficient to explain the size and military nature of the force. By the time the troops arrived in mid-December 1992, on-site witnesses were reporting that the famine was well past its peak, that agriculture was well on the way to recovery, and that many Somali farmers were complaining that donated food was undermining the market for their own crops (Perlez, 1992e, 1992f).

From the time the first troops arrived, the Somalia intervention illustrated many of the well known barriers to effective delivery of emergency food aid: significant amounts of the food were being stolen or traded for arms and were unable to reach the people who needed it most. Donated food commodities were depressing the market for locally grown agricultural products, and were creating demands for imported foods. Emergency aid was providing partial relief of hunger on a temporary basis, but was not addressing longer-term development needs.

In important ways, however, the Somalia events established new precedents. For the first time, American troops were deployed to enforce delivery of food relief, an action that led to U. S. and U. N. military involvement

in internal Somali political affairs. In turn, these events created conflict with Somalis as well as with representatives from other nations who were disturbed by the increasingly aggressive role of the U. N. in its peacekeeping operations. By the summer of 1993, troops of both the U. N. and U. S. were perceived as enemies and opposed by many of the very Somalis they had come to rescue, a situation that led to successive incidents of military conflict throughout the following year.

To understand how a humanitarian mission ostensibly designed to save people from starvation evolved so rapidly into an international military operation that took the lives of many Somali, international, and American military and civilian personnel, this paper reviews the history of U. S. food aid policies, describes some of the lessons learned from this history, applies those lessons to the case of the Somalia intervention, and uses the events in Somalia to illustrate the well documented need for separation of humanitarian from other policy objectives when addressing needs for emergency food. Because the Somalia intervention was still in progress at the time this article was written, much of its analysis is drawn from the substantial body of information available in contemporary newspaper accounts.

## U. S. Food Aid Policies

### Historical Overview

When reports of widespread starvation reach concerned citizens in affluent countries, a deeply rooted humane impulse is to send food. Such humanitarian concerns motivated Congress to authorize food shipments to Venezuela in 1812 and Ireland in the mid-1800s. By the time the U. S. sent food to Europe during World War I, the purposes of food relief had expanded well beyond humanitarian aid to include four additional goals: economic development of the recipient countries, disposal of surplus American agricultural commodities, development of foreign markets for these commodities, and support of American domestic and foreign policy objectives. The history of the increasingly political basis of U. S. food aid policies has been thoroughly and repeatedly reviewed (Lappe, *et al.*, 1981; Ruttan, 1993; Singer, *et al.*, 1987; Wallerstein, 1980). Key events in this history are summarized in Table 1.

### Current Status

Current U. S. food aid policies pursue all five of these objectives (Shapouri and Missiaen, 1990). The policies are governed by the most recent versions of two frequently amended Acts: Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, and the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (known better as PL 480 or Food for Peace). Until 1991, the various programs authorized by these acts were administered by five federal agencies: the Departments of Agriculture (USDA), State, and Treasury, the Agency for International Development (AID), and the

Office of Management and Budget. Administration of the programs is now divided among just two agencies, USDA and AID (Smith, 1991).

Since 1954, the distribution of billions of dollars in food aid donations has reflected shifts in the availability of surplus commodities and in U. S. political and trade objectives, as well as in the needs of recipient countries (Shapouri and Missiaen, 1990). Food aid accounts for a substantial portion of exported U. S. agricultural commodities. The U. S. provides about 60 percent of total world cereal aid shipments, and food aid comprises 10 percent of wheat exports and 40 percent of flour exports. Aid also accounts for 28 percent of vegetable oil exports.

The principal recipients of food aid also have shifted. From 1978-80 to 1988-90, the proportion of U. S. aid to Asian countries declined from 45 to 30 percent, and that to Latin American countries rose from 10 to 23 percent. The proportion of aid to African countries remained at about 40 percent during this period, mainly because more aid was shipped to Ethiopia, Morocco, and Mozambique, but less to Egypt (Smith, 1992). In contrast, 70 percent of internationally donated food aid in 1991 went to countries in the Horn of Africa — Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia (World Food Programme, 1992).

### Policy Issues

Although the moral imperative to provide food to starving people may appear self-evident (Singer, 1993), food relief policies have become increasingly politicized and controversial. Representatives of international agencies and private voluntary organizations note that food aid is an important resource for economic development because it supports food security and, therefore, reduces the cost of other development programs. They also observe that food is a valuable component of social safety nets, and that any disadvantages that may occur as a result of food aid interventions are short-lived and can be offset by improving management of the delivery process (Cohen, 1991; Prendergast and Miller, 1992; FAO, 1991a; World Bank and World Food Programme, 1991).

