

# Business Briefs

## Trade

### EC, Poland sign pact to deliver food to CIS

Polish Minister of Agriculture Gabriel Janowski and the European Commission in Brussels have signed an agreement to deliver food to former Soviet republics. The food will be bought with western money from Polish farmers and delivered to the East.

In the first phase of the program, Poland will get ECU 125 million (\$175 million) for its agricultural products; in the second, Poland will get ECU 625 million together with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria.

Janowski also announced measures to improve the protection of Polish farmers against low-priced food imports from abroad. The government in Warsaw accepted his proposal to introduce customs duties on some imported agricultural goods "in respect to international agreements." Unofficially, Janowski said that sugar would be one of these goods. He also said the government will act to protect family farms with new tax and credit policies.

## Energy

### Nuclear power plans revived in Poland

The Polish energy development plan which includes a nuclear power option is still valid, Jerzy Niewodniczanski, the head of the state nuclear power agency, said in an interview in the Oct. 5 *Gazeta Wyborza*. Construction of the first nuclear power plant in Zarnowiec (near Gdansk) was abruptly halted a few years ago as a result of protests, but at the same time a plan for nuclear power stations was approved. This plan is still there and can be drawn upon, he said.

Niewodniczanski said he believes that the social climate is now better for investment in new energy sources, and that if the country is to have a nuclear power supply by the year 2004, which is the target date of the old government energy plan, construction of at least one power plant has to begin now.

Renewed discussion of the nuclear option comes as the government has just signed a contract with the U.S. oil firm Amoco, which allows the company to explore oil and gas in Poland. Drilling will take place in central and eastern Poland over 11,000 square kilometers.

Amoco has completed geological exploration for the Polish government at its own expense, and in return it was given the right to choose where it will drill. If the Americans find oil, they will get an exclusive concession to exploit the fields. In return, Poland holds the first option to buy gas or oil from Amoco, but at prices determined by the Americans.

Since the government wants to close most of Poland's coal mines, this policy means a high dependency on the goodwill of the United States—if Poland does not push ahead with nuclear power options.

## Monetarism

### Debate must begin on IMF dismal record, says prof

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have caused massive human misery, directing capital flows out of, instead of into, developing sector nations, David M. Gordon charged in a column in the Oct. 4 *Los Angeles Times*. Gordon is an economics professor at the New School for Social Research in New York City.

"A virtual world government has emerged over the last 15 years, headed by the parallel international economic institutions—the IMF and the World Bank. During the 1980s and early 1990s, their policies have devastated the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people in the developing countries. And the U.S. government has close to a controlling interest in those two institutions," he wrote.

"The policies have almost uniformly contributed to dramatic reductions in workers' real wages, sharp cuts in the standard of living of the vast majority of households, and rising income inequality.

"Even more strikingly, by the mid-1980s, these policies were beginning to result in a massive net flow of resources out of developing countries back to the advanced coun-

tries. Rising trade surpluses have permitted substantial increases in debt repayment by the South to the North, while private bank lending . . . has continued to decline."

By the late 1980s, Gordon said, this transfer from South to North totaled \$20-40 billion a year. "The developing countries desperately need investment capital, but it's running the other way."

## Technology

### France refuses to buck 'new world order'

The French government of President François Mitterrand has made it clear to Indian Prime Minister Narashima Rao that France will not buck the "new world order" policy of "technological apartheid," to aid Indian space or nuclear technology development, the *Hindustan Times* reported Oct. 2. Rao, who was in France for three days, was only received by Mitterrand for a half-hour, and no reason was given for the short meeting.

"The hope seemed to be that France would continue the supply of uranium for the Tarapur nuclear power plant beyond the contracted period of 1993, and that it would be willing to part with advanced space technology. On both counts, France bluntly made it clear that cooperation in these spheres depended on India signing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and missile control technology regime," the paper reported in an editorial.

Similarly, the Russian decision to apply full scope safeguards on supply on nuclear equipment to foreign countries will impact India. After the Canadians had left following the Pokhran explosion in 1974, India had arranged with the Soviet Union to receive heavy water for the 235 megawatt Candu reactor at Rajasthan atomic power station. The Soviets had also offered India two 1,000 megawatt VVER reactors at Koodnakulam in Tamil Nadu. But during a recent trip to Russia by Indian Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Dr. P.K. Iyengar, Russia rejected requests to supply enriched uranium for the Tarapur atomic power stations. He was told that since India is not a signatory of the NPT, the old safeguard ar-

rangement that New Delhi had with Moscow is no longer valid and more stringent safeguards will be required in order to continue with the old agreements.

