

# Business Briefs

## International Debt

### Debtors demand Venice discuss solution

Eleven indebted Ibero-American countries have issued a call asking that a solution to the debt problem be discussed at the Venice summit of the top seven industrial nations.

Italy's *Corriere della Sera* reported that the call was sent as a telex to Italian Premier Amintore Fanfani by the President of Uruguay, Giulio Maria Sanguinetti, who "formally asked the seven meeting in Venice on June 8 to make concrete commitments."

"For the poorer, and particularly the sub-Saharan countries," writes *Corriere*, "a 10-year moratorium is being considered, followed by rescheduling for a period of 20 years. Italy will propose to the summit the creation of a 'critical mass' of fresh money for other countries."

## Agriculture

### French reject OECD policy

French Agriculture Minister François Guillaume, in a statement released in Paris May 25, was highly critical of the agriculture policy being pursued by the OECD nations, a policy whose aim is a reduction of food output. Guillaume charged that this policy does not take into account consumption needs of the developing countries, which could become Europe's largest trading partners.

Guillaume renewed his demand for a "Marshall Plan" for the Third World to "fight hunger more quickly than was possible previously, with the help of European food surpluses."

Raymond Lacombe, president of the French farmers union FNSEA, supported the agriculture minister's criticisms of OECD governments. Third World nations are "important economic partners in the long term," he said, and the OECD is refusing to promote equitable agricultural trade with developing countries. Instead of starting a trade

war, the United States and Europe should attempt to reach an international agreement on world markets, Lacombe stated.

## AIDS

### WHO opposes any mass screening

The World Health Organization (WHO) has come out strongly against AIDS screening programs now advocated in several countries, because these could be "misconceived, intrusive—even threatening fundamental human rights—and most likely both extremely expensive and very ineffective," WHO Director Dr. Jonathan Mann stated.

"These kinds of programs can have a negative impact on overall AIDS-prevention and control work by diverting resources away from education programs and other HIV prevention activities." Mann was summing up a meeting of 21 scientists, virologists, and physicians from as many countries who drew up criteria, covering 50 distinct issues, that the WHO claims should be met before any resort to screening.

"Screening to many people seems to be a simple answer to a very complicated question," he intoned. "Unfortunately, screening is itself a complicated part of an answer, a reflex action, to a complex problem."

## East-West Trade

### Soviets say they can do without U.S.

In an interview with *U.S. News and World Report*, Soviet propaganda chief Aleksander Yakovlev declared that Moscow is no longer concerned about the U.S. military threat, and can do without U.S. trade.

"We have concluded that it is difficult for Americans to attack us with nuclear weapons," he said. "We lived in the fear of such a possibility for three decades, but not any more."

He added that the Soviets are downgrad-

ing trade with the United States. Washington's "arrogant, high-falutin' actions, [such] as embargoes [and] clamping down on export of all kinds of technologies," have caused the Soviet Union to give up trying to encourage trade with the United States, and to reorient its efforts instead to Japan and Western Europe, said Yakovlev. "You made us do it," he said.

"I think Europe is more and more interested in détente and establishing good relations with us. I believe that the Soviet Union and Japan are natural trade and economic partners. I believe that the Japanese understand this, too."

## Comecon

### Gorbachov demands loot from Romania

Mikhail Gorbachov, during his two-day stopover in Bucharest on his way to the East Berlin Warsaw Pact summit, demanded that Romania integrate its economy more closely with that of the Soviet Union, according to a May 26 Radio Moscow report. His talks with Nikolai Ceausescu and other Romanian officials centered on bilateral relations, including "expanding economic and scientific-technological cooperation" and "expanding bilateral trade, which is already slated to grow by 80% during the 1980s . . . but, 80% should not be seen as the limit. . . . The rate of growth should be even higher," said Radio Moscow.

Then came the ultimatum: "The two sides discussed establishing direct production links" between Romanian and Soviet enterprises—that is, Romania's move from a satrapal to a colonial status.

Preceding the visit, *Pravda* featured Romania's severe economic problems, especially in energy supplies, and its vastly increased dependency on Russia. *Pravda* noted that in 1986, Soviet crude oil exports to Romania tripled, while exports of natural gas and electricity went up by one-third. *Izvestia* went even further, focusing on the country's serious food shortages and enforced food rationing.