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THE LOOMING FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA

HEARING

BEFORE THE

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THE LOOMING FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2000

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Benjamin A. Gilman (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Chairman GILMAN. The Committee will come to order, if Members will take their seats, and please close the doors.

This morning we are conducting a hearing on the conflict and famine in Ethiopia.

Ms. Bertini, I would normally say it is very kind of you to be with us today, but I suppose that that would not be quite accurate, since you are in London and we are communicating with you by teleconference. Nonetheless, I am so pleased that this Committee now has the technology to be able to take advantage of your expertise from afar, and you usually are in far distant places throughout the world.

We appreciate your taking the time out of your busy schedule to speak with us about the starvation in Ethiopia and the effects of renewed fighting, and our nation's ability to address it.

The House will begin voting on a series of measures in a very few minutes. At that time, we may have to interrupt our hearing. I would like, therefore, to go immediately to your testimony, and I will postpone my opening statement until after we return from those votes; and I would ask my colleagues to do the same.

At this point, I would like to ask our Ranking Minority Member, Mr. Gejdenson, the gentleman from Connecticut, for any opening remarks.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is an important area. We have 16 million people in the Horn of Africa who risk starvation. There is a brutal and senseless war going on. It would be easy to throw our hands up and say there is nothing we can do, and they brought it on themselves, but obviously, that would just leave a lot of innocent people to suffer and die.

There are lots of international organizations like Save the Children in my own State and many others who are trying to save people. The United States ought to use all of its resources to stop the war and end the starvation.

I am looking forward to hearing from Ms. Bertini, whom I had the privilege of being with earlier in the week.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Gejdenson.

Catherine Bertini has directed the World Food Program since 1992. She has done extremely well. In 1999, 88 million people around the world received World Food Program food aid. When the Secretary-General learned of the threat of famine in the Horn of Africa, he appointed Ms. Bertini as his special representative to that region. With her typical enthusiasm, Catherine Bertini immediately embarked on a mission to the Horn, followed by a thoughtful and comprehensive report. As a representative from our great State of New York, I take special pride in mentioning that Ms. Bertini is a graduate of the State University of New York at Albany.

We welcome you, Catherine Bertini. We look forward to your testimony. Your written statement will be entered into the record in full. Please feel free to summarize.

Ms. Bertini.

STATEMENT OF CATHERINE BERTINI (VIA VIDEO-CONFERENCE), EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, AND SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE DROUGHT IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

Ms. BERTINI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I am pleased to be here with you too, even though "here" means London; and I appreciate the invitation. But I would be with you and Members of the Committee anywhere as we work together on critical issues that are a matter of life and death.

I also want to thank the staff of the embassy here in London, very efficient staff, for working with your very efficient staff who have made this possible.

You remember during the mid-1980's, when President Ronald Reagan said a hungry child knows no politics. Once again, his charge and that commitment that he made on behalf of the American people is something that we have to bring to fore, because it is true that while some of the countries in the region of the Horn of Africa are involved in a brutal war, we have to remember the hungry children. Once again, credit must be given to the United States of America who has taken an early lead in addressing these problems of the crisis in the Horn of Africa.

I will summarize my statement and ask you to put the rest in the record.

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection, your full statement will be made a part of the record.

Ms. BERTINI. Thank you.

As the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa, I have found that, first of all, the crisis is not yet a famine, but it easily could be; and it could be unless we put every effort possible into preventive measures in order to ensure that a famine does not occur. There have been 3 years of consecutive poor rainfall which has made it very hard for people and for animals. Their food is gone and their water is scarce. The health conditions are deteriorating, and the hardest hit people are those who make their living with their animals, pastoralists who wander in search of food and water for themselves and for their animals. We are always particularly concerned about women and children, because they are the

most vulnerable. We estimate that in the whole region there are 16 million people who are at risk.

The Secretary-General's timing in naming a special envoy was critical, I think, in order to put the United Nations in a position to be proactive, to be raising the issues and to be encouraging additional contributions and more coordinated aid efforts in the region.

You will note from the map of the region entitled Greater Horn of Africa, Drought-Affected Areas, that there are huge areas affected by this lack of rain, and that they cross borders between Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia in particular. There are many people who cross borders, people who are, again, moving with their animals to find food and water, and they do not pay attention to where the borders are, they are just looking for relief. That means that we have to be very careful within the humanitarian community that we are providing complementary assistance. We don't want to place, for instance, a huge feeding center near the border in one country and then have that mean that hundreds and thousands of people are moving across the border to another area as well. So we have to have complementary programming.

We also have to be very careful on the security side, because as people move, so do problems. So we have to be sure we have communications systems set up; and we are now in the process of doing that, so that we can have aid workers communicate with each other on a regular basis throughout the region.

We have found that the biggest unmet needs are for clean water and for basic medicines. We have found that support for the livestock sector is almost nonexistent, and many of the people who are affected count on their livestock for their livelihood; and we have found that although food aid has been coming in, we need to ensure that we have the right kind of quantity and quality.

For instance, people who had been counting on their animals but no longer have animals, were used to some basic protein in their diet. They need to still get some of that. We also need to be sure that children have the right kind of food when they are very vulnerable.

I proposed to the Secretary-General, and he accepted that the United Nations do a new assessment and by the end of May announce an additional appeal. There are appeals already on the books, appeals already to donor countries asking for assistance. They were prepared with estimates based on assumptions made in November and December of last year, and those assessments assumed that there would be rain by now. But the rain has been sporadic; it is not enough. So this new appeal will build on the current requests and ask for additional assistance, especially in the areas of water needs and health needs.

We are hoping that UNICEF will play a lead role, as well as WHO providing medical expertise and FAO in its efforts to help with livestock and seeds.

The OCHA, the United Nation's humanitarian coordinators organization, is playing a very active role. They provided excellent support for my mission, and now, they have a staff member appointed by the Secretary-General to report to him through OCHA in order to manage the coordination of humanitarian affairs for the Horn of

Africa. He is Manuel Aranda daSilva, and he is based in Addis Ababa, already at work.

One more area that needs to be highlighted is the area of transportation. The ports that we will be using need additional upgrades. The World Food Program has been working on that now. Also, the roads in and out of those ports need to be improved, and we are asking donors for assistance in helping to do that. The transport within the individual country, especially Ethiopia, needs extra expertise, and we have been providing that to the government, but it also needs coordination among all the donors—the NGO's and the United Nations—so that we can maximize the use of a limited amount of trucks and reduced port capacity.

Then, finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to say, how can the United States help and what else can the United States do? I did have the opportunity to talk with you a bit about this before and with Mr. Gejdenson and with others. Let me just quickly summarize.

First of all, USAID has been very proactive, acting early and quickly in the Horn. They have given very generous contributions of food, and I would hope that when the new appeal comes out later, they would continue to give generous contributions, assuming that the needs have increased after the assessment is finished. Related to that, however, I would hope that the United States would take a special look at the needs, the non-food needs like medicines, water supply, cans to carry water, and seeds and tools, and livestock expertise and support. I would hope that the United States would make contributions also to the agencies to be able to work in these very crucial areas.

We have found that even in the regions where the most severe hunger existed, the people who died had died not of malnutrition primarily, but of diarrhea, of measles, of upper respiratory diseases, things that could have been—people who could have been saved with the right kind of medicine.

Another area I think where the United States can be helpful is in upgrading the roads, particularly the ones in and out of the ports in Djibouti and Berbera. Because even once the port improvements are complete, we still need decent roads; otherwise, that will slow down the movement of food and other important items in and out of Ethiopia in particular. Then also the United States and its other partners, donor partners and all of the NGO's and the United Nations must work very, very closely on coordination, perhaps more closely than we have in any other place, because, again, of a limited port capacity. It is very important for us to coordinate when the ships are coming into port, from whom the trucks are being leased, when the trucks are available; all of these things are critically important.

Finally, the United States might consider sending some experts for a few months to the regional coordination unit to be able to provide assistance on issues like livestock development, public health, and possibly security, because security for United Nations staff and humanitarian staff in the region is critically important as well.

Most importantly, of course, in addition to this critical humanitarian need, the United States could use its political and diplomatic skills in a major way in its efforts to bring peace to the people in the region.

The American people have reached out to poor people and people who need food and medicine throughout the world in many generous ways before. The American people have saved millions of lives. With your leadership, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Gejdenson, Members of the Committee, the active work of the Administration and the brave work of NGO's and U.N. staff around the world, I know we can do so again in the Horn of Africa.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bertini appears in the appendix.]

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Catherine Bertini, for your excellent report. I know you have a time constraint, and we will try to be brief.

You mentioned a number of things that we should be doing—generous contributions and the upgrading of the ports and coordination of relief activities and provision of livestock, et cetera.

What do you feel is the most critical that we should do immediately while we are working on this? What is the top priority?

Ms. BERTINI. From a humanitarian perspective, two things I would say, Mr. Chairman. First, is money to upgrade the roads so that the goods can move through; and second, is additional support for medical and water-related non-food items.

Chairman GILMAN. In upgrading the roads, are they capable of fulfilling that responsibility if we help them financially?

Ms. BERTINI. The way it would be done, Mr. Chairman, is that the World Food Program would contract people to do the work and would monitor and follow the work. We would bring in some of our own experts to supervise this and hire local people to manage it. So we have had good success in doing this in areas around the world before, so I can assure you that we would do it quickly and well enough for the food trucks to move through.

Chairman GILMAN. Will the ports in Djibouti and Berbera be adequate to handle the transport requirements?

Ms. BERTINI. That is a good question. First, let me say that we anticipate that 170,000 tons of food and other items need to move through either of those ports, particularly into Ethiopia. That is assuming the current needs, but that is for all of the humanitarian aid. The needs might go up.

Djibouti can probably provide about 140,000 or 145,000 tons. Berbera can probably provide about 20,000 or 25,000 tons. So that means that it can be handled, but it is very, very tight, and that only assuming that everything goes extremely well.

The Djiboutian port officials believe that the Djibouti port could handle actually as much as 200,000 tons, but that would require extremely smooth coordination. If this does not work, then we will have to go back to the officials in Ethiopia and Eritrea and discuss the use of the Assab port.

Chairman GILMAN. Ms. Bertini, are you aware of any of the food or humanitarian supplies being diverted to the war effort?

Ms. BERTINI. We, of course, investigate every time we hear anything, and just in the last couple of days, we have had a couple of allegations that we are looking into. For instance, we learned that the government sent about 1,132 metric tons of food to displaced people, and because we learned this after the fact, we were not able to monitor this food, and we must be able to review it.

We also understand that some food has been going to another area where it is intended to be used to feed displaced people, but this is food that had been requested for drought victims. So it means that we have to upgrade our ability to monitor the food from the warehouse to ensure that it is going to the right people.

Chairman GILMAN. One last question. Six bridges in between the port of Berbera and a famine area are reported to be out. Can we put Bailey bridges in and leave them there? Would that not serve economic development interests in Somaliland, as well as meet our logistic requirements?

Ms. BERTINI. Absolutely. Part of the improvements of the port and the road and bridges and access ways out of Berbera would certainly be longer standing to help support the economic development of this region in that peaceful part of Somalia.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you very much, Ms. Bertini.

Mr. Gejdenson.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Thank you. Let me first say, the ability to predict the weather is much better today, so we knew that there were going to be rainfall shortages. It is easier to mobilize this Committee to hold a hearing today, so I am not just blaming others, because there is a crisis now, it is immediate. We have so many places in the world to pay attention to; and if you tried to get our attention 3 years ago or 2 years ago, it probably would have been more difficult.

But are there things that we should have been doing 3 years ago, 2 years ago, 1 year ago that would have made this situation more manageable, and what would they be?

Ms. BERTINI. Two things I think, Mr. Gejdenson.

First of all, generally the United Nations has a much better process for being able to predict drought areas. I should say, beyond the United Nations, coordinating with U.S. facilities, as well as other international facilities. So this particular drought was predicted to be less severe than it was. There were a lot of efforts made last year on the part of the governments in the region, as well as the agencies supported by donors such as the United States, to bring in a lot of food and to work on contingency planning. The problem is, even the worst-case scenario presumed that there would be a longer amount of rainfall by now, and that did not occur.

Over the long term, in answer to your question, we need to be rethinking how we deal with droughts in this part of Africa, or in any areas where droughts come often. Because if they do, I think what we have to do is help provide support and assistance to the governments to be able to react in a different way.

I heard an interesting review of this by Dr. Richard Leakey, who is now the head of the Civil Service in Kenya, when I visited him on this mission. He said, we in this part of Africa have to start thinking about droughts as African winters and we have to change our mind-sets. He said, you people in the north where the snow comes, you know you are not going to grow food then, you know you have problems with passable roads, so you make preparations for that. Somehow, we have to rethink how we position food, how we plan for food for the animals over the long term.

One thing that might help the process, as Secretary-General Kofi Annan has not only asked me to go to work on this issue of the

current drought, but he has also asked Mr. Diouf of FAO would he work on some longer-term solutions. As yet, we don't have those to discuss.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Let me just ask, I think it is clear that we have to do whatever we can to help the people who are suffering, no matter how insane the policies of the government in a country may be. But how do you find—how do you make sure that your involvement, our involvement, doesn't increase the ability of the government to sustain the war? In a sense, they now can ignore several hundred thousand people or more who need assistance because the international community is rushing in, and so they can put all of their resources and effort into fighting?

Ms. BERTINI. I think the drought, first of all, is bigger than the government's capacity to be able to handle it, even if there were not a war, and that would be true for both the governments that are involved in war. Of course, we are also providing assistance in Kenya and Somalia and Uganda, Tanzania and elsewhere, and the war is not an issue in most of those places. So I think the assistance is necessary, in any event.

Does it provide a bit of relief to the government that we are sending this food, additional food because of the drought? Perhaps. But the people who are drought-affected I believe need massive amounts of food from us no matter what.

Do we have an alternative? I don't think so. I think we have to be sending the food and making sure that it is going to the drought-affected people. That is our big challenge. But we have to send the food, because the alternative is that innocent people will suffer even more.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Thank you.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Gejdenson.

Mr. Royce, the Distinguished Chairman of our Subcommittee on Africa.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for calling this hearing on famine in the Horn, and on America's effort to help. I do hope we have the opportunity to look at one of the root causes of this famine, which is the wasteful war between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Today, we are looking at a scenario in which both nations have both spent to date, $1 billion. Every day that goes by, a half-million is spent by Ethiopia alone on paying their troops. When we talk about the lack of vehicles for transport, the infrastructure problems in the famine context, I think it is important for us to realize that those vehicles have been commandeered. They are at the front. There is a reason why those vehicles are not there to transport humanitarian assistance.

