

vidual contracts abroad, while thousands more work under "collective contracts" (i.e., a medical team is hired as a group to man an entire hospital or department). Over 1,400 professionals in this category work in Libya alone. Most contracts are signed with Arab countries: Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Kuwait, and the UAE, as well as Nigeria and Zambia.

These contracts are arranged by the government-run Foreign Trade Enterprise Polservice for two-year periods. Fees are paid to Polservice by the employee. Polservice reports that this brings in \$13-14 million a year of hard currency the government needs to pay its debt obligations to the World Bank, IMF, and Western banks.

Infant mortality

Another grave side-effect of the economic crisis and general impoverishment is reflected in the country's rising infant mortality and lower birthrates. According to the government's Main Statistical Office figures, the infant mortality rate in 1986 was 11,100, or 17.3 for every 1,000 live births, *one of the highest in Europe*. The Polish weekly newspaper *Odrozienie* attributed a quarter of these deaths to infections contracted in hospitals, through lack of sanitation and non-sterilization of equipment, etc. Birthrates show drastic decreases—16.9 live births per 1,000 population in 1986 compared with 19.6 in 1980 and 18.0 in 1985.

Prenatal care is well below Western standards. Only a few hospitals have ultrasound equipment to monitor pregnancies. The number of miscarriages, premature or complicated births, and low birth weight (8% of newborn babies in Poland weigh less than 2.5 kilograms, or 5.5 lb.) is very high. Many women of childbearing age are employed in hazardous industries. Women constitute over 45% of the workforce; 60% are of childbearing age.

The number of maternity wards in hospitals fell from 4,488 in 1970 to 1,406 in 1986, with beds often placed in cramped corridors.

When mothers leave hospitals they face shortages of infant formula and baby food, meager supplies of cereals, instant meals, and sterile fruit juices. Only 40% of the demand for cereals, 30% of the demand for juices, and 20% of the demand for instant meals are being met.

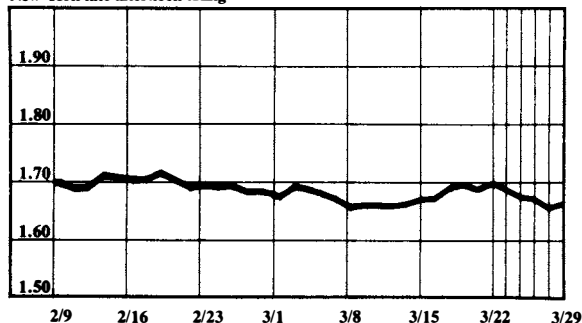
The drastic cuts in imported medical supplies have also ended once-normal vaccination programs for infants and children. Thus, efforts to halt the country's mounting rates of pulmonary tuberculosis and measles, for example, has become a serious problem in Warsaw and other cities, because since the late 1970s *only 30%* of all children have been vaccinated.

A Polish doctor who recently emigrated to West Germany told *EIR* that the current annual TB rate is estimated to be anywhere from 86 to 96 cases for every 100,000 inhabitants—appalling when compared with other European countries (e.g., in Denmark the corresponding figure is about 9 per 100,000).

Currency Rates

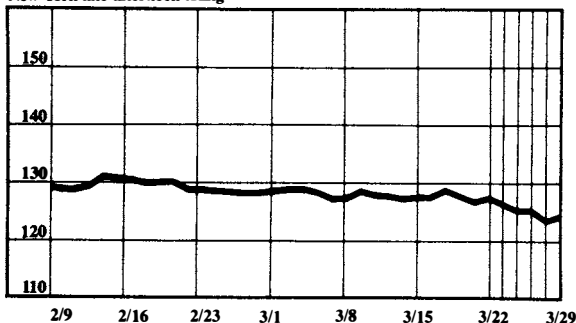
The dollar in deutschmarks

New York late afternoon fixing



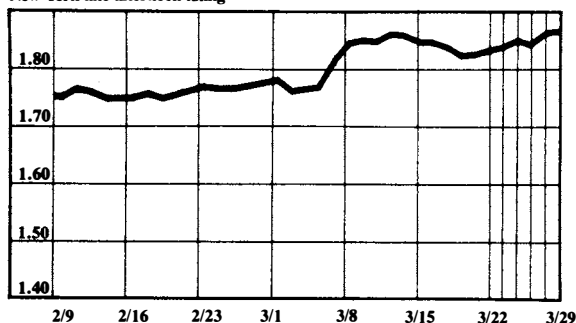
The dollar in yen

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

