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BACKGROUND NOTE

E C F I G H T S H U N G E R

Drought in Africa; displaced persons in Bangladesh; fighting in the Mideast. Whether man can one day avert such all too common natural and man-made disasters is, of course, moot; but man can help his fellow man in staying the terrible and inevitable corollary of hunger. One way of helping is through food aid programs.

The European Community has such a program. One recent manifestation was the EC Commission's March 7 urgent proposal to send food aid to the more than one million displaced persons in Indochina. In another recent example, on March 5, the Commission approved a European Development Fund allocation of 19 billion units of account (1970 dollars) for food aid to African countries hit by one of the worst droughts in years.

The aid to the displaced persons in Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam, and South Vietnam would initially include 30,000 tons of husked rice, 1,500 tons of powdered milk, and 600 tons of sugar. The food would be allocated within the multilateral framework of the International Red Cross.

The African countries to receive aid are all associates of the Community under the Yaoundé Convention -- Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and the Voltaic Republic, where the drought severely damaged crops and starved livestock. These countries have already been sent almost 96,000 tons of food aid both by individual EC member states and by the Community.

Tons and Tons of Food Aid Annually

Under terms of an international convention signed at the conclusion of the Kennedy Round in 1967, the Community agreed to furnish 1,035,000 metric tons of cereals annually to developing countries over a three-year period. (The United States obligated itself to 1,890,000 tons.) This commitment was divided between member states and Community institutions. Cereal aid given and administered on the Community level has showed a steady increase year by year: 301,000 tons in 1968-69, 336,900 tons in 1969-70, and 353,140 tons in 1970-71.

A new convention, signed in 1971, saw the amount of cereals given directly by the Community at an even higher level -- 414,000 tons in 1971-72. (See Table I for recipient country breakdown for Community cereals aid under both conventions. With the EC's January 1 enlargement to nine member states, the Community's cereals contribution, under the convention, will jump to a still higher rate, since Britain and Denmark are committed to 225,000 tons and 27,000 tons, respectively.

Other Community food aid includes powdered milk and eggs, butter and butteroil, and sugar: 238,650 tons have been allocated during the past four years. (See Table II for recipient countries and products.)

Community food aid in the last four years amounted to over 205 million units of account (UA). A year-by-year breakdown shows the consistent increase in Community food aid: UA 20 million in 1969, UA 39 million in 1970, UA 66 million in 1971, and over UA 80 million in 1972. These figures do not include the aid, average UA 225 million annually, granted through the European Development Fund to the 19 developing African countries associated with the Community under the Yaoundé Convention.

Food Aid Objectives and Procedures

The Community gives cereal aid not only for the obvious nutritional purposes but also for the economic and social development of the recipient countries. In the latter case, the recipient countries sell the cereals given by the Community on the local market, and the resultant funds are used to finance development projects. These projects are approved annually by the Community in advance.

Cereals for nutritional purposes are given by the Community for free distribution among the populations of the recipient countries. The cereals are intended either for specific population groups -- such as children and the sick -- or for the general population to alleviate famine caused by natural calamities or armed conflict. Standard nutritional aid is allocated on an annual basis, like food aid for development purposes. In the case of famine, however, the Community takes urgent action.

The other food products given by the Community are designated solely for nutritional purposes, and the recipient governments distribute them free to local populations. This aid is supplied both through multilateral bodies, such as the United Nations World Food Program, and unilaterally by the Community.

Although much has been done, the Community feels that still more can be done to fight hunger. The EC Commission is now planning a broader, more comprehensive food aid program. Such a program would not only help meet the developing countries' food needs but, through the use of Community level rather than national allocation and administration, add to the cohesion of the EC member states themselves.

TABLE I

COMMUNITY AID IN CEREALS 1968-1972
(in thousands of metric tons)

RECIPIENT	1968-69	1969-70	1970-71	First Convention Total	Second Convention 1971-72
<u>Maghreb</u>					
Algeria			11	11	25
Morocco			28	28	25
Tunisia	20	35	27	82	25
<u>Africa</u>					
Cameroon			6.5	6.5	
Dahomey					7
Voltaic Republic			9.5	9.5	5
Mali		30	7.5	37.5	17
Niger		15		15	7
Rwanda			6	6	
Senegal					8.5
Somalia		8			15
Sudan	20	10	9	39	
Chad					7
<u>Mideast</u>					
Jordan			28	28	5
Lebanon		15	7.5	22.5	10
Egypt			15.1	15.1	20
Syria			7.5	7.5	15
Yemen		14	7	21	4
<u>Far East</u>					
Afghanistan			21.64	21.64	20
Bangladesh					60
Sri Lanka		14		14	11
Indonesia	56	60	26.8	142.8	17
Pakistan	50	80	35	165	
India	80			80	
<u>Latin America</u>					
Peru			15	15	13.5
<u>Europe</u>					
Turkey	50	51.4	36.6	138	
<u>International Bodies</u>					
World Food Program			9	9	15
UN Rehabilitation and Works Agency			4.5	4.5	22
International Red Cross Committee (IRCC)	16.7	4.5	7	28.2	10
IRCC for Bangladesh			28	28	
IRCC for Bengali Refugees					50
Joint Church Aid for Nigeria	8.3				
<u>TOTAL</u>	301	336.9	353.14	991.04	414

TABLE II
 COMMUNITY FOOD AID OTHER THAN CEREALS
 1969-1972

POWDERED SKIM MILK, 187,000 metric tons in 1969-70 and 1972:

World Food Program	149,450
International Red Cross Committee	9,000
UN Rehabilitation and Works Agency	1,100
Bangladesh	19,450
Egypt	2,000
Jordan	1,000
Lebanon	250
Peru	1,000
Romania	1,000
Rwanda	750
Turkey	2,000

BUTTER OIL, 51,000 metric tons in 1969-70 and 1972:

World Food Program	48,000
UN Rehabilitation and Works Agency	2,000
Turkey	1,000

BUTTER, 1,000 metric tons in 1970:

Turkey	1,000
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POWDERED EGGS, 500 metric tons in 1971:

World Food Program	500
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SUGAR, 6,150 tons in 1972:

UN Rehabilitation and Works Agency	6,150
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