

agreed to restore certain goods to the list, such as rugs, furniture, and hides.

Egypt also announced that the value of the accounting pound sterling will be increased to encourage Egyptian exports.

Biological Holocaust

Reagan, Chirac agree on AIDS cooperation

President Reagan and French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac announced an agreement March 31 for U.S.-French cooperation in finding a vaccine or cure for AIDS, according to UPI.

Reagan said the agreement covering research, education, and technology exchanges had been reached between the Department of Health and Human Services and the Pasteur Institute, resolving a dispute over patent rights to the AIDS antibody test kit.

"The two medical groups will share the patent and each party will contribute 80% of the royalties received to establish and support an international AIDS Research Foundation," Reagan said. "This foundation which will also raise private funds, will sponsor AIDS-related research, and will donate 25% of the funds they receive to education and research problems in less developed countries. This agreement opens a new era in Franco-American cooperation, allowing France and the United States to join their efforts to control this terrible disease. . . ."

Free Enterprise

Colombian cattle ranches laundering drug money

The Barco government in Colombia has just announced an investigation of the drug-money laundering by dozens of cattle ranches across the country. According to Agriculture Minister Luis Guillermo Para, "The liquidity of the cattle market has unfortunately been used as a mechanism for legalizing capital of suspect origin."

Many of these ranches are located in

areas of guerrilla violence, where the former owners were forced to sell. The new owners, mostly absentee drug traffickers, have established a *modus vivendi* with the areas' terrorist groups.

The cattle raisers themselves have not hesitated to admit to the practice. In a study released by the Corporation of Agricultural and Ranching Studies (CEGA), it is stated that cattle raising in Colombia has climbed out of its depression and attained a miraculous recovery, due in large part "to the emergence of a new kind of large-scale cattle ranching, the product of legalization of capital," i.e., money-laundering.

East-West

Russia proposes 'Euroasian zone'

A "Eurasian economic zone from Gibraltar to Siberia," merging the economic potentials of the European Community and the Warsaw Pact, was proposed by leading spokesmen of the Comecon at a symposium at Hamburg University March 23-24. The symposium was sponsored by Jacques Delors, the president of the European Community, and featured, among its guest speakers from the East, Vyatsheslav Sychiev, the secretary-general of the Comecon. The West German government sent three senior officials to the event.

Other prominent guests were Ryszard Mankiewicz of the Polish foreign trade ministry, Prof. Jürgen Nitz of the Institute of Policy and Economic Studies (East Germany), and Gabor Vertes, the vice-president of the Hungarian National Bank.

Nitz described Russian imperial control over the continent of Europe in terms of a future "all-European economic union," to include high-tech cooperation and technology transfer, joint research in the Eureka project, a continental transport and energy grid, and joint ventures for exports all over the world.

The scheme resembles the historic proposal for a "Eurasian Economic Bloc," originally made by geopolitician Karl Haushofer, one of the "fathers" of the Nazi party, at the beginning of this century.

Briefly

● **THE TRILATERAL** Commission, holding its annual international meeting beginning March 23, debated a report contending that some debt relief, combined with a new flow of money to the Third World, should be considered. The report was prepared by former presidential adviser Martin Feldstein, French banker Herve de Carmoy, Bank of Tokyo adviser Koei Narusawa, and MIT Prof. Paul Krugman.

● **HEALTH AUTHORITIES** in Venezuela, according to a resolution published in the *Official Gazette* March 23, have established a policy of "obligatory reporting of all cases of persons detected carrying antibodies of the HIV [AIDS] virus, to the relevant health authorities."

● **OTIS BOWEN**, Secretary of Health and Human Services, said March 31 that Medicare benefits would have to be reduced by 13% and contributions increased by 15% over the next 25 years to avoid the bankruptcy of the program. The figures were included in the annual report on trust funds under the Social Security Administration and the Health Care Financing Administration.

● **PETROBRAS**, the Brazilian state oil company, has signed an agreement with Kuwait to import 30,000 barrels of oil per day, with payment due 90 days after shipment and no credit requirements. Brazil had stopped importing Kuwaiti oil in 1983, because Kuwait would not buy Brazilian exports. Petrobras signed another deal for 10,000 barrels a day from the Soviet Union.

● **CROP PLANTINGS** will be down for all crops except oats and cotton, says the Department of Agriculture's March 31 crop report. Estimates of lowered plantings include corn 12%, soybeans 7%, winter wheat 11%, sorghum 23%, and barley 16%. The figures, however, are only based on a survey of farmers.