This is the largest war in the world at the moment, and millions are starving, and I don't think we should pull any punches. This is gruesome. It is a gross devaluing of human life by both sides. The international community must speak out against this sad chapter in Africa's history, including imposing an arms embargo; and I commend the administration for pushing that at the United Nations.

Often, the war is described as senseless. The leaders of these two countries were friends, so it goes. They fought side-by-side against

the previous regime. So people ask, how could these two countries, which showed so much promise, take up arms against one another, and lead tens of thousands of their young men and women to their deaths and help generate the crisis with a famine?

This is not senseless. The war has deep fundamentals. The countries are at odds over economic and political issues. The war has cultural roots, and as for the territorial dispute, in my estimation, it is a convenient ruse for both nations wishing to deflect attention from the deeper issues of this war.

One of the deepest issues driving this carnage is that both governments see domestic advantage in making war; that is the sad reality. Until we get beyond arguing over old maps and treaties, tens of thousands of young men and women will continue to die, and the world will hear about the perverse celebrations from both capitals over how many enemy lives they have snuffed out. No, this war has an all-too-real logic.

Finally, let me share a New York Times report of this Tuesday from the trenches:

> Ethiopian soldiers said they had found something in the trenches emphatically not dead: a 1-month-old baby. Many women are in the Eritrean army and the baby may have indicated just how this war has become a part of normal life in Ethiopia and Eritrea over the last 2 years. "I got the feeling that he lived there," said an Ethiopian soldier as he watched the baby being carried from the trench.

Ms. BERTINI. Mr. Royce, I think, first of all, the humanitarian work is affected by our inability to use the ports in Eritrea, so we have to use the Djibouti and Berbera ports, and it would be easier if we could use the ports in Eritrea.

Second, the people on the border are displaced; there are many people who lived on the border in either country who are now displaced because of the war, and while that is not necessarily a drought-affected area, it just does put many more people at risk because of what is happening in the war, and they are cut off from all their normal facilities—food, medicine, everything else. So it makes for a lot more people who need assistance, though not drought-related.

On the drought-related side, in addition to the port, there are some problems in terms of the distribution. There is a limited trucking capacity, and there is interest on the part of the government to manage the trucking facilities. Some of this was done before the war, but it is much more controlled now, let's say. I cannot say whether that is a result of the war or not, but I can say that we are working with the government to try to allow experts from the United Nations, particularly the World Food Program, to be able to help manage the distribution in certain parts, for instance, of Ethiopia where we feel that we could do it relatively efficiently, compared to the current operation of distribution.

So I think those are some of the areas where we have seen effects so far.

Mr. ROYCE. What are the people that you are helping saying about the war? What is their observation?

Ms. BERTINI. When I visited with people in the countries, we didn't talk about the war; we talked about the people's lives and how they were struggling to keep their lives and their families together. So I think the war was very far away from some of them.

Of course, in some communities, the husbands and fathers weren't there; they were perhaps at the war, but when we asked where they were, that is not what we were told.

Chairman GILMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Ms. McKinney.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a statement that I would like to submit for the record.

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection, your full statement will be made a part of the record.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Thank you.

Ms. Bertini, first of all, I want to express my agreement with the words that have been said before me.

But, Ms. Bertini, in your testimony, your written testimony, you make the observation that the poorest people really don't know anything about the politics that are driving this; they are merely the victims.

I am looking at a map of the affected places, and I believe Gode is there. I hope you have the same map. I am looking at Djibouti and Berbera, and it appears to me that by the use of those two ports, you have access to more of the people who are hardest hit.

Could you talk to me about the use of those ports and the advantages? Because you have mentioned the use of the port of Assab, but it is farther away from the areas that are hardest hit. Talk to me.

Ms. BERTINI. The Djibouti and Berbera ports are closer to the people in the southeastern part of Ethiopia, and they would be used—particularly the Djibouti port—would in any event, but the port in Assab is larger and the roads coming in from the port of Assab are better than they are from Djibouti, which is why we need to have money to upgrade the road, because with the heavy trucks running on the road, upgrading would certainly help dramatically.

The same with Berbera. The roads are very bad coming in, but as the Chairman pointed out, if we did upgrade them, including the bridges as well as the roads, we would also have long term economic development of that region, that part of the world.

I think it is important to point out, though, if you look on that map, that the most populated region the drought is affecting is actually north of Addis Ababa; and that is where the Assab port could have been useful.

But I don't want to demean the Djibouti and Berbera ports. They are good ports and we need to use them; we just need to make some upgrades to make them work better.

Let me say also that it is not like we could go in tomorrow and use the Assab port anyway. There would need to be a lot of changes made. Many of the workers who used to work in the Assab port were Ethiopian, for instance, so there would need to be new workers recruited and trained. We would have to bring in expatriate drivers and they would have to have some place to stay, both in the port and over the border. There are a lot of issues that have not been resolved anyway.

Ms. MCKINNEY. What do you know about the use of land mines along that road leading to the Assab port?

Ms. BERTINI. I asked the Eritreans that question, actually, and they said that the road wasn't mined, but it is an issue that we would have to look very carefully at, not only the roads, but the sides of the roads. Because if a truck needs repair, it goes off to the side of the road; or is trying to avoid a goat in the middle of the road, it goes off. One would have to have pretty sure knowledge that it wasn't mined.

So I don't know; I haven't asked, and it is something that needs to be checked. Also, in the harbor.

Ms. MCKINNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Ms. McKinney.

Mr. Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be relatively brief, and if my questions have already been asked and answered, I apologize, but I had another Committee that I had to be at.

So my main question is this: I just met with the Ambassador from Ethiopia in my office the other day and we have met with the Eritrean ambassador numerous times; and this war, all wars, many wars are pointless, and this one seems to be particularly pointless and a waste of human life and resources of countries which ought to be putting these goods to other uses.

But could you elaborate somewhat on the connection between the war and how this is going to affect the ability of the countries to some extent deal with the famine themselves and what, if anything, the United States should be doing to resolve that?

Ms. BERTINI. The most important thing the United States should be doing is, at the highest levels possible, trying to find peace for the region and ensure an end to the war. From a humanitarian perspective, let me say that the drought is larger than the war in terms of the country's ability to manage the assistance needed because of the drought. So we must be there, whether there is a war or not.

However, there are some issues in terms of the transport capacity and the management of the trucks, the port availabilities, that are affected by the war.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chabot.

Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. I appreciate all of your great efforts in this work that you are doing.

Ms. BERTINI. Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. You mentioned before that part of the problem was the inability to access the ports of Massawa and Assab, or you said the ports in Eritrea, leaving the impression that it was Eritrea. Is that the impression that you wish to leave, that it was the Eritreans that were not enabling us to use those ports? Why can't we use the ports is the question.

Ms. BERTINI. First of all, let me say your voice was cutoff for just a second, but I got the end of your question, which is why can't we use the port, specifically, why? Is that correct?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes. Who is not enabling us to use the ports that are in Eritrea?

Ms. BERTINI. The message from the Eritrean Government is, you can use the ports, you can use them tomorrow, or at least this was

the message to me. Whether or not this has changed because of the outbreak of more fighting in the last week, I do not know. But the message of the Eritreans was, you can use the port tomorrow.

The message from the Ethiopians was, we don't want you to use the port, and besides, we don't think it is necessary to use the port, because we think that for all of the food and everything else that needs to come in, there is enough capacity at the Djibouti port, with the Berbera port as back-up. I will relate a couple of things on my discussions with both of them. In my discussions with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, we discussed this, and he agreed that if his analysis is wrong, his analysis being that the Djibouti port plus Berbera were enough, that I would come back to him and we would discuss other options. He made it known that the Assab port would be his last option to be discussed, but we would find another way to be able to get food and other goods into the country.

On the Eritrean side, I talked with them about by what means we could use the ports today, and there were several issues involved there. One is, there are some technical issues where there would need to be some work done which the World Food Program is doing—in the event that that port would be available. Massawa is not a port we would be using, we would be using the Assab port. On that side, we would need to, first of all, be assured that there are no mines on the roads or alongside the roads.

Second, we would need to bring in an expatriate group of truckers in order to drive the trucks, and we would have to build housing in the port and across the border in Ethiopia for the truckers.

Then also, we have——

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is there an impediment to that? Would there be somebody to prevent you from doing that?

Ms. BERTINI. No. Assuming both countries said it was all right, no.

Mr. ACKERMAN. You don't anticipate there would be objection to that?

Ms. BERTINI. Not if they agreed we could use the port. That would be part of the usage of the port. It would be required. We couldn't do it otherwise.

Then, can I continue? Would you like to hear the rest?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes.

Ms. BERTINI. Then we have the issue of staff in the port because my understanding is that 75 percent of the stevedores, people who worked in the port before were Ethiopian, so the port would have to find more people.

So there are technical things that we are working on in order to try to be ready should we be allowed to use Assab port.

But the other issue, Mr. Ackerman, is that some donors have some reticence about sending food for Ethiopia through Eritrea, because 2 years ago, there were 70,000 tons of food which the Eritreans appropriated and used themselves that was destined for Ethiopia. I raised this question with the Eritrean authorities also, and their answer today is, they can assure us that they won't do that again.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Are you confident that there are sufficient trucks for the relief effort in country?

Ms. BERTINI. No, there are not sufficient trucks for the relief effort.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Have you put out a call for additional trucks?

Ms. BERTINI. We have asked for additional resources, and the World Food Program is bringing in 108 trucks that will be there the 1st of June. They are from Sudan; we are leasing them from the Sudan. Other private-sector people are bringing in additional trucks and the World Food Program is bringing in 400 additional trucks.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I just wanted to remind you that part of the huge problem the last time around, in 1983–1984, was that there were so many different kinds of trucks that the major problem became getting parts, because you were able to get parts for the wrong trucks, and I just want to remind you to be alerted, to try to coordinate trucks and parts from the same people.

An additional question that I have——

Chairman GILMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. ACKERMAN. May I just have one more quick question?

Chairman GILMAN. Without objection.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The effectiveness of the Ethiopian Government's Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission in their response, how would you evaluate their ability to do the job?

Ms. BERTINI. I think that they are professional. I think that they have been understanding of this problem and raising flags about it and I think that they have some good people who are well-organized. It is, however, a bureaucracy, and like all bureaucracies, it sometimes moves slower than some of us would like. But the United Nations has a good relationship with them, and we hope that we can work out any difficulties.

Chairman GILMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Meeks.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I too just want to join in thanking you for all of the work that you have been doing in trying to prevent further disaster over in Ethiopia.

Let me ask this question, though. It seems as though it was just yesterday, although I know it was 16 years ago, when we were faced with this kind of situation. I am wondering, with all of the modern technology of today, and with all of the opportunities, with reference to irrigation, et cetera, what are we doing or what has been done or what can we do so that we can make sure that we don't have to react after the fact again; but we can prevent this from happening beforehand by making sure that we are using our modern technology so that people won't be affected by droughts, as they are now?

Ms. BERTINI. I think in this part of the world, we are always going to find that there are people who are trying to deal with the negative effects of the drought. I think that this year is different than the mid-1980's, because we—the governments, the United Nations, the United States—everybody is raising this flag relatively early to say, we really need to get this assistance now.

But I think that your question goes much deeper than that, and that is, what could we be doing to help the people over the long term?

There are some kinds of public works, in fact, a lot of public works that have been done, especially in Ethiopia and Eritrea, since the mid-1980's, but because the land mass is so large and there are so many people, it will take many more decades before a lot of that is useful for the whole population is completed.

But to give you an example, there have been a lot of projects where the people themselves have worked on irrigation programs. They have worked on terracing for erosion control, because sometimes when it rains it just wipes out so much top soil. Much of the area where the livestock roam is very dry, it is very arid, and there are big cracks that just form naturally in the ground. So there has been a lot of work to bring rocks in. This is manual labor, it is very tough. By the way, the women carry the rocks mostly, the men just kind of put them in the ground.

But anyway, there has been a lot of work filling in a lot of these crevices, because otherwise, it cuts off the space that the animals would have to move around.

But again, it is such a big place that even a significant amount of development work goes a relatively short way in terms of trying to deal with a big problem like drought.

But when I think about the future, there are some kinds of things that could be done, and I will point to two, because these are two of the biggest areas that we saw where there were really gaps, and one of them is in livestock management. Since so many people, especially in this region, count on livestock for their livelihood, I think that much more could be done to bring in some expertise, to train people, local people in the regions, who could carry on then this information about how to store food for your livestock, how to find water when there is very little water available, how to make a decision when to sell before your cows die, a lot of different kinds of things that our livestock expert on the mission was telling us about. So I would hope we could build a network to help with that.

The other network that is desperately critical is the health and water network. This is something that just doesn't exist very much. I don't mean the wells as much as clean water sources. We went to places throughout the region where if one was sick, one would have to go many miles to find a clinic to be able to help. So you don't do that unless you are very sick, because there is no public transportation. You go on the back of a donkey or somebody carries you. It just means that without that kind of an extension of medical care—for basic medicines, basic medicines for diarrhea and vaccinations, colds—many more people are at risk.

So I would answer you that those are two things that I think could be done with a lot of effort but not too many resources.

Chairman GILMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

Let me just mention, we have a series of votes we are being interrupted with. It will be about 45 minutes of votes, so we are going to have to reduce our time for each Member.

Mr. Payne, please be brief.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief.

Let me certainly thank you, Ms. Bertini, for the fine work that the World Food Program is doing. This is a problem. It seems to me, we should really be further ahead. I just listened to what you

said, and certainly, I am sure that you would appreciate more funding for the famine early warning system. We have given $7 million this year for that. But I think that is something that is cyclical.

There was a big famine in 1962–1963. I was in the Wollo Province and Dese City in the 1972–1973 famine and spent time there. At that time, people were nomadic, though, and they were moving, and no one really knew the famine was happening. It was, as a matter of fact, referred to as the "unknown famine," because the administration of the country did not let out the fact that this famine was occurring; and it was very, very devastating, and I remember working up in that area back then. Then in the 1982–1983 famine, the same thing happened.

Thus we know that they are cyclical, we know that they come about every 10 years.

