

Before its clandestine relief operations, the Hawker Siddeley 748 used to ferry the royal corgis around.”

The amount of food delivered in June then, was 3,471 metric tons, as opposed to the 9,574 metric tons believed by the World Food Program to be required to feed the estimated 1.2 million people at grave risk. Through April of next year, the World Food Program report of June 24 currently projects a shortfall of 66,969 metric tons, against minimal requirements.

It is no exaggeration, then, that prolongation of the war at the very least will lead to the death by starvation of many thousands. While the media in the West blame the Sudan government for this tragedy, it is the Sudan government that proposed a cease-fire to John Garang last May in talks in Nairobi, and it is the Sudan government that has made the concession for self-determination for the South through a supervised referendum. However, up to this point, the recalcitrance of Garang—backed by the war party of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Susan Rice and John Prendergast of the U.S. National Security Council, along with Caroline Cox, a Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords—has kept the war going.

### ‘War party’ aids the rebels

For years, the Sudan government has charged that the Operation Lifeline Sudan was using the cover of “humanitarian aid” to, in fact, give military aid to the SPLA and its allies, in violation of such agencies’ mandate. In 1997, a plane of the International Red Cross, for instance, was caught ferrying SPLA guerrillas.

The Norwegian Foreign Ministry has strongly confirmed Sudan’s charges, with a report issued from the ministry, that the Norwegian Peoples Aid “misused emergency aid money and actively kept the civil war going on by supporting the SPLA guerrillas,” according to the Oslo daily *Aftenposten* on May 20. The Norwegian Foreign Ministry’s denunciation of the aid agency—through which the Norwegian government channels its funding for aid to Sudan and other locations—was the result of a study of Peoples Aid’s work carried out by the Danish consultant agency COWI.

Norwegian Peoples Aid works closely with the U.S. Committee on Refugees of Roger Winter, one of the loudest voices in the Washington “war party” against Sudan.

As reported by *Aftenposten*, Norwegian Peoples Aid “has provided food for the rebels, made cars and houses available and organized schools for children of SPLA officers.” The organization is accused of giving medical help to wounded soldiers at the front rather than helping civilians. The COWI report states: “To establish a field hospital close to the front is something you do when your main concern is military progress.” COWI further accuses Peoples Aid of “having supplied transport and communication to the SPLA and having allowed the SPLA to sell emergency aid equipment in order to get the money for the purchase of guns and ammunition,” reports the Danish paper *Aktuelt*. The aid agency’s close links

to the SPLA “make control and efficient supervision very problematic,” said COWI.

The report has been denied by Peoples Aid. However, its chief of information, Ivar Christiansen, declared: “We have never been neutral in the conflict of South Sudan; we openly support the SPLA.”

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## Interview: Dr. Riak Machar

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# Sudan looks ahead to peace and development

*Dr. Machar is president of the Coordinating Council of the South of Sudan and vice-president of the Sudan National Congress; he was the leader of the South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), an armed faction against the government in southern Sudan. As recounted in his interview in EIR of Feb. 22, 1998, his movement chose a course for peace in 1995, and entered into direct talks with the Sudan government in March 1996. On April 21, 1997, they signed the peace accord with the Sudan government. He was interviewed by telephone by Linda de Hoyos on July 11.*

