

SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

A Science Service Publication
Volume 127, No. 26, June 29, 1985

E. G. Sherburne Jr. Publisher
Joel Greenberg Editor
Dietrick E. Thomsen Senior Editor/
Physical Sciences
Laurie Jackson Phillips Managing Editor
Wendy McCarren Production/Design
Director
Bruce Bower Behavioral Sciences
Joanne Silberner Biomedicine
Stefi Weisburd Earth Sciences
Julie Ann Miller Life Sciences
Janet Raloff, Ivars Peterson Policy/Technology
Jonathan Eberhart Space Sciences
Susan Welch Gilday Assistant to
the Editor
Science Writer Interns
Jennie Dusheck,
Judith Mathewson
Jane M. Livermore Books
Donald R. Harless Business Manager

Scherago Associates Advertising
Fred Dieffenbach, Sales Director
1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036

Copyright © 1985 by Science Service, Inc.,
Editorial and Business Offices,
1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.
Republication of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS
without written permission of the publisher is
prohibited.

Subscription Department
231 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43305

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$27.50; 2 yrs., \$47.50;
3 yrs., \$67.00. (Foreign postage \$5.00 additional per
year.) Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice
is required. Please state exactly how magazine
is to be addressed. Include zip code. For new
subscriptions only call (1) 800-247-2160. Printed in
U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington,
D. C. Title registered as trademark U. S. and
Canadian Patent Offices. Published every Saturday
by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc. 1719 N St., N.W.,
Washington, D. C. 20036. (202-785-2255)
ISSN 0036-8423

Letters

Famished farmers

Regarding state control of farming and the African drought ("Africa's Famine: The Human Dimension," SN: 5/11/85, p. 299): Whatever the mechanics of the governmental system, it is important to remember that in third world countries the peasants who live on and work the land rarely control the land. If they did, they would most likely grow crops for themselves and the surplus for sale or trade. With state- or family-controlled land, the resident farmers grow rubber trees, sugar, cocoa and other crops for international export and somebody else's profit.

The nations of Africa and South America have never had the opportunity to use their resources for their own development; after hundreds of years of colonial misdevelopment, they are dependent on the use they've been put to. Their populations have been kept artificially

This Week

- 404 A Statue of a Different Color
- 404 Chinese salted fish linked to cancer
- 405 Shuttle: 4 for 4 and SDI too
- 405 Pigs, sheep, rabbits with a human gene
- 406 Ion channels: Touch at the molecular level
- 406 Incineration on the high seas
- 406 Mt. St. Helens is calm
- 407 Pulsar clock to set cosmology by
- 407 Quasar found in galaxy cluster
- 407 Army aerosol laboratory
- 407 Chem-weapons ban ends

Research Notes

- 410 Biology

Articles

408 Radiation Therapy: Beyond X-Rays

Cover: A beam of ions coming from the left is used to treat tumors in experimental work at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory in Berkeley, Calif. The patient's head is held steady in a special plastic mask, and a plastic "compensator" modulates the intensity and energy of the beam before it reaches him. (Photo: LBL)



Departments

- 402 Science on the Air
- 403 Letters
- 411 Semi-Annual Index

Science Service Institution for the public understanding of science founded 1921; a nonprofit corporation.

Board of Trustees—President, Glenn T. Seaborg; Vice President, Gerald F. Tape; Treasurer, Willis Harlow Shapley; Secretary, Julius Duscha; Joseph W. Berg Jr.; Edward Bliss Jr.; Bowen C. Dees; David A. Goslin; Milton Harris; Hilleary F. Hoskinson; O. W. Riegel; H. Guyford Stever; John Troan; Deborah P. Wolfe.

Director: E. G. Sherburne Jr.; Assistant Director: Dorothy Schriver; Business Manager: Donald R. Harless.

high because of the misdevelopment. The resources are used by the developed nations for internal consumption; any money that enters the country soon leaves, either to pay off the international debt or because the rich have no way to spend it at home.

Luke McGuff
Minneapolis, Minn.

Freedom of movement is essential in critical situations created by natural events. What makes the African drought very serious are the artificial borders that have been imposed on the movement of the people. People never die so easily unless they are prevented from coping with a situation that threatens their survival.

This is especially true for people who are constantly on the move, such as the people of the Sahel and the Bedouins of the Arabian Peninsula, who harvested for thousands of

years a desert land where the annual precipitation was only a few inches. In the past when drought occurred people moved to areas to look for better grazing conditions or in the worst case to sell their flocks or herds in a wider market. At present this opportunity is severely limited because of a political pattern based on a European model which has proved catastrophic in more than one instance.

Turgut Dincer
Consultant hydrologist
Chicago, Ill.

Address communications to
Editor, Science News,
1719 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036
Please limit letters to 250 words.

JUNE 29, 1985

403