

Business Briefs

Trade

Ontario official urges an end to NAFTA talks

Ontario Prime Minister Bob Rae called Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney recently to urge him to take Canada out of the Mexico-U.S.-Canada free trade talks, and keep Canada out of a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The July 15 Toronto *Globe and Mail* quoted Rae on Mulroney, "He wasn't going to react on the phone" to the proposal.

Rae made the same proposal to the Ontario Provincial Legislature. Making note of trade harassment from the U.S. side, he said, "Canada cannot stay at the NAFTA negotiating table while these American actions continue."

Meanwhile, columnist Jeffrey Simpson wrote in Quebec's *Le Devoir* on July 15, "Very soon, Mulroney will suffer another headache. . . . The source won't be the constitutional crisis but the free-trade accords between Canada, the U.S., and Mexico." Canadian polls (excluding Quebec) show that two out of three Canadians are against free trade.

According to sources in Ottawa, reported *Le Devoir*, George Bush wants signing ceremonies in Mexico City and Niagara Falls before the U.S. election. But for Mulroney, it wouldn't be a plus. The constitutional crisis, the recession, the unpopular Goods and Services Tax—7% on almost everything—the already low popularity of his Conservative Party, and now NAFTA, make any ostentatious show around the accord very bad politics for the Canadian prime minister.

Food

Astronauts to enjoy irradiated steaks

Irradiated steaks will be back on the astronauts' menu soon, after 50 pounds of rib-eye steaks, irradiation-sterilized at the Vindicator plant in Mulberry, Florida, are tested for microbial content and then sent to NASA's Johnson Space Center. The steaks are cooked, sealed

in laminated silver pouches, and then irradiated to sterilize them, giving them an indefinite shelf life without refrigeration.

The Apollo astronauts ate irradiated food, and preferred irradiated steaks because they could be cooked to suit the individual astronaut's taste, and then processed without killing the taste. According to a NASA dietician, other ways of processing meat to ensure that it is not contaminated—heat processing, for example—made the meat taste like "dog food."

"If it's safe for people up there, how about now here on Earth?" Sam Whitney, president of Vindicator, asked.

Space Technology

A 400-meter optical telescope planned

An astonishing plan for an Earth-based optical imaging interferometer has been supported by a National Science Foundation statement of intent to provide half of the needed \$10.5 million funding. The planned telescope is called the CHARA Array, taking its name from the Center for High Angular Resolution Astronomy at Georgia State University in Atlanta, which reported the plans and an NSF award of initial funding (about \$0.5 million) on July 6.

The CHARA Array is projected to have the light-gathering power of a single mirror with a diameter of 400 meters. For comparison, the largest telescope planned heretofore, using four eight-meter mirrors in combination, is the equivalent of a single 16-meter telescope. This is the Very Large Telescope planned by the European Southern Observatory to be complete in 1998 at a much higher price. The Palomar telescope has a four-meter mirror.

The resolving power of CHARA is projected to be 150 times that of an ideally functioning Hubble Space Telescope. It is supposed to be operational at a remote site in the southwestern United States by late 1995.

It will be the most powerful interferometric array operating in the civilian sector—powerful enough to detect planets around other stars and monitor the progress of baseball games on the Moon. Today, a lunar crater has to be a mile in diameter before the best tele-

scope can see it.

The design calls for: 1) seven optical-infrared telescopes arrayed in a "Y" to permit interferometry; 2) adaptive optics—the mirrors are deformable and high-speed sensors change their shape as the diffraction of the atmosphere changes, a technological spin-off of Strategic Defense Initiative program; and 3) reconstructive imaging to make images from the interferometric information.

Energy

Iranian minister hits European 'greenhouse' tax

Iranian Petroleum Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh blasted the European Community's proposed "greenhouse" tax on carbon products and oil, warning that it would seriously affect expansion plans of the oil-producing countries, in an address to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ministerial energy seminar in Solstrand, Norway on July 1-2.

If implemented, and the environmental lobby is in a full-scale mobilization to make sure it is, he said, the measure will impose a \$3 "greenhouse" tax on a barrel of oil in 1993, with that rising to \$10 by the year 2000. According to the Opecna news agency, Aghazadeh said that this tax would endanger "our economic development and that of our future generations."

He pointed out that the tax placed the greatest part of the burden on oil and gas producers and ignored the differences in carbon dioxide reduction costs for different countries.

He also said that there was no scientific certainty as to whether CO² or water vapor was the cause of global warming. He said that the extent of such warming over the next 100 years, or its impact on various parts of the world, also remained in doubt. "Making specific policy decisions on the basis of such incomplete information, demonstrates overriding political considerations and pressures on certain states versus its scientific aspects," he warned.