It would appear to me that—it would seem like some of the things that you have mentioned, but it seems to me that there should be a real world effort in trying to come up with a plan—because in the year 2008, 2009, or 2010, there is going to be another serious drought. We know that right now, as we are talking. So that is just an appeal, and perhaps we can work on that here through our State Department to push that with the OAU.

Let me just ask a quick question. On both Eritrea and Ethiopia, sanctions have been suggested, and I wonder, would sanctions impact the food program?

Ms. BERTINI. As I understand the sanctions, they are for arms, are they not?

Mr. PAYNE. Arms, and other—it will go beyond arms. I just wonder, has that been brought to your attention and what impact might that have on your program?

Ms. BERTINI. I wouldn't think it would have an impact, I would say, unless there is a sanction on food and medicine and other things that are in short supply. That would, in fact, have an impact on the program.

Mr. Payne, I want to mention that the Secretary-General on the 30th of March when he announced my appointment as special envoy, he also said he was creating a task force to be able to deal with some of the longer-term issues of why droughts keep coming and what we can do about them, particularly in this region, so, I would refer you also to him and to Mr. Jacques Diouf, who has been appointed to look into this.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Campbell and I have introduced a resolution 316 that deals with the famine and trying to get additional support from our government.

Thank you very much.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Ms. Bertini, we want to thank you for your time. We want to thank the U.S. Embassy in London for its accommodations, and we hope we can do more of this with you as time goes on. Hopefully, there will be no more crises of this nature, but I am sure we will be confronted with some.

I am going to recess our hearing until the votes are over. It will probably be about a 45-minute period. We have one vote, plus 5-

minute votes. Thank you very much. The Committee stands in recess.

Ms. BERTINI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Whereupon a short recess was taken.]

[Recess.]

Mr. TANCREDO [presiding]. The Committee will come to order.

I have a statement that I would like to read into the record before we proceed with testimony. This is the statement of Congressman Tom Campbell, submitted for the record at the hearing of the House International Relations Committee on the looming famine in Ethiopia.

I call today on Ethiopia to stop the massive attack recently launched on neighboring Eritrea and to return at once to the peace table under the auspices of the Organization for American Unity.

As a Member of this Committee, and its Subcommittee on Africa, I traveled to Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998 shortly before the first outbreak of hostilities between the two countries. Now, after 2 years of sporadic fighting followed by months of stalemate, with troops in trenches opposing each other, Ethiopia launched an infantry assault on Friday, May 12, 2000, with more than a quarter of a million infantry backed by armored tanks. The attack went well into Eritrean territory, and well beyond the remote, lightly populated area whose sovereignty has been contested ever since the war began.

There is no victory in the shameless massacre of 25,000 soldiers in a 3-day period, beginning last Friday at midnight. Over a year ago, I offered a resolution, along with my distinguished colleague, Congressman Donald Payne, that called on both countries to put down their weapons. That resolution, H. Con. Res. 46, passed the House of Representatives on October 26, 1999, and is pending in the Senate.

Now, the world is watching while precious lives and resources are being spent in battle, when both are needed, instead, to ensure there is a harvest this year. People in both countries are facing starvation conditions, yet Ethiopia has chosen to extend this war. I am heart-broken, as I had such hopes for Ethiopia's development, such pride in their accomplishments, and maintain such love for her people.

It has not been easy to focus America's attention upon the needs of Africa. This war between two of Africa's poorest countries gives us a perfect excuse for those who would turn away and continue to do so.

I will enter the statement into the record.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Campbell appears in the appendix.]

I will now introduce Mr. Hugh Parmer. We welcome Mr. Parmer, Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Humanitarian Response of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Mr. Parmer's bureau coordinates disaster assistance and emergency response. He recently returned from a trip to the Horn.

We are very interested in hearing your findings, Mr. Parmer, particularly with regard to the logistical hurdles of getting adequate supplies of food into the remote parts of southeast Ethiopia.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE HUGH Q. PARMER, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. PARMER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to come and appear before the Committee today. I want to thank this Committee and, in fact, the entire Congress for the broad bipartisan support which humanitarian operations around the world have received. Since the Bureau for Humanitarian Response, which I head, contains both the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the Food for Peace office, we are the major responder—the 911 responder, if you like—for the U.S. Government.

I spent 14 days, beginning on March the 11th in the Horn of Africa, and I would like to, if I may, share with you some of my experiences there. I will of course submit written testimony which will be more formal in nature, and I will be glad to answer any questions that Members of the Committee might have.

If I could go to that second map, you can see, of course, the Horn of Africa identified on the map in front of us. If I could make the second microphone work, we will see if I do better with it than I did the first.

My trip took me first to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, and from Addis Ababa into the southern part of the country to a town called Gode. Gode is in the Somalia region. Its inhabitants and people in the surrounding area are pastoralists by nature; they travel with their herds. It is the area which was identified to us as the most heavily impacted by the drought.

Certainly, when we arrived there, we had reason to believe that that was an accurate description. The first impression that you got in Gode, as you stepped off the aircraft into a car and headed toward town, was the large number of livestock that were dead and rotting in the fields. Over on the monitor we just gave you a bit of a picture of some dead cattle that we came across as we drove into town.

We were told that virtually all of the cattle in the region had died. Sheep and goat casualties were in the 70 and 80 percent range; even the camels, who are the most resilient beasts that these pastoralists have in their herds, were beginning to die, and that problem was compounded by an Anthrax epidemic that had broken out among the cattle.

In Gode itself, we saw a stark, border-like kind of town, dusty and dry; there was no green in the entire region. What we saw in Gode were two things. First, a therapeutic feeding center where small children who are qualified by a height-weight ratio were brought into the center and provided with necessary nutrients to treat their malnutrition. That center had 100 children enrolled in it at the time that I arrived there, 10 of whom, however, of the original enrollees had died in the week before my arrival.

You will see a slightly different number in my testimony, because other Members of our parties got different numbers—but the local emergency committee people told me that 91 children under 5 years of age had died in the town of Gode in the 2 weeks before my arrival there.

There was also a supplemental feeding center. At that supplemental feeding center, there were approximately 850 children that were being served. When I was there, there were another 500 mothers and children in a crowd outside the center waiting for their children to be measured and weighed to see if they could qualify.

To give you a little bit of the human sense of it, I talked to a woman who had a very malnourished child in her arms. I asked her about her child through an interpreter, to which she replied, "Well, this was one of my three children. I had three children when I arrived here 2 months ago; two of them have died." My question then was, "Aren't you receiving assistance and help from the gov-

ernment?" She said "Yes, they are giving us wheat. My babies can't eat wheat.

The supplemental feeding center was understaffed; it had insufficient food commodities; they were feeding at half the recommended level for the children.

Upon my departure from Gode that day, I ordered a United States-funded civilian airlift of the proper types of food, F–75 formula, Corn-Soy-blend (CSB) mix and high-protein biscuits to be landed in Gode. They arrived within a week.

We visited a small town near Gode, just to get a sense of what was happening in the more rural areas. There were similar circumstances. I know our time is limited, and so I won't try to give you every anecdote that I ran across, other than to say that, in this town, we actually saw dead camels to illustrate again the tremendous losses in the only asset that these people have.

From Gode, we went to the north to the area around Lalibela. This is the area which was the epicenter of the 1984 famine in which over 1 million people starved to death. From there we took about a 2-hour drive out to a place called Wadhwan. What we saw along that drive were conditions that were considerably better than what we had seen in the south, but certainly marginal.

One of the things we came across was a group of people who were selling their livestock at a spontaneous market. When you talk to farmers about why they are selling their oxen when their ox is the only animal they have to plow the fields, they tell you it is so that they can get a little bit of money and hopefully make it through the period until the major rains. You say, "Well, then, what are you going to do with no oxen?" They report that they are going to lease their land to someone who has animals.

Now, I am from Texas. My family is from the south. My grandfather was a sharecropper. What I learned was that sharecroppers, people who farm the land for someone else, were the poor people in the society and the wealthier people were those who owned the land. It is the reverse situation in this part of Ethiopia. The person who has the animal is wealthy; the person who has the land—it is a reverse kind of a lease environment.

The situation up there was not as bad as in the south, but what we found was that, in the area that we were, virtually everyone was receiving food assistance, and everyone was dependent on food assistance.

There are two rains in this part of the world. The "meher" or the long rains, and the so-called "belg" rain, or the short rain, which was supposed to have occurred immediately prior to our arrival in the area, had not occurred. Therefore, the belg crop upon which these people in the north are largely dependent had not occurred; there was no crop.

I went to, as you can see over on the monitor to my left, a site where the government was distributing United States-contributed grain to a crowd of about 2,000 people. With an interpreter, I talked to that group of people, and as I talked with them, I discovered that this distribution, this once-a-month distribution, was all they had to eat unless they slaughtered their livestock, which some of them were doing. But as you can see, this is a healthier group of people than what we saw in Gode. Nonetheless, not only was

this the only distribution they were receiving, but they were at half-rations of distributed food, that is, U.S. food distributed through the Ethiopia Emergency Committee. These were people who were not in an immediate, prefamine condition, but these are people whose existence was very marginal, and if they had any interruption in the supply of food aid, they would quickly find themselves in prefamine conditions.

I went to Kenya, I did not get into the northern region where the drought has had a similar effect as in southern Ethiopia, but I did have an opportunity to meet with a number of people from southern Sudan. The one piece of good news in the trip is that Sudan this year has had one of the best harvests in recent times. In fact, the need for food assistance, although still there in Sudan, is less than it has been in subsequent years, and that is a good thing in that those commodities are badly needed in other places.

I went from Kenya to Baidoa in Somalia. Just a brief aside, Mr. Chairman. It was a rather remarkable visit. I was greeted in terms of my representation of the United States, like a hero. People said to me, "We will never forget here in Baidoa what the United States of America did when you led the intervention to prevent the famine back in the early 1990's."

The governor of the area said to me, "You should consider this your second home. We know you have been told it is unsafe here." I was the first American official in southern Somalia since the withdrawal of the peacekeepers. He said, "I know you have been told it is unsafe; this part of Somalia is the safest place in the world for you." He also said, "First George Bush came and now you have come." I said, "There is a bit of a difference in our pay scale."

We found the people in Baidoa, that was the city of death in the Somali famine, to be in remarkably good shape now. There was water in the stream in the town, people were watering their animals, the animals looked healthy, the children looked healthy. I was very favorably impressed with the condition of the people there.

In a nearby rural village, the people still were in pretty good shape, but obviously their condition was more marginal. Again, pastoralists in this area are dependent upon their flocks and their herds. The animals did look good, but they were good because of a UNICEF-funded water project that produced water.

We then went to Djibouti. Djibouti, of course, is the area and the port through which our logistics are having to operate. We visited the port, we talked to logistics people. I think I got a reasonable assessment of the capacity of that port at the time I was there, and I will be glad to answer questions about that.

I think the best way to describe it is that theoretically, the port of Djibouti will handle the commodities that we need to move into the region during the next few months. But I emphasize "theoretically," because our experience is that in a humanitarian relief operation, nothing works at 90 percent capacity. That would be required for the port of Djibouti to successfully handle all of the materials coming in.

In Somalia, I did not get to Berbera, but I have sent an assessment team there. That port can handle a little bit of the overflow that might be required out of Djibouti. The capacities will be

roughly 150,000 to 180,000 metric tons and 25,000 to 30,000 metric tons out of Berbera.

Finally, I went to Eritrea. Eritrea had had a bit more rain, a bit more of a harvest, than anywhere in Ethiopia at that time. But at the same time, they do have drought conditions along the coast, and there are approximately half a million people who have been war-affected prior to the most recent conflict and who have moved into internally displaced person camps.

The observation I had there was that the Eritrean Government had done a remarkably good job from a humanitarian perspective in terms of taking care of the people in those camps. I saw people in those camps who had been displaced from their homes for 22 months and who were in the second location to which they had been moved. Yet the camp had an operating school and an operating clinic. The children, although they might have respiratory troubles and reported diarrheal troubles, looked well-nourished. They certainly were active and running around and wanted to come and see us and talk with us. There were complaints in these camps about the quality of the food, but not the quantity of the food. They wanted more spices, and I told them we didn't do spices, although I am from Texas where we have quite a propensity for that kind of thing.

To back up just a step, my impression of the government's response in Ethiopia was also favorable. These people had drawn down their grain reserves in an effort to help their own people. They had gone into the open market and bought 100,000 metric tons of grain from the equatorial area of Eritrea, the eastern area of Ethiopia, which this year had a grain surplus, more than what was needed to feed its own population. I would like to think that that is at least partially the result of good international assistance spearheaded by USAID in the development arena, encouraging these folks to develop a market economy. You have to remember that just a very few years ago Ethiopia and Eritrea were a Marxist, centralized economy.

After my trip to the Horn, I went from the Horn to Europe. I know that Congress, as we are, is always concerned about the United States not sharing an oversupply or an overcapacity of the burden. At that point in time, there were no European pledges that had been made for assistance to the Horn of Africa.

While in Europe, I met with the European Union representatives, both of their counterparts to the Food for Peace office and to our Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. Both of them indicated that they would be responsive.

You know, you take so many trips that you feel you can't measure the productivity. But in that trip, after my departure, I was pleased to find that the Europeans upped their pledge to 432,000 metric tons of food. I visited briefly in France with the foreign minister's humanitarian coordinator. A week after I returned from talking with him, the French airlifted the same kind of commodities into southern Ethiopia that we had previously airlifted, and the French announced the availability of the use of their military facilities in Djibouti as logistical assistance to the international humanitarian relief operation.

I think my time has expired, Mr. Chairman, but I just wanted to give you some reflection of the human side of what we saw there, as opposed to just the numbers that we usually talk about.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Parmer appears in the appendix.]

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Parmer, for giving us a good overview.

When you returned from your recent trip, you stated that without the use of the port of Assab in Eritrea, you didn't think that famine could be averted in that part of the world. Given the renewed warfare, do you have any more current assessment with regard to that?

Mr. PARMER. I think the operative word is "guarantee." As I said, theoretically, the two ports that are available to us, the port in Djibouti and the port in Berbera, provide enough theoretical capacity to meet the need, and we are working very hard to enhance the capacity of those ports. We have contributed $600,000 to the World Food Program ports' renewal operation for the improvement operation in Djibouti.

But I would not retract the statement I made. If we had that third alternative, I think we could guarantee that sufficient commodities could be delivered to help the people. I think we can get there without it. I don't want to be too negative, because I think we can use the existing facilities, but it is more difficult.

