

Business Briefs

Australia

Loss of industries, unemployment are up

Australia has lost 1,762 factories that used to employ 10 or more people, in the last three-and-a-half years, according to statistics published by *The Age* on Feb. 24. The state of Victoria accounted for 40% of the losses. The greatest devastation was suffered by the clothing and footwear industry. Between 1988 and 1991, the number of clothing and footwear factories declined by 30%, from 1,400 to 974, as the government removed quotas, and manufacturers shifted offshore before their tariff protection was stripped away.

At the same time, the number of Australians who want to work has broken the 2 million barrier for the first time on record (which would double the official unemployment rate to over 20%) the annual Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) survey of Australians not in the labor force found. The daily *The Australian* reported on Feb. 22 that just over 1 million (51.4%) of those who wanted work were not actively seeking it, and were not counted by the ABS as officially unemployed. The number of discouraged job-seekers rose by 5% to 145,600 over a 12-month period, which means that they are 4% of all those not in the labor force.

'Technological Apartheid'

Iran being cut off from high technology

A cutoff of all high-technology exports to Iran is being orchestrated on the basis that Iran is using dual-use technologies to build up its weapons industry for the manufacture of missiles and weapons of mass destruction.

According to Kenneth Timmerman, the German government, unlike with Iraq, is moving quickly against Iran and is expected to stop several contracts. Germany has already cut off any new credits to Iran, as has France and Italy.

Timmerman, a top Zionist lobby scribbler linked to Kroll Associates pushed the cutoff of

technology in a commentary in the Feb. 25 European edition of the *Wall Street Journal* entitled "Iran's Weapons Build-Up: Iraq Redux." As in his book *The Death Lobby*, he targets Iran's main trade partners, especially Germany, for attack.

Economic Policy

Ukraine must boost output, says economist

"Our central task is to increase the production of industrial and agricultural goods" and "upgrade productivity" as production is increased, Ukrainian economist Volodimir Kovalenko stated in the Feb. 11 edition of the weekly *Literaturnaya Ukraina*, in an article entitled "Proposals for Coming Out of the Economic Crisis in Ukraine."

Several dirigist steps are necessary, he said, including: a central bank credit policy for credits through state and private banks for construction projects; stringent, "iron-clad" government price controls for all basic goods; state regulation to prevent monopolies, to thus create a climate where medium-sized enterprises can flourish; state exchange controls where foreign exchange is only allocated "for the things we ourselves can't produce," like oil, natural gas, "some metals," and tropical and subtropical foods such as citrus fruits, coffee, tea, cacao, etc.

Given the conduct of the West and the Russian policies of blockade and economic sabotage, Kovalenko stressed that Ukraine has no choice but to move toward "maximal autarky," through state protection of industry, and utilize its abundant resources and plants to "provide the necessities of life," from basic foods to most types of consumer goods. When George Bush was in Kiev in summer 1991, he said "don't rush into independence," and "London today" is "quick to reach agreements with Moscow, and not Kiev," because London views Ukraine vis-à-vis Moscow as it views Scotland vis-à-vis London.

Kovalenko urged that Ukraine create a gold-based currency like the gold chervonets of 1922.

Kovalenko attacked former acting Russian

Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar for having "followed the tune of the IMF" and "destroying the whole country" for \$24 billion in aid, which never materialized. "In Ukraine and Russia, monetarism leads to the development of economies of the Latin American type, where a group of millionaires are parasitizing on the bodies of the rest of the population. . . . Such a transitional approach will not satisfy the population of the former Soviet republics. It will lead instead to people calling for the former Communists, as was the case in Lithuania."

Ukraine should not follow "the American economist Milton Friedman, whose ideas Gaidar has taken on . . . but to renew Ukraine we should follow the German economic reforms carried out in 1948, which led to the Economic Miracle. . . . Ukraine today can be compared to bombed out Germany then."

Medicine

Gene therapy with vaccine reduces cancer metastases

A combination of gene therapy and immunotherapy has been used in animal experiments to sharply reduce the development of cancer metastases; following surgical removal of a large, rapidly disseminating lung carcinoma in mice, the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel reported on Feb. 10.

This is the first demonstration that this form of therapy can be applied in animals at late stages when tumor spread has already occurred. Without this novel vaccination treatment, all of the mice would have succumbed to metastasized lung cancer within 1-2 months.

In a report that will be published in the *Journal of Immunology*, Weizmann Institute researchers, and scientists of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York and Kyoto University in Japan, describe a vaccine approach to prevent the metastatic growth of a previously established tumor using the tumor cells themselves, which were genetically modified by gene insertion to secrete interferon-gamma (a stimulant of various immune system elements), and subsequently irradiated to halt their ability to proliferate. The therapeutic protocol reduces the development of metastatic lung tumors in mice by more than 95%.

