

'Food for Peace' meets in Thailand, maps campaign to feed the world

by Mary McCourt Burdman

The international Food for Peace movement held its first conference in Asia on June 24-25, in Bangkok, Thailand. As the former deputy prime minister of Thailand, Adm. Sontee Boonyachai, said in his opening statement to the conference, food is now a national security issue for all of Asia. Many tens of millions of uprooted and hungry people from China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma, and Laos, are flooding through Asia in a phenomenon never seen on such a scale in the West, in what is called in Chinese the *mong li*, or blind wave. In Soviet Central Asia, food riots are breaking out among the Muslim populations.

Activists of the Food for Peace movement attended the conference from the United States, New Zealand, Australia, West Germany, Malaysia, and India. Greetings were sent by Gen. T'eng Chieh of the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Admiral Sontee described how, as a member of the last Thai government, he put into effect a guaranteed parity price for rice farmers and defended an adequate price for rice exporters—an action which helped raise the living standard of 70% of Thailand's people. With the crisis in world food production, and with even the few surplus-food producing nations such as Thailand surrounded by hungry neighbors, it was timely to organize a seminar in Bangkok on "Food for Peace," he said.

'The year of decision'

This year is the year of decision for this crisis, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the chairman of the international Schiller Institutes, told the conference in her keynote address. Her husband, Lyndon LaRouche, now jailed in the United States for his political principles, warned last year, after the Democratic Party nominated Michael Dukakis for President, that hunger in the world is the greatest threat to world peace. Russia and China are cannibalizing their economies due to the total economic failure of Communism; at any time, they could use their military power to take food from producer nations in Western Europe, Asia, and America. The Communist empires are anti-human; they are completely corrupt. This is why they cannot feed themselves, and will start wars to survive.

Lyndon LaRouche's warnings have been greeted with

disbelief, Mrs. LaRouche stated; instead, people subscribe to the propaganda that the United States and Europe "over-produce" food. Farmers know this is not true: They have seen the overall reduction of both agricultural production and farmers, over the last 10-15 years.

The world food shortage is our greatest international strategic concern, Mrs. LaRouche stated. Even the U.S. government is reporting that 75% of Third World income is now being spent on food; organizations such as the WorldWatch Institute estimate that world food reserves are at their lowest in 20 years.

In the Soviet Union, the leadership is in crisis over fear of starvation this coming autumn, and the Tiananmen Square massacre could easily be repeated in Moscow or other Soviet cities. Already in Uzbekistan, where people eat only 8 kilograms of meat or sausage a year, the Russian Army moved in as ferociously as the Chinese did in Beijing. Gorbachov is in a more unstable situation than Deng Xiaoping. In China, 100 million people could starve very soon. The situation is now so bad that soldiers are keeping watch over the crops to take the grain by force as soon as it is harvested.

What we now see is an irreversible change in the world situation. All the assumptions of the Western leaders—George Bush, Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl—about the "tripolar world" are overthrown, whether they know it or not. The so-called policymakers, such as Henry Kissinger, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, and Helmut Schmidt, should have realized that the "global condominium" is finished—but they have not. Therefore, they are finished. George Bush has lost face, because all he will support is "stability"—not freedom, and not the right to eat to live. The massacre in Tiananmen Square has created what Lyndon LaRouche called the "river of blood" dividing those who follow Henry Kissinger and those who want the world to survive.

The great danger, Mrs. LaRouche said, is that world agriculture is collapsing so fast that soon, farmers will no longer be able to feed the world's growing population. Outside Southeast Asia, grain production fell 3.5% overall last year, and 3% in China. The bad harvests have driven grain prices up 30-45%. Producer nations are cutting exports sharply, except the United States—which is selling grain to

China and the U.S.S.R. at the expense of its own population. Very soon, the U.S. and Western Europe will be faced with the horrible choice between feeding their own populations or giving food to the Communists.

Food production is stagnating at 1986-87 levels, when, to give every human being enough food, we need twice what we are producing today, Mrs. LaRouche said. The policies of those institutions—the food cartels, the World Wildlife Fund, the Club of Rome—to achieve “equilibrium” by cutting the world’s population to 2 billion people, have created total disaster. After 20 years, their policies to increase the death rate through disease and starvation, have not brought “equilibrium.” We face war, whether civil wars or world war.