Chairman GILMAN. Mr. Parmer, how much are the French contributing to the port renovation in Djibouti, and how much are we contributing?

Mr. PARMER. We have contributed just over $600,000. I don't know the amount of the French contribution. Let me see if one of my colleagues does.

I will have to get that for you, Mr. Chairman.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Chairman GILMAN. What is our total contribution, to date, with regard to Ethiopia and Eritrea?

Mr. PARMER. The total contribution, to date, for Ethiopia is almost a quarter of a billion dollars. I would say our pledge and contribution—that is, what we are committed to do, as well as what has actually arrived—I would estimate another $50 million for Eritrea. That may be a tad high.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Lee.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Parmer, for your testimony and for everything that you are doing to help in this major crisis on the continent.

I am reminded today, and I am sure we all remember our friend and colleague, Congressman Mickey Leland, a good friend. Also, Joyce Williams and his delegation, who were actually killed in Ethiopia during a plane crash in the late 1980's; and their mission during that time was to take food to feed starving children in Ethiopia. Their unfortunate and untimely deaths focused this country's attention on the plight of hunger and starvation in the Horn of Africa.

I want to ask you a couple of things with regard to our sustained effort during that time in terms of humanitarian assistance. What

has USAID, in terms of the amount of money, done for the last 10 or 15 years? Has it been constant, consistent? Has it gone up or down? What has our contribution level been and how has it fluctuated?

Mr. PARMER. If I could differentiate between emergency humanitarian support and development assistance, our development assistance has been relatively constant. Our humanitarian assistance, of course, goes up and down, based on the circumstances that we find.

This is a very poor country that is chronically drought-affected. So in a year like 1998, when they had a reasonably good harvest, you might not need as much assistance. But in a year like this, or 1994 where we had drought conditions, the humanitarian assistance goes way up.

Ms. LEE. The famine early warning system, when was that set up? I know it is supposed to provide early warning of a drought. It is my understanding that reports were issued in June or July 1999 indicating that a drought condition was upon us.

How do we—how did we respond to that? Was it in an expeditious fashion? Did we wait a while? What did we do?

Mr. PARMER. The answer to your first question is that the famine early warning system was created after the 1984 drought, and I think we could pretty well demonstrate that it has been responsible for—not for there not being any more droughts, but for there not being any more mass famines at the time we saw.

We actually received reports from our USAID mission out there before the July report came out, that the belg rains, the short season rains, had failed; and in June, a disaster was declared by the Ambassador, and we began trying to respond. In July, we contributed 28,000 metric tons of emergency food through the World Food Program. We did an initial assessment in Ethiopia and Djibouti. In August, we contributed another 21,000 metric tons of food through the World Food Program, and also contributed $400,000 to procure the special kinds of foods that are necessary for malnourished children. It is always the weakest people in a community that suffer the most from one of these crises.

We went on then to provide additional funding to Save the Children, to UNICEF; and again, in August, another 15,000 metric ton of foods went to Catholic Relief Services. Finally, in September, 57,000 metric tons were provided. So we moved forward, and I think that is the reason that, at this point, the drought-related deaths can be measured maybe in the hundreds.

Now, that sounds terrible to say that hundreds of deaths represent any kind of victory, but in a country where we saw over a million people starve to death in 1984, that is victory. This is a place that is chronically food-insecure. People die every year from malnutrition and malnutrition-related illnesses. But I think our response was prompt. We could not predict the extent of the problem that occurred when the belg rains fell again this spring. The numbers had been inclining upward, but they suddenly took off on a very steep curve.

But again, I think we are ahead of it to the extent of preventing the kind of catastrophe that they have seen over there in the past.

Ms. LEE. How has the war impacted, delayed or hampered our efforts and the efforts of other donors?

Mr. PARMER. So far, the first thing I want to make clear is that the United States never made a linkage between the behavior of Ethiopia and Eritrea in their conflict and our commitment to provide humanitarian assistance to people who otherwise have gone without. So there was no delay, at least on the part of the U.S. Government, that was related to political or policy issues.

The worst part, the epicenter of the near-famine that we are facing over there, is in the south, and the war is in the north. So at this point, the war has not physically impaired our ability to deliver goods. Now, what we worry about is the availability of sufficient trucking capacity to move the stuff to where it is needed.

I met with Prime Minister Meles in Ethiopia and expressed that concern to him. He told me directly that that would not occur. The words he used were, "We are not going to let 1984 happen again. We look upon that as our holocaust, and I will not allow trucks to be diverted from the humanitarian effort to support whatever military operation might be going on. In fact," said he, "I would do the opposite if I had to. I would divert military trucks to carry humanitarian food."

Now, I say that at the same time that I talked to our Ambassador in Djibouti the day before yesterday, and there weren't any trucks in Djibouti. I understand our Ambassador in Ethiopia has talked to Prime Minister Meles, and he has indicated that he would immediately see to the problem. I got a report just before I came over that indicated that truck availability was opening up again.

Ms. LEE. Thank you very much.

Chairman GILMAN. The gentlewoman's time has expired. Thank you, Ms. Lee.

Mr. Tancredo.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You mentioned, Mr. Parmer, that we have provided a quarter-billion dollars in emergency aid in Ethiopia. How much do you think we would have to give in order that they would not—is there any way that we can buy them out of doing what they are doing I suppose is the bottom line?

Mr. PARMER. You mean from the point of view of their conflict, Congressman?

Mr. TANCREDO. That's right, yes.

Mr. PARMER. I am in the humanitarian response business. I think maybe that is a question that should be better addressed—would be better addressed to my colleagues at the State Department.

Mr. TANCREDO. I know you have a baccalaureate in political science. Maybe I will test that instead.

Mr. PARMER. I think my view would be what I expressed earlier, and that is, that it should remain the policy of the United States not to link humanitarian assistance with politics, whether to encourage a country to do things that we want them to do or discourage them from things we don't want them to do. We are really not in the business of helping countries; we are in the business of helping people.

I mean, I know the discomfort that we all feel when we provide humanitarian assistance to a people who are fighting a war. We think to ourselves, why should we be providing assistance when they are expending resources on something else? But the kid I saw in that Somali mother's arms in southern Ethiopia didn't know whether his country was at war or not, the mother didn't care whether her country was at war or not, and she wasn't going to get any food if the United States of America and France, it turned out, hadn't airlifted food into Gode.

So it is not an easy situation.

Mr. TANCREDO. Of course not, and the question was at least partially rhetorical, I suppose.

But it is intriguing in a way, because we look at the extent to which we go—commendably, I think—to provide that kind of relief in this situation, making sure that both sides are not—making sure that our ability to provide that aid to both sides is not impeded by the conflict. Then it is impossible for me to ignore a situation over which you have no control, but in a way just thinking aloud about Sudan and our inability or lack of desire to provide that same degree of support for people there. I mean, you have problems with—logistical problems with people blocking the aid effort.

But nonetheless, all that aside, the recent demonstrations outside the embassy, to what extent—and again, I am drawing on your political science degrees and background perhaps more than anything else——

Mr. PARMER. That was a long time ago.

Mr. TANCREDO. I saw it. I picked it out in your background.

What was the basis for those? What do you think prompted that kind of response outside of our Embassy?

Mr. PARMER. My guess would be that the demonstrations of that type probably did not just occur spontaneously and that the Government of Ethiopia was unhappy with the positions that we were taking in the United Nations. That is one of the things I learned over there, and that is, that both sides can be very unhappy with you at the same time.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you.

Mr. PARMER. I might add, though, that we are providing this year 125,000 metric tons of food assistance for Sudan, and as I said earlier, fortunately, the one piece of really good, positive news I got out of my trip over there was the report from southern Sudan that they had had a pretty good harvest and that they were in need of less food assistance than they have been in prior years.

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you very much for your testimony. I have no other questions.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Tancredo.

Did you have a further question? Ms. Lee.

Ms. LEE. Very quickly, you didn't mention Italy in terms of it being a donor country. Just knowing a bit about the history, can you talk about that a little bit in terms of what their role is, or has been, or is not?

Mr. PARMER. Somewhere in these papers I have a list of the donations by country. Since I don't know exactly how to put my hands on it, Ms. Lee, perhaps I could send that to you.

But I will say that I did meet with officials of the Italian Government, when I was in Rome to talk with Ms. Bertini and the World Food Program people. The Italian Government officials indicated that they not only had made contributions, in particular, to Eritrea which, as you know, was a long-time colony of Italy, ever since 1900, but also that they intended to make additional contributions.

I can get you the exact numbers.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Ms. LEE. Thank you.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Parmer. We thank you for being here today.

We will, before proceeding with our next panel, I had to forgo my opening statement while Ms. Bertini was waiting to go on. I just would like to make a few opening remarks with regard to this hearing.

Thursday last week, shortly after midnight, Ethiopian troops launched a major military offensive against Eritrea, and according to the sketchy reports we have received, wave after wave of Ethiopian infantry threw themselves against fortified Eritrean positions. Eventually, they were successful at breaking through the Eritrean defenses, and the Ethiopian armed forces have now penetrated far into Eritrean territory and appear to be trying to outflank the main body of Eritrean troops on the border.

We do not know yet what the death toll of this latest round of fighting will be, but it will likely be tens of thousands. Notwithstanding the Organization of African Unity peace proposal that has been on the table for over a year and which both countries claim to accept, it is apparent that Ethiopia has been planning this attack for a long period of time.

I have suspected for some time that Ethiopia's leadership favored a military solution to the conflict, and in January I wrote in the *Washington Post* that, "Ethiopia appears prepared to reignite their war. It has become clear that Ethiopia is hostile to the peace agreement and is stalling for time to recruit and train tens of thousands of additional troops."

After that article appeared, I received hundreds of angry letters. The Ethiopian Foreign Minister himself launched a very personal, public attack against me. Great pains were taken to point out that Ethiopia had not rejected the peace plan and that its objections were merely technical. Again and again, I was told that Ethiopia had no intention of restarting the war.

For example, the Ethiopian ambassador wrote, "First and foremost, my government is committed to ending the war through negotiations. We have, without condition, supported the OAU framework as a tool for ending the war and will continue to do so."

For the sake of the thousands who have died over this past week and the thousands more who will likely perish in this senseless war, we sincerely wish that my suspicions had been wrong.

The war is inextricably linked to the famine, which is the focus of our hearing today, and in southeastern Ethiopian parts of the central islands, food shortages have reached a critical stage. Eight million of Ethiopia's 60 million citizens are now at risk of starvation. Nearly 1 billion metric tons of food are going to be required, and our nation is prepared to supply a portion of it.

The cycle of famine in Ethiopia will not be broken, however, as long as the government continues to spend a third of its budget on its military. The International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates that Ethiopia spent $467 million on the military just last year, a dramatic increase over previous years.Economic development efforts have been put on hold while scarce resources are committed to their war effort.

Let us be very plain. What is taking place in Ethiopia today is a man-made disaster. Without the war, there would not be a famine on this scale. The decisions of the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea have directly contributed to the dire conditions of their populations. This is the same pattern we saw in the early 1980's when the horrific Dergue regime under Mengestu used famine to make war on its own people. How regrettable that the current Governments of Eritrea and Ethiopia, which had valiantly fought against the Dergue, now share this aspect with it.

We thank our witness for joining us today, and we look forward to the testimony of our other witnesses.

Thank you again, Mr. Parmer. We appreciate your patience.

Mr. PARMER. Thank you.

Chairman GILMAN. We will now call our next panel.

Our next panel includes two distinguished witnesses, Dr. Stephen Morrison, who is no stranger to our Committee, having served as a staff member of the African Affairs Subcommittee from 1987 to 1991.

Welcome, Dr. Morrison.

After launching USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, Dr. Morrison joined the State Department's policy planning staff and recently assumed the directorship of the African Studies Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Joining him is Mr. Gary Shaye, Vice President of International Programs at Save the Children. In a 25-year record of service with that distinguished organization, Mr. Shaye has served in the Dominican Republic, in Nepal and Bhutan. His current responsibilities include Save the Children's operations in some 46 countries.

Thank you both for being with us today.

Chairman GILMAN. Dr. Morrison, you may summarize your statement, and your full statement will be made a part of the record. The same for Mr. Shaye.

I am going to ask Mr. Tancredo if he would chair this panel, since I have to go on to another meeting.

Mr. TANCREDO. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF J. STEPHEN MORRISON, Ph.D., DIRECTOR, AFRICAN STUDIES PROGRAM, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Dr. MORRISON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very pleased to be here today. I was asked to prepare some comments yesterday on the broader political and military context in which this famine is unfolding. I will do my best and attempt to be brief in a situation which is highly fluid, highly uncertain, and highly dangerous today in the evolving war between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Before I begin, I would like to put our session here in a bit of context. Seventeen years ago, when the 1983–1984 famine was first

beginning to break, we had no AID mission in Addis. The issue of effective humanitarian relief in the Horn of Africa had not surfaced in several years, over a decade.

It was a very divisive issue within Congress at that time. Within 16 months, there had been one very important bipartisan congressional delegation drawn from this Committee that resulted in a $1 billion supplemental that was also put forward with very strong bipartisan support. That was an essential event in building the bipartisan coalition around effective humanitarian assistance globally. It was rooted in that phenomenon and in that motion.

I believe that the leadership here in Congress remains critical, and I think there is much that you should be quite proud of. Many of the principles, practices and the norms of humanitarian assistance were forged in that period and applied globally.

I think we also, as this famine unfolds in Ethiopia and Eritrea against a backdrop of war, we have several very important advantages or assets that we need to continue to remind ourselves of.

First, I have mentioned the bipartisan coalition in support of effective humanitarian action. Second is the administration itself. USAID, both here in Washington and through the leadership of the Bureau of Humanitarian Response and our missions in both Asmara and Addis are extremely capable and focused on this, and I think they deserve to be commended for what has been done so far. This is a very professionalized operation, it is very quick off the mark, and it has been very effective for this cycle of famine. The Eritrean and Ethiopian Governments both have capacities they did not have 17 years ago, and the regional infrastructure, as weakened and difficult as it is, still permits some quick action.