Other observers suggest that the overall value of food aid is limited by barriers that undermine their humanitarian purposes. Table 2 presents a selected list of such barriers. Because these barriers commonly exist, some authorities suggest that even emergency food aid has the potential to do more harm than good, and that consideration should be given to abandoning it entirely in favor of longer-term policies targeted to agricultural and economic self-sufficiency. These suggestions and the historical basis for them have been documented elsewhere in detail (Clay and Stokke, 1991; Lappe *et al.*, 1981; Jackson, 1982; Rothschild, 1993; Ruttan, 1993; Sen, 1990; Wallerstein, 1980).

The experience of international aid agencies suggests that barriers to delivery of both short- and long-term food aid can best be overcome in situations in which the recipient country is sufficiently stable to support emer-

Table 1. Key Events in the History of U. S. Food Aid Policies.

1812: Congress votes to provide emergency food to aid earthquake victims in Venezuela.
Mid-1800s: Congress authorizes food aid to relieve famine in Ireland.
1914-18: World War I aid provides 28 million metric tons of food, mainly to Britain, France, and Italy.
1933: Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) established to purchase and sell surplus agricultural products, and to make loans to farmers.
1934: Export-Import Bank established to enable foreign agencies to purchase U. S. commodities through low-cost loans.
1941: Lend-Lease Act allows \$6 billion of agricultural products to be shipped to European allies.
1947: Marshall Plan for European reconstruction authorizes half the expenditures as food relief.
1949: Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act authorizes the CCC to sell surplus commodities abroad at below-market prices, and to barter them for strategic materials.
1954: Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act (PL 480) authorizes sales of surplus commodities to friendly nations (Title I), donations to any government for famine relief (Title II), donations abroad through nonprofit voluntary agencies, and barter of surpluses for strategic materials (Title III).
1959: PL 480 renamed "Food for Peace Act," and amended to permit long-term, low-interest loans to friendly ( <i>i.e.</i> , anticommunist) nations (Title IV).
1960: President Eisenhower creates White House Office of Food for Peace.
1961: President Kennedy establishes Food for Peace within his Executive Office.
1964: Amendments to PL 480 require food aid to be classified under international rather than agricultural expenditures, bans Title I sales to countries considered communist, and authorizes Title I receipts to be used to support counterinsurgency programs.
1965: President Johnson transfers the Food for Peace Office to State Department Agency for International Development (AID), formalizing its role in foreign policy.
1966: Amendments to PL 480 authorize use of non-surplus commodities, tie food aid to other forms of economic assistance, and require recipients to commit resources to increase food production and other self-help measures.
1974: Foreign Assistance Act amended to require 70 percent of Title I commodities to be given or sold to countries defined by U. N. as "seriously affected."
1975: International Development and Food Assistance Act requires 75 percent of Title I commodities to go to countries with yearly <i>per capita</i> income below \$300.
1990: Farm bill legislation collects all food aid programs in USDA (Section 416 (b) and PL 480 Title I) and AID (Titles II and III). Section 416(b) donates surplus commodities purchased by CCC. Title I gives loan priorities to countries that demonstrate the greatest need for food, undertake economic and agricultural development, and demonstrate potential as commercial markets for U. S. products. Title II makes commodities available through private voluntary agencies. Title III grants food aid to the least developed countries. Title IV forbids food aid to disrupt local economies or to compete with U. S. agricultural products.
1992: President Bush orders 28,000 U. S. troops to Somalia to enforce delivery of food aid to famine victims.

Sources: Ruttan (1993), Singer, *et al.* (1987), Smith (1991), and Wallerstein (1980).

gency or development programs. In the absence of such stability, aid agencies have found it difficult to plan and control relief operations, and to anticipate or respond effectively to problems that might arise. Under the best of circumstances, the most effective food interventions are initiated well before a famine reaches its peak, are well coordinated with local and regional private agencies and governments, and are able to channel food through local market systems (International Science, 1993). None of these favorable conditions applied to the situation in Somalia.

### The Somalia Intervention

#### Background

Unlike the populations of other African countries, the Somali people are remarkably homogeneous in ethnicity (Samaale), language (Somali), and religion (Is-

lam). Although historical details remain uncertain, Somalis are believed to have inhabited the Horn of Africa as pastoral nomads for a thousand years or more (Delancy *et al.*, 1988).