Demographics

Africa entering an 'era of depopulation'

"Africa is definitely entering an era of depopulation," an African medical doctor who works in Nigeria told *EIR* July 16. "From Zaire to the East African coast down to Tanzania, AIDS is everywhere. It is common knowledge." According to the World Health Organization, AIDS is mostly confined to cities in Africa, but this source corroborated other first-hand reports that AIDS has long been rampant in rural areas. "AIDS has wiped out entire towns, entire villages, throughout Uganda and Zaire. And nothing is being done about it at all."

Since Nigeria implemented an International Monetary Fund "structural adjustment program" in 1986, health services in rural areas have collapsed, the African doctor told *EIR*. Some 65% of the Nigerian population lives in the countryside. The services "have been withdrawn," he said. Clinics have simply closed down.

The biggest killers in Nigeria remain yellow fever, drug-resistant types of malaria, and cholera, he said. Yellow fever and cholera wipe out entire villages at a time, with a village averaging about 1,000 people.

If health services are disappearing in Nigeria, it is worse for the rest of Africa, he added. Nigeria has 60% of the doctors on the continent.

Environmentalism

Indian writer charges 'ozone hole' is a hoax

Environmentalists who like that around chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and the "ozone hole" are part of a program of "technological apartheid" against the developing world, argued Indian writer N. C. Menon in a *Hindustan Times* feature on July 15.

"It has been argued that the environmental movement was created and financed to this day by some of the leading families in America and Europe that control many of the giant corpora-

tions." The motivation of the big corporations in supporting "aggressive environmentalism" is seen in "the campaign that was launched to ban CFCs on the specious ground that they destroyed the ozone layer. Horrendous stories were spread about the thousands of deaths by skin cancer resulting from the destruction of the ozone layer." This is all a fraud: "The villain in CFCs is known to be chlorine. But evaporating seawater contains 600 million tons of chlorine per year. . . . In comparison, the chlorine in CFCs is only 0.75 tons a year."

But "the determined and well-financed campaign" is pushed, Menon wrote, with the aim of banning CFCs, and thereby driving Third World chemical producers "out of business, since they do not have the resources and resource capabilities to produce alternatives to CFCs."

Development Policy

Science and technology are the most powerful tools

Science and technology are the most powerful tools to solve the problems of economic deprivation and deteriorating environment, Dr. Subroto, secretary general of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), told the 1992 Hania World Dialogue conference in Crete on July 17.

Subroto maintained that aid through loans had resulted in a reversed flow of resources from the South to the North. "Only through the development of a strong indigenous base for science and technology will the South be able to solve its development and environmental problems," he said, the OPEC news agency Opecna reported.

Subroto emphasized that "it is time to revise our entrenched tolerance of the economic imbalance between the rich and the poor, which has dominated life through much of this violent century. Indeed, such imbalances seem increasingly untenable in a borderless world." He warned that the end of the Cold War should not be allowed to give way to a form of class war which would be more ferocious and prolonged.

● **SEN. CONNIE MACK** (R-Fla.) wrote a commentary in the July 16 *Wall Street Journal* suggesting that "the veil of secrecy" over International Monetary Fund programs "be lifted to allow for greater accountability. . . . When the IMF agrees to fund a given country, the country must sign a letter of intent outlining the economic policies it must follow to receive the aid. Letters of intent . . . are, in effect, secret economic treaties, not subject to review even by the legislatures of the major IMF donors."

● **LITHUANIA** is facing drought conditions, Minister of Agriculture Rimvydas Survila reported at a cabinet meeting July 8. The harvest of most crops is expected to be 40-60% below last year. Rainfall is only 5-20% the normal rate.

● **IRAQ** has announced that it is filing suit against the Swiss-based Bank for International Settlements for refusing to release \$350 million in Iraqi assets.

● **THE CONCORDE** aircraft reached 250,000 hours of supersonic flight time in early July, more supersonic hours than all western air forces combined. The plane was built by British Aerospace and Aérospatiale of France, and first entered service 15 years ago. But it is starting to show its age: Since 1989, the top section of the aircraft's rudder has disintegrated three times during supersonic flight. In each case, the aircraft was able to land safely.

● **SANCTIONS** against South Korea are likely after talks with the United States on shipping broke up without progress on "the key issues" of "liberalizing the Korean trucking and rail industries and ending Korean restrictions on transportation middlemen," according to the *Journal of Commerce*. The Federal Maritime Commission has moved "a step closer to retaliating against South Korea for prohibiting foreign freight forwarders and consolidators from doing business in that country."