Score of opening: Houston's heat 101, ceremonies 13 minutes

by Kirsten Danis
Columbia University

Sweltering temperatures shortened the opening ceremonies of the 19th annual Economic Summit of Industrialized Nations, where President George Bush and first lady Barbara Bush welcomed seven other world leaders and officially opened summit talks.

Heads of government from Canada, France, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and West Germany, and the President of the European Community joined Bush on an air-conditioned platform in Rice University’s Academic Quadrangle for the ceremony, but even the temperature control could not combat the Houston heat and humidity. A 101 heat index (the combined effect of heat and humidity) limited the ceremony to a scant 13 minutes.

Arriving via motorcade which blocked Houston traffic for almost three hours, the leaders were greeted by fanfare which included a red carpet, a 21 gun salute, and seven national anthems played by United States Armed Forces bands.

The group walked shoulder-to-shoulder as they approached the president and his wife.

"The economic summits have become a framework for frank and constructive dialogue—a dialogue for progress that I believe will be advanced greatly in the next three days," Bush said.

A banner, probably requested by the French delegation, was hung above the leaders to block the sun's punishing rays.

"Generally, we don't like to leave Mitterrand more than 30 minutes under the sun," said Hubert Vedrine, a spokesman for the French delegation.

Some of the leaders arrived in Houston prior to the today's event, but Italian President Giulo Andreotti, Mitterrand and Kohl flew to Texas at the last minute. Andreotti and Kohl remained in Rome to watch West Germany defeat Argentina in the World Cup soccer championship.

Kohl, who was reportedly wearing a new suit for the occasion, responded to Bush's "Hail the champions of football" with a wide smile.

"Kurt Mueller contributed to this report."

U.S. takes new tack on Soviet aid: it's not the most important summit issue

by Sam Hananel
Washington University

The American delegation Monday tried to shift the focus away from questions of aid to the Soviet Union, instead emphasizing resolution of trade disputes with the European Economic Community.

Reporters covering the United States delegation were treated to briefings that provided little more than succinct reiterations of past U.S. positions on the major issues. In four separate press conferences, officials said the United States sees negotiations on the Uruguay Round of talks on the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) as crucial.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter called GATT negotiations "ten times as important" as the question of aid to the Soviet Union. Both he and U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills came out with sharp attacks on European Economic Community negotiators for being stubborn in GATT talks.

"We hope President Bush can use the summit to motivate our European colleagues to move the Uruguay Round to a satisfactory conclusion on time," Yeutter said.

Yeutter criticized the Europeans for not putting forth enough effort in talks so far. He said EEC negotiators will need to be more engaged in upcoming discussions if they want to resolve disputes by the previously agreed upon December deadline.

Negotiations on the Uruguay Round have been ongoing for more than three years. The EEC has steadfastly refused to eliminate agricultural subsidies as demanded by the United States.

Although the United States hopes to increase momentum on concluding the Uruguay Round of talks, White House Chief of Staff John Sununu said it may remain an intractable issue. "The President is willing to take on intractable issues," he added.

Typically, the first day of an economic summit does not bring much

The Summit Seven

American summit priorities according to a statement made Monday by John Sununu, President Bush's chief of staff:

• GATT and the Uruguay Round. The U.S. is committed to eliminating the imbalances in agricultural trade.

• Aid to the Soviet Union. The U.S. will not support aid to the Soviet Union until the Soviets make a commitment to market reforms, including eliminating aid to Cuba and the curtailing of defense spending.

• The environment. The President will continue to be committed to the environment without endangering "economic vitality."

• Drugs. The summit heads will discuss international cooperation in the war against drugs, including an emphasis on money laundering.

• International debt. The president will seek support for his recently announced "Enterprise for Latin America Initiative."

On the first day: boredom, insults

Note International student journalists working at the summit are filing daily articles for "The Summit Seven." Germany

Surely this first day was not what one might expect from an Economic Summit. On this day, bored journalists were hanging around and killing time. Only a few of them—the tough type who had stayed up all night perhaes those that are paid by the word—sat in front of their laptops typing news. What news? Nobody knows.

The peaks of today within the German delegation office certainly were the spontaneous gatherings when an official appeared, as occurred several times. But all the officials ever announced were things like "nothing is decided now," "the atmosphere is good" or "it seems to be that there is no solution to that now."

The hard news for today, and this is disappointing from a German point of view, is that most probably there will be no decision on a G-7 aid program within this summit.