Somalia lies on the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, and it shares borders with Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The strategic importance of this location is self-evident; Somalia guards the entrance to the Red Sea. From the 15th through 19th centuries, Portugal, Egypt, Britain, France, Italy, and Ethiopia established claims in the region. By the late 1800s, France controlled the small area that is now Djibouti, Britain and Italy had established protectorates in Somalia's North (British Somaliland) and South (Italian Somalia), and the large Ogaden area to the West had been transferred from Italian to Ethiopian control. These arbitrary divisions of a nomadic people created border disputes that remain unresolved and elicit conflict to this day.

Table 2. Suggested Barriers to Humanitarian Use of Food Aid.

**Food aid:**

- Does not address root causes of famine. Famine crises are brought about by political situations that create homelessness, unemployment, disease, and poverty.
- Arrives after the peak crisis has passed.
- Does not reach groups most in need; food aid is sold on open markets and cannot be purchased by people lacking funds.
- Undermines local food production by glutting markets and reducing prices.
- Creates demands for imported rather than local food staples.
- Detracts from aid aimed at improving local food production.
- Does not create purchasing power.
- Is exploited as a weapon in political conflicts.
- Results in unanticipated consequences that undermine relief efforts.
- Has not been subjected to rigorous outcome evaluation.

Sources: Clay and Stokke (1991), Lappe *et al.* (1981), Jackson (1982), Prendergast and Miller (1992), Rothschild (1993), Ruttan (1993), Sen (1990) (1990), and Wallerstein (1980).

During the 1930s, Italy reclaimed Ogaden, but was forced to return it to British Somaliland after World War II. In 1950, the South was made a U. N. protectorate under Italian administration. At this point, Ogaden was returned to Ethiopia. This curious turn of events was designed to establish a basis for independence. On July 1, 1960, the Italian and British trusteeships ended and their territories were joined to form the newly independent and democratic country of Somalia. The new regime lasted until 1969 when a military coup established a dictatorship under Mohammed Siad Barre (Delancey *et al.*, 1988; Lewis, 1988; Kaplan *et al.*, 1977).

Because of its strategic location, Somalia soon became deeply embroiled in the politics of the Cold War. The Soviets were supplying arms to it and to Ethiopia. In 1977, Siad escalated hostilities with Ethiopia in an unsuccessful attempt to regain Ogaden. When the Soviets supported Ethiopia, Siad expelled their remaining advisors and leased a large air base to the U. S. in exchange for large amounts of military aid. From 1981-1989, for example, the U. S. provided \$35 million in rifles, grenades, various types of missiles, and other forms of "lethal assistance" (Gordon, 1992c). The Siad government used these weapons to suppress growing dissatisfaction with its regime and to wage what amounted to a civil war. (Africa Watch Committee, 1990). In 1991, multiple competing political factions, which in Somalia are based largely on clan kinships, joined forces and ousted the regime. When this alliance disintegrated, the

principal clans began fighting each other.

Thus, for a period lasting nearly 15 years, successive waves of civil strife disrupted social and governance systems, and caused extensive loss of life, the creation of a vast refugee population, and profound disruption of food production and distribution systems — conditions inevitably predisposing to widespread famine (Perlez, 1992a; Maren, 1993a). This strife, while rooted in traditional clan rivalries, was fueled by arms from both U. S. and Soviet sources. In the early 1980s, attempts to provide emergency food relief in this situation had encountered virtually all of the barriers to implementation listed in Table 2, particularly those related to the misuse of food aid as currency on open markets (Clay and Everitt, 1985). By 1991-92, such barriers were compounded further by ongoing civil strife.

**The 1992 Famine**

Prior to the civil wars, the Somali population was dependent on rainfed agriculture and the grazing of food animals, an existence considered fragile by any standard (International Science, 1993). In the late 1980s, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated that the Somali food supply provided only about 2,000 kcal/*per capita/day*, an amount thought barely adequate to meet human needs. By comparison, the U. S. food supply contains 3,600 kcal/day (FAO, 1991b). Nevertheless, this amount appeared to be sufficient to feed the population (Perlez, 1992e; Nasar, 1993), perhaps because FAO food supply data do not usually include home food production.