Now I would just like to quickly turn to a few comments. First of all, we should keep clear, as we look at the war and the question of how the war impacts the humanitarian situation, we should keep clear that the responsibility for this intense, expansive war that resumed last Friday and that now reaches into Eritrea's interior—that the responsibility rests with the two adversaries and them alone. We and other external players, such as the OAU and the U.N. Security Council, are not the cause of this protracted 2-year crisis, now compounded by famine that threatens to escalate and endure in ways that will gravely weaken each State and damage the already frail surrounding region. Each side at varying points has attempted to lay blame upon outsiders for their failure to resolve the regional border dispute. We should disregard these diversions and focus clearly upon the base calculations of the two parties.

Indeed, the administration deserves special credit, I believe, for the sustained creative efforts that have been made by Special Envoy Anthony Lake, Assistant Secretary Rice, and NSE Director Gayle Smith, along with their Algerian counterparts acting on behalf of the OAU. This has been an exceptional instance of diplomatic investment. This has amounted to a full court press over a period of well over 2 years now; it is an enormous, continual and diversified investment. It has not worked, admittedly, but I think we should keep ourselves very aware of what this investment, the scale and the scope and the integrity of it, is.

These outside interventions have revealed the grave limits to high-level diplomacy, and they have raised very troubling questions about what strategies and approaches can work in circumstances in which the parties themselves are so resistant to a negotiated settlement. We are at risk right now of drawing a conclusion that we should not make this kind of investment in this type of crisis zone. I would argue against that. The fact that we have not had success up to now does not mean that this type of serious, diplomatic, bilateral and multilateral investment cannot work elsewhere and cannot work again in the future in terms of the Ethiopian and Eritrean crisis.

Our efforts diplomatically have put forward a very important paradox in terms of the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict. These two adversaries are in essential agreement on a framework to the border war that began in May 1998. But the closer that these parties came to final closure over this dispute over a barren stretch of ground, the harder it seemed for them to finally sign off on that agreement. The adversaries appear even more starkly incapable of having the will and the capacity to close this deal.

This has led people to begin questioning what is the nature of this conflict. It has led to the conclusion that this is, in fact—what had originally been understood as a border dispute is, in fact, something larger. It is a war between two highly interdependent states. It is a war that has all of the complex motivations and volatile emotions and deep hostilities that that implies.

We have to begin to ask, where does this new phase of warfare lead? What is at stake in terms of U.S. interests? Wyhat are the policies we should pursue?

I would argue that based on past history, sadly, there is a very high probability that this war will drag on and transmute along new fronts. Ambitions of each side are highly uncertain, but they reach well beyond the trench lines and disputed ground around Badme, Zalambessa and Assab.

There will be a strong impulse, I would also argue, in the coming months to make use of air power, particularly on the Ethiopian side, where there has been a massive investment in air capacity and where Ethiopia now enjoys considerable superiority. I want to remind you that just 2 years ago this month, both sides, as this dispute broke, engaged in aerial bombardments of civilian populations.

This fight that is under way right now is consciously over something much larger. It is rooted in national honor, historical grievances, and the blow-back from the separation 7 years ago this month between Ethiopia and Eritrea into two separate nations. It is about—this war is about two nations who have altogether lost trust in one another and have lost any vision of how they are going to relate to one another in peace.

It will be very difficult to move back from where we are today to the earlier focus upon a border dispute along a line of ground in a barren part of Ethiopia and Eritrea. The game has changed. We are going to need to look at this problem in a much different way.

Disturbingly, this expansive war has certain echoes with the 1970's and 1980's. Worsening conflict is unfolding parallel with

deepening famine. An international arms bazaar continues apace today as we speak. Fortunately, we had the Security Council pass the embargo last night. This bazaar, this arms bazaar has enabled and consolidated hard-line interests on both sides and it has fed the dilution of military triumph.

When both sides entered this war last Friday, military commanders on each side were optimistic that they would see results. Each side entered this conflict confident that they would get what they wanted. There is something bizarre and odd and deeply disturbing about that.

We have to pay attention here, as we have in Angola and Sierra Leone and other crisis areas, to the reckless marketing of weapons to both sides, often by the same vendors. This has fed the worst tendencies of both sides, and it has certainly not led to deterrents, it has led to the opposite. The war is reordering the resurrounding region in very important ways. It distracts and weakens regional pressure upon Khartoum to respect its human rights, to end its internal wars, and to end its support of international terrorism. It encourages new vulnerabilities to attack for Djibouti and it encourages arms transfers into already chaotic zones of Somalia.

How should we think about the war's impact on humanitarian operations? There has been some comment about Massawa and Assab, the lack of access to these ports and on limits on trucking. I want to add a few other points.

The war in the famine zones is geographically segregated. Hugh Parmer made this point. This is very unfortunate. That means that most of the relief that is going into Ethiopia or Eritrea is not going to be subject to the predations of armed units as we have seen in countless other wars. This is a different type of war, and we are fortunate there. We will be able, I think, to guard the integrity of humanitarian operations far more in this instance than in many others.

The exception, where we need to be thinking about down the road—the exception is where the war and the humanitarian crisis will intersect, which is presently in the interior areas of Eritrea. If fighting persists there and if it results, as would seem to be virtually inevitable, in massive displacement of civilians, we are going to have an emerging humanitarian crisis in the middle of an armed conflict as we have seen in the Balkans, in Angola and in Sierra Leone, and there we will be back into a very difficult and complex game.

I want to add also, there are hundreds of thousands of displaced Ethiopians in Northern Tigray along the border areas. As the war has resumed, one should be asking, to what degree this population has been redisplaced and access to them disturbed?

If war persists and intensifies, we can anticipate further forced expulsions in both Addis and Asmara of Eritrean and Ethiopian nationals respectively. We should be very vigilant on human rights grounds to this phenomenon. Close to 100,000 have already been expelled forcibly.

The railroad and road channels from Djibouti are the path along which both the humanitarian assistance and the armaments flow. There is a close overlap. It is very difficult to disentangle arms and humanitarian relief along the road and rail links leading from

Djibouti into Ethiopia. I would argue that this makes for a very alluring target on military grounds.

I have spoken to some of our officials here to try and get some estimate of how real is the risk of attack upon that line if this war intensifies, but I think it is a real threat and we need to look more closely at it. Mention has been made of the prospect of aerial bombing of civilian targets. If it moves into urban environments like Asmara or northern Ethiopian urban environments, you could cause very serious damage to those populations in a very short time. If Assab comes under siege as many have argued it might and it suffers extensive damage to its port and other infrastructure, that will have long-term consequences for the annual fertilizer, fuel and grain shipments into Ethiopia.

I want to make one final comment, which is that Somaliland, which has provided the port of Berbera, which for years was a refueling station and air base for the United States during the cold war, Somaliland is a state-led port of relative stability that has begun to function and has been searching for the opportunities to engage donors and others in support of their efforts, with minimal success up to now. Paradoxically, this famine is bringing resources and engagement there. One hopes that this will result in a positive change and reinforcement of positive efforts that are under way in Somaliland.

Last, final comments on where do we go with policy? I think our interests in this conflict are to adopt a measured detachment from each of the adversaries. To address the grave humanitarian demands, while seeking to contain the spread of this war and eventually diffuse it. At some point in time, we are going to have to get the parties focused back upon their vision of living peacefully with one another, but that is a remote—a remote option at the moment.

A resolution of this war will not likely be achieved in the near term. It requires a strategy of 1 to 2 years, and it requires a very heavy emphasis on building transatlantic alliances. We need to today intensify our consultations with our European partners and devise mechanisms for moving ahead. At the moment, we do not have effective transatlantic mechanisms.

We have mentioned the arms embargo. We need to begin taking a very serious look at our multilateral and bilateral assistance.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Morrison appears in the appendix.]

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you, Dr. Morrison. The bells of course indicate that we have a vote.

Mr. Shaye, if you have your testimony and can give it within the timeframe, we should be able to handle it.

STATEMENT OF GARY SHAYE, VICE PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS, SAVE THE CHILDREN, USA

Mr. SHAYE. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee and distinguished guests. Thank you for inviting Save the Children to speak with you about the current crisis in Ethiopia and share with you the work that we are doing to respond to the critical needs of children in this emergency. I am hoping that while I am speaking, you will get some video footage of Denan, which is an area just north of the Gode area.

I would like to begin by thanking the government for being so proactive and responsive to this emergency. This assistance has been provided by the U.S. Government, not only to the U.N. agencies such as the World Food Program, but has also been provided to nongovernmental organizations like Save the Children that are working on the ground in Ethiopia. We have been really fortunate to have had a really close working relationship with USAID, Food for Peace, and OFDA. I think I can speak for all of the NGO's, we would not be in a position to respond to this crisis without that timely support.

The U.S. Government should also be applauded for moving quickly and for providing a significant portion of the international assistance for this emergency. We are off to a good start, yet there is still a lot to do. I would also like to recognize the U.S. Government's understanding of the regional nature of this emergency and the need to continue to support emergency development and political initiatives throughout the region. It is clear that this famine, like all famines, finds its roots in complex regional, political and economic issues that require a multifaceted and long-term approach.

Save the Children began its work in Ethiopia in response to the 1984 famine. Over the last 16 years, we have implemented a wide range of activities to help vulnerable children and their families combat hunger, obtain community-based health services, have access to clean water and attend school. Our programs focus on geographic areas and target populations that have been under served. This includes the pastoral peoples in the east and south of Ethiopia.

When droughts and famines begin, it is the children who are the most severely affected and whose health begins to deteriorate first. That is why in November 1999, Save the Children agreed with the Ethiopian Government authorities to initiate drought relief activities in the Gode zone of Ethiopia.

At this time the situation in Gode of Ethiopia is one of the most severe of anywhere in Ethiopia. An estimated child mortality rate of 1.5 of 10,000 per day has been observed. Currently, we are working with 163 severely malnourished children who are at our therapeutic feeding center and 6,000 moderately malnourished children who are in our supplementary feeding program and are fed daily with their mothers. Since the opening of these centers in February, admissions of malnourished children to these feeding centers are double our original projections.

The good news I can report is that during the past month, we have seen a decrease in the number of infant and child deaths in Gode. However, the death rates in the region are still too high. We estimate that both feeding centers could double again and there is a clear need to open additional centers.

Other efforts that Save the Children is conducting in the region, including the preparation and initiation of food distributions for some 135,000 children and family members in the Liben, Afdheer, and Borena regions were also involved in the transportation of water by trucks to over 100,000 residents of the Gode zone, however, there are still villages that don't have access to water. We are vaccinating livestock herds to prevent deaths and improve the food

security of pastoralist families and their children who rely on livestock for milk and income.

These efforts address only a small fraction of the suffering. The relief efforts on the ground need to be expanded and combined with political initiatives to fully address the problems that are currently affecting over 8 million Ethiopians.

The efforts of Congress are needed to assist in this emergency. The American people don't want us to let the women and children of Ethiopia die, regardless of the political turmoil of the governments in the region. The United States is a leader in responding to humanitarian crises, and the American people are known for their generosity and compassion. The faster we respond now, the greater the chance that children and their families will survive.

What should Congress do? As stated previously, the U.S. Government's initial efforts to deal with this emergency have been exemplary. We are here today to ask Congress to continue to ensure that the agencies of the U.S. Government have adequate resources to respond to the underlying economic and social fragility in the region for years to come, recognize how important it is that the regional approach to this emergency is not forgotten, and that continued assistance is targeted to the rehabilitation and development stage, not only in Ethiopia, but throughout the region, to help mitigate the effects of potential future crises.

When I was in Ethiopia in September, I was in the Negali area, and I was out to see some of our programs that are supported through the Food for Peace office. A number of the projects that we are involved with involve the construction of reservoirs. They are constructed using food for work, but what they do is they enable the people to conserve water for many additional months throughout the year. There were areas as large as two football fields that had been dug 10 to 15 feet in the ground that were used as rain catchment areas. These are the types of interventions, relatively low-cost interventions, that help people cope with the droughts in those areas.

We should also acknowledge that the influence of the U.S. Congress is needed to ensure that the Government of Ethiopia maintains its commitment to the long-term task of reducing famine vulnerability.

Mr. TANCREDO. Please wrap it up.

Mr. SHAYE. Just, finally, I get calls from our staff from places like Afghanistan, Sudan and Angola. They are all places with complicated politics and conflict. The calls are about, what can agencies like Save the Children do to address the humanitarian crisis? While we certainly understand that there is a conflict going on, it is really important for this Committee not to lose sight of the woman sitting in Gode with her child. The conflict is a long way from where she is, and she is looking to groups like Save the Children and others for the assistance she needs.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shaye appears in the appendix.]

Mr. TANCREDO. Thank you, Mr. Shaye.

Thank you, Dr. Morrison for your testimony. I appreciate it. I appreciate the fact that you would stick around with us here. I assure you that the testimony will be carefully reviewed.

We don't have time for questions, so we will have to bring it to closure. Thank you, gentlemen.

[Whereupon, at 1 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MAY 18, 2000

Statement by Benjamin A. Gilman, Chairman
Committee on International Relations
Hearing on Famine in Ethiopia
May18, 2000

On Thursday last week, shortly after midnight, Ethiopian troops launched a major military offensive against Eritrea. According to sketchy reports, wave after wave of Ethiopian infantry threw themselves against fortified Eritrean positions. Eventually they were successful in breaking through the Eritrean defenses. Ethiopian armed forces have penetrated far into Eritrean territory and appear to be trying to outflank the main body of Eritrean troops on the border.

We do not know what the death toll of this latest round of fighting will be, but it will likely be in the tens of thousands.

Notwithstanding the Organization of African Unity peace proposal that has been on the table for a year and which both countries claimed to accept, it is apparent that Ethiopia has been planning this attack for months.

I have suspected for some time that Ethiopia's leadership favored a military solution to this conflict. In January, I wrote in the *Washington Post* that

> "Ethiopia appears prepared to reignite the war....It has become clear that Ethiopia is hostile to the [peace] agreement and is stalling for time to recruit and train tens of thousands of additional troops...."

After this article appeared, I received hundreds of angry letters. The Ethiopian foreign minister himself launched a very personal and public attack against me. Great pains were taken to point out that Ethiopia had not rejected the peace plan and that its objections were merely "technical." Again and again I was told that Ethiopia had no intention of restarting the war.

For example, the Ethiopian ambassador wrote,

> "First and foremost, my government is committed to ending the war through negotiations. We have, without conditions, supported the OAU framework as *the* tool for ending the war. We will continue to do so."

For the sake of the thousands who have died this past week and the thousands more who will likely perish in this senseless war, I sincerely wish my suspicions had been wrong.

