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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REFUGEE
SITUATION IN SOMALIA

A STAFF REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE



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(II)

FOREWORD

The Foreign Relations Committee has a deep and continuing interest in the problems of refugees throughout the world. In addition to the Committee's oversight responsibility for proper use of U.S. refugee assistance, we have an abiding humanitarian concern for those who have been forced to flee their homes as a result of natural or man-made disasters. Unfortunately, such disasters appear to be occurring with increasing frequency.

The Committee has closely observed the United States and international response to the recent refugee crises in Cambodia, Afghanistan and Somalia. Since October of 1979, the Committee has received three staff reports on Cambodian refugees and has conducted several hearings on the issue. We have been briefed regularly on the Afghan refugee situation. This report provides first-hand information concerning Somali refugees.

At present, Somalia may have the largest refugee population in the world. Accordingly, we requested that two Committee staff members provide the Committee with a first-hand report on the refugee problem in Somalia and the actions by the international community to deal with it.

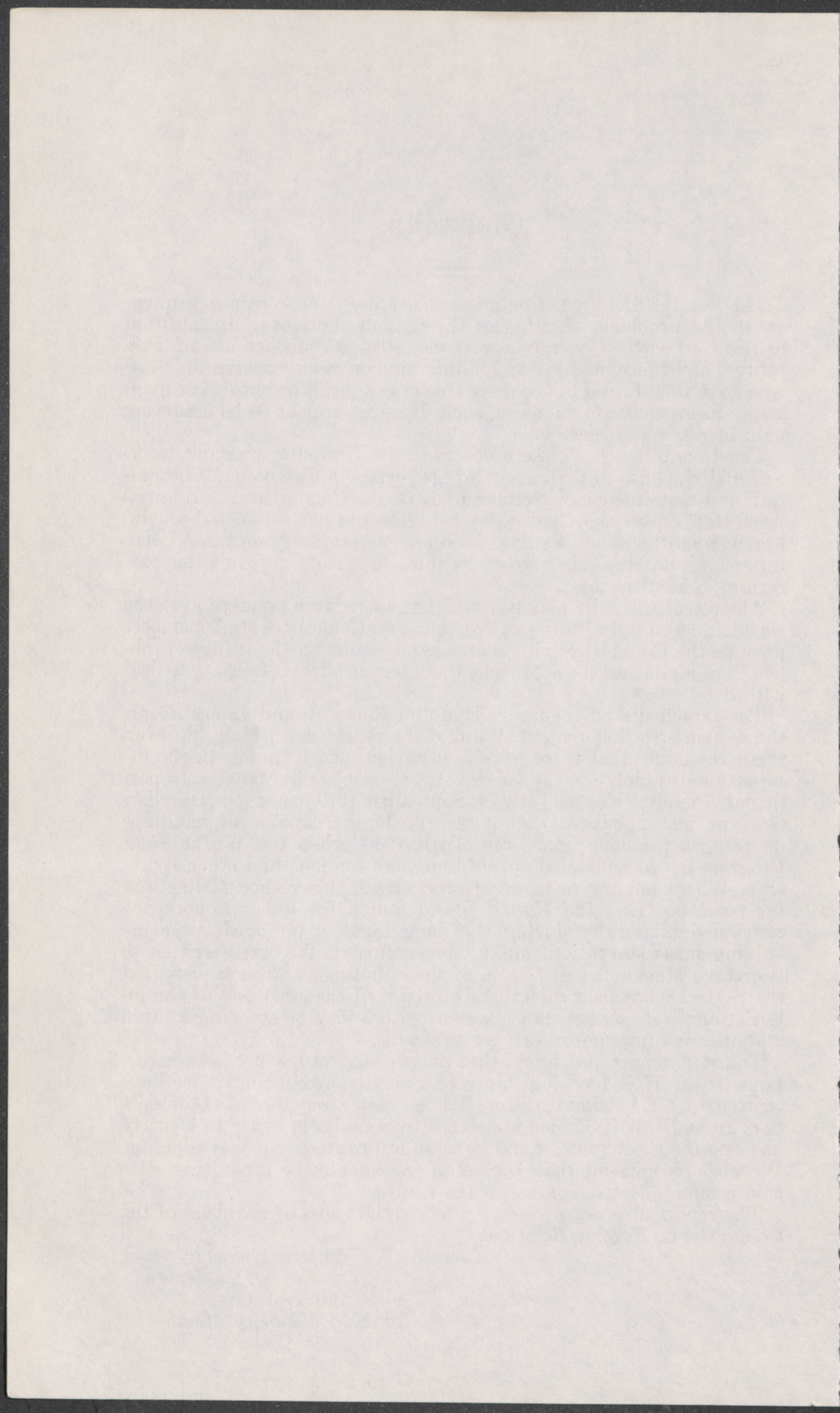
The attached staff report by Rudolph Rousseau and James Fox is the response to that request. We find the report disturbing, however, for it concludes that there have been serious shortcomings in the international response to the severe refugee problem in Somalia. In particular, 7 months elapsed between September 1979, when the Somalian Government announced that it was no longer capable of handling its refugee problem alone, and April 1980, when the World Food Program issued a detailed appeal to donors for food and other assistance. Where hungry refugees are concerned, this response time was far too long. Had the United States and a few other donors not responded bilaterally during this long lapse, a major disaster involving mass starvation might have occurred. We have written to Secretary Muskie to advise him of these findings, and to request that the State Department undertake a review of the adequacy of the international refugee assistance system with a view to assuring a rapid and effective response to refugee problems.

The staff report also found that proper control has not been maintained over U.S. food assistance to Somalia. Accordingly, we have written to AID Administrator Bennet requesting that AID undertake an audit of U.S. food assistance to Somalia in order to identify any specific shortcomings and develop appropriate corrective action. We also recommend that U.S. staff in Somalia be strengthened to assure more effective control in the future.