Briefly

The study raises the possibility that genetic manipulation of human tumor tissue removed during a biopsy or surgery to enable it to produce interferon-gamma or other natural immune system regulatory agents (known as cytokines) might similarly provide an immunotherapy to prevent metastatic growth of that tumor in the patient.

Malthusianism

World Bank plans to cut energy to Third World

The World Bank has developed a supposedly new energy policy which is more explicitly geared toward cutting back energy production and consumption in Third World nations.

The World Bank "has put developing countries on alert that it will curtail future lending to badly run state-owned monopoly power utilities," Reuters reported on Feb. 21. Policy papers released the following day, say that the World Bank will also discourage power suppliers from continuing to subsidize energy prices and will move aggressively to encourage private investment in the utilities.

"We have a new motto. . . . No more business as usual," Robert Saunders, principal author of the reports, said. "It's a new world out there. We don't feel like a sector like energy should be subsidized."

Energy

China opens oil basins to foreign companies

China has opened what is believed to be potentially the largest unexplored oil basins in the world to foreign companies, Wang Tao, president of the China National Petroleum Corp., said on Feb. 17. The basins are about three times as large as France in area and contain more oil than Saudi Arabia. Total potential reserves are estimated at 8.2 billion tons of oil and 2.5 trillion cubic meters of gas.

The biggest basin, Tarim, is in Xinjiang province, the world's second largest desert,

1,400 miles from eastern China, where most of the energy-consuming industries are located. Oil would have to be moved across a pipeline, costing billions of dollars to build.

News from London reveals that the Royal Dutch Shell Group and British Petroleum both expressed interest after China announced that it was opening 12 onshore areas to foreign companies.

Despite the pressing need for energy for industrial development, China is not able to explore the oil fields on its own. Official statistics predict that by the year 1995, China will be an oil-importing country. Energy consumption is very low per capita compared to the world standard; nevertheless, the giant country ranks number three in total energy consumed each year.

Poland

Strikes begin against IMF-imposed budget

Protests against Poland's official budget for fiscal year 1993 began with a surprise one-hour warning strike of the upper Silesian miners late on the weekend of Feb. 20-21. The austerity budget was imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and had been welcomed by IMF chief envoy Mark Allan.

The strike protested the government's plan to cut insurance guarantees for the wives of the mining workers, and received the support of President Lech Walesa, who insisted that the plan be changed, or he would not sign it. The miners' cause was then taken up by the Senate, the lower house of the national parliament, which voted against the budget plan which had just been passed by the other chamber, the Sejm.

Not willing to risk a defeat on the budget, which is crucial for the ongoing talks with the IMF, the government of Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka backed off from the original plan, promising a modification of the insurance policy. Walesa then signed the budget plan, which leaves the government the task of looking for funds to meet the promises made to the miners. It is certain to put the guidelines that have just been agreed to with the IMF into jeopardy once again.

● **CHINA** will build two 300-megawatt nuclear power stations for Iran, according to an agreement signed on Feb. 21 in Teheran by China National Nuclear Industry General Corp. and Iran's Atomic Energy Organization. Both plants will be in the southern province of Khuzestan, near Iran's border with Iraq.

● **AIDS CASES** in New York City exploded 60.6% from 1989 to 1991, according to a confidential report done for the city and the state which was obtained by the *New York Post*. The lowest rate of increase was among homosexual men (47.0%), while the greatest increase was among women, which the paper on Feb. 22 called "an astonishing 80% rise in AIDS."

● **RUSSIA'S** biggest engineering firm, Yuri Osintsev, sees a bleak future, Reuters reported on Feb. 22. The firm's acting director, Janet Guttsman, said, "Our production fell by 30% last year. . . . Looking at the government's 1993 plans, we realize it will not be possible to stabilize things. In 1993, the fall in output will continue."

● **THE DEPRESSION** is leading many Britons to consider leaving the country for good, according to a Gallup poll published in the European press on Feb. 23. Some 49% would rather live in another country, as they see nothing that would keep them on the bankrupt island.

● **GERMAN** Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel pledged on Feb. 24 to help the former Yugoslav republic of Slovenia join the European Community. "Already good economic cooperation between the two countries should be developed further," Kinkel said.

● **GENERAL MOTORS** announced on Feb. 25 that as many as 11,000 workers would be laid off in early March as part of a work force reduction of 20,200 resulting from the exhaustion of the company's \$1.7 billion Jobs Bank program, established in 1990 to cover workers idled for more than 36 weeks.