Early in 1991, private relief agencies working in Somalia began to issue public warnings that deaths from starvation and disease were rising rapidly — especially among children weakened by malnutrition in the crowded refugee camps — and that food aid was needed urgently (Moore *et al.*, 1993). The number of Somalis who died of hunger or disease during 1992 was reported to be in the hundreds of thousands, and two to four million people were believed at risk of starvation (Perlez, 1992a).

In response, the U. N. sent food relief, but much of it continued to encounter problems with looting, the trading of food for weapons, or sales on open markets. When Somali factions shelled a grain shipment, robbed some U. N. workers, and killed a U. N. official, the U. N. called for military intervention, authorized the use of force when necessary, and accepted an offer from the U. S. to supply troops to protect food aid deliveries (Lewis, 1992a, 1992b; Perlez, 1992a, 1992b).

**Operation Rescue Hope**

In December, 1992, President Bush announced that he was sending 28,000 U. S. troops to enforce delivery of food aid on a temporary basis. Despite Pentagon predictions that the intervention would be lengthy, the President stated that he hoped the troops would return in time for the Clinton inauguration (Gordon, 1992a), and he repeated

this assertion during a visit to Somalia early in January (Mitchell, 1993a).

The first U. S. forces arrived in Somalia early in December (Perlez, 1992d) and eventually were joined by about 14,000 U. N. troops from 22 countries. By February, the multinational force had "evolved into a police patrol," and at least four Americans had been reported killed (Schmitt, 1993b). In March, the U. S. envoy to Somalia announced that the mission was a success; food and relief supplies were being delivered, and the "problem of clan warfare is virtually gone" (Lorch, 1993a). Later that month, the U. N. announced that it would replace the American force with 28,000 multinational troops and 3,000 civilians who would disarm the clan factions and administer the country under the most expensive peacekeeping operation it had ever undertaken (Lewis, 1993b). When this transition took place early in May, 4,000 American troops remained in Somalia.

Early in June, followers of the leader of one particular Somali faction, General Mohammed Farah Aidid, attacked and killed U. N. forces who were threatening to take over a radio station. The U. S., under U. N. command, retaliated by raiding Aidid's power base; Somalis were killed during this action (Gordon, 1993). The next day, U. N. troops fired upon Somalis who were demonstrating against the raid, and Somali civilians were killed (Lorch, 1993e). The U. N. then issued a warrant for Aidid's arrest. In July, similar U. N. raids also caused Somali casualties. These actions strengthened Somali opposition to what was increasingly perceived as an American-led occupation force taking sides in a civil war (Cowell, 1993), and fueled growing sentiment against the Americans and the U. N., which, in turn, led to further violence and further impeded relief efforts (Lorch, 1993f).

During the next two months, American efforts to capture Aidid intensified, and the resulting skirmishes cost the lives of American, U. N., and Somali soldiers and civilians. At home, the Senate passed a resolution to require Congressional authority for continued U. S. involvement in Somalia. When nearly one hundred American soldiers were killed or wounded in a U. S. -initiated battle early in October, the President ordered more troops to be deployed ("The U. S. Military Role . . .," 1993). Later accounts indicated that 300 Somalis also had been killed in that battle and another 700 wounded, among them hundreds of women and children (Cushman, 1993b). This action was seen to thrust the U. S. into an increasingly undesirable military posture. Congress increased demands for rapid withdrawal (Krauss, 1993b), but agreed reluctantly to delay the target date until March 31, 1994 (Krauss, 1993c). In the interim, the White House announced that the mission had ". . . 'got a little off track' but had now returned to its original humanitarian goals," and that the U. S. would no longer attempt to capture Aidid but would begin seeking political rather than military solutions (Ifill, 1993). Continued clan strife and increasingly frequent attacks on relief workers raised

questions about the loss of security that would be certain to occur when the U. S. and U. N. withdrew (Lorch, 1994).

### **Intervention Objectives**

As noted earlier, U. S. food aid policies were designed to serve multiple purposes. Although officials stated that its sole purpose was humanitarian, the Somalia intervention — whether by accident or design — also responded to additional objectives. This confusion of purposes led to the repetition of the problems described in Table 2.

*Humanitarian Relief.* There is little question that the intervention stabilized ongoing aid efforts and eased the work of relief workers (Schemo, 1993). To many observers, however, the size and force of the operation seemed excessive (Perlez, 1992g). For example, in their first deployment, 700 American marines and French troops were sent to guard the delivery of one truckload of food to an orphanage (Lorch, 1992a).