The report does not necessarily reflect the views of members of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

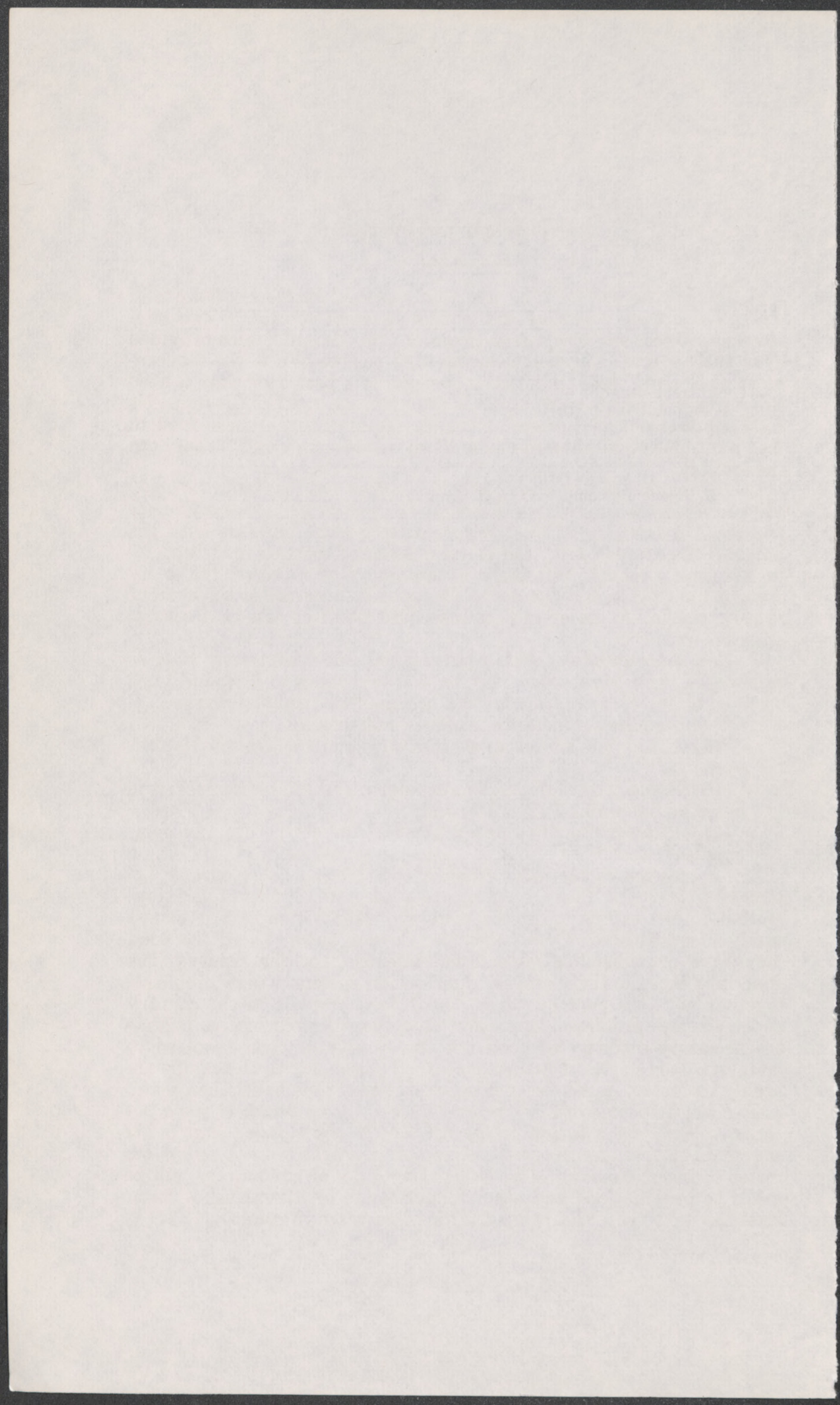
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I. MAJOR FINDINGS

A. *In the first half of 1980, the food supplied by the United States and other donors provided the margin between starvation and continued existence for refugees in Somalia.* The United States provided over half of total shipments during this period. While the Government of Somalia attempted for a considerable period of time to feed the refugees from its own resources, Somalia has neither the domestic food supplies nor the foreign exchange required to purchase food to feed a refugee population of one million, inside camps and throughout the country.

B. *Although the international relief effort has kept the refugees alive to date, the supply and distribution systems are extraordinarily fragile.* A disruption of food shipments to Somali ports or from the ports to the camps could lead to exhaustion of refugee food supplies in less than a month. Similarly, a new influx of refugees due to increased fighting in the Ogaden could quickly overwhelm the current supply system. A major new influx could occur in the next several months.

C. *The international relief organizations have been very slow to respond to the refugee crisis in Somalia.* According to U.S. and U.N. officials, major contributing factors in this slow response were:

- (1) Somalia's reluctance to request assistance;
- (2) Ethiopian and Russian opposition in the United Nations system;
- (3) Inadequate staffing of multilateral and bilateral agencies in Somalia, including U.S. AID; and
- (4) Extraordinarily limited physical infrastructure and management capacity in Somalia.

D. *In addition to the late response, the existing relief system has serious deficiencies.* There is no accurate estimate of the refugee population in the camps or in the country. Official figures are almost surely overestimated. Donor agencies do not know where the food they have provided has gone. Food intended for the refugees has gone into the country's general distribution system. These problems, together with the poor coordination of food arrivals in the country and transport problems, has meant that the refugees receive neither the necessary quantity of food nor the variety of food required to maintain good health. Furthermore, food shipments to the camps are highly irregular. As a consequence, several food riots have taken place.

E. *Knowledgeable officials foresee no short-term prospect for a political or military solution to the fighting in the Ogaden that is the source of the refugee problem, nor much prospect for relocating the refugees inside Somalia.* The international donor community will be asked to provide food and other requirements for the refugees for at least the next year, and probably for some years to come.

F. *Conditions in the camps visited by the staff were very difficult, even for a tough people accustomed to living in an inhospitable environment.* When up to 65,000 refugees are brought together to live without adequate water, firewood or sanitation, physical and social conditions deteriorate rapidly. Unless basic needs are provided quickly, the camps may be a worse place in which to live six months from now than they are today.

II. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That the Auditor General of AID undertake, immediately, an audit of the disposition of food which the United States has provided to Somalia for refugee relief.

This recommendation is made, not because of any doubt that the audit will reveal that United States and other donors' food has been diverted from feeding refugees to feeding the population generally, but because this audit will provide substantive evidence which will support efforts to encourage the Government of Somalia to control more effectively the distribution of food to refugees in Somalia.

There is logic to the position held by the Government of Somalia that since the country drew down its own food stocks to feed refugees it should be able to use food intended for refugees to replenish its stocks. Also, it makes little sense to ship donor commodities from one end of the country to another when government stocks of the same commodity are in place.

However, the diversion of food intended to feed refugees into the general food supplies of the country for use in commercial markets and by the military will inevitably lead to continued inadequate supplies for the refugee population. Government officials responsible for allocation of food are under incredible pressure to take care of their own people first. Furthermore, the provision of 100,000 metric tons of food to a country as poor as Somalia without adequate accounting for the disposition of stocks invites, the diversion of food for personal profit. Somalia is reputed to be remarkably free of this type of corruption. However, it would appear that conditions are ripe for serious problems to arise.

B. That AID immediately increase its staff in Somalia.

A single Food for Peace officer will not be able to oversee a program as large and complex as the Somalia operation. Part of the current problem facing assistance agencies today is due to inadequate staffing of the U.S. AID mission as well as related missions of international organizations. The AID mission should also hire local employees to monitor food supplies as missions normally do in other countries. Local hiring is a cost effective way to assure systematic reports of food stocks. In addition, the U.S. mission should receive the support required to maintain an expanded operation—vehicles, housing, secretarial assistance, etc. It will do little good to dispatch additional employees if they do not have adequate support.

