

interview on July 16 after a trip to North Korea. More than 80,000 children under six in North Korea are severely malnourished and some have already died of starvation, she said. "There has been a marked deterioration since my last visit in April. . . . The situation is getting very serious. It is alarming."

"These are pictures like I'm used to seeing from Africa, but not from Asia," she said. "We saw children where I knew, if no help is forthcoming in the next few weeks, those children will not survive."

This year's harvests will still not yield enough to lift the threat of famine, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned on July 15. "Even under the most optimistic scenario, food this year will fall short of requirements," Ajay Markanday of the FAO told a Rome press conference.

FAO consultant Hans-Peter Mueller, who returned in mid-July from a visit to North Korea, said, "The public distribution system is near collapse. . . . All food needs are being met by food imports or assistance." No food was being distributed unless a shipment of international aid arrived, and the shortages had forced the government to abandon its system of rations twice a month, he said.

EIR reported last week, there is also pressure building in the U.S. Congress for famine relief as a moral issue. "It's my

understanding that our commitments have been very small indeed," Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) insisted during State Department testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 8, before the latest U.S. grain offer. "I have heard" that, because of "other commitments," she said, possibly referring to a campaign by London and Seoul to prevent food aid, the United States had been "very reluctant to commit food, which to me is a position to which I do not subscribe. It seems to me that when children are starving and adults are starving, that we should contribute some of our loaded grain silos and help people out."

Clearly there is an awareness dawning on some people in Congress that, on their watch, they ought not let 10-20 million human beings starve. Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp LaRouche, in a statement on June 13, called for a worldwide mobilization to feed the hungry in North Korea. In response to this appeal, many Americans have urged their congressmen to take action.

"The North Korean famine could mean the death of an entire country" of 24 million people, said Zepp LaRouche on July 11. "As with the current genocide in Africa, the human race will not survive, for moral reasons, if we allow this famine to kill an entire nation," she said.

Hanson: 'Australia, Feed North Korea now!'

The following is the text of a news release issued by Pauline Hanson, Australian Member of Parliament for Oxley, on July 11.

It has come to my attention that due to the natural disasters of flood and drought, North Korea has suffered food shortages for two years. In recent months, this situation has worsened.

On June 4, the UN World Food Program forecast North Korea would run out of food stocks by June 20. Unicef reported that 2.6 million children are at immediate risk, and the International Federation of the Red Cross said on June 20 that 5 million North Koreans are facing starvation. Eyewitness reports from CARE Australia from June 24, UN Undersecretary-General Yasushi Akashi from June 28, and U.S. Congressman Tony Hall from April confirm the gravity of the situation.

The UN World Food Program has reported that if all the pledges are realized, their original appeal of around 200,000 tons has been filled. They also report that the food deficit in North Korea is over 1 million tons. Inquiries to

the WFP in Rome have revealed that they intend calling for another 130,000 tons, an appeal which has been formulated on the basis of increasing the ration of kindergarten children from 100 grams per day to 450 grams per day.

The Australian government gave \$2.9 million to the World Food Program appeal in the last financial year. While commendable, it is totally inadequate in terms of the volume of food actually required. If we seriously regard ourselves as a nation of the Asia-Pacific region, it is incumbent upon us to respond to the humanitarian crisis facing North Korea.

The Australian government must immediately take the following action:

1. Direct AusAID to provide, in full, the necessary food that Australian NGOs are trying to raise to provide relief. The figure being talked about in Australian aid circles is 50,000 tons; the Australian Wheat Board has 500,000 tons of wheat. AusAID should also enquire as to what grain is available from the Rice Growers Co-operative and Grainco.

2. Ensure that the next World Food Program appeal is filled immediately, and take the lead among the nations of the world community to ensure the entire food deficit is filled as soon as possible.

As of July 7, according to the WFP's forecast, many North Koreans have been without food for 17 days. Action by the Australian government must be immediate.