**EIR:** You are now the chairman of the Coordinating Council of the South?

**Machar:** The title is President of the Coordinating Council of the South of Sudan, for the southern states.

**EIR:** The headquarters of the Council is in the city of Juba in southern Sudan, is that correct?

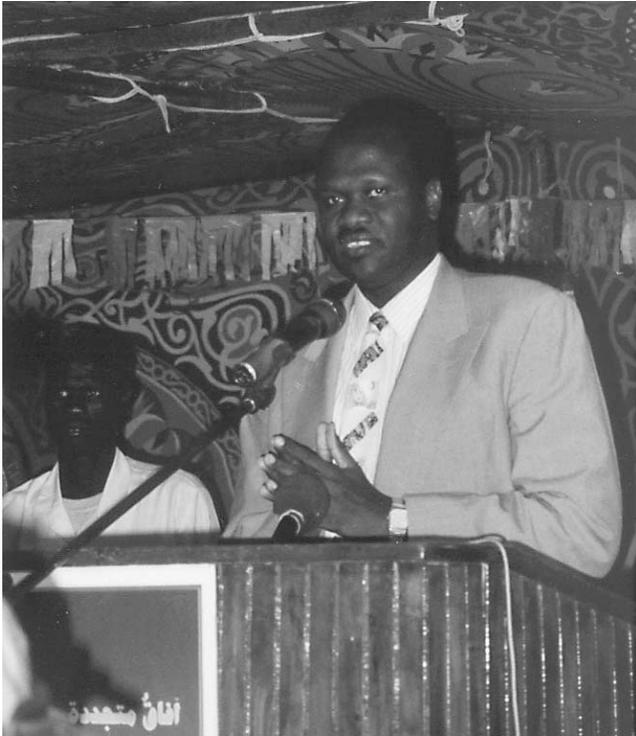
**Machar:** Yes, it is.

**EIR:** And you spend a lot of time there now?

**Machar:** Not fully. We moved on April 7 of this year. Because the premises had not been made ready and needed rehabilitation and maintenance, we left some ministers to work from Juba and some to work from Khartoum. I have been up and down, and travelling abroad and coming back to Khartoum. I hope to be in Juba even tomorrow. Juba is the seat of the Coordinating Council. We hope that before the end of this month, the whole Coordinating Council will be in Juba. The ministers who are in Khartoum will all move to Juba. The maintenance will have to be finished while we are in Juba.

**EIR:** What was this Council established to do?

**Machar:** It is the government for the South. It is entrusted with the resolution of the government apparatus of the ten states. It does planning, social, economic planning. It is also



*Dr. Riak Machar: "I do not believe that a military solution will help. It is only through negotiations that we can resolve the conflict in Sudan."*

responsible for maintenance and security. It is responsible for development of the South. It is responsible for the rehabilitation of schools, roads, health services. It is a government. It is also supported by an Advisory Council, which shall be announced soon. The Advisory Council's work would be to improve on the legislation process in the ten states of the South and coordinate that process.

**EIR:** Where do the resources come from for the Council to carry out this work?

**Machar:** They come from the national chest, from contributions, donations from the international community, non-governmental organizations, and from the resources generated internally in the South.

**EIR:** What is the major problem that the Council faces now?

**Machar:** Obviously, the Council is entrusted with repatriation of displaced people who have come north and the refugees who have gone to the neighboring countries. We are to rehabilitate and resettle the population that has been displaced, as the first thing to do. The second, which is a primary thing, is to ensure that peace prevails in the South. Maintenance of peace also means that we must continue the negotiations with the remaining faction that has not joined the peace process, and that is the SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army], and this we have been doing through the IGAD [Inter-

Governmental Authority on Development], and through also private contacts.

The third thing we are embarking on is rehabilitating schools, hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, roads, so that the civilian population in southern Sudan is served through provisional services.

Fourth is that we should embark on serious developmental programs, wherever we find a place secure.

The fifth issue is really the implementation of the federal system of government. There are ten southern states, and under each state there are provinces and local councils. We would want to see the participation of people in governing themselves, improving on the federal system which was agreed upon in the agreement [of April 21, 1997], and also in the Constitution.

These are the tasks we are supposed to do.

Now, what are the challenges? The challenges we have today are security difficulties we are facing to maintain peace.

Second, is the provision of the necessary funding so that rehabilitation and maintenance of the infrastructure are done.

