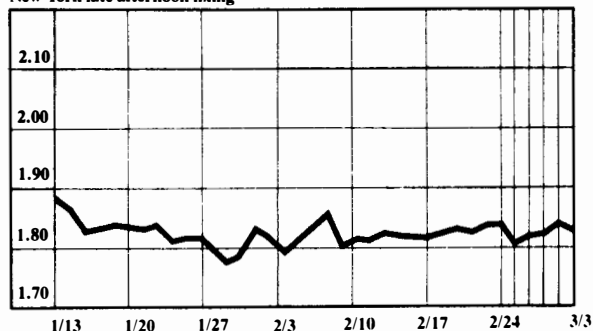


Currency Rates

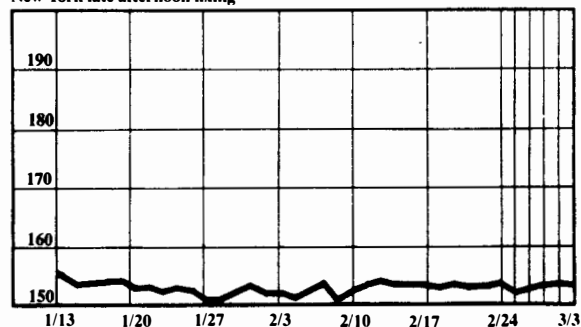
The dollar in deutschmarks

New York late afternoon fixing



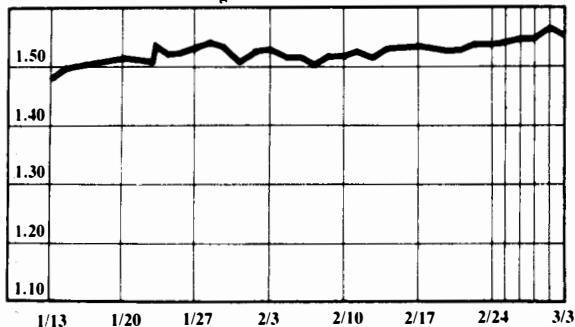
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



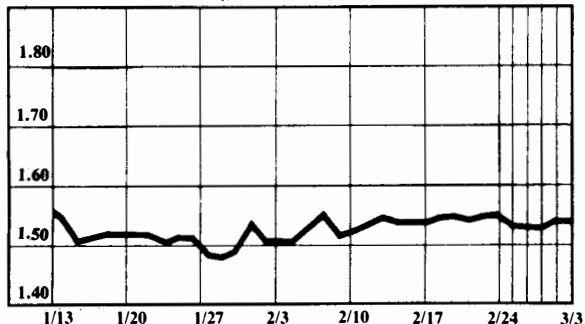
The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing



War against AIDS: Bavaria goes it alone

by Wolfgang Lillge, M.D.

The Bavarian state government of Franz-Josef Strauss decided on Feb. 26 to implement public health measures to contain the spread of AIDS. This decision comes just after the failure of the West German federal government in Bonn to initiate a nationwide AIDS legislation including mandatory testing of broader layers of the population and mandatory reporting of AIDS cases and infections.

The Bavarian move is a slap in the face of West German Health Secretary Rita "Rubbermaid" Süßmuth, notorious for her manic insistence of a "voluntary" approach to the AIDS problem and huge public information campaign for "safer sex" and condom use. For about two months, there has been a growing debate in Strauss's Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU), the sister party of the governing Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of which Mrs. Süßmuth is a member, to challenge the "preservative" rather than "conservative" policy in Bonn.

The measures to be taken in the state of Bavaria include:

- Testing of all applicants to public service employment;
- Testing of all prisoners in Bavarian jails and isolation of AIDS-positive inmates in separate sections;
- AIDS-positive persons are banned from donating blood, semen, and organs;
- Testing of all foreigners from non-EC countries applying for residence;
- Testing of all drug addicts, male and female prostitutes, homosexuals, if necessary enforced by police;
- Job ban for AIDS-infected male and female prostitutes;
- Strict regulations for red light districts and gay bars;
- Strict enforcement of the law against anyone spreading the disease intentionally;
- Anonymous counting of all cases of infection and disease.

While these measures do not include a general testing of the population and mandatory reporting by name, they are a first step that could be a model for other states. They also reflect the growing influence of the work of the Patriots for Germany, who for two years have demanded the enforcement

of the German law on epidemics and a crash scientific program to develop a cure and a vaccine against AIDS.

Beside Strauss, a key proponent of public health measures is Peter Gauweiler, undersecretary in the Bavarian Interior Ministry, who stressed the civil right to life and well-being for every citizen as the main motivation behind the Bavarian initiative. "In the case of AIDS, this fundamental right obliges the state to protect the non-infected part of the population from the virus and to give aid to the sick ones," Gauweiler stated in the German mass daily *Bildzeitung* Feb. 27.

Meanwhile, in Bonn the coalition talks to form the new federal government, after the general elections on Jan. 25 failed to address the AIDS issue in a rational way. Reportedly, Strauss and other CSU representatives put the demand of anonymous reporting on the table but were rebuffed by the "condom mafia" of Süssmuth, CDU General Secretary Geisler and the Free Democrats who argued that any state or police enforcement of laws against AIDS victims would send them underground and worsen the problem. The only measure the coalition partners could agree upon is an anonymous gathering of data from laboratories involved in AIDS testing and a commitment for closer national research coordination. Otherwise, the public information campaign about "safe" sexual practices and use of condoms will be continued.

There are totally divergent reactions in the German pop-

ulation and the institutions to this political in-fighting around the AIDS issue. While in recent polls, 70% of the Germans favored an AIDS test ranging "from the prostitute to the chancellor" and 67% would agree to mandatory reporting, there is violent rejection of the Bavarian approach by most politicians and even medical institutions. Health Minister Süssmuth claimed that these measures are not for the welfare of AIDS patients and AIDS virus carriers, a quite moderate statement from her side as she might prepare to cover her position for the future. The Social Democrats stated in an official release that the way in which the CSU would "stigmatize" AIDS patients and exclude them from society is "intolerable." The only effect these measures will have is to drive prostitutes and other high-risk persons out of Bavaria and aggravate the AIDS problem in other states.

The most extreme reaction came from the Association of German Private Physicians whose director stated that mandatory reporting and quarantine would create a "gigantic state surveillance network" that reminds him of George Orwell's novel *1984*. He announced resistance by his colleagues to participating in any mandatory reporting scheme.

Given the clear view of a large majority of the population concerning AIDS, it becomes more and more obvious that it is those who block the way toward implementing public health measures who will be held responsible for the unchecked spread of the deadly disease.

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