

# Business Briefs

## Space

### CBO says NASA costs too much

In a report released in May, the Congressional Budget Office complains that the nation's space program simply costs too much to maintain. In the CBO's estimate, even if NASA takes no new initiatives, but simply flies the Shuttle and completes the space station, the agency's budget will have to increase to \$14.4 billion (1988 dollars) by 1993, and \$16.4 billion by the year 2000.

This "core program," it admits, would have the United States bow out of new space science projects, including a return to the Moon, and putting human beings on Mars. It also admits that this would be the end of any U.S. leadership in space, and that, by comparison, during the peak year of funding for the Apollo program, 1965, the budget stood at \$22 billion in 1988 dollars.

But, the nation cannot even afford this no-future program, CBO insists.

## Health

### Spend more on AIDS in Philadelphia

"No economizing on AIDS," read the headline on an editorial in the May 24 *Philadelphia Inquirer*. It praised Philadelphia for gearing up a serious fight against AIDS.

"Now that AIDS has killed more Philadelphians than died in Vietnam, the city is finally gearing up to fight back," said the newspaper. "In July, Philadelphia's budget for AIDS prevention and treatment will jump from \$1.8 million to as much as \$9.6 million. . . . Spending the full amount that city AIDS coordinator David R. Fair proposed, or as close to it as possible, would transform Philadelphia's AIDS prevention and treatment program from a sick joke into a serious response.

"Philadelphia," argued the *Inquirer*, "has now reached the point where an estimated

40,000 residents carry the AIDS virus, which will kill at least one-third of them, and those they spread it to.

"Obviously, there's no way that Philadelphia can prevail against AIDS on the cheap. . . . The city's costs will escalate dramatically in future years as more and more people are diagnosed. The only question is how strongly Philadelphia moves now to stem the losses from a disease whose scope remains hard even to imagine."

## Malthusians

### Catholic newspaper exposes U.N. agency

The Italian Catholic daily *Avvenire* has created shock in Italy by exposing the genocidal program and activities of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the World Wildlife Fund, and other malthusian organizations.

On May 17 and 18, *Avvenire* ran feature articles on a secret May 15 seminar, held in a room of the Italian Parliament, of the UNFPA and a group called the Italian Association for Population and Development. Speaking at this meeting, UNFPA head Sadik revealed that 65% of the U.N. body's budget is spent on sterilization activities.

One Gianfranco Bologna, vice-director of the World Wildlife Fund/Italy, stated that the population problem in the Third World could be handled by "not permitting the Third World countries to develop as the Western nations have."

A Mr. Penisi, who has just moved from the Italian government Budget Ministry to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters in Rome, stated, "I think the main problem is the fertility of women." He recommended a widespread program of vasectomy and sterilization as the solution, and complained that sterilization is not yet legalized in Italy.

A "gallery of horrors" is the way the newspaper described the UNFPA's report on demography. The article lists the following elements:

- In Hong Kong, there is sterilization of women in refugee camps. Among 1,600 women surveyed, 800 had been successfully sterilized.

- In India, the UNFPA's aim is to sterilize 60% of all married couples by the year 2000.

- In Naples, Italy, there are more than 300 UNFPA officials involved in "injecting contraceptives under the skin," which creates an AIDS danger in the city.

- In Pakistan, there are 110 centers that have succeeded in sterilizing 33,000 women. But this is only 72% of what the UNFPA wants to achieve.

- In Tunisia, the birthrate was cut in half for 1987. Both Tunisia and Zimbabwe are singled out as positive models for controlling population.

## Space

### U.S. to take Soviet equipment into orbit

Soviet scientists were informed on or about May 12 that the United States had decided in principle to take Soviet Mars-probe equipment into space in 1992 on a planned space launch, deputy associate administrator for space sciences at NASA Samuel W. Keller said May 22.

The move was characterized by the *Washington Post* as "the first move toward tangible U.S.-Soviet cooperation in the exploration of Mars."

Secretary of State George Shultz said on ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley" show May 22 that he expected a U.S.-Soviet Mars mission to be discussed under the space science cooperation agreement signed by himself and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on April 15, 1987 in Moscow. According to Shultz, although such a mission "has been talked about" it is "a long way from being agreed upon." "We have to be careful with problems of technology transfer," Shultz added.