But it was announced that the letter Mikhail Gorbachev wrote to the summit will be answered by the G-7. As it seems, this will not include...
Covering the summit: pride and frustration

The phrase "so close and yet so far" seems to capture the reaction of many of the press to the opening ceremonies for the upcoming 1990 Economic Summit of Industrialized Nations. The welcoming was held on the Rice campus while we watched from a television monitor in downtown Houston, restricted from our own campus due to the very frustrating lack of access and time. The opening ceremonies were off campus with the knowledge that a thousand feet away eight world leaders are meeting, but we can see more of the action if we leave campus and watch at the convention center.

Nevertheless, seeing our school in the limelight evokes a special feeling of pride. The heavy doses of pomp and circumstance surrounding the arrival of the leaders of the most powerful economic nations took on a special meaning for many Rice students as the ceremony unfolded in the main academic quad. Granted, the architecture of the main buildings on campus does give Rice its own sense of majesty and stateliness, but the presence of such an influential group gave even the familiar buildings a special aura that only Rice students can fully appreciate. Rice was a debutante at its coming out party, making its first large-scale international appearance. During the playing of the national anthems, we were all sure it passed the test—with flying colors.

Even the visiting students who have loyalty to their own schools seem to share with those of us from Rice a sense of pride, just for being involved and being present, as student journalists, to have media access. Reporters at our "bureau"—the Thresher's first bureau ever—at the convention center yesterday enjoyed answering the phone "Thresher, George R. Brown Convention Center Bureau" and feeling stories to be typed. And the stress and strain of pulling all-nighters and converting what is a weekly paper during the school year into a daily paper for the summit is worth it when we see our newspaper distributed at the convention center, along with many other national and international papers.

Many Rice people—students, faculty, and staff—have gotten involved in the summit, and while there have been many inconveniences along the way, the exposure is invaluable. Ranked tenth in the nation among universities by U.S. News and World Report, Rice is the smallest school in the top ten, with only 2700 undergraduates. But despite the increased awareness about Rice, many people still say, "Rice who?" Even though this is the third major summit-type affair this summer, and so earth-shattering events or serious history-making decisions will likely be made, it's still our time to be in the limelight. And that makes us proud.

From the editors' desk...

Nyet to U.S.S.R. aid

Reform in the Soviet Union spotters, while other nations, having just shattered the yoke of communism, cry out for aid. No wonder President Bush rejects a multilateral aid package to the U.S.S.R.

The past eight months have seen Moscow float numerous economic reform proposals based on the free market. But so soon as one is unveiled, it is scrapped, for another is announced. The excuse offered is usually the Soviet people are not ready toward a market economic system.

And recent events, such as the panic buying which resulted from a declaration saying the price of bread would double in six weeks, seem to bear out that out. The Soviets have never had a market economy and possess an instinctive and irrational contempt for a system that elevates one group to a much higher standard-of-living but tosses others into squalor. On second thoughts, how would that be different from what's there now?

But the fact remains that Gorbachev has shown an unwillingness to walk the uncharted path which is the only way to reach prosperity. Every day his country's economic situation deteriorates, and every day the acceptance of the uncharted path which is the only way to reach prosperity. Every day his thought, how would that be different from what's there now?

However, history shows that aid not tied to reforms will be wasted. If anyone should benefit from the West in this era of the new democracies, the people's attitude toward a market economic system.

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Texas-size summit hype is bigger, but is it necessarily better?

by Shaila Dewan
Rice University

Yeah, Houston is famous for its bragodadillo and exaggeration. And yeah, Houston's hosting entourages of the world's most important. Very important this summer. But, let's face it: Houston is only a backdoor to the thousands who have gathered here for the S-word. And it's behaving like, well, like Warren Beatty showing Madonnas out of camera range. Houston goes to finishing school. I admit, if someone were saturating international airwaves with pictures of me, I'd be checking for interdental spinach and wielding with pictures of me, I'd be checking for interdental spinach and wielding

How hot are we? Is Houston, the major papers are helping Mayor Kathy Whitmire's gang out. The Houston Chronicle's special summit coverage included four sections on how diverse, cultural, friendly, artsy, upwardly mobile, and above all "hot" Houston is. The most negative head was probably "Sorry, Gilly's is gone," referring to a famous, now out-of-business downtown music ban- nana venue.

