

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

APPOINTING A SPECIAL ENVOY FOR HUNGER

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 29, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, Africa is on the brink of a crisis of biblical proportions. I traveled to Ethiopia and Eritrea earlier this year to see the famine conditions, and never imagined that I'd see conditions as bad as I saw in 1984.

In 1984, 8 million were in need of food aid. In January, more than 11 million people struggled for their next meal. I saw women and children that were too weak to feed themselves. This is absolutely tragic in a world with food as plentiful as ours.

Today, the situation is even more distressing. I recently read a cable from the American ambassador in Ethiopia describing a grimmer outlook for the coming months than had previously been expected. I will be submitting into the RECORD the cable and the latest NOAA weather forecast, which revises expectations for crop viability downward. This paints a bleak outlook for millions more Ethiopians for months to come.

In March, I wrote U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan urging him to appoint a special envoy for hunger. Many European news outlets have run stories in recent days on the growing number of Africans, whose lives are now in jeopardy. The Ethiopian Government is planning another "Live-Aid" concert to re-energize the donor community and draw international attention to the situation. The momentum of this concert, coupled with the appointment of a U.N. special envoy, may help draw enough attention and resources to the continent and save the lives of millions of women and children.

In Matthew 25, Jesus talks about the obligation to feed the hungry. The United States has responded to this crisis with an enormous amount of compassion. Many countries have the ability to give more, and may just be waiting to be asked. Time, resources and attention must be devoted to mobilizing and coordinating the resources required. This is a crisis that will require enormous coordination between international aid agencies, religious leaders and governments from every corner of the globe.

The war in Iraq has demanded our attention, but we can not allow this silent emergency to grow worse. The lives of millions of women and children depend on this story being shared loudly and boldly. I hope you'll do your part.

FROM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1559

SUMMARY

1. The mission believes that the number of people in need of emergency assistance will continue to increase from current levels of 11.3 million to 14 million people over the

course of the year, forcing a deliberate shift from the mid-case to the worst-case scenario as described in the October 2002 USAID/Ethiopia Contingency Plan.

2. Life-saving interventions are ongoing throughout Ethiopia, with special attention to pocket areas with high malnutrition. However, poor belg rains to date continue to raise vulnerability and needs and potentially threaten grave consequences, including increased mortality.

3. The sheer magnitude, severity and duration of Ethiopia's food security emergency has left people in an extreme state of vulnerability where coping strategies have been exhausted and livelihoods destroyed leading to widespread destitution. Increased destitution and continued shocks threaten a sharp increase in mortality levels as any possible harvest is still months away and health status of the most affected continues to decline.

4. Pre-famine indicators are present in Ethiopia for a significant portion of the at-need population and support the movement of contingency planning efforts to a worst-case scenario.

BACKGROUND

5. As per Reftel (A), USAID/Ethiopia issued a contingency plan (October 2002) to the horn response working group in USAID/W outlining a mid-case and two worst-case scenarios as well as a mitigation and response plan.

6. The mission believes that the response to date, particularly led by the GFDRE and the USG, has provided the necessary resources to mitigate against the absolute worst-case scenario (Worst-Case Scenario Two as per the plan). However, current rains are again inadequate and NOAA projections indicate "normal to below normal" rainfall is anticipated.

7. Continued drought can be expected to increase the beneficiary caseload beyond current levels of 11.3 million people to 14 million or more over a wider geographic area. Thus, we can expect to meet criteria for the plan's Worst-Case Scenario One.

8. A worst-case scenario will result in unacceptable levels of mortality over a wide area and further breakdowns of long-term livelihood and coping strategies. In addition, one can anticipate further depletion of productive assets (destitution), distress migration, increased rural and urban vulnerability, malnutrition, and mortality will occur over the coming months based on current indicators. The pre-famine indicators will only worsen if rains continue to be much below average.

9. The current crisis is not likely to result in the mortality levels of the 1980's, in large part due to an early response by the GFDRE, donors, and institutions such as the Emergency Food Security Reserve, and early warning systems. In the likely event of pipeline breaks and/or epidemic outbreaks, the worst-case scenario could result in a significant spike in mortality.

FACTORS LEADING TO A WORST-CASE SCENARIO

A. MASSIVE CROP FAILURE AND NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN NEED

10. Following the December 2002 crop assessment (estimated 25 percent decrease from the 2001/2002 harvest and 21 percent decrease from the last five-year average (FAO) production decline), DPPC and multi-agency teams concluded that 11.3 million people

would require emergency assistance, a further 2.9 million people were identified as being under close monitoring.

