

depends on better terms for the nation's debt-restructuring program."

### **Ecological Holocaust**

## **New herpes virus is similar to AIDS**

Reports in the Aug. 15 issue of the British journal *Lancet* indicate that a newly discovered herpes virus, which has been shown to infect B lymphocytes, can also grow in, and destroy, T-cells, as does the AIDS virus. Two isolates of this virus were reported from Uganda and one from Gambia.

This virus, originally called Human B-cell Lymphotropic Virus (HBLV), has been named as a potential cause of chronic mononucleosis syndrome. In light of its ability to infect T-cells, the authors propose to call it Lymphotropic Human Herpesvirus (LHV).

This follows a recent report of a T-cell lymphotropic herpes virus isolated from two AIDS cases in South Africa, one of whom had no evidence of infection with HIV, the usual AIDS virus. It would thus appear that in addition to HIV, the widely prevalent herpes viruses are acquiring the ability to produce increasingly severe disease among immunosuppressed populations, and represent a significant potential for epidemics of immune deficiency and nervous system disease.

### **International Credit**

## **North Korea is first country to default**

In the first formal default by any nation since the advent of the world debt crisis in 1982, two Western banking syndicates led by Morgan Grenfell and the Australian ANZ banking group have notified communist North Korea that it is in default and that it could soon face legal proceedings to seize

some of its property abroad.

The amount of money involved is relatively small—in the range of \$770 million, according to a report in the *New York Times* on Aug. 23. In their search for assets to seize, the creditors say they have located offices in Paris and Vienna of North Korean firms, adding that ships passing through Western ports might also be vulnerable.

### **Health**

## **Soviets set penalties for spreading AIDS**

The Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on Aug. 26 announced the world's strictest anti-AIDS law, mandating stiff penalties, including jail sentences, for anyone knowingly spreading the virus.

According to Radio Moscow's report, "The amination in some cases and . . . up to eight years in prison for those who have AIDS and knowingly transmit it." It provides for mandatory testing of Soviet citizens, foreigners, and "stateless persons living or staying in the territory of the U.S.S.R.," when there are "grounds for assuming that they are infected with the AIDS virus." If suspected carriers dodge voluntary testing, they "may be brought to medical institutions by health authorities with the assistance, if necessary, of authorities from the interior ministry."

Radio Moscow added, "An international convention is needed against AIDS, along the lines of the International Convention Against Drug Use."

The broadcast claimed that there are 130 cases of AIDS in the U.S.S.R. and "only 19" are Soviet citizens. "Despite these low figures, the U.S.S.R. is taking decisive measures against this plague. Experts are working on special drugs and vaccines. Centers for anonymous tests have been opened. The Supreme Soviet has asked the government to take necessary measures in international cooperation to stop AIDS and to take quarantine measures if needed."

## **Briefly**

● **THE U.S.S.R.** will boost its investments in the Soviet Far East, according to Anatoly Reut, first deputy chairman of the state planning agency Gosplan, in an interview published in *Pravda*. New factories will be built from Lake Baikal to the Pacific Ocean to process mineral wealth; the fish industry will be transferred to the Far East; oil and gas deposits on Sakhalin Island will be developed. The aim is to make the Far East self-sufficient in energy and most agricultural products by the year 2000.

● **FRENCH AGRICULTURE** Minister François Guillaume toured Africa at the end of August to promote his "Marshall Plan" proposal for developing agriculture. His itinerary included Mali, Ivory Coast, and Chad. On Aug. 25, his plan was endorsed by Ivory Coast President Houphouët Boigny.

● **PERUVIAN POLICE** on Aug. 21 raided three clandestine cocaine-processing labs and captured 6,000 kilograms of basic cocaine paste. This was the largest drug seizure since President García came into office two years ago. The raid was part of "Operation Lightning Strike," which began on July 15.

● **BRITISH FIRMS** have spent \$18 billion in acquiring American companies so far this year, compared to \$13 billion in all of 1986. They intend to take advantage of the deregulation and regionalization of American banking.

● **ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT** Kenneth Kaunda rejected pressures from the International Monetary Fund, in an interview with the Italian newspaper *Il Giornale* published Aug. 23. "We cannot shoot at our population," he said. "We already devalued our currency 900%. The result has been that people are starving and planned investments have never taken place. . . . We are on the brink of economic catastrophe, but we will not accept the dictates of the IMF."