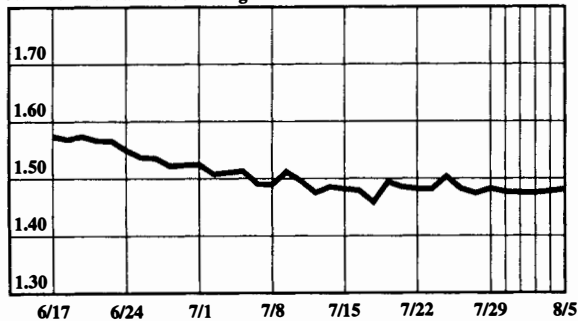


Currency Rates

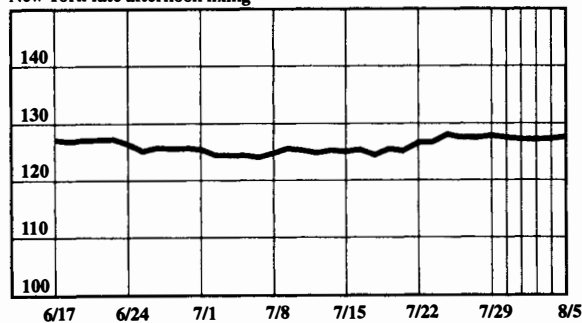
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



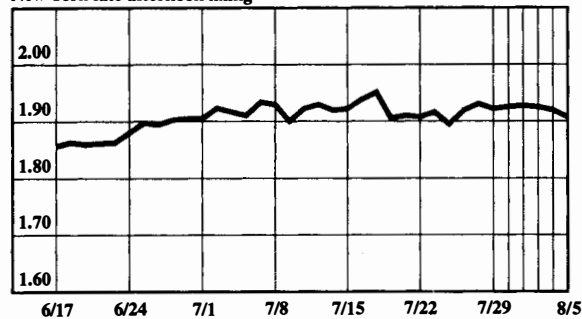
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



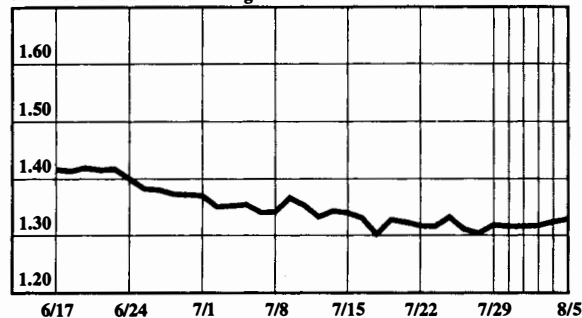
The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing



Bush vetoes Oregon rationing plan

by Linda Everett

On Aug. 3, Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan officially rejected Oregon's five-year plan to ration health care services for the poor, allegedly because the Bush administration is concerned that the Medicaid plan in its present form discriminates against people with mental or physical disabilities.

The administration's action is especially interesting because it has been studying the plan for nearly two years, giving signals that it would approve the major structural changes in the state's Medicaid program. The only criticism raised was from Office and Management and Budget czar Richard Darman, who complained that the plan would cause an increase in federal matching funds to Oregon. And heretofore, the prescriptions for health care reform from either the Bush or Clinton camp started with the candidates' repeated avowals that their major concern is cutting costs.

Now, the twin candidates are mouthing concerns about the rights of those with disabilities, with Secretary Sullivan calling for the Oregon plan to be retooled. This occurred after a consortium of 21 groups representing people with disabilities raised substantial problems with Oregon's experiment.

Last January, member organizations of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities requested a meeting with Secretary Sullivan to convey their concerns about the rationing plan. They were ignored. On July 24, in a letter to President Bush—and to the press—the consortium again requested a meeting. It read: "If services are to be prioritized for funding on the basis of presumed quality of life, we will have a long way up the 'slippery slope' (which is getting steeper every day in the face of the growing cost containment crisis), to try to justify health care for persons with disabilities whose treatment may be viewed by the general public and by some health care providers as causing 'minimal or no improvement in quality of life.' "

Such discrimination, the consortium wrote, violates the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which allows state limits on services in Medicaid programs as long as they do not deny individuals with disabilities access to care; and the federal child abuse ("Baby Doe") laws of 1984, which prohibit the withholding of medically effective treatment from a child born with a disability that would be provided to a child without a disability.

A meeting was finally arranged between the consortium