(3)

C. That the U.S. AID mission, in cooperation with international organizations, immediately develop contingency plans to provide assistance in the event that a large influx of refugees moves across the border from the Ogaden or food supplies are disrupted for any other reason.

Any large number of new refugees would overwhelm the current relief system and supplies and bring about a major humanitarian crisis.

As a corollary to this recommendation, the U.S. AID mission director or a U.N. official resident in Mogadishu should have the authority to disburse funds to break bottlenecks in the relief system which threaten to cause serious problems for people in the camps. The availability of supplies is so uncertain and the distribution system so subject to interruption that relatively minor problems such as fuel shortages or large numbers of breakdowns in the transport fleet, etc., will have serious humanitarian consequences. Officials on the spot should have the resources to resolve these problems.

D. That the Committee and the U.S. Department of State carefully review the response of the U.N. system to the refugee problem in Somalia as well as similar experience with man-made disasters in other countries.

United States, United Nations, and other responsible officials agree that the response time of the U.N. system to the situation in Somalia was far too slow. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees should have the authority to raise the alarm about a major humanitarian problem, should be held accountable for doing so and, most importantly, should have the resources at hand to respond. If the UNHCR is not responsible for alerting the world, nobody is. If the UNHCR is not held accountable by the international community for responding to the problem, nobody will be. If the UNHCR does not have the resources to respond, then the entire international community shares the responsibility for the human suffering which follows.

The UNHCR should have a substantial contingency fund for response to the emergency phase of refugee crises. While this money may be used in politically sensitive situations, urgent humanitarian needs—literally life and death situations—require providing international officials with the resources to discharge their responsibilities.

III. INTRODUCTION—THE SOMALI REFUGEES

On August 12, 1980, Ahmed Yusuf led his family of 13 into a refugee camp at Tug Wajale in Northwest Somalia. He said that he left his home in Jijiga, Ethiopia, because the Ethiopians took his animals and because he feared for the safety of his family due to the fighting between government forces and the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF). Ahmed Yusuf plans to return to fight with the WSLF after his family is settled in a permanent camp.

Safia Osman has been living in the refugee camp at Saabaad for 9 months. The camp is estimated to hold 65,000. Safia Osman is responsible for receiving food from the camp supplies for 11 families, totaling 108 people. On August 11, she received 2 days of rice rations, their first rations in 10 days. Given the low stocks of food in the camp stores, she may not receive food for some time to come.

Ahmed Yusuf and Safia Osman are two of an estimated 1 million refugees in Somalia, of which 650,000 are in camps. They are victims of a war in which the Government of Somalia and Somalis living in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia are attempting to separate the Ogaden from the Ethiopian Empire. The Somalis are opposed by the Ethiopians and their Soviet and Cuban allies. Ahmed Yusuf and Safia Osman are also victims of an international relief system which has responded with too little, too late, too irregularly to meet the needs of the Somali refugees.

Although a drought is affecting East Africa creating hardship for millions of people in the region, the refugee crisis in Somalia is a man-made not a natural disaster.

Somali refugees represent one of the largest and most acute humanitarian problems in the world today. To place the magnitude of the problem in perspective, the refugee population of one million or more in Somalia would be the equivalent of 50 million refugees in the United States. Somali refugees have come to a country which is among the poorest in the world. They have settled in a land which cannot support them for any length of time. They are dependent for their supplies on very limited physical infrastructure—ports, roads, storage, and transportation. But, according to the refugees, they have little alternative at this time because of the fighting in the Ogaden. (See Appendix I for a map of Somalia and the location of refugee camps.)

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS

The refugee problem in Somalia is a man-made disaster. Its origins lie in the war over the Ogaden, which is controlled by Ethiopia but inhabited by ethnic Somalis. The solution to the refugee problem lies in a resolution of this conflict. According to knowledgeable officials, no resolution is in sight.

In June 1977, Somali-supported Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) troops launched an offensive in the Ogaden. By September 1977, the WSLF had taken 90 percent of the Ogaden from the Ethiopians. However, at that point, the Soviet Union began providing large amounts of military assistance to Ethiopia, with which it had signed an arms agreement in December 1976. Soviet arms and Cuban troops were committed in the Ogaden, where they remain today.

During the offensive, Somalia committed regular troops to the Ogaden. By March 9, 1978, after bloody fighting and heavy casualties, Somalia began to retreat. As Ethiopian forces advanced, Somali refugees began to flee the area. As Appendix II indicates, by July 1978, an estimated 85,000 refugees were in camps in Somalia.¹ However, 1 year would pass and the number of refugees in camps rise to 330,000 before Somalia requested assistance from the international community. An additional 6 months would go by before significant international aid arrived in Somalia. Appendix III provides a record of food shipments to Somalia.

By September 1979, the Government of Somalia recognized that it could not support the refugee population inside and outside of the camps. The government declared a state of emergency and asked for aid valued at \$71.6 million.

In October 1979, the UNHCR's Executive Committee voted a total of \$5.8 million for assistance to Somalia, far less than was required. More importantly, UNHCR did not issue an appeal for assistance to Somalia. UNHCR officials say that Somalia did not ask for more aid from UNHCR at that time.

Through the fall of 1979, the United States was lobbying UNHCR to issue an appeal for Somalia. However, according to U.S. and U.N. officials, Ethiopia and Soviet Union opposition blocked an early UNHCR appeal. According to these officials, in November, the U.N. Secretary General, in effect, took the issue out of UNHCR hands for several months. Despite the fact that senior U.N. officials had visited Somalia during the summer of 1979 and were appalled by conditions in the camps, instead of issuing an appeal and sending food, the U.N. dispatched study missions.

¹ Although the accuracy of these estimates are subject to question, the U.N. system generally accepts the official figures of a government.

It was not until February 11, 1980, 6 months after Somalia's request, that Secretary-General Waldheim circulated a "note verbale" to mobilize international aid. He asked for \$200 million—\$80 million food aid, \$40.7 million emergency non-food aid, and \$80 million for infrastructure—to help Somalia cope with the refugee influx. By February 11, 1980, the Government of Somalia estimated that 450,000 refugees were in camps in Somalia.

Senior officials of the U.N. Secretariat in New York strongly deny that Ethiopian or Soviet opposition affected the Secretary General's consideration of Somalia's request for assistance. These U.N. officials state that Secretary General Waldheim directed that an inter-agency study team be dispatched to Somalia to determine the requirements for assistance. The team was sent in December and formed the basis for the Secretary General's February 11 "note verbale." These officials deny that the study mission took the issue out of UNHCR's hands and they state that the UNHCR could have acted before issuance of the Secretary General's report.

Nearly 1 month after the Secretary General's "note verbale," and 6 months after the Somali request, UNHCR issued the formal appeal for \$40.7 million for Somalia, for non-food aid. On the day of the UNHCR appeal, March 4, 1980, the Government of Somalia estimated that over 500,000 refugees were in camps in Somalia.