11. A March 14 addendum to the appeal (SEPTTEL C) increased needs slightly from 1.44 to 1.46 million metric tons and those under close monitoring from 2.9 to 3.1 million.

12. Production is most severely affected in Eastern Ethiopia, particularly in lowland areas, where losses range from 70 to 100 percent. However, food production is also down in surplus areas in the west. Reduction in food production in surplus areas will limit timely local purchase of food aid and cereal prices will increase further through the hungry season (July-September) when more than 90 percent of farmers' cereal holdings will be depleted.

13. Note: The 1999-2000 food shortage emergency (labeled as localized famine retrospectively by CDC with respect to excess mortality in the Gode Zone of Somali Region and low-level famine in the Ethiopian highlands by experts such as Stephen Devereaux) was largely limited to belg producing and pastoral areas. This is not true in 2003. Current pre-famine indicators are found in many areas that are main meher-season producers. In the 1999 and 2000 contingency plans, the mission warned that a true worst-case scenario would be a failure of production in main season agricultural areas. This is in fact the situation that we now face in Ethiopia.

B. CHANGED DISEASE ENVIRONMENT

14. As per Reftels B and E, mortality and morbidity indicators are deteriorating. Of the 130 worst drought-affected districts, surveys with mortality data are now available for 30. Of these, 18 districts with a total surveyed population of 2.1 million report mortality rates at or above emergency thresholds of 1 per 10,000 per day for crude mortality or 2 per 10,000 children under five years of age per day.

15. Recent nutrition surveys in areas where interventions are ongoing suggest that nutritional status has stabilized or improving in a number of districts. Other areas, particularly those in the southern nations, nationalities and peoples region (SNNPR) and other pocket areas in the north-central highlands, however, are now deteriorating (including the development of pellagra).

16. Of particular concern are reports of pellagra and other micronutrient deficiencies from UNICEF nutrition experts traveling in North Wello. Pellagra results from a lack of niacin, often occurring in populations reliant on a homogenous diet of corn. After several months of dependency upon relief food comprised of corn or wheat only, (blended foods and pulses are in short supply), micronutrient deficiencies such as pellagra are not surprising. UNICEF nutrition experts reported seeing cases in most villages they visited. As the rash-like symptoms of pellagra are only visible at advanced stages of the micronutrient deficiency, pellagra is very likely to be affecting a much larger proportion of the population than was observed.

17. Since early February, measles outbreaks have been reported in Bale Zone in Oromiya, Silti Zone in SNNPR and the WAG HAMRA Zone in Amhara.

18. Cases of meningitis have been reported in Tigray, SNNPR, Afar, Benishangul and Amhara. The ministry of health is making

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

aggressive efforts to determine the strain. The threat of cholera increases with the advent of rain in the northern part of the country. Malaria cases are increasing and will likely increase further as people move to lowlands

C. A DEEPENING CRISIS, COUPLED WITH POOR RAINS IN 2003

19. On March 25, 2003, the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Commission (DPPC) launched a multi-agency assessment team to Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regions (SNNPR). The assessments will revise the status of 3.1 million people under the "close-monitoring" category and verify any additional need. Early indications point to an increase in needs beginning May 1, 2003, of 1.5 million people as a result of the emerging and deepening crisis and the lack of relief provided by the current belg season. Assessment results will be known on April 25, 2003.

20. On April 9, the DPPC Commissioner commented that he believes the assessment would show significant movement of those under "close-monitoring" to the beneficiary group requiring immediate assistance.

21. Fewer net assessments of the rains to date indicate that although there are sporadic intensive rains in a few pocket areas, the belg is below-average to much below-average in the eastern portion of Ethiopia generally, and specifically in the Afar, Somali, West Hararghe and SNNPR regions. Given that a good belg season in recent years is more the exception than the rule, we anticipate, based on experience, that the outcome this year will likely be much below-average. A significant reduction in area-planted for belg producers are already being reported over a widespread area.

D. INCREASING NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN NEED

22. To date, the effect of the much below-average belg is a deepening of the severity of the drought in already affected food deficit areas, pastoral areas, and newly emerging areas (SNNPR and some parts of the Oromiya Region). Assuming at this time, a much below-average belg performance (and poor pastoral rains), but not a total failure, we expect an increase of an additional 1 million people in need of assistance over a widespread area beginning in July or a revised total beneficiary caseload of 13.8 million (initial caseload of 11.3 million beneficiaries, projected may increase of 1.5 million people, and July increase of 1 million).

23. Based on this estimate, the following can be expected:

—Rather than needs peaking between April and June and declining in July, the mission believes that overall needs will increase initially in May and then remain at peak levels for the period June, July and August, and possibly through September.