Third, is the famine, which is facing the South today. Bahr el-Ghazal states — there are four states: the Lakes State, Western Bahr el-Ghazal State, Northern Bahr el-Ghazal State, and Warab State. All of these states are hard hit with famine. The Unity state is joining them also because of insecurity. And even the rest of the states, from our assessment, we believe that although they are better off than the five states I counted, at present there is a severe food gap in many of the states in southern Sudan. So, famine is one of the major issues facing us.

The international community has reacted late to our appeal, an appeal that we made as far back as January. But then, it was not until April that the international community began to see the point we made three months earlier, and even once the international community accepted that there is famine in southern Sudan, the response has been slow. Although the Sudan government has given permission to the Operation Lifeline Sudan, which is run by the United Nations, and the other non-governmental institutions, to take food to the needy in southern Sudan, the number of planes operated from Lokichokio [Kenya] was only five. The Sudan government also provided El-Obeid airport, which is nearer to the states in Bahr el-Ghazal. This is in Northern Kordofan, in the north; it is nearer to the Bahr el-Ghazal than the airport at Lokichokio. This facility was not used as soon as it was provided by the government. The slow reaction of the international community to the use of this facility, and the fact that there are few planes and, I believe, not enough food, are major problems.

**EIR:** Is the food problem caused by mainly natural causes, the drought, or the war?

**Machar:** The major problem is the war, because the war creates displacement, and the war creates insecurity and instability in the lives of people, so they do not really settle, to cultivate. This is the major problem. The other problems are

natural causes, such as lack of rain, or so much rain that the crops fail.

**EIR:** I have heard that Kerubino Kawanyin Bol of the SPLA has carried out military operations that have exacerbated this famine. Is this correct?

**Machar:** Yes, Kerubino Kawanyin Bol was with the peace process up to Jan. 28 of this year. But then, out of reasons not convincing, he rebelled in Wau and attacked Wau. This has compounded the humanitarian situation in Bahr el-Ghazal.

**EIR:** I attended a conference in September 1997 at the U.S. Institute for Peace, where Roger Winter of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and John Prendergast of the National Security Council called for a full-scale war to bring down the government in Khartoum. They predicted that the government would fall by December, which did not happen. Winter also said that the war would cause a "humanitarian catastrophe," but that the war policy should be carried out anyway. It is clear that in fact, by January, this humanitarian catastrophe has unfolded. But where do things stand militarily?

**Machar:** I do not believe that a military solution will help. It is only through negotiations that we can resolve the conflict in Sudan. Now, there is the Sudan peace agreement, which was signed on April 21, 1997. This peace agreement has met the aspirations of the people of southern Sudan. The peace agreement accords the people of southern Sudan the right to self-determination, exercised through an internationally supervised referendum. It also gives the South its special status of self-rule, through the formation of the Coordinating Council and its supporting Advisory Council. Third, it enshrines federalism as the system of government, where there is major participation of the Sudanese. Federalism has been the demand of the people of the South since 1947. On top of all this, the Sudan is defined and accepted by all as a multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious country, where citizenship is the basis for rights and duties, and where religious freedoms are also accorded. These rights are also enshrined in the Constitution.

Now, having addressed the problem of the South, the other problem that might have brought about the thinking of Roger Winter, is the question of democracy, the question of pluralism. The new Constitution has enshrined that multi-partyism is accepted. Political association would be the norm of the day. Fundamental freedom and rights are also enshrined in the Constitution which was newly promulgated on June 30.

So, I think that the call of people like Roger Winter for the overthrow of the government, has no political rationale on which such a call would be supported. Therefore, overthrow of the government in Khartoum is not a solution. Concrete reasons must be given. If it is a democracy, Sudan has moved toward democratization. We hope that in less than three months, Sudan will be multi-party. And a law is now being drafted, after this Constitution has enshrined multi-partyism, which will be enacted by the National Assembly, where

parties shall be free to operate. The other thing is that the Bill of Rights enshrined in the Constitution are so wide, that anyone who calls for the overthrow of the government, that call is outdated.