They lost our bats. But when papers such as the New York Times and the Washington Post are using phrases such as "bally-hoo" and "city touts itself," one might say that Houston Proud has become amusingly, Houston Loud. And the louder we are, the less any- one, especially journalists, is fooled. After all, isn't anyone going to think that all of Houston looks like West Uni- versity with skyscrapers?

There is, in fact, still certain hard facts involved here, the main one being that Houston is the fourth largest city in America. And like every major city, it has major, major prob- lems. We have a surplus of homeless people and not enough medical care, too much pollution and too little education, a proposed toxic dump near our water supply and a large and increasing number of Vietnamese. Well, okay. So nobody's perfect.

The giveaway. How do we know Houston is not just hosting the S-word for its health? The giveaway, when it comes right down to it, is the giveaways. Reporters are beginning to wonder how they'll get back on the trail of matters. "Honey, I'm home!" they'll shout as they fill their Economic Summit basket at the downtown personal City of Houston coasters. "Do you know, dear? Houston is a wonderful cultural and eco- nomic center. They gave me a "Toovel to Go," it's packaged under 14 tons of pressure. I think we should mortgage our house and build a high-tech industrial complex there. But, you know, I thought I bought you this one commen- morative coin.

I have to admit, though, that Rice is quite a crowd. It's very much the same crowd as at any other of these summits. People there are going to look at my resume and say "Rice? Well bully for you."

The bottom line. Plain and simple, Houston just isn't getting the picture. When faced with our particu- lar brand of overload, the media is glancing at its watch and saying, "Look. The location of this event is a cosmic accident. We are here to help, to invite you anywhere for the complimentary Bayou Belle dinner cruise."

I wish Houstonians would remember it is Texans that are sup- posed to wear boots, not lick them.

Europe faces uncertain future, despite changes

by Galey Stokes

The question people ask me most often is what is happening to the East German bloc. I keep saying that it is hard to avoid the question by saying that politicians only predict the past, not the future. But after a while one does come up with something. I do not fear the unification of Germany to the extent many seem to. Of course, a united Germany will be the great- est economic power in Europe, but the Federal Republic already is. Of course it will penetrate economically into Eastern Europe, but that is pre- cisely what is required for those countries to develop. This is not 1870, 1914, or 1939—Germany is now part of an entire European entity, the European Community, which forms a fundamental struc- tural precondition of its prosperity and at the same time provides a strong incentive to good interna- tional behavior. In addition, unlike

many other countries of Europe, including most of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and Austria, the Germans have confronted their past publicly and less than 50 years. Of course something unex- pected can happen, and German politics is not all swords and light. But if Germany does take a nasty turn it will have to understand thoroughly of German- ers of their own past.

We can contrast this with the situa- tion in Russia (not the Soviet Union, but Russia). There, no strong middle class provides the potential backing for moderate politics, no experience with other democracies or econo- mies provide an incentive to good international behavior. If, as might well already be happening in some of the major cities, the Communist party starts to disintegrate in the face of electoral defeats and grass roots demonstration campaigns. I can envision a political vacuum in which xenophobic leaders basing their ideas on the ideal of In- Russia (the title of a recently published anti-Semitic tract by the Russians) could come to power. If that were to happen, we could have a strong but democratic Germany facing a de- fensive, politically inexperienced, economically weak, neo fas- cist state in Russia, the result of the regime having broken away. Most thinking Russians would find this an extreme scenario, especially if they see the showing of Paminat in the recent elec- tions, but my basic point is that if we

are looking for a place for a scary scenario to come of Germany, it isn't that think that place is likely to be a united Germany.

I am very optimistic in Central Europe. The new leadership there is vastly superior to the old, and it has the moral authority with the public to implement great changes. In the end these changes will not be produced primarily by governments, but by millions of individuals choices that are what they are given the chance to do so.

As long as governments will per- mit these choices, Poland, Czechoslo-vakia, and Hungary will probably find a place of some kind in the Euro- pean Community well before the end of the decade. This would have the added beneficial effect of further linking the larger structure of Central Europe and Europe in general.

I am very optimistic for Southeast Europe. The recent brus- tales in Romania and the victory of Communism is not enough to give much hope that these two countries will find a place to Euro- pean Community. They do not give much hope that these two countries will find a place to Euro- pean Community. They do not give much hope that these two countries will find a place to Euro-
Post Cold War era demands new type of economic communication

by Brian Hecht
Harvard University

This week, the eight world leaders attending the meeting of industrialized nations will negotiate, mediate and perhaps even journey through a week of Texas-style summity. Other world leaders will not be so lucky. What happened last year in Paris and the like round-out agreements on aid to the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, the leaders of those faltering nations are notably absent. Poor Gorbachev, weary from a week of fighting for his political life at the Communist Party meeting, is probably sitting in his living room waiting for the summit on CNN like the rest of us.