Another month passed before the FAO/WFP decided what types and quantities of food should be provided. U.N. and U.S. officials indicate that the month's delay was due to wrangling over which organization should make the appeal. In all, 8 months passed between the time Somalia asked for help and the United Nations system responded with an appeal. As Appendix III indicates, more months would pass before significant amounts of food shipments would arrive.

The slow response of the U.N. system could have resulted in starvation of a substantial portion of the refugee population if the Government of Somalia had not been willing to draw down its own food stocks to extremely low levels and if the United States and the European Community had not begun to act prior to the U.N. appeal. In fact, in the absence of an adequate U.N. response, the U.S. Department of State found it necessary to organize for a 3-month period an office which coordinated United States and other aid.

From discussions with responsible U.N. officials and a review of the record of the U.N. response to Somalia's request for assistance, it is clear that the lives of tens of thousands of refugees were jeopardized and some may have been lost while the Somali request for assistance was being "studied" by the High Commissioner for Refugees and the U.N. Secretariat.

The history of the U.N. response to the Somalia refugee crisis leads to the recommendation that the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees be provided with the resources and the clear authority to respond to refugee crises. Given the large number of refugees in the world today, and the likelihood that politically sensitive refugee problems will continue to arise in the future, an effort should be made to insulate from international politics, to the extent possible, the immediate, emergency response to a new refugee flow.

V. THE CURRENT SITUATION

A. CONDITIONS IN THE CAMPS

We visited seven of the 26 permanent refugee camps in Somalia, as well as two of the four transit camps. The permanent camps were generally large, with populations in the range of 20,000 to 65,000. Refugee huts were made of sticks and straw, a construction typical of the region. Many refugee families had a small plot surrounding their hut, with thorn-bush branches used to delineate the boundaries separating one plot from the next. Each camp also contained a number of central facilities, including a small food storage building, structures used for medical treatment or supplementary feeding, and schools. The camps were generally kept clean.

Lack of adequate water and firewood for cooking were major problems in the camps visited. In the Gedo region, all the camps were near a large, though polluted, river. A West German assistance team was in the process of constructing filtration systems for the river water, so that it could be used for drinking. In the Gedo camps where filtration systems had not been completed, water trucks provided small amounts of water for each family. In the northern camps, refugees dig for water in dried-up riverbeds. Their water is contaminated and they do not have adequate quantities.

Firewood for use as fuel was obtained by foraging the area surrounding the camps. This practice had resulted in the virtual denuding of vegetation near the older camps. Family members are being required to go progressively further from the camps in search of wood. In some cases, refugees spend several hours per day collecting wood. Given the likelihood of long-term operation of the camps, the fuel problem appears to be a severe threat to the already fragile ecology of the Somali countryside.

Food distribution in the camps was irregular. Neither camp officials nor local representatives of the national refugee commission could predict when the next shipment of food would arrive. The supply of food from the outside appeared to be viewed by both refugees and camp officials as beyond their control. When a new shipment of food arrived, it was immediately distributed to the refugees, with camp storage facilities used for only small amounts of leftovers after distribution. Since the commodities provided in each shipment varied, the refugees were left without any clear idea of what foods they were likely to receive or when they might next receive them.

Discussions with refugees in the camps generally indicated that they had food at the moment. The refugees said, however, that there had been some periods of near-starvation in the camps. The problems

appeared to have resulted from a shortage of food in the country, from transportation difficulties, and from lack of storage in the camps. Given the very tenuous nature of the present food distribution chain, with no reserves in the camps, breakdowns in the system will lead to serious, adverse effects on health conditions in the camps.

Supplementary feeding programs for underweight infants and other high-risk groups were in operation in all of the camps we visited, although substantial numbers of the target group remain outside the program. Food availability for this program appeared to be considerably better than that for the general distribution, both because the smaller required quantities made in-camp storage feasible and because distribution was made directly to the camps by the World Food Program. Nevertheless, food shortages requiring suspension of the program still occur. The presence of supplementary food in the camps during periods of general shortage had led to disturbances. On several occasions the supplementary food storage buildings were broken into and the food taken. In most camps, American or European volunteers were providing health and medical assistance.

An estimated 90 percent of the people in camps are women and children. Few young men are present. Refugee women usually said that their men were fighting in the Ogaden, or that they had been killed in previous fighting. There are unconfirmed reports that the men were being "drafted" for fighting or other related work.

The camps offered little potential as long-term settlements. Few employment opportunities are available in the vicinity of the camps, and rain-fed farming is very marginal. In the Gedo camps, the nearby river makes irrigated farming a potential source of some employment and food production, for at least some part of the camp population. The government had recently begun an experimental attempt to grow crops with refugee labor near two of the camps. However, these efforts involved mechanized production of sorghum which offered much less employment potential than would vegetables or other labor-intensive crops.

In sum, although the refugees are not receiving either the quantities or the variety of foods which international organizations have determined to be required to maintain them in good health, the people are surviving at reduced rations. The Center for Disease Control has determined that many children in the camps suffer from severe malnutrition, but few are critically ill. Death rates appear to be about normal for this population, but base line data is limited.

Two potential problems could arise. First, in the short term, if food supplies are disrupted for any reason or if a large number of additional refugees come into the camps from the Ogaden, the food situation will deteriorate quickly and could well represent a threat to the lives of refugees. This threat will diminish in the next few months as relief shipments arrive.

Second, over the long term, these camps will not be viable without substantially improved fuel and water supplies as well as improved storage and sanitation. The Government of Somalia and international donors should determine whether they want to maintain large camps at present locations before addressing the long-term problems.

B. THE REFUGEE POPULATION

There is no accurate estimate of the number of refugees in the camps or in the country. According to UNHCR officials, estimates of camp populations were developed by questioning heads of households as they arrived in the camps, and not by individual head counts. Since the refugees have an incentive to overstate family size in order to assure a more ample ration (and camp officials have a similar incentive to try to obtain increased supplies of food for their camp), there is a tendency to overstate the actual population in the camps. Knowledgeable international officials told us that camp populations are overstated by about 15 percent. Thus, camp populations may be on the order of 650,000 instead of the official figure of 760,000. UNHCR officials told us that they have no choice but to accept the Governments estimates as official and to use them as the basis for their plans and appeals.

The estimates of refugee population outside the camps are much more tenuous. These estimates range from 300,000 to 1 million. The lower number is probably more nearly accurate, implying a total refugee population, inside and outside the camps, of about 1 million people.

C. STAFFING OF THE ASSISTANCE EFFORT

The multilateral and bilateral agencies dealing with the refugee problem have only recently increased in-country staffs. Until recently, the UNHCR had a staff of two expatriates and eight Somalis in Mogadishu. Furthermore, the UNHCR had only an acting representative with limited authority. The WFP was similarly understaffed. Both organizations placed a senior, experienced expert on the ground in Somalia in the past 3 months—9 months after the Somali request for assistance.

