

Africa: the overlap between famine and geopolitics

by Douglas DeGroot

Freedom House, and its newly created cothinker organization, the Committee for the Free World (CFW), made up of networks from the right wing of the Socialist International, are in the forefront of collaborative efforts with U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig to set the Reagan administration on a confrontation course with the Soviet Union in southern Africa. Both social-democratic organizations are actively lobbying to get the Reagan administration to back South African military efforts to topple the Angolan government and get Cuban troops out of Angola.

If they are successful in pressing Reagan to ally with South Africa, the stage will be set for U.S.-Soviet confrontation throughout southern Africa. By drawing the U.S. closer to South Africa, Haig will be providing the pretext for the "class war" faction in the Soviet Union to enter the fray throughout the region by professing Soviet support for "national liberation movements."

The resulting conflict, producing population dislocation, disruption of food production, and disease, will accelerate population reduction in precisely the manner called for in the Carter State Department's Global 2000 report on population and now being carried out.

The anti-Soviet inquisition advocated by the CFW is also intended for the same goals of population reduction, in drought- and conflict-ridden eastern Africa.

The areas targeted for confrontation, eastern and southern Africa, coincide with those already hardest hit by drought and famine, and both have enormous development potential.

The advocating of aid cutoffs and regional wars to cut the African population, and hence its development potential, is a conscious policy. James Harkin, who did development work in Africa's Sahel region during the 1973-74 drought, was given prominent coverage in the March 9 op-ed page of the *New York Times*, where he wrote, "Let there be no mistake about the risk. In Africa's future, there may indeed be a failure of food production for local consumption. The consequences would be horrific. Any relief program would be over-

whelmed. Millions would die in weeks. My guess is that they would go silently to their graves. Then, at least, the problem of hunger in Africa would be solved."

Interviewed by *EIR*, Harkin stated that the big problem in Africa was the nation-state and advocated a return to tribally based village social organization which would produce food only for itself and would be organized together into administrative units smaller than the tiny state of Gambia. He categorically opposed food shipments or any other input from the developed countries that could lead to industrialization in Africa.

William F. May, dean of New York University's Graduate School of Business, who has publicly endorsed the Global 2000 report, has stated that "the World Bank report is right on the mark when it says that all development projects must now take into account the permanent high price of energy. Projects will be scaled down and this will mean greater population control."

Asked how to reduce populations in the Third World, May was explicit. "Populations will spill over borders. Regional wars are going to be fought over scarce resources. This will create more pressure on population and more wars. In some areas of the world this could become a way of life."

This is precisely the kind of scenario being launched in southern Africa. If successful in Africa, where 5 million of a mere total of 400 million population are already refugees (half of the world total), and where the rate of food production is half the rate of population growth, the continent will be destroyed in short order (see below).

Angola has been targeted to kick off this process. Freedom House is sponsoring an upcoming visit to the U.S. by anti-Angolan rebel and South African puppet Jonas Savimbi. Savimbi's rebel guerrilla group, UNITA, was deployed by Henry Kissinger in the latter's attempts to unseat President Agostinho Neto of Angola until the Clark Amendment cut off U.S. arms to Savimbi in 1976 in order to prevent the situation from developing into a major superpower conflict.

Although Savimbi's military capability has been

largely rooted out, South Africa continues to run military operations into Angola under UNITA cover, murdering and terrorizing the civilian population. They are carried out by black South African troops, led by South African officers and mercenaries recycled from the Zimbabwe independence war.

Savimbi's trip to Washington comes on the heels of a formal request by the State Department that the Clark Amendment prohibition on the U.S. arms supplies in Angola be repealed. Savimbi will reportedly meet with State Department officials, to lobby for military support.