## Health

### Disease holocaust sweeping Russia

The natural increase of the Russian population is being wiped out by disease, the Oct. 8 London *Guardian* reported, based on two reports commissioned by President Boris Yeltsin and just released by Ecology Minister Viktor Danilov-Danilyan. Ukrainian leaders report a similar situation.

Pollution is so bad, and health care has collapsed so totally, that in 29 areas in Russia, deaths outnumber live births. Toxic waste contamination and air and water pollution are so severe in vast areas of Russia, that almost one-sixth of the country is unfit for human habitation. Up to 2.7 million people are still living in the area affected by the massive radiation leak from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, and 400,000 still live in areas officially declared unfit for human habitation. Some 1.3 million people have been registered at hospitals as suffering from diseases related to radiation exposure from Chernobyl.

Diphtheria is sweeping through Moscow and whooping cough through St. Petersburg. Infant mortality is soaring. Complications occur in 40-47% of all Russian births, and, if current trends continue, only 15-20% of all babies will be born healthy by 2015. Official infant mortality in 1991 is 17.9 per 1,000; by international standards, the report states, that rate would be three times higher. One-fourth of all intestinal diseases in Russia occur in children, due to the filthy conditions in kindergartens, where respiratory and intestinal diseases are rampant; 60% of Russian children are thought to be showing signs of rickets or allergies, and 10% show symptoms of anemia.

The Ministry of Health has calculated that only 25% of all 16-year-olds are healthy, and if international standards were applied to army recruitment, only 20% of young men would be considered fit for military service.

On top of this, the Russian health care system is collapsing. Some 40% of hospitals and 30% of outpatient clinics have no hot water; 18% and 15%, respectively, have no sewage system; and 12% and 7% have no water supply at all.

Water pollution is the worst. All the main Russian rivers have between 10 and 100 times the allowable viral and bacterial levels. Yevgeny Belyaev, a representative of the state committee for sanitation supervision, said that "even by our loose standards, over 20% of drinking water does not meet required standards in terms of its chemical composition" due to industrial dumping.

## Exploration

### Two U.S.-Russia space agreements signed

NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin and Russian Space Agency head Yuri Koptev signed two agreements in Moscow on Oct. 6 for U.S.-Russia cooperation in space exploration. One agreement is for U.S. participation in the Russian "Mars '94" mission to Mars, and another is for "Cooperation in Human Space Flight."

The Mars agreement provides for the flight of two U.S. scientific instruments, the Soil Magnetic Properties Experiment and the Soil Reactivity/Composition Experiment, on the Russian Mars '94 lander. The question of the magnetic characteristics of Mars is key and unanswered; only a faint magnetic field has been detected, which is an unexpected finding.

As part of the second agreement, two Russian astronauts are scheduled to begin training in late October at the Johnson Space Center to fly on the Space Shuttle. One of them will fly on a Shuttle mission in November 1993 as a mission specialist.

A NASA astronaut will also fly on a long-duration Mir space station mission of more than 90 days. This is scheduled for 1995 and will coincide with the docking of a Space Shuttle orbiter at the Mir station, though the astronaut will be flown to the Mir on a Russian Soyuz spacecraft.

## Briefly

● **JAPAN** will change its aid policy toward China to prevent the aid being used in military-related projects, Taiwan news service CNA quoted *Shan-kei Shimbun* on Oct. 2. Much of three Japanese loans has gone into the construction of railways and harbors that could be turned to military use. The shift will not take place until fiscal year 1996.

● **CHILD ABUSE** is now four times that of 1970; the number of children living in poverty has increased 33%, and teenage suicides have doubled, says Dr. Marc L. Miringhoff, director of the Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy in Tarrytown, New York, which maintains "The Index of Social Health" in the U.S. The index began at 75 in 1970, and fell to 42 in 1990, the Oct. 5 *New York Times* reported.

● **RUSSIAN CENTRAL** bank head Viktor Geraschenko said Oct. 5, "The International Monetary Fund is not an all-seeing God. Many of its officials and top world experts are starting to realize our problems are not as simple as the IMF leaders had imagined." The blast was reported by Reuters.

● **MOST POLES** support the labor protest actions in Tychy, at the FSM auto plant, according to a survey by the Polish Center for Analysis of Public Opinion. Over 60% of the population which does not work in the factory stated that the strikers' demands were justified.

● **'FISCAL OVERKILL'** was the term used by George Magnus, an economist at S.G. Warburg in London, to the Oct. 8 *Financial Times*, to describe how European governments may be trying to eliminate deficits. "If private-sector activity is going to be depressed for some time, this is the wrong time to cut back spending in private investment."

● **U.S. POVERTY** is growing among whites, too. Of the 4.2 million Americans added to the ranks of the poor in 1989-91, 51% were non-Hispanic whites.