Lyndon LaRouche proposed policies that could solve this crisis: emergency programs to increase production, parity prices to farmers, a new credit system. But now, he is in jail, because he proposes the means to support far more than 5 billion people on the Earth.

The Food for Peace movement was created to solve the food crisis, and we will devote all our efforts to doing this, Mrs. LaRouche stated. What we must do, is adopt a rigorously ecumenical policy: Every African child is as precious as any child born in Europe or America. No human being should die for lack of food. The problem is easy to solve; what is necessary is the *political will* to solve it.

Mrs. LaRouche’s statements were the basis of the resolution passed by the conference the next day (see page 8), which will be circulated worldwide. The conference also demanded of U.S. President George Bush that he take immediate steps to meet the danger of the world food shortage, and use his presidential pardon to release Lyndon LaRouche.

The crisis in China

The situation in China makes clear the need for the solutions proposed by LaRouche, as a panel at the Bangkok conference demonstrated. Dr. Preedee Kasemsup, chairman of the Faculty of Legal Studies at Thammasat University, said that the upheaval in China, was the coming to the surface of years of trouble. Since 1979, Deng Xiaoping has led the “reform movement,” because he had to realize that the collective economy was dragging China behind other nations. This did not mean that Deng was “opening up” to the West, however—the situation in China was so desperate 10 years ago, that even a die-hard Communist like Deng had to realize that individual enterprise was essential to develop a country. The “reforms” began in agriculture, where private production increased at first, when Mao’s communes were dismantled. Deng began extending this policy to urban areas. But leasing state-owned factories to individuals could not work. In the 1950s, China’s entrepreneurs were liquidated by the Communists, and now, only those who have power to protect themselves risk becoming “capitalists.” That meant only the most powerful of the Communist Party bureaucracy.

This led to a level of corruption unprecedented in world history. These bureaucrats know nothing about developing or running industry; they have only one interest—to make money—and they ran industry into the ground. For this, these “crown princes” earned the undying hatred of the Chinese people.

Inflation took over the economy of China, and industry stopped as the state attempted to control inflation by cutting all credit. It was this policy that created the “blind wave,” as farmers were paid only worthless promissory notes for their crops, and construction workers were thrown out of work. There is no social welfare in China—if you have no job, you can only wander the country looking for work. A huge army of over 50 million people fled south to “prosperous” Guangdong province, only to be turned back north, to Manchuria. This has happened before in China, as dynasties broke down, and the conquerors enlisted the army of homeless to take control of the country.

Webster Tarpley, president of U.S. Schiller Institute, said that the “great Chinese people” had broken up the global condominium superpower deal—which was also a racist deal—between the Soviets and the United States. But the Chinese people have paid dearly for their courage. At least 1 million will die under Deng Xiaoping, he warned. Deng Xiaoping was the first “reform Communist,” not Mikhail Gorbachov, and now China’s disasters are showing the Soviets their own future. Already, 20-30 million died of hunger in the 1988-89 winter, and the biggest banking crisis in the recent period was not in a capitalist country, it was in China.

Deng’s policies were inspired by Chen Yun, a “Chinese Bukharin,” who took the Hong Kong “sweatshop” model for a nation of over 1 billion. “Investors” came in to take what profits they could before the country collapsed.

There has been no real development in China, Tarpley said. Not a single nuclear plant has been built; 20% of industry is always shut down due to electricity shortages. Because education was stopped for at least 10 years during the Cultural Revolution, labor productivity is worse than in 1949!

The Communist regime will end by the end of the century, Tarpley said, but we cannot leave China to the Hong Kong model. There is another economic policy, whose current champion is Lyndon LaRouche. This is what China must adopt.

In the 1920s, the great founder of modern China, Sun Yat-sen, wrote a book, *The International Development of China*, that proposed converting the war industry left from World War I to develop China. Sun warned, rightly, that if the problem of China were not solved, there would be another, greater war. He called for 100,000 miles of railroads, 1 million miles of roads, and three great ports and port cities to be built in north, central, and far southern China. LaRouche’s 50-year development program for the Pacific Basin, released in 1983, emphasizes the same type of development for the Pacific Ocean.