The role of the CFW

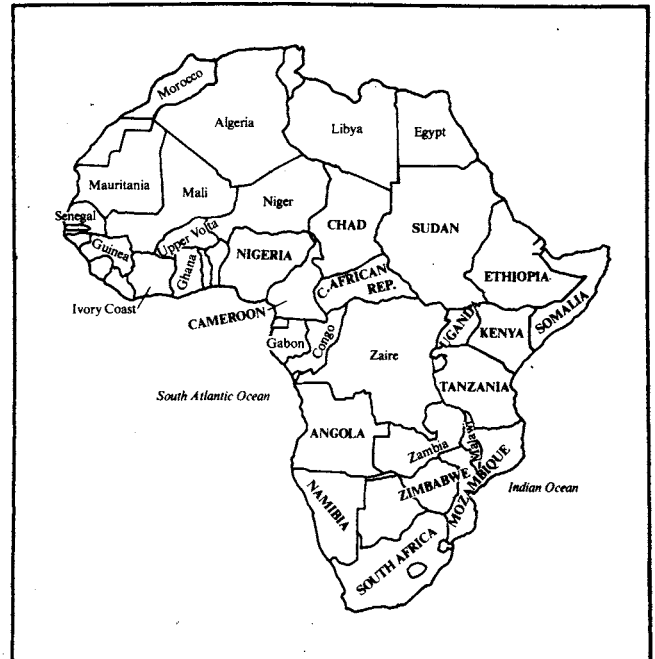
Commenting on the Savimbi trip, a spokesman for the CFW made absolutely clear that the reason for Savimbi's trip was to build UNITA up a pawn to be used against the Soviets. "I strongly back Savimbi," the spokesman said. "He is the kind of Third World leader we need. He needs arms, and we should give him arms so that he can get the Cubans out of Angola."

The CFW was organized last month to induce the Reagan administration to conduct a simplistic "battle of ideas in aid of Western strength in the face of the Soviet Union," he continued. The CFW's executive director is Midge Decker, and the group includes Michael Ledeen and Arnaud de Borchgrave of Kissinger's Georgetown CSIS. Both had previously touted Savimbi's UNITA as a force that could beat the Cubans if the U.S. supported the group. U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, and one of her top aides, Carl Gershman, were also initiating members of the CFW, but had to withdraw because of their government positions.

Gershman coordinated Savimbi's previous visit to the U.S., and Kirkpatrick has provocatively pushed for closer relations with South Africa despite her diplomatic position. She met with South African head of military intelligence Lieutenant-General Van der Westhuizen, when he recently visited the U.S., under false pretenses, along with four of his colleagues from the various branches of South African military intelligence.

Kirkpatrick called for closer ties with South Africa in a speech she gave before the Conservative Political Action Conference March 21. National Security Adviser Richard Allen has also called for closer relations with South Africa. The London *Sunday Times* claims that Reagan and Peking agree that Angola is internationally "the front line" against communism.

If the Reagan administration begins aiding the South Africa-UNITA operation, this will be seen as a go signal by the South Africans for a flight forward mode into Angola. The South Africans have increased their troop strength to 20,000 in Namibia, the launching site of their attacks into Angola.



The CFW spokesman expressed confidence that South Africa would then also be able to avoid making a deal with the Namibian liberation group SWAPO on the independence of Namibia, and can instead install their own puppets. As a result SWAPO leaders now fear "annihilation." "SWAPO may be finished as an effective fighting force within six months," said one SWAPO leader

the significant opposition to South African plans for a puppet government in Namibia, since SWAPO draws its membership primarily from the largest ethnic group in Namibia.

Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere is now openly talking of bringing in the Soviets in response to Haig's provocations. The unrest that could result inside South Africa will have two results that will make the antidevelopment population controllers happy. Refugees from South Africa will flood into Namibia and Zambia, according to the London *Economist*, as well as other southern African countries, exacerbating the existing drought-created problems. South Africa will also step up military raids against her neighbors in retaliation for the unrest, the explicit policy of P. W. Botha. Meanwhile, a Libyan-sponsored destabilization of Sudan would be another flashpoint for superpower conflict.

By pulling the Soviets into the war and chaos operation, Haig, like Kissinger before him, would greatly increase Soviet influence in Africa. In the words of one U.S. think-tanker: "If I were a Soviet hardline opponent of Brezhnev, I couldn't design an American policy that would be more advantageous to me than what Haig is doing now."