Considerable evidence suggests that the relief effort occurred some months after the famine had reached its peak. By the time American troops arrived, private relief organizations already had distributed substantial amounts of food (Perlez, 1992e). Observers were describing children as robust and crops as about to be harvested, and some commentators judged Somalia to be just on the brink of recovery (Noble, 1993; Perlez, 1992c). Deaths had dropped to hundreds rather than thousands *per day*, and were due mainly to infectious diseases among adults (Perlez, 1992f).

Once the U. N. forces started fighting with Somali factions, however, private relief efforts faltered. Relief workers reported feeling a need to disassociate themselves from the U. N., noting that they could not ". . . bomb people with one hand and give them rice with the other" (Lorch, 1993f). As the fighting continued, food relief agencies were forced to abandon their operations ("2 Aid Groups Quit . . .," 1994).

*Economic Development.* Reporters noted that the distribution of rice, wheat, and sorghum at no or low cost was depressing the market for locally grown corn (Perlez, 1992e), and that the price of rice in Somalia had fallen to the lowest in the world (Mitchell, 1993b). They also noted that people were refusing to accept donated rice because it could be obtained so cheaply; instead, they were asking for jobs (Perlez, 1992f). They quoted farmers as complaining that grain could be bought on the open market for less than the cost of growing it (Perlez, 1992e), and as insisting on assurances before they planted that there would be a market for their crops. Other observers noted that refugees who had become accustomed to free food and medical care were requesting permission to remain in the camps (Burgess, 1993).

*Surplus Commodity Disposal.* Reporters noted that the shipments of surplus grain were not always appreciated by the recipients. In one account, a Somali was

reported as remarking: "They are giving people only wheat. We don't know wheat. We cannot digest wheat." (Lorch, 1993c)

*Market Development.* Commentators noted that the Somalis had become accustomed to the rice used in feeding kitchens and were no longer interested in eating locally grown corn and sorghum (Mitchell, 1993b). In this sense, the donated food was creating a demand for imported rather than locally grown commodities.

*Domestic and Foreign Policy.* Because all objectives other than humanitarian aid were denied by U. S. officials, domestic and foreign policy interests can only be surmised. Many commentators noted that the intervention marked a turning point in U. S. policy. Because U. S. military forces had neither been invited by Somalia (Friedman, 1992), nor authorized by Congress, some members of Congress had demanded that it be put to vote under the War Powers Act (Krauss, 1992). The failure of this early effort strengthened Presidential powers to deploy combat troops independent of Congressional interference, and created an opportunity for a departing President to demonstrate decisive leadership — as had occurred during the Gulf War — just as he was about to leave office (Wines, 1992).

Commentators immediately noted the dangers of sending troops to Somalia in the absence of defined policy objectives (Editorial, 1992). They considered the effects of civil warfare and hunger on the people of Somalia to be difficult to distinguish in any meaningful way from the effects of similar — or worse — situations in the Sudan (Gordon, 1992b), Haiti, Kurdistan, or Bosnia and Herzegovina (Friedman, 1992). The one significant difference appeared to be that Somalia was thought easier to pacify (Lewis, 1992b) or, as phrased by one observer, to be "doable" (Maren, 1993b).

A more obscure explanation was the need to protect American oil investments. Somalia almost certainly possesses as yet untapped oil resources, and four U. S. petroleum companies were reported to have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in development of oil rights prior to the civil war of 1991. These companies, with links to the former oil interests of President Bush, would be likely to benefit from restoration of order and to encourage the President to take action to do so (Fineman, 1993).

Many commentators suggested that the policies were forced to change from humanitarian to increasingly militaristic objectives under pressure from the increasingly chaotic political situation. When military actions failed to capture the "enemy" clan leader, to pacify the country, or to protect relief workers, the U. S. mission in Somalia shifted, as suggested by one Congressman, "... from saving lives to saving face" (Lorch, 1993g). Other observers, however, viewed the

policies as political — rather than humanitarian — right from the start, explaining that because the famine had resulted from political chaos and not lack of food, political solutions had always been required for its relief (Maren, 1993b).