Gwei Way Kiat of Malaysia, an associate of the *Dragon Flag* publication of the Republic of China, gave an eyewitness account of Beijing in the days before the Tiananmen massacre. He saw with his own eyes, that there was no opposition to the students' movement among the population, but because the students would not yield to the government, they were killed. The U.S. government has been too weak, Gwei said. He attacked Henry Kissinger for his support for the Beijing government.

The broader Asian picture

The discussion on China was followed by presentations on the agriculture and economies of the Asian region. Ramtanu Maitra, editor of *Fusion Asia*, described the enormous potential and problems of the Indian subcontinent, which has a population as great as China's. Management of its tremendous water system is the question of survival for the subcontinent, Maitra said. Farm leader Denis McLachlan of New Zealand described how the constitutional changes in that country, especially the loss of the protection of the Crown, had opened it up to bankruptcy and total loss of national sovereignty through an unpayable \$56 billion foreign debt in 10 years. John Koehler of Australia reported that agriculture was being financially destroyed there. People now are almost better not to engage in any business, Koehler said, but Australia could double its food production readily.

Pakdee Tanapura, editor of the Thai newsletter *Off the Record*, warned that Thailand is far too complacent about its food production. It is a food exporter, but its per hectare productivity is considerably lower than that of even Bangladesh. Thailand's food surplus comes from the amount of arable land alone, but, surrounded as it is with starving Communist nations from which many thousands of refugees are fleeing, Thailand must build up its productivity in order to survive.

The Bangkok Resolution

The decisive question for human survival

In July 1988, the American opposition politician Lyndon LaRouche, on the occasion of the Democratic Party convention in Atlanta, warned that the world food shortage would have to lead quite soon to a strategic crisis between East and West. Following a rigged political trial, LaRouche was imprisoned for a 15-year sentence, and his warnings that the Communist regimes would one day seize the food they need-

ed by force, were thrown to the winds.

Politicians and bureaucrats have clung stubbornly to their delusion about agricultural "overproduction." They have hysterically refused to even consider LaRouche's proposal for an immediate and fundamental shift in the agricultural policy of the biggest producer countries toward expanding food production, and instead they have continued their policy of deliberate and long-term destruction of agricultural production capacities.

Today, just one year later, LaRouche's assertion is unfortunately more than confirmed:

"In Moscow, Fears of Famine Grow," reported *Welt am Sonntag* on June 18, in large letters on the front page, citing official Soviet sources. It is no longer any secret that in the developing sector, where people have been kept under the subsistence level for decades by the IMF, the banks, and the food cartels, this has reached the point of genocide beyond anything in the past. At the end of May, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in a speech before the World Food Council, informed the world that in this decade alone, 512 million people have died as a result of hunger. Mubarak called upon the industrial nations at least to forgive a portion of the debts of the developing countries, so that they could invest more money in building up the economy of their own nations.

Hunger kills more people in a single year than died in both world wars! And yet, an agricultural and economic policy is maintained, whose foremost declared principle is bankruptcy.

If one accepts the "logic" of the agricultural policy of the past years, then over 500 million people have died of "overproduction." The EC Commission, the U.S. Agriculture Department, and the big cartels have announced as the highest priority, "to reduce the burden of food surpluses." All sorts of measures to curtail production, quotas, price incentives, environmental restrictions—all of this is justified in the eyes of the politicians in order to cling to their delusion of "surpluses."

Even a spokesman of the WorldWatch Institute, an institution explicitly hostile to agriculture, sounded the alarm recently about the collapse of world stockpiles: Food supplies have dropped to only 61 days of current consumption—the lowest level since the 1972-73 world food crisis. Consumer prices in many countries are 50% above what they were 18 months ago. Further price hikes by as much as 75% can be expected, particularly in the poor countries; even hunger riots in many countries can no longer be ruled out of the question.

The food crisis has now become the most important strategic threat; it has shifted the previous potential for military conflict into second place. Already in March of this year, the *World Farmers' Times*, pointing to the catastrophic consequences of food shortage, rising prices, and astronomically high debts, noted that leading politicians of the world must "bring about a conceptual change, from stress on military security to stress on food security."