The war is inextricably linked to the famine, which is the focus of our hearing today. In southeastern Ethiopia and in parts of the central highlands, food shortages have reached a critical stage. Eight million of Ethiopia's 60 million citizens are at risk of starvation. Nearly a billion metric tons of food are required, and the United States is prepared to supply half of it.

The cycle of famine in Ethiopia will not be broken, however, for as long as the government continues to spend a third of its budget on the military. The International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates that Ethiopia spent $467 million on its military last year, a dramatic increase over previous. Economic development efforts have been put on hold while scarce resources are committed to the war effort.

Let us be very plain: what is taking place in Ethiopia today is a man-made disaster. Without the war, there would be no famine. The decisions of the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea have directly contributed to the dire condition of their populations.

This is the same pattern we saw in the early 1980s when the horrific Dergue regime under Mengistu used famine to make war on its own people. How regrettable that the current governments of Eritrea and Ethiopia, which had valiantly fought against the Dergue, now share this aspect with it.

We thank the our witnesses for joining us today and we look forward to their testimony.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN TOM CAMPBELL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD AT THE HEARING OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE LOOMING FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA

Thursday, May 18, 2000

I call today on Ethiopia to stop the massive attack recently launched on neighboring Eritrea, and to return at once to the peace table under the auspices of the Organization for African Unity (OAU).

As a member of this Committee, and its Subcommittee on Africa, I traveled to Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998, shortly before the first outbreak of hostilities between the two countries. Now, after two years of sporadic fighting followed by months of stalemate, with troops in trenches opposing each other, Ethiopia launched an infantry assault on Friday, May 12, 2000, with more than a quarter of a million infantry backed by armored tanks. The attack went well into Eritrean territory, and well beyond the remote, lightly populated area whose sovereignty has been contested since the war began.

There is no victory in the shameless massacre of 25,000 soldiers in a three-day period, beginning last Friday at midnight. Over a year ago, I offered a resolution -- with my distinguished colleague, Congressman Donald Payne (D-NJ) -- that called on both countries to put down their weapons. That resolution, H.Con.Res. 46, passed the House of Representatives on October 26, 1999, and is pending in the Senate.

Now, the world is watching while precious lives and resources are being spent in battle, when both are needed, instead, to ensure there is a harvest this year. People in both countries are facing starvation conditions, yet Ethiopia has chosen to extend this war. I am heart-broken, as I had such hopes for Ethiopia's development, such pride in their accomplishments, and maintain such love for her people.

It has not been easy to focus America's attention upon the needs of Africa. And, this war between two of Africa's poorest countries gives us a perfect excuse for those who would turn away to continue to do so.

World Food Programme | Programme Alimentaire Mondial | Programa Mundial de Alimentos | برنامج الأغذية العالمي

The Food Aid Organization of the United Nations

Testimony of

Ms. Catherine Bertini

Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General on the Drought in the Horn of Africa

&

Executive Director of the World Food Programme

before the Congress of the United States of America Committee on International Relations House of Representatives

US Embassy in London - 18 May 2000

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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Millions of people in the Horn of Africa are living on the brink of disaster.

All of you recall the Ethiopian famine of 1984-85 and the great suffering it caused. Despite the hostility between Ethiopia and the United States at that time, Americans set those differences aside as President Reagan declared simply and memorably: "A hungry child knows no politics." America has once again taken the lead in addressing this new crisis in the Horn of Africa.

Many of you may be asking yourselves, just what has changed since the mid 1980s? Is there really any improvement in Ethiopia or the other countries in the region, or are we simply moving down the same slope to the horrors of widespread famine and death? The fact is that the people in the region and we are far more prepared to cope with this drought today than we were in the mid 1980s. Things have, in fact, changed for the better.

Today, we have far more sophisticated data on the hardest hit areas and we have it earlier. Ongoing vulnerability mapping by WFP and others has helped us target food aid more effectively. Governments in the region have improved their management of the food stocks they have. Ethiopia now has one of the best crop and weather monitoring capacities in Africa. Food-for-work has been employed in the region for years, to support people's labor in rehabilitating land damaged by drought, digging irrigation canals and constructing

terraces for erosion control.

The bloody war that resumed this past week between Ethiopia and Eritrea clouds the picture and any donor has the right to ask: "If these Governments can afford to spend more than a million dollars a day on guns, then why is it that they cannot afford to take care of this drought?"

I wish I had a simple and straightforward answer to that question, but I do not. The UN Security Council, with Ambassador Holbrooke's active involvement, is now pushing to secure a ceasefire and bring the parties back to the negotiating table. On the humanitarian side, we are very concerned that access routes may be blocked and the Governments will not give relief aid their strongest attention and support, especially in the transport sector.

But with or without the war, I am quite sure that these countries would need aid to cope with this drought. I am equally convinced that Americans will not stand by and watch millions of women and children go hungry even if their governments are tragically conducting a war.

THE SCOPE OF THE CRISIS

Let me give you an overview of what I found in my mission as the Secretary General's Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa.

The crisis in the Horn of Africa is not a famine. But it can easily

become one unless every effort is made now to undertake preventive measures before there is a widespread loss of lives. Three consecutive years of poor rainfall have been very hard on the people and their animals, food stores are gone and water is scarce. Health conditions are deteriorating and health care distribution systems don't exist. The hardest hit have been the pastoral communities that rely heavily on livestock for their living. Up to three million cattle, calves and milking cows have died. In some areas the losses have been as high as 90 percent.

We are particularly concerned about the women and children. As men migrate to towns to search for alternative work, women are left behind to care for the children by themselves. As food has become scarcer, these women and their children fall victim to malnutrition and are often too weak to seek relief. One of the most disturbing things I saw on my mission was the quiet suffering of these mothers and their children. Some had walked literally for days holding skeletal young children in their arms before they reached NGO-run feeding centers.

We have been able to help many of these mothers, but there have been hundreds of deaths, especially in the remote Ogaden region. Most deaths could have been prevented, with adequate medicines for colds, diarrhea and vaccinations for measles.

If we do not move quickly and efficiently, the potential scale of the crisis is enormous -- the lives of 16 million people are at risk in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, the

southern part of Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi. Conservative estimates of the food requirements already exceed 1 million tons for this year. Ongoing detailed assessments in several of these countries are likely to yield even higher numbers.

A RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR PREVENTION

We have a rare opportunity to prevent suffering on a large scale.

The Secretary-General's timing in creating the Special Envoy mission was critical. The UN, with stronger support from the US and other governments, can play a key role in preventing a disaster.

The Governments in the Greater Horn are committed, but they have varying capacities, especially with regard to transport and distribution, and contending with this drought is simply beyond their capacities. The Ethiopian, Eritrean and Kenyan Governments have all pledged funds from their own budgets to buy cereals locally and they have all maintained strategic food reserves, although the levels are now quite low.

UN agencies, bilateral donors and NGOs must step in on a broad basis and, above all, they must carefully coordinate the aid they will be providing.

CROSS BORDER ISSUES AFFECT RELIEF AND SECURITY

The pastoral societies most affected by the current drought inhabit

ecosystems that cut across national borders. Migration in pursuit of food and water has been the traditional coping mechanism in the Horn of Africa. But properly managing food distribution to a moving target population is complex, to say the least, both politically and logistically. There are also security implications. Cross border movements could rise sharply.

CLEAN WATER AND BASIC MEDICINES ARE THE GREATEST UNMET NEEDS

In the drought affected areas, less than one quarter of the people in the Greater Horn have access to drinkable water. Roughly a third of water facilities are not functioning or need rehabilitation or simple repairs. Pressure on remaining water facilities has grown accordingly and they may not sustain such heavy use for both people and the remaining livestock.

At the same time, contaminated water has led to widespread diarrheal diseases that are claiming the lives of young children. Basic medicines are simply not found, nor are medical facilities. Relatively modest investments in basic drugs and water supplies would have a dramatic impact.

SUPPORT FOR THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

The erratic rainfall for the last three years has taken its toll on livestock. Those that have survived are congregated around traditional dry season reserves and watering points that can no

longer sustain them. As livestock prices have collapsed, grain prices have climbed. This has led to a serious deterioration in the terms of trade for pastoral communities and Governments have offered only the most limited help and sporadically.

FOOD AID OF THE RIGHT KIND AND QUANTITY IS NEEDED TO BRIDGE THE GAPS

The current pipeline for food aid looks secure into the summer, but we will need significant new pledges. Some of the earlier needs assessments were low and based on the resumption of rain sooner. Therefore, per person rations were reduced in some areas.

As needy pastoralists have lost much of their livestock, we need to provide a food basket with a relatively higher protein component. We clearly need to do more in supplementary feeding for children and the vulnerable.

SECURITY IS A SERIOUS CONCERN

The areas most affected by drought are also the most dangerous. This is a concern both for people migrating for food and for government and relief workers seeking to help them.

UN TO LAUNCH NEW APPEAL AT THE END OF MAY

Rapid and detailed assessments are now underway throughout the region to get precise figures on food and nonfood needs, and

Statement of Hugh Q. Parmer
Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Humanitarian Response
United States Agency for International Development

Before the

Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives

May 18, 2000

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today to discuss the situation in the Horn of Africa and to respond to your questions regarding the efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development to address the growing problems of hunger in the region, particularly the acute situation in Ethiopia. Sadly, since I received your invitation, war has resumed between Ethiopia and Eritrea. This will undoubtedly complicate the situation but will not deter our efforts to provide aid to those in need. Hunger and disease, which potentially affect millions, especially children, concern us all. We intend to continue, in concert with your advice and consultation, our engagement both humanitarian and diplomatic in the region.

Drought and food shortages are not infrequent occurrences in this part of Africa. War and other forms of political turmoil have also shortened people's life spans and curtailed economic development in many parts of the region. Many of you will remember the Ethiopian famine of 1984 - 1986 to which the United States responded with one of the largest-ever emergency relief efforts. During that famine, 1.5 million metric tons of food were distributed, reaching an estimated 7.1 million people. Droughts and significant emergency needs also occurred in Ethiopia in 1988, 1991 and 1994. Today's emergency may be of an even greater magnitude. An estimated 8.3 million people are now at risk of acute hunger and disease in Ethiopia alone, with 16.5 million people affected by drought and civil unrest in the seven countries of the Horn, including Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. To date, appeals for 1.4 million metric tons of food aid for the Horn have been made internationally. The planned United States government emergency food aid response, both P.L. 480 Title II and Section 416(b) resources, as of May 1, is 684,000 metric tons to the region.

I am pleased to be able to announce to you today that we have recently received approval for further food allotments from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Section 416(b) resources in the amount of 175,000 metric tons (MT) for Ethiopia and 50,000 MT for other countries in the Horn. The new allotment boosts our total commitments to 909,000 MT. We expect the number of people in need to increase once new assessments are completed in June. In addition I have ordered a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to the region consisting of a leader, deputy and several sector and logistics specialists. The DART arrives in country today, May 18.

The current drought and assessed failure of the "belg" (short) rains in Ethiopia in April of this year is the culmination of dry conditions and reduced soil moisture, developing since the last Contact: Bob Randolph (Wife Nina) good harvest throughout most of the country in 1998, with the exception of the southeastern most region. The current weather throughout the Horn appears to be caused in part by "La Nina" weather patterns. These same patterns have affected adversely much of the world's climate, resulting in unusual floods, drought, bitter cold and extreme heat in various parts of the world, with ensuing economic damage over the last two years. In the Horn, problems began as early as 1997 in the pastoral areas of southeastern Ethiopia, slowly spreading to the rest of the country and other regions of the Horn. This year's failed crop marks the seventh consecutive failed harvest in the south/southeast.

These problems have not caught USAID unprepared. Because of the frequency of harsh climate in the Horn, our development assistance programs in the 1990s, and in large part since the 1984-86 Ethiopian drought, have focused in good measure on emergency preparedness, disaster mitigation, sustainable agriculture and environmental practices, and food security.

The Famine Early Warning System (FEWS), a regional forecasting and early warning system conceived and funded by USAID, is in large part responsible for the abundant data we now have on current and developing weather patterns in the Horn. P.L. 480 Title III policy reforms, negotiated with the government of Ethiopia, were responsible for the creation of the emergency food security reserve. Title III wheat was used, starting in 1993 and continuing through 1999, to help stock the reserve and to enable the government to address various food emergencies. USAID funds helped make ready the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) within the

Ethiopian government. The Commission is Ethiopia's first line of defense against the recurring drought emergencies. USAID funds assisted in increasing the capacity of nine Ethiopian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which are now participating in the relief effort. Similar efforts have taken place in our programs throughout the region. The recent outbreak of war may make further progress in these areas increasingly difficult.

Looking to the near future, the weather forecasts predict normal to above normal rains for the first two months, June and July, of the "Meher" (main) crop season. Such rains would allow restoration of soil moisture and seed germination, providing a good start to many crops. This is in line with the historical pattern in "La Nina" years. A normal to good "Meher" crop season would result in considerable relief of famine conditions in much of the country in November - December. Meteorologists maintain, however, that the current weather system is unusual, making even short-term forecasting difficult.

As Assistant Administrator of USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Response, responsible for coordinating the large majority of U.S. emergency assistance to the region, I visited the Horn in March of this year. I wanted to witness firsthand the size of the problem, the efficiency of our delivery system, and to determine the challenges that lay ahead. On my return, I stopped in Rome to review the situation with the leadership of the United Nations World Food Program. I also stopped in Brussels at the European Commission and in Paris to speak with French officials in the Foreign Ministry responsible for humanitarian relief. It is clear that the coordinated efforts of the international community will be necessary to adequately address a crisis of this magnitude. I shared my experiences and relayed what I learned in an effort to ensure that potential partners were as aware and committed as we are, as I know that Congress is interested in seeing that other donors contribute their fair share.