Regardless of policy intentions, the intervention resulted in the creation of considerable antagonism toward the U. N. (Lorch, 1993d) and toward the U. S. (Editorial, 1993; Lorch, 1993f), and it did so at great cost. By mid-March, U. S. intervention expenses were an estimated \$583 million (Schmitt, 1993a); they rose to nearly \$982 million by September and were expected to include another \$300 million by the March 1994 withdrawal date (Schmitt, 1993d). In addition, the U. N. mission was expected to cost \$1.2 billion annually, of which the U. S. share was just over 30 percent (Lewis, 1993b). As of May 1993, the U. S. owed the U. N. \$312 million in unpaid peacekeeping costs and an additional \$518 million in other arrears, making it the U. N.'s largest debtor (Lewis, 1993c).

The cost in human life to all parties involved also was substantial (Annan, 1993). Estimations of the number of Somali casualties during just the four months of Summer, 1993 ranged from 6,000 to 10,000, with twice that number wounded. Women and children were thought to comprise two-thirds of these casualties ("Americans Cite . . .," 1993).

### Policy Implications

The history of U. S. food aid policies suggests that they achieve limited success in relieving hunger emergencies, but at a price. The case of Somalia illustrates this conclusion. The intervention delivered food aid and relieved some hunger in the short term, but its longer-term consequences only made the situation worse. The focus on capturing Aidid actually strengthened his position (Holmes, 1993), and the escalating military conflicts — in part brought about by years of U. S. arms sales — increasingly interfered with agricultural production and humanitarian aid ("2 Aid Groups Quit. . .," 1994). These actions prolonged the need for emergency food relief.

Those Somalis who welcomed the intervention initially did so because they sought political stability and agricultural support (Nasar, 1993; Perlez, 1992e, 1992f). These wishes would seem to be consistent with those of the U. N. and U. S., yet news accounts revealed few attempts at genuine collaboration with Somalis in working toward such goals. Although the U. N. organized a meeting of members of Somalia's most important factions to discuss governance needs, it intended the meeting only "to give them a sense of joining in the rescue of their country" (Lewis, 1993a).

The intervention in Somalia emphasizes the need for aid policies that help governments foster their own economic and agricultural development. Somalis hoped the U. S. would provide such aid (Nasar, 1993; Perlez,

1992e). The Clinton administration did offer development aid, but only after announcing withdrawal of American troops, and only under the condition that the warring Somali factions make peace. Even then, the \$100 million aid offer included \$33 million to establish a new police force, and \$20 million for food (Lewis, 1993d). Of these amounts, \$12 million was actually authorized to support establishment of the police force ("U. S. Giving . . .," 1994). Whether such aid will establish order and lead eventually to economic development is uncertain at this time.

Admittedly, collaboration with Third World governmental and voluntary agencies is not a simple process (Clay, 1991), and in Somalia requires reconciliation of the disparate views of 15 major political factions, but it is essential to long-term stability. News reports document at least one successful attempt; the Red Cross, working closely with its Somali counterpart (the Red Crescent), was able to unload and deliver food aid throughout the crisis without any need for military protection (Lorch, 1992b).

Thus, the Somalia case illustrates lessons that should have been learned long ago. Humanitarian objectives should be uncoupled from political objectives, and food aid should be designated for one purpose only: to relieve temporary shortages. Emergency intervention, as well as longer-term intervention, should be governed by the precept, "first, do no harm."

The Somalia case raises difficult questions for individuals concerned about human values. In situations of famine induced by ongoing political chaos, should food aid be withheld? There are no easy answers to such questions. Emergency food aid does relieve short-term disasters. But the situation in Somalia was not short-term; it was one of chronic social disorder to which the U. S. government had contributed for many years through sales of arms. None of the well established conditions for effective use of emergency aid — early intervention, coordinated implementation, and functioning mechanisms for distribution — were present in Somalia in late 1992. Instead, its situation reflected well known barriers to effective use of food aid. Therefore, although the Somalia famine represented an ongoing problem that required solution through governance and economic development, the U. S. and U. N. were not equipped or prepared to address either of these needs. Ultimately, the intervention caused harm to the Somali people, an effect that could have been predicted through examination of previous experiences with food aid.

We believe that what is most needed is a global strategy to address the underlying causes of hunger crises. As has been demonstrated by countries in Asia, economic improvements in Third World countries lead them to become better consumers of American products (Greenhouse, 1993). In the long run, overall U. S. aid objectives would be better served by following

principles established by the International Conference on Nutrition. These principles encourage policies to deliver emergency food only in emergency situations, and longer-term food aid only when it is able to help recipients support food security, develop sustainable agricultural systems, and alleviate poverty (ICN, 1992).

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