Collapse of agriculture in Communist sector

Just how right this is, is underlined not only by the shrinking figures for per capita food supplies for the world's population, but also the developments in the Communist part of the world speak a convincing language. The ethnic unrest in the Soviet Union, as well as the rebellions in China, are caused not least by the food supply situation, which is constantly getting worse and which for some has reached the absolute minimum. In Uzbekistan, the latest scene of unrest in the Soviet Union, per capita consumption of meat and sausage has fallen to 8 kilograms per year! In China, the supply for the population is so bad, that soldiers guard the crops, and then seize the grain right after it is harvested.

The catastrophic supply situation in the Soviet Union can no longer be kept under wraps. At a press conference given in the middle of June by leading Soviet politicians and scientists, Prof. Vladimir Tikhonov, an agricultural expert and member of the newly elected Parliament, said: "If we do not take radical measures this year to deal with agriculture, by next year we will be confronted with an outright famine."

Gorbachov's deputy Abalkin underlined this warning with the words: "If the economy does not stabilize in the next year and a half to two years, and no clear improvement takes place, there will be no way to prevent a shift to the right. Our society is getting out of balance. It cannot be predicted what form this will take, but it will be inevitable." And Viktor Belkin of the Academy of Sciences warned: "The economic situation is worse than we could have imagined it would be. Sometimes I doubt whether we can survive until fall. The economy is cannibalizing itself, it is consuming itself in order to stay alive."

LaRouche's proposal

LaRouche's warnings could hardly have been more clearly confirmed. At a press conference on Oct. 12, 1988 in West Berlin, which LaRouche gave together with his wife Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the chairman of the international Schiller Institutes, he repeated his warning, that the food crisis in the East bloc is becoming the greatest strategic threat to the West. At the same time, he proposed concrete measures to secure peace by solving the food crisis:

- A fundamental change in agricultural policy of the biggest producing countries, in favor of increasing production.

- Western aid to alleviate and solve the economic and food crisis in the East bloc, by shipments of food supplies and capital goods, as well as carrying out a program of economic reconstruction.

However, LaRouche made this aid contingent on the following three conditions:

- 1) The supplies could not be provided at the expense of the developing countries.
- 2) Future shipments could only follow market prices.
- 3) Western aid is linked to certain political concessions,

such as the reunification of Germany in freedom, and a real democratization in the Soviet Union and the entire East bloc.

LaRouche's proposals are highly relevant for the present moment. The governments of the West must act immediately to change their agricultural policy along the lines LaRouche has proposed; otherwise the supply crisis in the East bloc will become the greatest strategic threat to the West. It is indeed quite possible that if no other alternative is left to them, the Communist potentates will use force to appropriate the food supplies they need so desperately from the West.

As LaRouche stresses, a fundamental change in the agricultural policy of the West, with the goal of expanding production as rapidly as possible, is indispensable, since world agriculture as it is today, already can no longer feed the people of both West and East. The question is, who will be able to eat in the future—the people in the East, or those in the West? If the food and agricultural crises come to that point, then military conflicts become unavoidable.

To feed 5 billion people, we will have to produce 3.5 billion tons of grain per year—and that is exactly double this year's worldwide agricultural production. The "scissors" of supply and demand are opening ever wider. The present agricultural policy is simply a means to commit genocide.

If mankind is to survive, we need higher and more secure incomes for farmers and a doubling of agricultural production. This, however, can only occur if we defuse the "debt bomb" in time and overcome the present crisis through a new, just world economic order. This means:

- Debt moratorium and/or the transformation of existing unpayable debts into long-term credits with an interest rate no greater than 2%.

- Establishment of a new world monetary system, aimed at furthering productive development. The IMF and World Bank must be immediately dismantled and replaced with a new "two-tier" credit system that will encourage productive projects, while placing speculative financial deals at a disadvantage.

- Restoration of the sovereignty over credit of the national governments and placing of the central banks under their direction.

- Renunciation of the cynical policy of so-called "appropriate technologies" for the developing sector, and instead a return to the policy of financing infrastructural Great Projects, particularly in the areas of agriculture (prevention of drought and flood catastrophes, irrigation), transportation (railroads, highways, waterways), and energy (including nuclear energy).

- Doubling of agricultural production in the entire world, through dismantling the dictatorship of the international cartels and the Brussels EC, debt reorganization programs for foundering family businesses, and parity prices for farmers.

Unless we immediately adopt this policy, we will lose not only the battle against world hunger, but also the battle for world peace.