The roster: what destabilization and the IMF have done to Africa

by Cynthia Parsons

Regional wars provoked as part of the larger strategic resources geopolitical fight have placed Africa in the worst crisis in living memory. Famine, disease, floods, pestilence, and drought are now common occurrences in sub-Saharan Africa. The 1973 oil price hike, coupled with the doubling of wheat import prices, crippled the purely agrarian economies and weakened the mineral resources ones. Foreign exchange dried up and many countries wound up heavily indebted to the International Monetary Fund and further subjected to conditionalities. These conditionalities attempt to force the recipient country to become self-sufficient in food production through subsistence farming, to discourage industrialization programs, (except those based on local "linkages" and supplies rather than dependent on imports), and to adopt population control programs.

Numerous "villageization" schemes have brought food production to a halt such that the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) said in February that 47 African countries are facing "abnormal" food shortages and will need to import 2.5 million tons of food aid. Only 27 countries even raised their per capita food output during the 1970s. Sub-Saharan Africa faces the most serious problems since food production there fell 1 percent per year during this entire 1973-1980 period.

This year both South Africa and Zimbabwe have food surpluses. South Africa has already announced that it would use its food as a weapon against black countries. Last year South Africa supplied about 700,000 tons of maize to black Africa, notably Kenya, Zambia, Mozambique, Zaire, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland. Conversely, black countries could refuse to buy their food. Such sentiments have already been voiced by Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere.

The future is bleak, especially if the U.S. Congress allows food aid to be cut. Then the 250 million who face starvation will surely die.

East Africa region

Of the 16 countries in this region only Mauritius, with a per capita income of \$830, is classified as a middle-income country. The remainder average a per capita income of \$250. Life expectancy is about 50 years

and the average infant mortality rate is about 132 per 1,000 births. Even though Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe have substantial urban populations, the region is predominantly rural. With the exception of Zambia, all suffered reduced per capita food availability.

Zimbabwe's bumper crop this year will be the first choice of African countries who can afford to buy food. And Zimbabwe depends almost entirely on the South African railway network to move its exports.

Kenya: Serious food shortages, primarily in the cities and northern districts, have plagued the country for the past year. Along with drought, widespread lawlessness has resulted in stealing and smuggling of crops and cattle. Kenya used to be self-sufficient in cereals, but with the failure of the maize crop in the Rift Valley, millions are now suffering from malnutrition.

At least a quarter of the 170,000 people in the Turkana district of North West Kenya are destitute, having lost their herds of cattle, goats, and camels to drought, disease, or raids by neighboring tribes. While famine relief is available, a narrow dividing line exists between starvation and survival.

Tanzania: President Julius Nyerere's recent statement that his country is being hit with the "worst famine in 40 years," meaning that many Tanzanians will die this year, indicates the failure of the appropriate technologies policy. More than 90 percent of Tanzania's 18.6 million population live off the land; 80 percent of their export earnings come from cash crops, which suffered a 20 percent decline during the 1970s.

The self-reliance villages, into which 30 million were forcibly relocated, scratch the soil with sticks and hoes to try to feed themselves. This is a testament to the IMF and the World Bank conditionalities, which used Tanzania as a model for their genocidal forced villagization scheme. Conditions are so precarious that adverse weather means starvation. Because Tanzania is an IMF-run economy, food imports are not permitted.

Uganda: There has been no Ugandan economy since 1971 and the destruction of the "Pearl of Africa" by madman Idi Amin Dada. His Pol Pot-like regime cleared the country of the educated and literate. Doctors and professionals were killed or forced to leave. The

cities became nightmares, and people fled into the bush only to be attacked by bandits and opposing tribes.

Acute hunger and starvation are the result, especially in the targeted remote areas of the Karamoja in the east and the west Nile regions. Cattle and crops are at the mercy of bandits. Last year 9,000 women and children died over a two-month period due to brigands and drought. Food relief is minimal.