And although political gurus are predicting that Gorbachev might magically make the invitation list next year, there remains little hope that others of important nations such as Czechoslovakia, India, Pakistan and Australia will be noticeably absent.

Experts are touting this year's economic summit as the first post-Cold War meeting of the industrialized powers. But although the 1990 festivities may transcend the Cold War in content, its very format is uniquely reminiscent of that very tiring past.

The concept of the "summit" is a curious creation of the Cold War. The superpower summit in its current form evolved over the past few decades as a diplomatic alternative to the noncommunication which plagued the international community.

For years and years, the world looked on helplessly as the Soviet and American leaders occasionally took it upon themselves to speak to each other, usually producing only a token cultural or trade agreement.

Residing under the leadership of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, the leaders of those faltering nations are notably absent. Poor Gorbachev, weary from a week of fighting for his political life at the Communist Party meeting, is probably sitting in his living room waiting for the summit on CNN like the rest of us.

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For years and years, the world looked on helplessly as the Soviet and American leaders occasionally took it upon themselves to speak to each other, usually producing only a token cultural or trade agreement.

Anti-nuclear activists crossed their fingers each time the leaders spoke, their hopes stilled by an international climate that simply would not allow any significant talk of disarmament.

Most meaningful international communication was conducted on only a limited multilateral basis between the superpowers and their respective allies.

NATO and the Warsaw Pact were active participants in discussions which could shape the political landscape for years to come. It is true that as the numbers of industrialized Western nations increase, the G-7 countries bear a unique economic burden, particularly in ever-changing Europe.

But what can be gained by excluding nations by including, involved nations from discussions of their own fate?

Perhaps the seven world leaders may decide the fate of Eastern Europe or the Third World is economic elitism at its worst.

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Rice professor analyzes benefits, disadvantages to style of teaching in undergraduate science courses

by J. Dennis Huston

A good many of the very best students I teach in my English classes begin college planning to be scientists, engineers, or doctors. Relatively quickly, though, these students find the study of science deeply unsatisfying and unusually difficult. Perhaps they feel this way because, finally, they lack the talent to do really good work in science.

But nothing in their SAT scores or previous performance in school suggests this fact. And sometimes nothing in their college grades, even in science courses, suggests it either.

Which is why I wonder if many of the students who drop out of science do so for a reason which has less to do with their lack of talent than with the basically impersonal way in which they are asked to learn science.

Consider, for example, the paradigm for the introductory science which now obtains in most colleges and universities in this country.

In these courses students are herded in large numbers into a "Lecture Hall," where a professor lectures to them, and they take copious notes, trying desperately to capture both the essence and the particulars of this professor's words. Often the professor will cover a blackboard — with formulas that many of the students do not understand. But these students, writing as fast as they can, diligently copy down the formulas in the hope that they will be able to understand them in lectures after they have studied them or after one of their fellow students has explained them. Almost no one would think to interrupt the lecturer to ask a question. For such a question might reveal the student's inadequacies in front of his peers; after all, diligently recording the lecturer's words, seems to understand.

Moreover, the lecturer usually sends clear signals to the effect that he or she cannot stop for questions: there is too much material to cover, too much for all of them to learn, for the lecturer or to prepare for the lecture section.

And so it goes in most introductory science courses — a class that produces a model of efficiency: one lecturer to instruct hundreds of students, thus freeing other professors while reaffirming their vows of allegiance to their disciplines.

But now, the ideological barriers which for years prevented true multilateral communication are almost gone. The two, three, or even seven-way "summit" as a means of conducting foreign policy is a relic of the Cold War mentality that world leaders are now so eager to renounce.

There seems to be no remaining logic for including only seven nations in discussions which could shape the political landscape for years to come. It is true that as the numbers of industrialized Western nations increase, the G-7 countries bear a unique economic burden, particularly in ever-changing Europe.

But what can be gained by excluding nations from discussions of their own fate?

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OPENING CEREMONIES

The G-7 leaders arrive at Rice University. From the left: Giulio Andreotti, Prime Minister of Italy; Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of West Germany; Francois Mitterrand, President of France; George Bush, President of the United States; Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of Britain; Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, and Toshiki Kaifu, Prime Minister of Japan.