U.S. AID was similarly understaffed. Although the United States reopened its mission in Somalia 2 years ago, it did not have a full-time Food for Peace officer until May of 1980. An AID program officer was responsible for Public Law 480 food along with his other duties. According to AID officials, limitations on AID staff imposed by the Department of State and the restrictions on operating expenses due to the failure of Congress to pass a fiscal year 1980 foreign aid appropriations bill were responsible for inadequate staffing during the critical period earlier this year.

Major staffing problems also exist with respect to the Somali Government. The management of a massive relief effort in a country with limited numbers of trained people inevitably strains host government capabilities. In the case of Somalia, this problem is exacerbated by the loss of many trained people to higher paying jobs in the Gulf states.

D. U.S. ASSISTANCE

The United States is providing 91,555 metric tons of food in calendar year 1980 at an estimated value of \$18.8 million plus \$7.6 million for shipping costs. In addition, the United States has made a direct grant to the WFP to purchase 12,000 metric tons of corn and 300 tons of locally produced meat. The United States will have provided 58 per-

cent of the total tonnage given to Somalia this year. In addition, the United States will give the UNHCR \$11.9 million for non-commodity aid in fiscal year 1980. (See Appendix IV.) The EEC has pledged \$30 million for food.

E. DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLIES

While the slow response of the U.N. relief system contributed to shortages of relief supplies between September 1979 and mid-1980, the internal system of distributing food to the refugees is not only inadequate today, but it is likely to become a very serious problem as larger quantities of food arrive in Somalia ports.

Relief supplies flow through three Somali Government agencies and one international channel. The Agricultural Development Corporation of the Government of Somalia, which has traditionally been responsible for procuring and distributing maize and sorghum in the country, distributes donor-supplied corn and sorghum to the refugee camps. The National Trading Agency of the Government of Somalia, traditionally responsible for the distribution of commercially imported commodities such as cooking oil, rice, flour, sugar, etc., handles these refugee commodities. The National Refugee Commission is responsible for distributing all non-traditional commodities such as powdered milk and the blended food. The World Food Program controls its own supplementary feeding program and maintains separate stores.

The principal problems with this system of providing food to the refugees are as follows:

(1) The Agricultural Development Corporation and the National Trading Agency are responsible for both refugee feeding programs and distribution to the commercial market and government agencies such as the military. Food supplied by the United States and other international donors for refugees is consigned to the Agricultural Development Corporation and the National Trading Agency. This food becomes commingled with other stocks held by these Government of Somalia agencies. In some cases, the Somali agencies treat food intended for refugees as part of their regular stocks. Donated food is then supplied to commercial food shops and to other government agencies. It is highly likely that the Somali military receives food intended for refugees. The military is authorized to draw stocks from the Agricultural Development Corporation and the National Trading Agency. There are reports that the Ethiopians have captured very small quantities of Public Law 480 food in the Ogaden.

In mid-August, United States and international agency officials met with the Government of Somalia to discuss use of refugee food for other purposes. The Somali view has been that they have a serious food shortage throughout the entire country and must meet the needs of Somali citizens as well as refugees. Under these circumstances, when the tough decisions about allocating food supplies are made, it is likely that the women and children in refugee camps will have less political power to demand food than will military commanders, local store owners and other indigenous Somalis. Well-laid plans for the provision of specified quantities and varieties of foods will break down

if the Agricultural Development Corporation and National Trading Agency warehouses do not have the proper supplies—which they do not—or if the provincial governor decides on a different set of priorities for his allocation decisions.

The agreements under which the United States has provided Public Law 480 Title II food require the Government of Somalia to notify the United States if it intends to exchange its stocks for U.S. commodities. AID officials acknowledge that the Somalis have violated these requirements at times.

(2) The record keeping in the distribution system does not distinguish between donor supplies and Government of Somalia food. The record keeping system does not account for the distribution of food in the camps. Tracing the flow of food from port to warehouse to district warehouse to camp is extraordinarily difficult.

During a 1980 AID audit, only 80 percent of the Public Law 480 Title II food delivered to the Agricultural Development Corporation could be accounted for and the auditor noted that "records of deliveries upcountry" are "less complete." With regard to the National Trading Agency, the AID auditor found that there were no records for the second half of 1979.

(3) The National Refugee Commission, which is responsible for non-traditional donor foods, is, at this writing, \$1 million in debt to transport companies for shipping food. The remains of 750 tons of powdered milk were piled up in warehouses in Mogadishu and Berbera for 6 months after arrival for lack of National Refugee Commission funds to transport the food to the refugees. This powdered milk, provided by the EEC, had been intended for Kampuchea but diverted to Somalia. Inadequate funding of the Refugee Commission will be a more serious problem in the future as the Commission becomes responsible for larger quantities of food.

(4) The refugee camps, themselves, do not have adequate storage facilities. As a result, even when food supplies increase at the ports and in provincial warehouses, the camps will be dependent on frequent deliveries by road. At this time, refugees are fed from the trucks which come into the camp. Essentially, no reserves are available in the camps if the trucks do not arrive. All too often, they do not arrive.

(5) The transport system is stretched to its limits. Although about 100 trucks and trailers are being brought in to supplement the existing fleet, management of the transport system will have to improve if it is to meet the needs of the refugees. It is important to remember that the transport fleet is now required to move food to a population which may have grown by 20 to 25 percent.

(6) The problems of the internal distribution are compounded by the uncertainties of the flow of relief supplies from abroad. As Appendix III indicates, Somalia is about to receive a substantial quantity of food in the next few months. Because various donors ship their commodities according to their own government's budget and decision making schedules, coordination of the flow of food is virtually impossible. Furthermore, although the World Food Program alerts donors to the needs of the country, the driving force behind supplies is less what the refugees need than what the donors have to send. This is a particular problem for a refugee population of nomadic

herdsmen whose normal diet consists of substantial portions of meat, milk and related animal products. Donors have little meat to send to Somalia. Powdered milk is reconstituted using badly contaminated water. The implications for the health of the refugees are readily apparent.

AID and international agencies have become aware of each of these six basic problems. Until these problems are resolved, or at least ameliorated, refugees are unlikely to receive food in the quantities or varieties planned by the international donor community.

F. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY

Somalia is one of the world's poorest countries. The World Bank lists its per capita income as \$110, higher than only seven other countries in the world. The majority of the Somalis are nomads, eking out an existence by raising camels and other animals in semi-desert conditions. Some light industry exists in Mogadishu, and some commercial farming exists, particularly along the banks of the country's two major rivers. Livestock and bananas are the country's two major exports.

Somalia's GNP has been growing at a rate of only about 1 percent per year since 1960, a rate insufficient to keep up with population growth. Its per capita income has been declining at a rate of about 0.4 percent per year. The present government, in power since 1969, operates a mixed economy, but with heavy and increasing state involvement. State involvement has tended to displace private investment in the economy, so that little growth has resulted from large government expenditures.