—The overall increase in beneficiaries by 2.5 million people will result in increased cereal needs by some 170,000 mt (using 12.5 kg/person) and blended food requirements of 39,375 mt between May and September. This will increase overall needs during the appeal period from 1.46 mt to 1.66 mt (or an increase of about 210,000 mt overall (cereals and blended food) for the five month period).

E. PIPELINE BREAK FOR CEREALS AND BLENDED FOOD

24. The most recent USG contribution totaling 186,500 mt, as well as new contributions from other donors, brings the total pledges against CY 2003 to more than 1 million mt including 939,252 mt of cereals, 65,685 mt of blended food and 15,267 mt of vegetable oil. This represents some 70 percent of the estimated needs for 2003.

25. However, it should be noted that these are pledges, not deliveries and continued co-

ordination and robust deliveries are necessary to avert a pipeline break. Any delay could result in a pipeline break, which will have lasting repercussions for relief deliveries for the rest of the year, and could cause all major indicators to spike (morbidity, malnutrition, mortality, migration, etc.)

26. Actual deliveries are lagging. For example, the USG has pledged some 535,000 mt in CY 2003, but over 250,000 mt has not yet been purchased or shipped from the US and remains unscheduled in terms of delivery to Ethiopia. Consequences of a prolonged pipeline break include:

—Sharp increase of severe malnutrition and mortality;

—Ration reductions further compounding high levels of malnutrition;

—Limited pre-positioning of food to inaccessible areas;

—Reduction in distributions, requiring parallel import measures to the distribution sites and the emergency food security reserve, or partner warehouse;

—Mass migration during the agricultural season will affect this year's overall production and next year's assistance requirements; and

—Mass displacement and rural to urban migration.

27. With the addition of some 2.5 million people in need, it is expected that current pledges and delivery schedules for cereals will fall short of needs beginning in late-July with delivery lulls and gaps as early as May.

28. The blended food availability remains dangerously low with only 50 percent of the supplementary food needs pledged. Current available information points to a break of supplementary food availability in the middle of June.

29. Maintaining a pipeline at a minimum of 83 percent (representing the reduced ration of 12.5 kg-per person) of needs is necessary, not just to meet less-than-minimal nutritional requirements and limit spontaneous migration in search of food, but also to ensure that stability is maintained.

30. The mission is concerned about continued targeting difficulties and dilution of rations from the reduced level of 12.5 kg per person-per month, to even lower-levels as local officials stretch food available for an increasing number of people in need. The long-term impact on health status of keeping people barely within nutritional requirements is a serious concern.

31. The mission continues to stress the importance of improved targeting to increase the effectiveness of the emergency aid and in particular the present supplementary distributions. However, this often falls on deaf ears at the local level where absolute numbers in need are immediately apparent.

PLAN TO MEET INCREASING NEEDS

32. To date, the major stabilizing factor has been the USG contribution of 712,000 mt (\$319 million) of emergency food aid since the crisis emerged in July 2002. Non-food contributions include ofda grants (\$7.2 million with additional grants expected in the coming weeks), and USAID/Ethiopia grants totaling \$17 million. Accordingly, the USG has played the leading role to meet critical needs.

33. Recently signed grants will complement and increase the immediate health response, including increasing the number of nutritional surveys, health services and measles campaigns in the worst affected areas. Funds will also support services to emerging hotspots, increase potable water and expand the school-feeding program through the summer and fall.

A. Health and Non-Food Interventions:

34. But more is needed. One of the most significant and damning criticisms of the

1999-2000 response in the Somali Region of Ethiopia, was the inability of the UN Agencies and non-government organizations to undertake a timely measles immunization campaign and appropriately link food and health interventions to minimize excess mortality. The following critical actions need to be undertaken by the GFDRE, DONORS, NGOS, etc. In the next ninety days in order to avoid further excess deaths:

—Implement mass measles immunization campaigns (currently underway). In all, 16.2 million people under the age of 15 will be reached by June.

—Provide basic health, water and sanitation services at food distribution and supplementary feeding sites.

—Provide food and basic health services to displaced, mobile and other difficult to reach populations, including out-reach services;

—Improve targeting and ensure that food distributions are integrated generally with an overall health response;

—Increase availability and improve targeting of CSB;

—Implement an aggressive outbreak investigation and response to diseases of epidemic potential (e.g., meningitis);

—Implement a nutrition and mortality survey to cover the worst drought affected districts in order to obtain a better estimate of the overall magnitude of the problem (this is a follow-on to previous Center for Disease Control (CDC) support. USAID/Ethiopia is working with OFDA to identify appropriate assistance.); and

—Increase preparedness for therapeutic feeding by creating mobile teams of trained medical personnel that can move to sites where malnutrition rates rise to require specialized therapeutic feeding.

