

# Aid conference convenes

WASHINGTON — President Bush pledged \$645 million in new U.S. aid Wednesday to the beleaguered people of the former Soviet Union as they struggle to "make the leap" from communism to democracy and free market economies.

Bush's unexpected gesture at a 47-nation conference on emergency relief to the Soviet people could inspire others to hike their own contributions even though Secretary of State James A. Baker III had said there would not be a bidding contest.

In fact, several of the governments participating in the conference came forward later in the day with offers of new assistance, said U.S. officials who spoke on condition of anonymity. The prospective donors and the amounts were not disclosed.

At a luncheon, Baker singled out oil-rich Saudi Arabia, Australia and New Zealand for private consultations.

The United States "cannot and will not falter at the moment that these new states are struggling to embrace the very ideals that America was founded to foster and preserve," Bush said in opening the conference.

His aid proposal, which must be approved by Congress, marked a shift in emphasis since the new aid would not have to be repaid. Bush told the gathering that the United States has pledged more than \$5 billion in various forms of assistance, but most has been in the form of agricultural credits that will benefit U.S. farmers.

"Let us join together to give these people a reason to hope," Bush said at the ceremonial opening of the two-day summit.

The bulk of the new aid would be used to set up a \$500 million account for humanitarian assistance. Another \$25 million would purchase badly needed pharmaceuticals, and \$20 million will help farmers become private entrepreneurs after more than a half-century of communism. Money will also go to technical assistance and development projects.

Russian President Boris N. Yeltsin saluted the participants in a message declaring, "humanitarian and other forms of assistance by the international community will no doubt help alleviate the difficulties our population is facing as we move to a market economy."

Hurd said, the next goal must be getting Russia, Ukraine and the other republics into the International Monetary Fund "and getting down to working out with them the bigger questions of their economic reforms and whether we can help make sure that they are a success."

## ON THE ISSUES CANDIDATES RESPOND

Here are the views of the major presidential candidates on the question:

**What assistance should the United States provide for the former Soviet republics to help in their transition to democracy and how should this assistance be financed?**



### DEMOCRATS

**Jerry Brown** — "We should provide technical assistance and encourage our private industries to help in their transition to democracy, and to aid them in the famine issue."

**Bill Clinton** — Not available.

**Tom Harkin** — "In the short term, I believe that the United States should provide humanitarian assistance — in the form of medicine and food — to the suffering citizens of the former Soviet state this winter, as long as that assistance is provided by organizations that will ensure that our help directly reaches the people who are without the basics of life. Over time, we can help the evolving government there by providing loans and loan guarantees to private organizations seeking to promote American business and the purchase of American-made products — and by encouraging the establishment of a free-market economy, through technical assistance from American businessmen and women, workers, farmers, and professional managers."

**Bob Kerrey** — "The United States should first make full use of the \$400 million already appropriated by Congress to initiate the dismantlement of the nuclear arsenals in the four nuclear republics. We should also begin to work with our NATO allies to provide immediate short-term humanitarian aid by transporting medical supplies and foodstuffs to targeted population centers in the member republics of the commonwealth to help them survive the harsh winter. Financing for this aid should be a multilateral effort done in concert with the European Community and Japan."

**Paul Tsongas** — "In order to assist the former Soviet republics, the United States must take three basic actions. First, provide the republics with food aid to avert economic chaos; second, establish an Enterprise Corps of American businessmen to assist the republics in moving their economies toward capitalism; finally, help dismantle their nuclear arsenals. All of these actions can be funded from decreases in the defense budget, and will do more to create stability than spending the same dollars on defense."



### REPUBLICANS

**George Bush** — No response.

**Pat Buchanan** — "If people are starving in the old Soviet Union we will be the first there with food aid. But taxing American workers to send billions of dollars to politicians in the C.I.S. (Commonwealth of Independent States) works against everybody's interests. Private capital will pour into the resource-rich C.I.S. so long as C.I.S. policies make the C.I.S. an attractive place to invest. If the vestiges of socialism survive there, no amount of American aid will help."

**David Duke** — "I don't subscribe to the notion that we are obligated to finance the government of any country other than the United States of America. As the breakup of the Soviet Union is seen by all as a unique opportunity, we may assist in the stabilization of the breakaway republics by providing humanitarian aid."

# Libya attempts to buy U.S. nuclear parts

BONN, Germany — A plane bound for Libya carrying American-made laser equipment for building rockets was seized last month at Frankfurt airport moments before takeoff, German officials said Wednesday.

Chief government spokesman Dieter Vogel said the cargo contained "dual use parts which could be used for nuclear technology." Dual use refers to technology that has been designed for civilian use but can also be used in arms production.

Another German official said U.S. officials had asked Germany to intervene shortly before the plane left Frankfurt for Tripoli Dec. 10.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the cargo contained "lots of parts," mostly laser equipment used in building rockets.

He said the cargo was addressed to a Libyan organization known to be working on the country's rocket program.

In Washington, State Department press officer Joseph Snyder said the administration was aware

of the transaction and has been in touch with the German government. Other officials said the administration was not surprised by the German disclosure. There was no elaboration.