The government is clearly committed to improving social conditions in the country. It has made a major effort to increase literacy in the country and to improve health conditions. Despite the country's poverty, the government had spent heavily to feed the refugees prior to the arrival of donated food on a large scale earlier this year.

Given the economic conditions of the country, there is little hope that the Somali Government can assume a larger share of the refugee burden, so the international community must be prepared to continue to finance the refugees as long as they remain in the camps.

Over the longer term, there is some potential for increased agricultural production, and foreign assistance agencies have encouraged the government to give a higher priority to agriculture. Nevertheless, any such increases will be needed to meet the overall food deficit of the country, and not just refugee needs.

VI. FUTURE PROSPECTS

The principal cause of the refugee flow from the Ogaden to Somalia is the war. Refugees indicated that they left home because of Ethiopian seizure of their animals or concern about fighting near their homes. The refugee camps also serve as a safehaven for families while the men fight with the guerrilla forces.

Units of the WSLF and the regular Somali army have been operating in the Ogaden. The Government of Somalia has denied the presence of regular troops, claiming that only volunteers whose homes are in the Ogaden have been involved in the fighting. Before the final negotiations on the Berbera base agreement, the United States reportedly requested that the Government of Somalia withdraw regular troops from the Ogaden and received assurances that regular troops would not be introduced into the Ogaden.

If the Ethiopians advance toward the Somali border into regions formerly controlled by the Somali army and WSLF, a large, sudden flow of refugees is likely to come across the border. Any sizable flow of refugees would overwhelm the relief operation. Refugees could begin to starve in the camps in a very short time. That concern is the principal reason for our recommendation that AID and other international relief agencies immediately begin contingency plans to provide assistance in the event of a sudden increase in refugees.

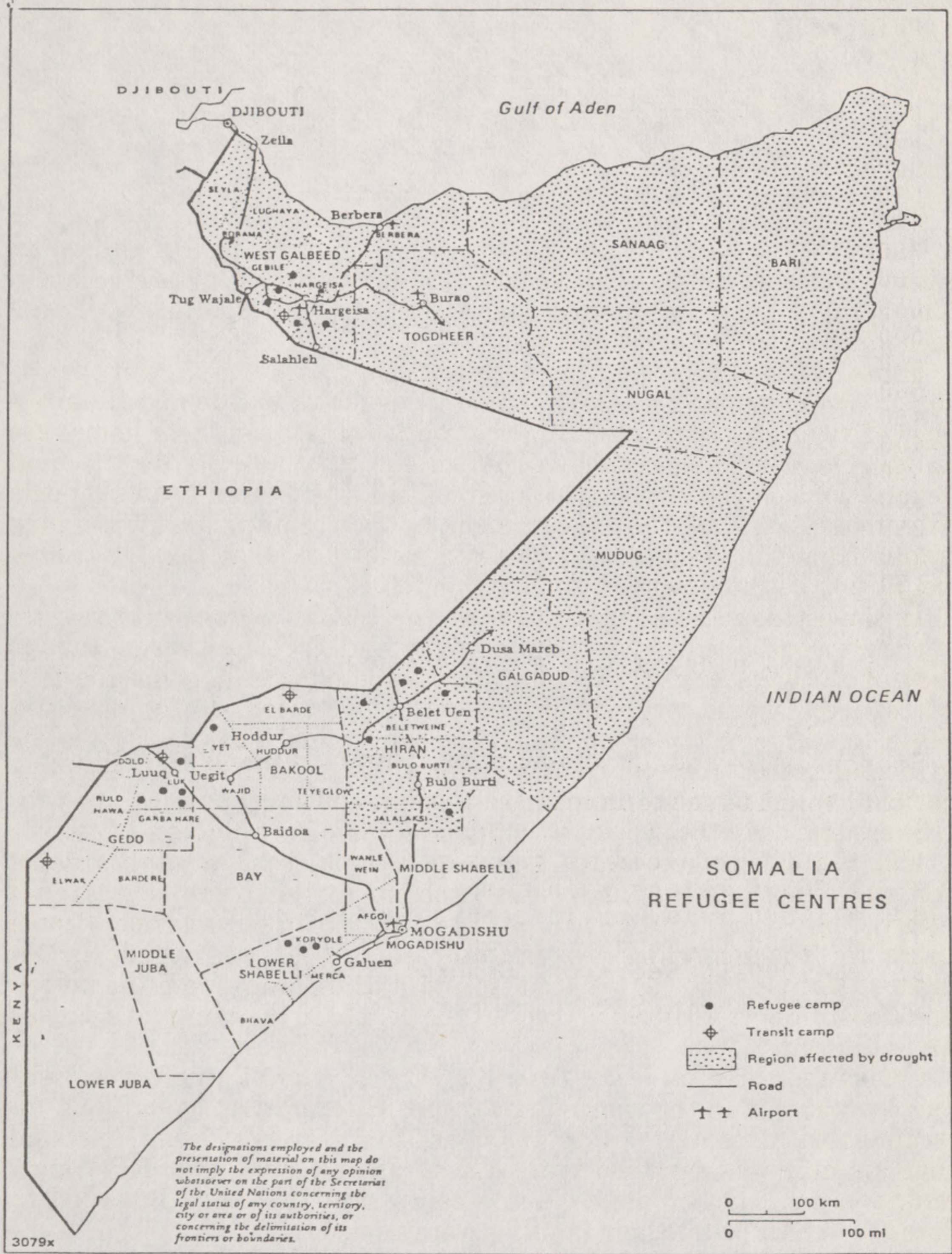
The use of refugee camps as an operational base or supply depot for guerrillas has been a serious problem in the Kampuchea relief effort. The Somali refugee camps do not appear to serve as operational bases for the guerrillas. No military equipment was visible in the camps. Many of the camps are a substantial distance from the border and, most importantly, 90 percent of the people in the camps are women and children.

One young man on leave from his WSLF guerrilla unit was visiting his parents in the camp at Saabaad. He said that he had left his weapons with his unit which was operating near Wardeen. He stated that his unit was supplied with AK 47 assault rifles and RPG anti-tank weapons. Other males in the camp said that they intended to join the WSLF after their families were settled.