B. Support a Livelihoods Approach To Meeting Needs:

35. It is critical that the USG look to an increasing broad pool of implementing agencies to meet the widening humanitarian needs in Ethiopia. A significant surge-capacity is required to integrate food, non-food, livelihood and counter-famine responses to address the depth of the crisis.

36. Millions of families have lost their assets and require protection from further asset losses. Households also require access to a safety net and other opportunities for asset building. Provision of drought and disease resistant crops and pastoral interventions to assist in the recovery of populations in need, is critical prior to the onset on the main rains and the hunger-season in June.

C. Support Counter-Famine Measures:

37. Counter-famine measures such as the introduction of marketing interventions to improve access to grains and support the stabilization of, and access to, food and seeds, must be identified and funded now to ensure a continuation of the proactive and robust emergency response.

38. In support of USG efforts to minimize the effects of the food crisis in Ethiopia, the mission began receiving technical assistance from the Feinstein International Famine Center (FIFC) At Tufts University, through joint funding from OFDA and USAID/Ethiopia. The assistance will project the widespread nature of the current crisis, identify pre-famine level indicators in Ethiopia, AND assist in the identification and design of strategies to support livelihood and counter-famine measures and interventions that directly mitigate and minimize outcomes such as malnutrition, destitution and mortality.

39. Comment. The characteristics of the current crisis depict one of widespread and severe-hunger where 20 percent of Ethiopian households are dependent on relief distributions. This is a crisis that could be exacerbated immensely with a pipeline break, an epidemic outbreak or continued under-response relative to needs. Pre-famine indicators are in place in Ethiopia, including:

irreversibility, increased morbidity and mortality beyond acceptable levels and migration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

40. Given the continued deterioration of the situation, and the likelihood of increased needs and a wider affected population experiencing irreversible outcomes of the crisis, the mission recommends the following:

A. Issue demarche to other donor countries and request further assistance (see Reftel F).

B. Establish a reserve allocation of 150,000 MT from the Emerson Trust that can be used to respond to needs at the height of the hungry-season (July–September). Food would be distributed through NGOs and the World Food Program.

C. Continue CSB contributions and deliveries through NGOs and the World Food Program to meet the deterioration of nutritional status in developing hot-spots. Based upon needs, up to 25,000 MT of CSB should be made available for delivery in July and August 2003.

D. Use additional agency funding to meet immediate needs and put in place livelihood interventions and counter-famine measures particularly through U.S. non-governmental organizations now implementing the joint emergency operation.

E. Broaden the normal pool of implementing agencies and the tools to meet needs (i.e., beyond traditional food and non-food programs). It has become clear over the last several months that our NGO partners are quickly coming to a saturation point regarding their capacity and additional surge capacity is needed.

F. Provide follow-up CDC assistance to track epidemic outbreaks and implement appropriate nutritional and mortality surveys to deepen the understanding of the overall magnitude of the crisis.

G. Press the United Nations for the appointment of a special envoy and/or a senior operational humanitarian coordinator to establish an effective and credible emergency response across UN agencies. This point cannot be over-stated. Brazeal.

FREEDOM'S OBLIGATION

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 30, 2003

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit the words of John Marc Sianghio, Jr., a young man from Oswego, Illinois, to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. John was recently named a winner in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Voice of Democracy scriptwriting contest for 2003.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars holds a Voice of Democracy competition each year in order to give high school students an opportunity to express their patriotism. This year, an overwhelming 80,000 students across the country participated in the contest. John's essay reflects upon the responsibilities inherent to life in a free nation—freedom's obligation.

I commend the Veterans of Foreign Wars for their continued commitment to fostering a sense of patriotism and responsibility in the youth of our great nation. And I congratulate John on his success and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

2002–2003 VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY
SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

"FREEDOM'S OBLIGATION"

(Illinois Winner.—John Marc Sianghio, Jr.)

Lady Liberty stands vigil over a city, and a nation that does not sleep. In her torch shines perpetual daylight, fueled by the great virtue that is tireless action. "Action" she demands. Even her silence cries out to the world, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

Though the words say "give me" the subtext shouts "come!" It is not an invitation, it is a command; not a gift, a demand. The imprisoned lightning in her torch thunders with a message understood in every language, that the Republic over which she stands with its liberties and justices, is not for all. It stands only for all those with the boldness to take it, for all those willing to pay its price. This precious freedom is open only to those who can meet its obligation.