Mozambique: Under the pretext that the Mozambique government had expelled several Americans who had been targeted as "CIA agents" by Cuban advisers, the U.S. State Department early last month announced it would cut off \$5 million in wheat aid and 27,000 tons of rice. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Mozambique is the "hardest hit in southern Africa" by two years of drought, as well as famine caused by alternating drought and sudden flood-producing rainfall. Cereal production is 15 percent below the 1960s' average production. Subsistence production of the two staple foods, cassava and maize, was less affected by the Zimbabwe fighting, but the disappearance of thousands of small expatriate traders who marketed the surpluses from the subsistence farms reduced food supplies to urban areas. South Africa placed pressure on the Mozambican economy when the South African railway refused to send commodities other than oil and coal through to the Mozambique port of Beira through which the latter receives foreign exchange.

Foreign-exchange income has dropped with the reduction of Mozambican workers in South African mines.

Botswana: While this country is run by South Africa, which owns and runs its diamond mines, its 820,000 population is hit by drought. The entire country was declared drought-stricken in May 1979 after it received no rain for three years. Virtually everything edible, except beef, comes from South Africa. Cattle are suffering from drought, and hoof and mouth disease, which had been eradicated before the Zimbabwe war.

Bantustans: A total of 100,000 people are threatened by drought and up to 30 percent of these may die immediately. Bantustans without mineral resources are mere concentration camps without an economy.

Angola: Fugitives from Namibia are straining Angola's already weak economy. An estimated 50,000 Namibians have fled to Angola to escape fighting between South African troops and the Namibian independence movement, the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO), a tenfold increase since 1978.

Angola's food production has steadily declined 29 percent since her 1975 independence.

the past three years, along with labor and transportation shortages, have made distribution very difficult. This year's maize crop is predicted to be 17,740 tons. The 1978 harvest was 400,000 tons.

Cameroon: One hundred thousand Chad refugees alone are in camps in Cameroon, where conditions are dangerously unhealthy. Hazardous sanitation is threatening an outbreak of disease which could occur with the onset of the June rains. Uncertainty over the intentions of Libya's Qaddafi toward Chad increases the possibility that refugees from Libya's attempted annexation of Chad may not return.

The Horn of Africa

Ethiopia: The government has requested \$1.5 billion from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to repair war damage in Eritrea and the Ogaden desert and to rehabilitate the starving 5 million war and drought victims. Commission officials say that this amount is so large that there will be little chance of its immediate acceptance. About 250,000 Ethiopian refugees will soon be returning from Somalia.

Ethiopia has lost more than 2 million people who have fled during the Ethiopia-Eritrea and Somali wars. More than 400,000 fled to Sudan and another 42,000 have encamped in tiny Djibouti where every five inhabitants is a refugee. The Horn's strategic location, whose ports protected resources entering Africa from the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, has so deteriorated that the area has turned into virtual wilderness.

Food shortages affect a large part of the country as rainfall has been deficient for two years. Per capita annual consumption fell from 106 kilograms to 89 kilograms in 1979. Food production has fallen 20 percent since 1975. Coffee is the most important export crop, but low prices have reduced export earnings.

Somalia: Somalia has become a godforsaken land in the Northeast Horn region where some 1.5 million fugitive refugees and even more nomads wait for death in the worst drought (the two major rivers are running dry this year) in 30 years. They represent more than a third of the Somali population. Most of them were driven out of Ethiopia's Ogaden region during the Ethiopian and Somali wars.

There are now 30 camps whose occupants are 90 percent women and children starving to death because there is not enough food. Food is allocated according to height and weight. Seasonal rains are now causing havoc in many camps. Flooding is widespread and makes food distribution impossible. An outbreak of measles in the Hudor camp in the southwest has killed 200 people in the past three weeks, mostly children. In west-central Somalia, officials at the Booco camp have said the situation was "explosive" after camp inhabitants had rioted because of food shortages.

On March 8, the government made an international appeal for nearly 1.5 million tons of food to meet a projected shortfall since "stocks of certain essential food commodities have a reserve number of days."