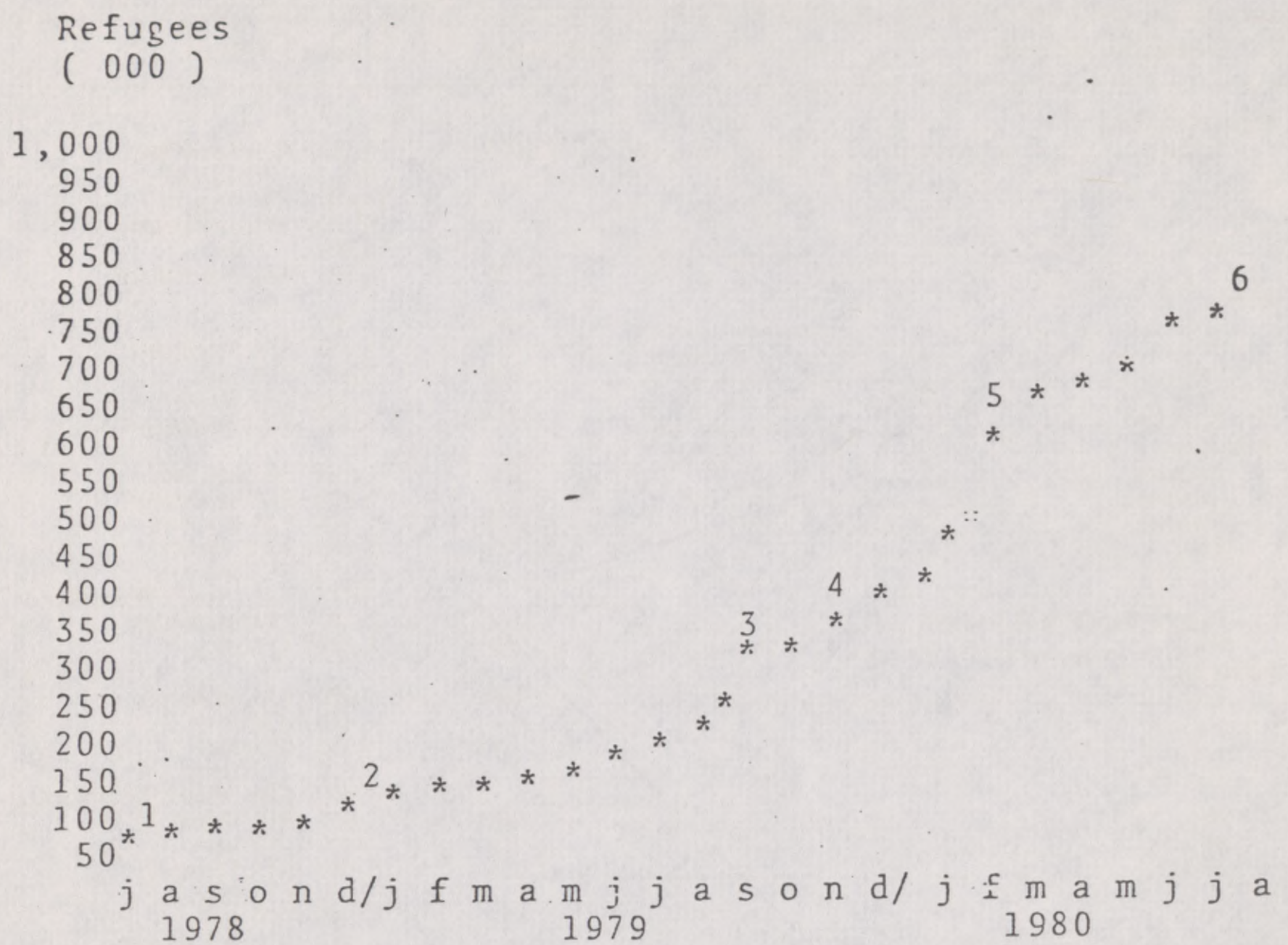
Visits to the camps and discussions with United States and other officials indicate that the refugee camps do not serve as guerrilla bases nor are they directly involved in the Ogaden war.

CONCLUSION

The refugee problem in Somalia is a man-made disaster, the origins of which lie in the war in the Ogaden. Refugees in the camps told us that they wanted to return to their homes when security conditions permit. They also said that they will fight with the Western Somalia Liberation Front to free the Ogaden from Ethiopia. No political resolution to the origins of the refugee problem is apparent at this time. The Government of Somalia cannot support a million or more refugees. Refugees will continue to be dependent on international assistance as long as the war continues.



APPENDIX II



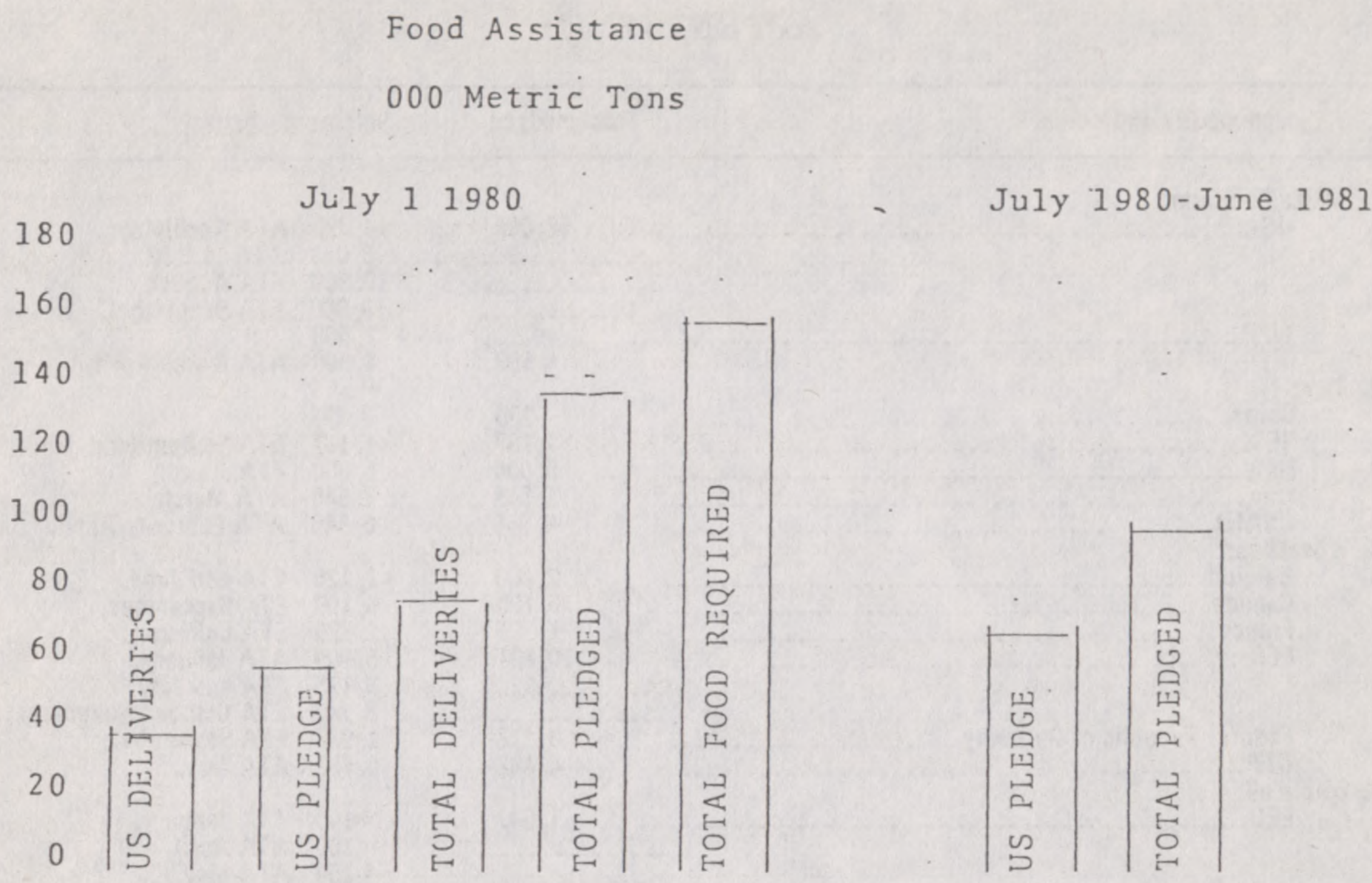
Source: AID and UN Documents reporting Government of Somalia estimates.