On March 14 of this year, with a team of USAID specialists, I visited Gode town in the Somali region of southeast Ethiopia. What I saw, coupled with statistics presented to me by the Ethiopian Regional Ministry of Agriculture Southeast, was sobering. According to the Ministry, 99 percent of the cattle, 80 percent of the horses and 20 percent of the sheep in Gode zone had died by the end of February. In one small area, I witnessed at least 50 carcasses from recently deceased cattle. In the fifteen days prior to our arrival, 61 people in Gode town

had reportedly died, 45 of whom were children under five. This was in a town of 47,000 inhabitants. I visited a therapeutic and supplementary feeding center that Save the Children/U.S. had built within the last two weeks. The therapeutic feeding center already had 86 severely malnourished patients suffering from marasmus, or wasting. There were 850 moderately malnourished patients in the supplementary feeding center. The BHR/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) grant to Save the Children/U.S. funded care for only 500 patients. It was obvious to see that the funding would soon have to be increased. I spoke with one woman waiting at the center who told me the last time she saw rain was one and a half years ago. Two of her three children had died. In response to the dire situation in Gode, I ordered an airlift of 40 tons of special foods for therapeutic and supplementary feeding programs. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with BHR/OFDA funding, began relief flights into the area soon after I departed. Today there are twenty-nine organizations running nutrition programs in this area, as opposed to the one that was operational during my visit.

On March 15, I flew to the northern highlands in the Amhara region, which was the epicenter of the 1984-86 crisis, and is an area frequently affected by drought. Half the 1.4 million population of North Wello is currently dependent on food assistance. I was distressed to learn that distributions are irregular and consist only of half rations. With the food shipments that recently arrived in the region, distributions should become more regular and increase in size. The added complication now, of course, is that the war effort is concentrated in the north, and may become a factor in delivery.

While in Ethiopia, I met with Prime Minister Meles and Commissioner Ato Simon Mechale, head of the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission. Prime Minister Meles compared the memory of the 1984-86 drought in Ethiopia to the Jewish remembrance of the Holocaust. He indicated that the reactions of both peoples were similar in that they found past events so horrible that they would take extraordinary measures to see that such an event was not repeated. "Never again" was the phrase he used to underline the country's resolve not to let the current emergency deteriorate into a famine comparable to that of 1984-86.

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's efforts to address the immediate effects of the crisis are crucial. The government has drawn stocks from its

grain reserve. In March, it also issued a tender for the local purchase of 100,000 metric tons of food. In discussions with Prime Minister Meles, he assured me that a sufficient number of trucks would be made available for distribution purposes. He promised not to allow a resurgence of border hostilities with Eritrea to hamper the relief efforts. He told me that responding to the drought was as, or more, important to the government as its dispute with Eritrea. In my discussion with Meles about the possibility of using the Eritrean port of Assab as a back-up measure, Meles preferred to direct arrivals of food to the ports of Djibouti, Berbera, and possibly, Port Sudan, for the immediate future. As you know, we are using Djibouti and Berbera to off-load supplies for Ethiopia. If these prove insufficient, we will consider all other port options in the region and will urge all relevant governments to cooperate.

At my next stop, Kenya, on March 19, I was able to meet with officials of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in Nairobi. The SPLM officials presented to us briefly their assessment of the situation in southern Sudan. Southern Sudan has been affected both by the ongoing civil war and, to a much smaller extent, by the current drought. A total of 2.8 million people are considered at risk, largely from the affects of civil war, with a small percentage of people being directly affected by the drought. In addition to relief, USAID has provided assistance that has resulted in an increase in agricultural production in the Western Equatoria region of southern Sudan and has helped to repair roads so that surpluses from Western Equatoria can be transported to areas of need. I was able to discuss points of issue with the SPLM, notably the memorandum of understanding (MOU) required for signature by nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, working in southern Sudan. Currently those agreeing to the MOU are working under a 90-day trial period that ends in May, after which time the SPLM has agreed to review the terms of the agreement, and if deemed necessary, adjustments will be made. I relayed to SPLM officials that USAID had no intention of back-filling behind NGOs that had decided to not sign the MOU. USAID will not provide funding to the NGOs who did sign, or to new NGOs, to cover projects that were left unfulfilled by the NGOs who chose not to sign. USAID continues to rely on SPLM assurances that it will respond to the needs of its populations affected by NGOs who refused to sign the MOU and withdrew from Sudan.

While I did not visit the drought-affected areas of northwestern Kenya, conditions there have deteriorated since my departure, even though it has begun raining in some parts of

Turkana, the hardest-hit district. People in Turkana have already lost over seventy-five percent of their animals. Further rains will be necessary to restore soil moisture and rejuvenate pastures. BHR/OFDA will be funding the rehabilitation of water sources, animal health, human health and nutrition in Turkana, Marsabit, Mandera, and Moyale Districts in northern Kenya.

I next traveled to Baidoa and Qansahdere, Somalia, where I visited rehabilitated health centers, primary schools and water sources. I was the first American official to visit Baidoa since the departure of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) in April of 1995. When we arrived in Baidoa, I was met by the local leadership of the Rahaweyne Resistance Army. They greeted me with open arms, saying that they would never forget what the United States did for the people of Somalia. The Americans would always be welcome in Baidoa, they told me.

An estimated 1.2 million people are considered at-risk in Somalia, stemming from war-related displacement or trauma and from drought. Somalia is experiencing increased difficulties and malnutrition as a result of drought but is not, at this time, on the brink of famine. U.S. food commitments total $14.5 million.

Since my departure from Somalia, the rains have started, albeit three weeks late. Roads and airstrips have sporadically been inaccessible due to the heavy rains in Bay and Bakool regions. The rains are providing some relief in water availability, however, it is too soon to know if the rains will continue and prove helpful to the crops. BHR/OFDA is funding health, nutrition and water programs in Bay and Bakool, the two regions most affected by the drought.

My next stop was the small country and port-city of Djibouti. I visited Djibouti in order to tour the port facilities, meet with the U.N. World Food Program logistical staff, and to learn more about how the drought has affected Djibouti itself. The Djiboutians have invested significant efforts in port improvements over the last six months, and the U.N. World Food Program is working to further expand the capacity of the bulk cargo berths. BHR/OFDA is contributing to this effort.

Being the hottest country on earth, Djiboutians are accustomed to little rainfall, but this year has been particularly dry. Before leaving, I pledged 2,765 metric tons of food in response to the U.N. World Food Program appeal to

help relieve the situation. The U.S. Embassy recently declared Djibouti a drought disaster. The Ambassador's request of $25,000 was given to CARITAS to continue its special feeding efforts.

The last stop in my trip to the Horn was Eritrea. From March 22 to 24, accompanied by USAID personnel, I visited camps of internally displaced persons -- their displacement caused by the hostilities with Ethiopia. I met with representatives of the United Nations and other donor organizations, traveled to the Debub region of the zone bordering Tigray, Ethiopia, and spoke with President Isaias and other national and local government officials.

While effects of the drought were evident in some regions in Eritrea, the situation is much more manageable and considerably less severe than conditions observed in Ethiopia. An estimated 760,000 people are currently at risk in Eritrea, about half from the drought, and the balance from the events of the war with Ethiopia The drought is the most severe in the Anseba, Gash-Barka, and northern and southern Red Sea zones. The situation is being monitored and preparations made to respond if there is further deterioration. The European Union (EU) assessment team, which had visited the drought areas of Anseba the week before my visit, indicated that coping mechanisms were stretched to their limit in the region and that the population would require additional assistance if the drought continued to worsen.

In conversations with Eritrean President Isaias, I stressed the importance of resolving the legalities of previously misappropriated food and its use by the Eritrean government. This issue had created difficulties with the provision of food aid but now appears close to resolution. The possibility of using the port of Assab as a discharge point for food destined for Ethiopia and the creation of a humanitarian corridor were also broached with President Isaias. After some discussion, President Isaias agreed to consider this option favorably if the modalities could be worked out.

The final leg of my trip took me to Western Europe where my task was to alert potential European donors to the gravity of the situation and encourage them to join us in a response. I am pleased to report this portion of my trip yielded substantial benefits. Whereas before my visit, European response to the crisis had been limited, announcements of assistance by our EU and French colleagues came within a week of my return. Of the

current figure of 432,000 metric tons pledged by the European Union to Ethiopia for this calendar year, 260,000 tons represents new commitments. After learning of our decision to airlift food into Gode, the French government also sponsored an airlift one week later. I also discussed with French humanitarian officials the possibility of using the French military base in Djibouti if a strategic airlift might be needed in the future. I understand that the French government has subsequently offered use of its base to the humanitarian effort.

On the last day of my journey, the U.N. Secretary General announced the appointment of Catherine Bertini, the Executive Director of the U.N. World Food Program, as the U.N.'s special envoy for the Horn. Ms. Bertini's ensuing trip to the region continued to spotlight the problems that I reported to her when we met in Rome.

During my trip, I had ample opportunity to reflect on what needs to take place in response to the crises and how to surmount the obstacles facing us. In the six weeks since I returned, much progress has been made. As mentioned earlier, donor pledges have increased and our own efforts have grown tremendously. If there are reasonable rains and harvests in the next planting season, the numbers will ease in the fall. If the "Meher" (major) rains, due to begin in June, fail, then the current crisis could reach proportions of the 1984-86 crisis.

The most daunting challenge immediately in front of us is ensuring that the necessary logistics are in place for moving resources to those in need. The internal logistical constraints in bringing food overland to the hardest-hit regions of Ethiopia pose some of the greatest challenges, given the distance of many of the hardest-hit regions from the sea and the poor state of roads. Unpaved sections of road, washed out bridges, security threats and shortage of working trucks, replacement parts, tires and fuel are the principal problems of the many that we are facing. Because of my concerns with the logistics chain, I dispatched a logistics team in April to study the issue and make recommendations.

Our current approved food commitments for the Horn total $373.9 million, of which $277.8 million are for Ethiopia. About fifteen percent of the total commitment is non-emergency food aid resources programmed as part of ongoing commitments of the BHR/Food for Peace program. An estimated 108,000 tons of U.S. Government food assistance for Ethiopia arrived in Djibouti port in April, with another 100,000 tons a month scheduled to arrive

in both May and June. The U.S. tonnage is then projected to drop off to a level of about 70,000 tons each month in July and August.

With some upgrades currently being undertaken by the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), the port of Djibouti should be largely adequate to handle this quantity of food. In March, BHR/OFDA provided approximately $600,000 to the World Food Program for this effort. Based on the USAID logistics team's recommendation, we are contributing an additional $1.75 million to the World Food Program for emergency repairs to the road that runs from the Djibouti port to the Ethiopian border. In addition, Canada is contributing $2.6 million to the port upgrade, while Switzerland is providing $4.2 million to road repair in and around Djibouti. Further funding to address logistical problems is either already committed or expected in the near future from various international donors.

Significant European Union and bilateral donor contributions are also programmed throughout this period. The European Union plans on using the port of Berbera in northwest Somalia for a significant portion of its food aid, which will relieve some of the stress on the Djibouti port. Berbera presents a good secondary port of call, even though it is smaller and shallower than Djibouti. Some work on the roads overland from Berbera to Ethiopia will additionally be required. BHR/OFDA is supporting port upgrades totaling $308,000. The EU is supporting a five-year project for bridge and road work from Berbera to Hargeysa.

The U.N. World Food Program has established a special logistics cell in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia responsible for coordinating shipping arrangements of all donors, air movements, and in-country food movements. The cell will also liaise with the involved governments, NGOs, international organizations, and donors to ensure effective coordination.

In addition to food, BHR/OFDA has funded over $14 million in non-food emergency relief activities in the Horn. Of this amount, $10.2 million is specifically for Ethiopia. These emergency programs include water and sanitation projects, nutritional feeding and health programs in the hardest-hit areas of Ethiopia, as well as the logistical upgrades mentioned earlier.

I want to emphasize that security along these routes is a pressing concern, especially in the south. The most severely

affected populations live in the remote Somali and Oromiya regions of Ethiopia. Critical to an appropriate response is the availability of an adequate number of partnering organizations to oversee proposed program interventions in this area. Security for humanitarian staff as well as supplies in the Somali and Oromiya regions must be strengthened and enhanced. In the last eight weeks, several attacks on convoys have occurred, resulting in at least one death and several injuries. The war has the potential to aggravate security concerns.

Ongoing development assistance to the region totals $53 million annually. Ethiopia receives $37.8 million, Eritrea $9 million, and Sudan and Somalia $3 million each. Many of these programs, such as the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS), impact on the ability to respond to crises. Sustainable agricultural and environmental practices are part of USAID's strategic objective, along with those of the host country throughout the region.

The generosity of the American people is well known, Mr. Chairman, especially in the face of natural borne disasters over which there is limited control. The ugly face of war makes many of these problems even more urgent and difficult. Our humanitarian and diplomatic efforts must continue. The U.S. Agency for International Development is prepared to meet the challenges of bringing relief to the people of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa.

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J. Stephen Morrison
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Washington, D.C.

Hearing on 'Famine and Conflict in Ethiopia and Eritrea'

The House International Relations Committee,
Rm. 2172 Rayburn House Office Building
10:00 AM Thursday, May 18, 2000

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and other Members of the House International Relations Committee for the opportunity to appear here today. I will do my best, under present circumstances, to answer the Committee staff's request that I speak to the broader political and military context surrounding the unfolding famine in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The war that resumed May 12 between Ethiopia and Eritrea is highly fluid, uncertain and dangerous. For this reason, any commentary and projections will by definition be tentative.

One thing is however quite clear: **the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict is today the largest war worldwide,** involving over 600,000 armed combatants and newly arrived heavy artillery and high performance aircraft valued in the hundreds of millions of dollars. This war could again (as in the spring of 1999) generate casualties in the tens of thousands and displaced persons in the hundreds of thousands.

I wish to cluster my remarks around five brief points.

1) **First, responsibility for the Horn war that resumed last Friday and that now reaches deep into Eritrea's interior rests with the two adversaries, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and with them alone.**

There is plenty of blame on the shoulders of each of these two parties. My purpose here is not to parse blame, and I will not attempt to do so.

Each side at varying moments has attempted to lay blame upon outsiders for failure to resolve the original border dispute. We should disregard these diversions and focus clearly upon the base calculations of the two adversaries themselves, the decisions that got them into this war, and

the decisions required of them, if they are to rescue themselves from a potentially protracted and devastating war.

2) Second, the Administration deserves credit for the sustained creative efforts of Special Envoy Anthony Lake, Assistant Secretary Susan Rice and NSC Senior Director Gayle Smith.

In close collaboration with OAU envoy Ahmed Ouyahia, EU envoy Rino Serri and the UN, the American team conducted over many months a full court diplomatic press to resolve the border dispute. It was a continual, diversified engagement that left no diplomatic option untested. Seldom in Africa crises or crises outside Africa have we seen such a sustained internationally-coordinated diplomatic investment aimed at preempting a devastating conflagation.