In an interview with the May 22 *Washington Post*, Mikhail Gorbachov had called

## Briefly

for a joint U.S.-Soviet mission to Mars. The four-page interview, appearing the same week as the summit and the INF ratification debate, was conducted by *Post* owner Katharine Graham herself, along with *Newsweek* editor Richard Smith, and others.

### AIDS

#### High incidence reported in Spain

Approximately 25% of all AIDS tests conducted recently in Madrid were seropositive, the Health Department of Madrid announced. Of 42,000 persons tested, 10,000 were infected.

*EIR* was unable to find out by press time if the 42,000 persons were selected for testing as "high-risk group" members, or on a more random basis. The rate is enormous, in any case.

AIDS is spreading faster in Spain than in any other European country, according to the latest European Commission statistics. Between 1986 and 1987, cases reported went up by 198%; the average rate of increase in the EC is 126% for the same period. There are now officially 20.2 cases per million inhabitants in Spain.

### Debt

#### German bankers respond to churches

The German Bankers Association responded to Catholic and Lutheran Church documents on Third World debt of May 16 with a statement denouncing the churches for "polemical tones that won't help any of the debtors in the Third World."

The churches' documents denounced current financial policies toward Third World countries as a violation of Christian moral values.

The bankers' association response re-

jected the idea of debt cancellation, and restated its policy of "enabling the debtors to have more growth of the economy, in order to pay their debt."

In a separate release, Commerzbank at least stated that "there is something just in the churches' view," but added that "from a strict merchant's viewpoint, debt cancellation is not the way out of the debt crisis."

Pope John Paul II's recent encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, the inspiration for the West German church documents, had denounced economic policies which are conducted without ethical considerations, as it were, "from a strict merchant's viewpoint."

Deutsche Bank had a spokesman say that the churches had "better stick to religious affairs, and leave the finances to those who understand the business"—and he might have added, who are now bringing on the worst financial crash in human history.

### Mexico

#### Oligarchy dictated economic policy

The leading spokesman for Mexico's elite circle of financial speculators, banker Agustín Legorreta, publicly admitted that the government of President Miguel de la Madrid is little more than a front for the country's financial oligarchy.

In a speech to students, at which he requested tape recorders be turned off, he outlined how, in November 1987, he went to the government and told them that if they wanted the cooperation of his circle in arresting inflation long enough for the PRI to win this July's elections, they had better do what the "business sector" wanted in the economy. And they have, selling off the largest copper mine in the country, letting the national airlines go bankrupt, and "privatizing" major chunks of the public sector.

Meanwhile, real wages have continued to plummet, public investment has been slashed, and now, intense suffering from the drought is taking place, and still there is no government action.

● **THE MEXICAN** drought is causing serious crop losses, and a health emergency for its population. Along with threatened loss of 60-70% of Mexico's soy crop, which depends on irrigation, are reports of thousands of infants and children suffering from dehydration in Mexico's north. In numerous townships around the city of Monterrey, drinking water is only available for four hours a day.

● **THE GOVERNOR** of Brazil's Alagoas state, Fernando Collor de Melo, held a meeting with small industrialists in which he said that his state will not respect the budget cutbacks ordered by the federal government because "they are unconditional surrender to the IMF and stem from a government that hasn't the least authority." He also criticized the government for not establishing "a policy of incentives for businessmen to invest in the productive sector and not in the unproductive, which is the open market."

● **BRAZIL'S** trade surplus in April hit \$1.9 billion, most of it in raw materials. The huge margin is a sign of the illness of the economy: It reflects, according to president of the Foreign Trade Association, Norberto Ingo Zadrosny, a fall in imports and a contraction of the internal market.

● **SPAIN'S** largest banking operation in history took place in mid-May, as Banco Central merged with Banesto. The head of Banesto, 40-year-old Mario Conde, is being profiled as the new economic czar of the country.

● **SOUP KITCHENS** are proliferating throughout the United States. Highlighting a soup kitchen in Homestead, Pennsylvania, created in the aftermath of the closing of Homestead's USX steel plant, the May 24 *Washington Post* called soup kitchens "part of a nationwide growth industry—an underground, largely volunteer network that distributes millions of pounds of free food every year."