1. 85,000 refugees in camps.
2. 103,159 refugees in camps.
3. 331,000 refugees in camps; Somalia requests aid.
4. 390,000 UN sends mission to Somalia.
5. 614,000 UN Secretary General issues note verbale.
6. 760,000 refugees in camps.

APPENDIX III

Commodity and donor	Total pledged	Shipment	Arrivals
1. Maize/Sorghum:			
USAID.....	62,098	19,098	ATA April/May.
		9,043	ATA 18.6.80.
		10,000	ETA August.
		10,000	ETA September.
WFP.....	4,500	¹ 12,000	Do.
		4,500	ATA March/April.
2. Rice:			
China.....	300	(²)	
EEC.....	1,187	1,187	ETA September.
Italy.....	5,000	5,000	ETA June.
Iraq.....	1,545	1,545	ATA March.
USAID.....	6,540	6,540	ATA February/April.
3. Wheatflour:			
Belgium.....	2,000	³ 1,125	ETA end June.
Canada.....	6,100	6,100	ETA September.
France.....	1,325	1,325	ETA unknown.
EEC.....	10,821	3,909	ATA January.
		3,175	ETA end July.
		3,747	ETA October/November.
Federal Republic of Germany.....	3,112	1,987	ETA September.
WFP.....	4,482	4,482	ATA May.
4. Edible oil:			
EEC.....	1,000	³ 100	ATA January.
		100	ATA April.
		³ 150	ATA May.
		250	ETA June.
		400	ETA October/November.
Iraq.....	388	388	ATA March.
Sweden.....	1,300	³ 500	ETA June.
USAID.....	4,237	1,682	ATA February.
		1,200	ATA May.
		500	ETA July.
		855	ETA end August.
WFP.....	1,061	500	ATA March.
		182	ATA May.
		329	ATA July.
Menonite Central Committee.....	288	288	ETA June.
5. DSMilk:			
EEC.....	4,610	1,500	ATA April.
		³ 250	Do.
		250	ATA May.
		500	ETA July.
		2,000	ETA unknown.
Menonite Central Committee.....	140	140	Do.
USAID.....	4,460	1,260	ATA February.
		1,200	ATA April.
		1,000	ETA September.
		1,000	ETA unknown.
WFP.....	2,115	920	ATA May.
		1,915	ETA July.
6. Sugar/dates:			
Iraq.....	4,392	4,392	ATA March.
UNHCR.....	1,140	1,140	ATA April.
7. Meat:			
Netherlands.....	360	360	ETA unknown.
UNHCR.....	540	95	ATA February.
		445	ETA unknown.
USAID.....	290	³ 290	Do.
8. Tea: UNHCR.....	165	165	ATA May.

¹ WFP. ² No information. ³ UNHCR.



APPENDIX IV

U.S. FOOD FOR PEACE TITLE II CONTRIBUTION TO REFUGEE ASSISTANCE IN SOMALIA,
FISCAL YEAR 1980

I. Amount of original fiscal year 1980 FFP contribution of 47,396 m.t. attributed to the calendar year 1979 program which does not count against the calendar year 1980 requirement of 158,495 m.t.:

	<i>m.t.</i>
Maize -----	4,380
Rice -----	3,592
Oil -----	1,682
Milk -----	1,312
Total -----	10,966

Value: \$3.994M + \$1.598M (40 percent transport) = \$5.592M.

II. Fiscal year 1980 contribution which counts against the 158,495 m.t. requirement:

	<i>m.t.</i>
Maize -----	50,098
Rice -----	4,200
Oil -----	2,555
Milk -----	2,200
Total -----	¹ 59,053

Value: \$10.888M + \$4.356M (40 percent transport) = \$15.244M.

III. Supplemental—32,502 m.t.:

	<i>m.t.</i>
Maize -----	24,902
Oil -----	3,400
CSM -----	4,200
Total -----	32,502

Value: \$7.900M + \$3.260 (40 percent transport) = \$11.160M.

¹ Total U.S. food contributed toward the CY 1980 158,495 m.t. is 114,821. Total amount received at port 114,621 m.t.

U.S. FOOD FOR PEACE TITLE II CONTRIBUTION TO REFUGEE ASSISTANCE IN SOMALIA,
FISCAL YEAR 1980—Continued

	<i>Millions</i>
IV. Total projected fiscal year 1980 contribution-----	\$31. 996
Less value of food applied to calendar year 1979-----	—5. 592

Total projected fiscal year 1980 contribution toward calendar year 1980 requirement of 158,495 m.t.----- 26. 404

[NOTE: This does not include the \$3M contribution to WFP which is expected to yield approximately 12,000 m.t. maize and 300 m.t. of meat purchased in Somalia.]

V. Total projected fiscal year 1980 FFP contribution toward the calendar year 1980 requirement of 158,495 m.t. = 102,521 m.t.

I. Actual USG fiscal year 1980 nonfood¹ inputs/pledges to UNHCR Somalia program as of August 1

U.S. 1/3 of UNHCR 1980 regular program for Somalia (\$5,795,800)	\$1, 931, 933
Relief supplies provided January, February, March, 1980-----	3, 800, 000
Epidemiological survey (original grant)-----	106, 152
Water/sanitation assessment survey-----	15, 000
Water supply equipment-----	1, 183, 400
Africare relief personnel and hospitals-----	614, 796
Epidemiological survey (extension)-----	87, 183
Relief supplies currently being procured and shipped-----	2, 416, 600
Total U.S. nonfood aid-----	10, 155, 064

II. Total RP and 495F fiscal year 1980

Funds available for Somalia relief-----	\$11, 931, 933
Total U.S. nonfood aid as of August 1-----	10, 155, 064
Total fiscal year 1980 funds remaining-----	1, 776, 869

¹ Grant of \$3,000,000 to WFP for food is not included.