The present opposition, whether it is the SPLA, or the northern political parties, they really will have to manufacture a new agenda for continuing the war or continuing opposition abroad, or even for the United States to continue being hostile and maintaining the severance of relations with Sudan. There will have to be better reasons.

We know that the U.S. severed relations with Sudan for three reasons. It accused Sudan of supporting international terrorism. This is not the case today. There are no international terrorists in Sudan; it will soon be a democracy, joining the democracies in the world. It is also true that foreigners, including Americans, are free to walk in the streets of Khartoum or Omdurman without fear of being kidnapped, and there have been no incidents of this kind.

Secondly, the peace process signed since 1997 has shown beyond doubt that Sudan is serious about bringing about peace in the country. For that matter, the seriousness of the peace agreement was shown by the negotiations in Nairobi last May in the IGAD talks, where the SPLA reaffirmed the federal solution provided by the Sudan peace agreement. On the question of human rights and democratization, Sudan is moving toward democratization.

So, people like Roger Winter should be able to come and visit Sudan. Yes, we have problems with famine in the South. But I believe that with the support of the international community to bring the SPLA to the peace process, I believe that Sudan has done its own homework. It has provided the basis for the peaceful transfer of power, and any party that wants to participate in power, should now do it democratically.

**EIR:** The claim from supporters of Garang here is that the SPLA controls the entire countryside of the South, and that the government controls only the cities and the towns. Is this true?

**Machar:** This is not true, this is an exaggeration. There are areas—for example, Western Equatoria and Lakes State, these two states. But the rest, the government is firmly in control in most of the countryside also. There are ten states in the South.

**EIR:** Eight out of ten are in control of the Council?

**Machar:** Yes.

**EIR:** How many people from the South sought refuge from the war in Khartoum?

**Machar:** The estimate is about 3 million.

**EIR:** There are about 3 million people from the South in Khartoum?

**Machar:** Yes, looking for security, and looking for services,

and escaping the war.

**EIR:** So they have moved north, to where, presumably, their enemy is. The Council is now working to bring these people back to the South?

**Machar:** Yes, this is what I was telling you, that we need to repatriate the southern Sudanese who have moved north.

**EIR:** How many people have moved back so far?

**Machar:** We have not started the process, although the people are so anxious to return. We have told them that there is need for us to settle as a Council, before we are swallowed up by the people who want to go back home. Because we do not want them to get frustrated. We would want them to find that we have done our homework, that there are schools—at least the basic services are provided.

**EIR:** These people would come back to the other eight states?

**Machar:** Yes, even those who would want to go back to their original states could return, even if they are under the control of the SPLA. We see no reason why they would not go back to their homes of origin.

**EIR:** Do the people who went to the North include Christians?

**Machar:** Yes, the bulk of them are Christians, and if they were not Christians, many of them have become Christians as they came north. Those who came north became exposed to Christian teaching and many of them became Christians.