That obligation can only be action, for America is a republic born of a hard and painful labor, a republic that earned its freedom at the point of a gun, and that has held its freedom with the same. America is a nation that did not emerge as the random offspring of intermingling tribes. It emerged by the active will of its people. Nor was its revolution won in the minds of inert philosophers, rather in the hearts of the masses; hearts that not only had passive sentiment, but that physically pumped charged blood into live limbs, stirring them to action: Hearts that bled freely so that the flag of independence might be striped in scarlet . . . But that once vibrant crimson has faded through uncounted years of stagnancy.

Stagnancy is the greatest treason. We justify it in this age by referring to it by an alias. Like the devil it is, it has many names. It is called caution, debate, delay, filibuster, complaint, apathy, and inaction. If it is not action . . . it is treason.

Treason was not a word in my vocabulary when I immigrated to this country. I was two at the time. Freedom when I first set foot on American soil meant that I would be out of the coach class seat that held me for twenty two hours, that I could stretch my legs on solid ground. Was that true freedom? Of course not. I had to learn freedom. I had to earn freedom.

From the moment I was first old enough to realize the opportunities and liberties gifted to me by American Freedom, the enormity of Freedom's obligation was already creeping onto my shoulders. As I have grown older and learned more and more about my rights, the responsibilities wrapped inside these rights also began to emerge.

As immigrants to this country, there was a long difficult process which my family and I had to undertake to stay in this country. This process required much sacrifice by each individual involved. However, we wanted to work to earn the freedoms we enjoyed. Had we not done it, we would have debased our honor and lowered ourselves to the state of common thieves. The sacrifices I have made earned me my freedom. Your story, your struggles, your road to earning freedom is probably much different. However, our obligations to freedom are in essence the same.

So what is the spirit of our obligation? What is the common labor that must be undertaken to be worthy of Lady Liberty's embrace? It is simply love. Patriotic love.

I speak of a patriot's love, not as the lust of a fool who thinks he serves his country by ignoring her laws and making his own rules because he believes they are better. I speak of true love, like that in marriage. Freedom's obligation is the marriage of our minds and our souls. It is a dreamer's desire

for the ideal, guided by the rational hands of what is real. Our obligation is to strive for that ideal. Realistically, we know that true freedom can only come when every human being is rid of their every chain, chains of poverty, chains of addiction, and chains of hatred. Still we are obligated as individuals to strive for the ideal of freedom. The ideal that every person is created equal because every person creates himself equal. It starts with one. It starts with me, and it starts with you. If we do not meet our obligations, this ideal can never be reached. If we do not meet our obligations, we cheapen freedom, and we cheapen ourselves.

For it is freedom's obligation, the great price at which freedom comes, that gives it its value. That is why we must act, so freedom may retain its value, and that we as individuals may maintain our integrity and human worth as well. For the obligation of freedom is Lady Liberty's call to the individual who longs to be free. Who, like a newborn child that struggles for its first life sustaining breath, expands his lungs against the weight of apathy so that he may breathe free.

HONORING 2002 PRE-TEEN AMERICA SR. TITLEHOLDER KATIE BECK

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 30, 2003

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize and honor Katie Beck for being named 2002 Pre-Teen America National Sr. Titleholder, and thank her for her outstanding contributions to her community. Competing against talented young ladies from all across the country, Katie distinguished herself through a demonstrated commitment to community, steadfast character, and drive: all the values that we, as parents, teachers, community members, and legislators, hope to instill in our next generation.

As a parent, I understand the demands that our young people face, which is why I am so encouraged by what Katie has accomplished. In addition to being an active member of her church, captain of the dance team, and the starting pitcher for her softball team, Katie has maintained an A average in school from grades first through eighth. Her energy and dedication have earned her numerous accolades and honors including: Duke University TIP Award, President's Education Award, and the National Science Award. At a time when our country needs youth leadership more than ever, Katie has answered the challenge and set a course that can serve as an example for us all. This is a young lady who exemplifies the Arkansas spirit, and who is destined for great things.

Just qualifying for the rigorous Pre-Teen program speaks volumes for the character and accomplishments of the young women who compete; however, by being named Pre-Teen America Sr. Titleholder, Katie has also shown maturity and poise beyond her years on top of her many accomplishments. And already, at such a young age, Katie has demonstrated leadership, and exemplary character and grace.

Again, I say to Katie, "Congratulations." You are a credit to yourself, your wonderful parents, your community, and your state, which is