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FAMINE: NOT A MEDIA EVENT

by

Fassil Demissie

As men women and children
Lie gazing into the empty sky
Groaning in hunger induced pain,
Sympathizers swarm around like locusts
To observe the ravages of famine
and drought

Others stampede from a multitude of places
around the globe
Shedding their tears and telling each other
about the sorry affairs of the land
called Ethiopia
Others are struck speechless, alarmed and
ashamed that such a catastrophe is happening
today

Sympathizers clamor around the feeding camps
--as if their presence alone would subdue death
...the terrible beast that ferociously and
indiscriminately devours men, women and children

Rumors have filtered through the refugee centers
as the starving people witness the slow, painful
ebbing away of the life force in their families
and friends
Who will be next
Will there be enough food for tomorrow

Yes, columns of contrite witnesses flock from
distant lands - clergy, doctors, movie actors,
journalists and politicians - to see, touch,
and feel the texture of the tragedy
To capture a news event
To mount an appeal for aid
To give donations
To profit from this misery and death
or
To tell the truth
about the starvation in
Ethiopia