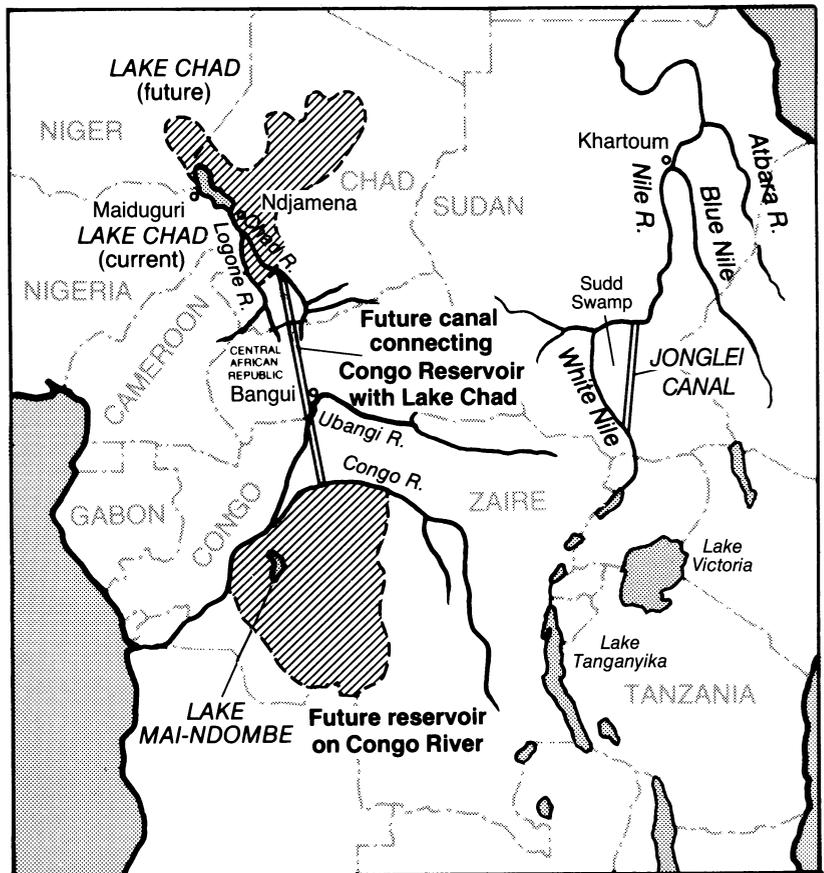
**EIR:** Aside from the IGAD talks, I know that you have been to Kampala, Uganda, and talked to President Yoweri Museveni there. Can you tell us where that stands?

**Machar:** I have been to Uganda for many purposes. One is to improve the relations between Sudan and Uganda. You know that Uganda and Sudan have cut off their diplomatic relations. So, the primary aim has been to improve relations. That necessitates that the conflict between Sudan and Uganda is resolved. The accusations which they trade between themselves are set to the side, and relations are improved.

Secondly, I have been looking for an opportunity so that President Museveni understands our point of view. We are southern Sudanese; we represent a southern Sudanese point of view. This view is not a monopoly of John Garang, and we will be in Juba, and it will be asked who will be operating with President Museveni; it will not be Khartoum, because

FIGURE 1

### Lake Chad-Congo Basin, and Jonglei Canal projects



we would be the immediate neighbors, and we would be the government responsible for security along the borders. So, we wanted to know each other, and see ways of cooperating between ourselves. On top of that, we thought it was also a chance for confidence-building, and if President Museveni can intercede at all and do on his own the process of mediation between us and Garang.

I met Garang on June 7 in Uganda. That was a great opportunity, so that we could explain to Garang the peace process in Sudan, the seriousness of the steps taken, and [to see] if that can contribute at all to confidence-building and the restoration of trust. We believe that President Museveni has given us that opportunity, and we are thankful for the role he played.

**EIR:** Of course, the famine situation in southern Sudan extends into northern Uganda, but no one ever talks about it.

**Machar:** You mean the famine or the security situation?

**EIR:** Both.

**Machar:** By the way, the people of southern Sudan and northern Uganda are the same ethnic grouping. The Mahdi of Nimule are also in northern Uganda; the Acholi are in northern Uganda; the Kakwa are also in northern Uganda. So, there

are ethnic groupings that are common across the border, and anything that happens—whether it is political instability or insecurity—will affect those on both sides of the border. Even socially, once there is displacement, it has effects across the border. We have all heard of the Lord's Resistance Army, which is composed predominantly of the Acholi, and we have also heard of the groups in the West Nile. We understand that there is fighting. There is insecurity in northern Uganda, and I think with peace prevailing in southern Sudan, this might also have good overtures in northern Uganda, and on the stability of the whole of Uganda, and in the Nile region.

**EIR:** Does the Coordinating Council deploy militarily in the region? Does it have power to deploy soldiers in the region?