The German government source said a U.S. company, in apparent violation of export law, sent the goods to Amsterdam, Netherlands, where a Dutch firm served as an intermediary. The goods were then flown to Frankfurt for the last leg of the journey, the source said.

The cargo seizure came to light during the German government's regular news briefing Wednesday. Vogel was briefing reporters on a new regulation in German export law that the Cabinet had approved earlier in the day.

The new rule prohibits "sensitive" items from being transported through Germany to Libya "when the government has reason to believe these items are to be used for arms purposes," Vogel said.

Asked why Libya had been singled out, Vogel said: "Because it's a special case."

# Eight workers radiated

By the Associated Press

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has ruled that the Cooper Nuclear Station near Brownville violated federal radiation standards after eight workers complained they were subjected to large doses of radiation while involved in cleanup efforts last October.

The men — known to co-workers as "The Radiated Eight" — said they were hired as temporary welders or metal workers. Some of them said they were surprised when they were ordered into the core area of the reactor to do cleanup work.

One of the men suffered bladder damage after working in the reactor. His doctor told him the only other place the doctor had seen similar symptoms was in cancer patients receiving large doses of radiation treatment.

"They burned us out. They fried us, they maxed us out on our radiation limits," said Hal Eltiste, 40, of Peru, who said he does not know if his bladder damage is permanent. "Man, I was snowed. I didn't realize what was happening."

Joe Flash, a spokesman for the power company, said the NRC considered it a Level 4 violation, which carries no financial penalties.

In its response to the NRC, the company admitted that the subcontractors used improper procedures.

"The four Contract Health Physics Technicians providing radiological coverage for this job apparently failed to recognize the significance of this situation and did not relocate or obtain additional dosimetry, nor convey the workers' claims to Health Physics Supervision," the company said.

The company said it immediately stopped further work on the project until the workers' claims could be evaluated.

The company said dose evaluations after the incident "showed that the workers did not receive doses in excess of (federal) limits."

"To further evaluate the doses received, a consulting firm was hired," said Ron Bogus, another company spokesman, "and the results of this independent evaluation firm confirmed the radiological doses the workers received."

# Economy remains weak, but report predicts turnaround

WASHINGTON — Economic weakness pervaded virtually every part of the country as the new year began with retailers, factory owners and bankers all complaining about the sluggish state of business activity, the Federal Reserve said Wednesday.

The Fed's latest survey of business conditions depicted an economy mired in stagnation with little suggestion of a rebound outside of some modest gains in housing sales.

"Activity was lackluster as the year drew to a close," the central bank said in a survey compiled from reports from its 12 regional

banks.

The Fed did hold out the prospect of better days ahead, noting that "business and banking contacts generally anticipate that economic conditions will improve by mid-year."

The survey noted production cutbacks in a number of industries in the face of falling demand, an overhang of unsold goods at many retail stores following a disappointing Christmas season and little demand for new loans at banks outside of a rush to refinance old mortgages.

One of the few bright spots in the Fed survey was a slight upturn in housing sales and construction activity in many parts of the country in December as first-time home buyers have been lured into the market by the lowest mortgage rates in nearly two decades.

That view seemed to be bolstered by a separate report Wednesday that showed new construction of homes and apartments jumped 2.6 percent in December to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.103 million units, the fastest pace in 13 months. Building permit

applications improved even more in December, rising by 5.8 percent.

Housing is the sector of the economy most sensitive to changes in interest rates and often helps lead the country out of recession.

Robert Reischauer, director of the Congressional Budget Office, issued a new forecast Wednesday predicting that the economy will strengthen throughout 1992. He cautioned lawmakers against enacting anti-recession tax cuts that would cause long-run damage by widening the federal deficit.

# Doctor suggests specialists in suicide

DETROIT — A physician who developed suicide machines and used them to assist three ailing women in killing themselves is proposing a nationwide network of doctors who could help people end their lives.

Dr. Jack Kevorkian outlines the plan in an article in February's American Journal of Forensic Psychiatry, a quarterly for psychiatrists who serve as expert witnesses in legal cases.

The 85-page issue is entirely devoted to the article, "A Fail-Safe Model For Justifiable Medically Assisted Suicide (Medicide)," and responses

from 13 psychiatrists.

Edward Miller, executive director of the journal based in Laguna Hills, Calif. said, "He's an unusual thinker, a very avant-garde thinker. But a serious thinker."

Miller said he learned of Kevorkian through reports of the three lethal-injection suicides in which the doctor assisted in Michigan.

Kevorkian recommends establishing panels of suicide specialists, whom he would call "obitriatrists," who would review requests from people wishing to kill themselves. Would-be suicides

would need a doctor's referral to the panels.

Of the 13 responses, three generally endorsed Kevorkian's plan, four or five strongly opposed it and the rest saw good and bad in it, Miller said.

Dr. Jay B. Kohn, a New York psychiatrist and lawyer, wrote, "The physician should support and promulgate life, never death."

Dr. Michael S. Cleary of Scottsdale, Ariz. said, "The bottom line is Dr. Kevorkian has gone too far, too fast."

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