Sadly, these efforts have revealed the grave, exasperating limits to high level diplomacy and raised troubling questions as to what strategies and approaches can possibly work, when the parties themselves are so resistant to a negotiated settlement. An obvious question, in retrospect, is whether the international mediators should have pressed, early and hard, for controls over massive arms deliveries (that now total over $1 billion) and begun to condition bilateral and multilateral assistance.

One risk is that we conclude 'never again' and retrench from an activist diplomatic engagement in Africa. That, in my opinion, would be a mistaken and dangerous conclusion. There is simply too much at stake to walk away from the Horn war. Because high level diplomacy has not yet succeeded up to now in the Horn does not mean outside diplomacy will not work elsewhere, or will not succeed in the Horn at other future moments. It does not mean that we cannot do better in the future, with a much more focused set of actions on arms flows.

3) Third, international efforts have revealed that what had been understood as a border dispute is in fact a much more profound, deep-running interstate conflict.

Paradoxically, the two adversaries are by all accounts in essential agreement on the framework to resolve the border war. Yet the closer they they have come to final agreement on operational details and the sequencing of actions, the more starkly apparent it has become that they lack the will or capacity to truly close the deal.

3

The present war is not over a boundary lines over barren stretches of remote territory. It is about two sovereign nations who have lost all trust in one another, and who have at present no workable vision of how to live with one another peaceably. The Horn war is rooted in national honor, enflamed egos, historical grievances and the blowback from an imperfect separation into the two separate nations of Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1993.

If the two parties can be brought back to the table, an effective resolution will require speaking to the deeper causes of the war. The present framework agreement on the border dispute cannot and should not be discarded; it may provide the means to refocus Ethiopia and Eritrea on a path out of war. However, an enduring settlement will likely require an accord that speaks to the breakdown of trust and rebuilds sytematically interstate relations between these two highly interdependent entities.

4) **Fourth, there is a significant danger that the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea has entered a fundamentally new phase.**

Based on past history, there is a very high probability the war will drag on and transmute along new fronts. Ambitions of each side are highly uncertain, but could quickly escalate beyond the trench lines and disputed ground around Badme, Zala Anbessa and Assab.

There will be a strong impulse to make use of air power, particularly on the Ethiopian side, where there has been a massive investment and where Ethiopia now enjoys considerable superiority. Just two years ago, we should recall, both sides engaged in aerial bombing of urban civilian targets.

There are other disturbing echoes of the devastating wars of the 1970s and 1980s.

Worsening armed conflict occurs parallel with deepening famine. Both sides engage in mass mobilization oof conscripts, with the open expectation of exceptionally high casualty rates.

An international arms bazaar continues apace, an obscene backdrop to the international mobilization to redress the famine. As in the 1970s and 1980s the flood of weapons enables and consolidates hardliners on each side and feeds delusions of military triumph, even though all recognize

there will be no decisive victor. As war commenced last week, each side's commanders entered the fray confident and smiling.

Today it is not the reckless indulgences of the Cold War that fuel war. It is the reckless commercial marketing of weapons to both sides, often from the same vendors in eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, China, Israel and elsewhere. Even-handed aggressive selling to the Horn of Africa, we have discovered, does not achieve deterrence.

The war reaches beyond the boundaries of Ethiopia and Eritrea and has altered fundamentally the regional dynamic of the Horn. Already it has shifted the calculations and regional alliances of Sudan, Djibouti, and Somalia. It threatens to drive new mass refugee populations into Sudan. It distracts and weakens regional pressure upon Khartoum to ends its internal war, respect human rights, address its massive humanitarian crisis, and end support of international terrorism. It creates new vulnerabilities to attacks upon Djibouti, and encourages arms transfers into already chaotic sectors of southern Somalia.

4) **Fourth, the new war will change demands upon international humanitarian operations.**

Up to now, the war and famine zones have been largely segregated into separate geographic zones, such that most relief has not been subject to the predations of armed units and there has been no need for cross-line delivery of relief assistance (as became common in the 1980s).

This pattern may now be changing. If fighting persists and results in massive displacement of civilians, war and humanitarian demands will intersect in the interior areas of Eritrea.

If war intensifies, we can also anticipate further forced expulsions of Eritrean and Ethiopian nationals from Addis Ababa and Asmara, respectively.

The rail and road channels from Djibouti, along which the bulk of humanitarian relief and armaments flow, may become a target. These channels are an inviting chokepoint, where humanitarian and military goods are difficult to disentangle.

The Eritrean port of Assab may come under siege. If so, it could endure extensive damage that would have long-term consequences for annual fertilizer fuel and grain shipments into Ethiopia.

6) **Fifth, and lastly, the new war calls for new policy actions.**

Our interests call for us to adopt a measured detachment from each of the adversaries.

Our interests are dual: to address grave humanitarian demands, as we simultaneously work to contain and eventually defuse this war. Throughout, we and others must grapple with the continued risk that we will be blamed and targeted.

An enduring resolution may be elusive in the near term. It likely requires a strategy that looks out 1-2 years and that rests on building transatlantic alliance with the EU member states. Without a coherent, effective transatlantic alliance we cannot begin to see results.

Containment requires changing calculations through new forms of coordinated multilateral pressure.

Arms embargoes are essential, will take time, and require serious efforts at monitoring and enforcement. Action last night by the UN Security Council to impose an international arms embargo was a critical step. We need now to ensure that these commitments are implemented effectively.

We should move rapidly to condition multilateral and bilateral assistance and to limit travel and the ability of the two adversaries to use our soil to raise funds for their respective war efforts.

Thank you.

BRIEFING STATEMENT
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
BY
Gary Shaye
Vice President for International Programs
SAVE THE CHILDREN
May 18, 2000

Good morning Mr. Chairman, members the Committee, and distinguished guests.
I am here today representing Save the Children on behalf of our President Dr. Charles MacCormack, who was unable to be here today.

Thank you for inviting Save the Children to speak with you about the current crisis in Ethiopia, and share with you the work that we are doing to respond to the critical needs of children in this emergency. Save the Children is a non-profit organization whose mission is to make a lasting and positive change in the lives of children in need. We work in 46 countries around the world and focus our work primarily in the sectors of health, education, micro-enterprise, and food security in both development and in emergency settings.

I would like to begin by thanking the U.S. Government for being so proactive and responsive to this emergency. To date in 2000, the U.S. Government has provided over $165 million in food, water, and relief assistance to drought-affected areas of Ethiopia. This assistance has been provided not only to United Nations agencies, such as the World Food Program, but also directly to non-governmental organizations working on the ground in Ethiopia. We, as Americans, can be proud of what we have done so far to keep this famine from deteriorating to the level of the one in 1984-85. The U.S. government should also be applauded for moving quickly and for providing a significant portion of the international assistance for this emergency. We are off to a good start, yet there is still much to do.

I would also like to recognize the U.S. Government's understanding of the regional nature of this emergency and the need to continue to support emergency, development, and political initiatives throughout the region. It is clear that this famine, like all famines, finds its roots in complex regional political and economic issues that require a multifaceted and long-term approach.

Save the Children's Work in Ethiopia
Save the Children began its work in Ethiopia in response to the 1984 famine. Over the past 16 years, Save the Children has implemented a wide-range of activities to help vulnerable children and their families combat hunger, obtain community-based health services, have access to clean water, and attend school. Programs focus on geographic areas and target populations that have been historically under-served. This includes the pastoral peoples in the east and south of Ethiopia, as well as the urban poor living in slum areas. It is Save the Children's long-standing presence in the country and our long term understanding of the issues and problems facing families and children that allowed us to respond so quickly when the situation started to deteriorate in October of 1999.

When droughts and famines begin, it is the children who are the most severely affected and whose health begins to deteriorate first. That is why, in November of 1999, Save the Children agreed with the Ethiopian government authorities to initiate drought relief activities in Gode Zone of Ethiopia, near the borders of both Kenya and Somalia, which are also experiencing economic, political, and humanitarian crises.

At this time, the situation in Gode Zone of Ethiopia is one of the most severe of anywhere in Ethiopia. An estimated child mortality rate of 1.5/10,000/per day has been observed. In March of this year, Hugh Parmer visited our program and saw seriously malnourished children being fed at our centers. Currently, 163 severely malnourished children are in the therapeutic feeding center and 6,000 moderately malnourished children are in the supplementary feeding program and fed daily with their mothers. Since opening in February, admissions of malnourished children to these feeding centers are double our original projections. In the first week alone, while we anticipated 10-11 admissions per week, we admitted 10-11 children *every two days.* The good news I can report is that in the past month we have seen a decrease in the number of infant and child deaths in Gode. However, the death rates in the region are still too high. We estimate that both feeding centers could double again and there is a clear need to open additional feeding centers. Other life-saving efforts that Save the Children is conducting in the region include:

- Preparing and initiating food distribution programs for some 135,600 children and adult family members in the Liben, Afdheer, and Borena regions. 9,200 metric tons of wheat, vegetable oil, and corn soya blend will be distributed as soon as it can reach the region from the port in Djibouti.

- Transporting of water by trucks to an estimated 100,000 residents of Gode zone. However, there are still additional villages without water in the zone.

- Vaccinating livestock herds to prevent deaths and improve the food security of pastoralist families and their children who rely on livestock for milk and income.

Although we believe that these efforts and the efforts of the other NGOs working in Ethiopia are addressing the most critical needs and saving lives, we are well aware that these efforts address only a small fraction of the suffering. Relief efforts on the ground need to be expanded and combined with political initiatives to fully address the problems that are currently affecting over 8 million Ethiopians.

Why should Congress Act?

The efforts of the U.S. Congress are needed to assist in this emergency. The American people don't want us to let women and children of Ethiopia die -- regardless of the political turmoil of the governments in the region. The U.S. is a leader in responding to humanitarian crises, and the American people are known for their generosity and for their compassion. The faster we respond now, the greater the chance that children and their families will survive. As we have learned from previous drought emergencies, the farther people begin to move from their farms, families,

and communities in search of food and water, the greater the risk to their survival. Congress should be aware that the costs of not responding immediately are huge. The longer the international community waits, the greater the costs. If this emergency results in large population movements in the region, there will not only be loss of human life, but also further destabilization in an already unstable region.

What should Congress do?

As stated previously, the U.S. Government's initial efforts to deal with this emergency have been exemplary. We are here today to ask Congress to:

- Continue to ensure that the agencies of the U.S. Government have adequate resources to respond to the underlying economic and social fragility in the region for years to come.
- Recognize how important it is that the regional approach to this emergency is not forgotten and that continued assistance is targeted to the rehabilitation and development stage – not only in Ethiopia, but throughout the region – to help mitigate the effects of potential future crises.
- Acknowledge that the influence of the U.S. Congress also is needed to ensure that the Government of Ethiopia maintains its commitment to the long-term task of reducing famine vulnerability.
- And, lastly, the U.S. Government needs to use its political muscle to convince other donor nations to be as forthcoming and responsive to the needs of this emergency as the U.S. has been to date.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for allowing us to bring this situation to your attention and to the attention of the American people. As an NGO on the ground in Ethiopia, we thank you for all that you have done to assist in this crisis and for keeping the needs of children at the forefront of U.S. humanitarian efforts. I welcome your questions.

U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Assistant Administrator

JUN 15 2000

The Honorable Benjamin A. Gilman
Chairman
Committee on International Relations
House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I was pleased to have the opportunity to testify before the Committee on International Relations on May 18 regarding the efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development to relieve the effects of drought, and now war, in Ethiopia, Eritrea and the Horn of Africa more generally. As you may be aware, shortly after the hearing, I traveled to Rome to lead the U. S. delegation at the Executive Board meetings of the World Food Program.

While in Rome, I took the opportunity to arrange a meeting to discuss the crisis in the Horn - - the drought as well as the war. Recalling your interest in French assistance to the Djibouti port, I asked the French representative if his government had any plans to contribute to the Djibouti port operation. I have learned that the French contributed $1.4 million for Djibouti port upgrades and almost $7 million for road upgrades from Djibouti to Dikhil in January 1999. They are currently considering an additional contribution. Our own assistance toward port rehabilitation totals $600,000, as I mentioned in the course of the hearings.

Please let me know if I may be able to assist you with any additional information.

Sincerely yours,

Hugh C. Parmer
Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Humanitarian Response

1300 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Assistant Administrator

JUN 15 2000

The Honorable Barbara Lee
House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lee:

I was pleased to have the opportunity to testify before the Committee on International Relations on May 18 regarding the efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development to relieve the effects of drought and now war in Ethiopia, Eritrea and the Horn of Africa more generally.

As you may be aware, shortly after the hearing, I traveled to Rome to lead the U. S. delegation at the Executive Board meetings of the World Food Program. While in Rome, I took the opportunity to arrange a meeting to discuss the crisis in the Horn - - the drought as well as the war. In response to your specific question regarding Italy's donations, I had the opportunity to ask our representative office to the World Food Program to provide me with information on the efforts of the Italian government to assist in alleviating the suffering in the Horn. The information they provided follows:

Italy's Contributions to the Horn of Africa Relief Efforts in CY 2000

CY 2000	Country	Comment
$33 million	Eritrea	1999-2001 development project total $100 million
$ 5 million	Eritrea	Humanitarian Aid
$ 3 million	Eritrea	Food aid through WFP 1999-2000 total $6 million
$33 million	Ethiopia	1999-2001 Development project total $100 million
$ 3 million	Ethiopia	Food aid through WFP 1999 - 2000 Total $6 million
$250,000	Ethiopia	Humanitarian flights
$2.5 million	Sudan	Food aid for Sudanese IDPs; rehab projects through OCHA, UN appeals
$1.5 million	Sudan	Southern Sudan project through UNICEF
$1.5 million	Sudan	UNESCO, UNICEF appeals in southern Sudan
$1,5 million	Sudan	Food aid through WFP 1999-2000 total $3 million
In process	Sudan	Humanitarian aid (flights) for Somali region's refugees
$3.5 million	Somalia	Civil protection through UNDP
$1.75 million	Somalia	Food aid through WFP 1999-2000 total $3.5 million

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In process	Djibouti	
$5 million	Horn	2-year EU rehab programs for NGO projects
Total: $94.5 million		

It should be noted in the above data that some of the activities in Eritrea and Ethiopia had been halted because of the war. Please let me know if I may assist you with any additional information.

Sincerely yours,

Hugh Q. Parmer
Assistant Administrator
Bureau for Humanitarian Response