**Machar:** Yes, we do. We are a government. We are responsible for security. If there is need for a deployment of troops, we will definitely tell the military establishment, whether the South Sudan Defense Force, or the Sudan national army, that there is need for the deployment of troops to create more security in the area.

**EIR:** Where is there actual fighting? Is there low-intensity fighting everywhere, or are there pockets of intense fighting you would call war zones?

**Machar:** In actual fact, at present, there is a lull in most of the South. It is such areas as Blue Nile, which is outside southern Sudan, where there is fighting. There is a relatively quiet situation in the South now.

**EIR:** How does the Eritrea-Ethiopia war affect the situation in Sudan, given that both of these countries were part of the coalition backed by the United States to bring down the Sudan government?

**Machar:** Definitely the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea raises a lot of questions. You will recall that the IGAD countries are composed of seven, including Somalia, whose status is yet to be determined, so let us talk about six. Among the six countries, four are actually at war with each other. Three are at war with Sudan, in a way, or are having problems with Sudan. Two are fighting each other—Eritrea and Ethiopia have declared their own war. I think, with the new conflict in the Horn of Africa between Eritrea and Ethiopia, there are opportunities for peace. If the United States thought that Sudan was the aggressor, it is proved, now that there is fighting between Eritrea and Ethiopia, that Sudan may not be the aggressor. There are problems in the region—they need to be solved peacefully. I think there is an opportunity for these regional conflicts to be brought to an end—either Ethiopia and Sudan bringing their conflict to an end, or Eritrea and Sudan doing the same, or Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Uganda, with Sudan. I think that the war in Ethiopia and Sudan is an indication that things might come to an end very suddenly. If the bad guy, as in the Western movies, was Sudan, who is the bad guy now?

**EIR:** Congressman Tony Hall, who was in Sudan at the end of May, has called on President Clinton to appoint a special peace envoy to end the war in southern Sudan. Do you support this call, and do you think that if the United States came behind the peace process in a serious way, would this advance the peace?

**Machar:** The call made by Congressman Tony Hall, with Frank Wolf, is good, in the sense that they are bringing America to the center stage of coming to work for peace. Our impression in the Sudan has been that America did not want peace in the region; it only encouraged these low-intensity wars. But now, if it can accept to appoint an envoy on peace in the Sudan, this means that America would positively be wanting to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the country, and that would be welcomed. Instead of encouraging the continuation of the conflict, if the United States would reverse its decision, this definitely would be welcomed.

**EIR:** Is the completion of the Jonglei Canal along the Nile River on the agenda of the Coordinating Council? And what other projects of substantial size do you see being implemented in the South?

**Machar:** You see, the Jonglei Canal was stopped by the war. Once the Jonglei area is fully secured, many of its provinces, with the exception of the Atem River province, which is in the middle of the Jonglei Canal—if that province is secured, the Jonglei Canal would definitely be resumed. It is now a big hole in the middle of the land. We would want to ensure that it is completed. As long as it is going to bring development to our population along the canal. It is one of the major projects, because through it, we can really have agricultural production, we can have a highway along the canal, we can establish schools and clinics. The life of people would be modernized, urbanized, along the canal. Trade will pick up along the canal. The waterway would be more usable. The floods that are a problem to us in the Nile River would be reduced, because the water which is always bringing floods would be siphoned off and used elsewhere in northern Sudan or in Egypt. Definitely, the oil exploration is continuing in the Unity state, in the Upper Nile state—we would also want this process to extend to Jonglei state, where the French company Total used to explore for oil. We would want to emphasize agriculture, so that we can feed ourselves in the South and contribute to food production in Africa. Through that process, agriculturally based industries can be built.

**EIR:** Do you then see the Jonglei Canal as a centerpiece for development in the South?

**Machar:** Yes, it is the centerpiece for the development of the South. I think that with stability prevailing, the Jonglei Canal is a central issue, around which many things can be built. We can even improve our relations with Egypt, and even with the countries of the Middle East.