1990 ECONOMIC SUMMIT

Bush cautions Thatcher about the nasty American air vents.

CLASS PHOTO

Jacques Delors, President of the European Community, Andreotti and Kohl contemplate the finer arts of summity.

The lady's not for turning?
Summit's final communiqué in limbo on trade, aid environment

by Jonathan Marshall

Important questions were left unanswered yesterday in the draft text of the final communiqué of the 1990 Economic Summit of Industrialized Nations. Far from having been written and approved at the summit itself, as some have suggested, it is now clear that the communiqué was the subject of close debate in the opening plenary sessions.

Press briefings yesterday confirmed, however, that the communiqué will deal with three principal topics: aid to the Soviet Union, trade, and the environment.

The teams of “sherpas,” governmental officials charged with drafting the communiqué, have been working through the night to complete the final draft. This draft will be subject today to last-minute amendments and final approval by the heads of government. The final communiqué will be read to the world press tomorrow morning at the White House.

Press briefings yesterday, in fact, suggested that any changes to the document are likely to be cosmetic, and that the basic content will remain intact.

By Brian Hecht

Harvard University

When Bush administration officials acknowledged Monday that the United States will not agree to provide joint economic assistance to the Soviet Union, they knew they would meet with opposition from some of the leaders of the Western nations.

Some European participants are expected to express opposition to the Bush administration’s package fervently.

A subsidy reduction proposal, which calls for a 10-year decrease in agricultural subsidies, has been made by Robert Miller

University of Miami

The good news is that nothing funny happened during the first day of the 1990 Economic Summit of Industrialized Nations.

Or is that bad news?

"I’m not laughing at anything now," said Frank Solot, a security service agent from the White House Brown Convention Center dressed in the George R. Brown Convention Center’s enormous exhibit floor. A large plastic garbage can, catching water from a leaky roof, had sat with a small sign taped to it reading “Lake Houston - No Swimming.”

"No one would claim responsibility for it.

Several people, however, were not afraid to take advantage of the summit and decided to poke fun at world leaders and make a political statement. Claude Jones and Joe Jennings, could be seen most of the day Monday at the entrance of Brown Convention Center dressed up as President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and waving small signs.

Along with the presidential imposters, "Miss Broccoli" could be seen wandering up and down the sidewalk passing out samples of the vegetable and urging "broccoli understanding." The trio was apparently playing to a few journalists, though. No one was reported having found them terribly funny.

However, one journalist, who wished to remain anonymous, did relate the most recent joke circulating among the press corps.

"It goes like this: ‘Hey George, read my finger!’ he said.

The third main topic, the environment, is probably the least contentious. The leaders have agreed that the seven nations "might be able to achieve a consensus" on this issue. Several issues have risen to the top of the agenda this year, the environment has not been given the highest priority in summit discussions and was not discussed on the official agenda. But a number of environmentalists would like to see more discussion of the issue.

The U.S. is prepared to lay all of its cards on the table, to discuss the future of trade, aid to the Soviet Union, and the environment. However, the United States is unlikely to agree to the GATT round of discussions, which is expected to begin in December.

The Bush administration, which has been facing criticism from both the European nations and the American public, has been seeking to improve its image. The administration has been trying to hammer out a compromise on subsidies, which are resistant to American demands.

The Bush administration’s stance indicates that America still clings to a Cold War ideology. If Gorbachev were doing something fundamentally wrong, I could see aid being an important issue," said Dr. James Gibson, professor of Soviet foreign policy at the University of Houston. "But Gorbachev is doing so much fundamentally right that I do not see any reason for such punishment."
Summit

From Page 1

a promise of aid, but the offer of a dialogue on a closer connection of the Soviet Union to the Industrialized Countries.

The final conclusion on the first day is a confirmation of the opinion that summits are not the places to make breathtaking decisions. But the heads still have time to show me if I am wrong in this opinion.

—Boris Maeuer, University of Bonn

Great Britain

The Brits at the summit have now settled in, relaxed and began to in- sult the French, which is a sure sign that they feel at home. Officials at yesterday's British press briefings were disgusted when they heard the times of French briefings, which clashed with theirs. "Bloody French have done it again," muttered one darkly. "They're al- ways trying to spike our guns."

John Major, the British Chancel- lor of the Exchequer, made a speech Friday criticizing Jacques Delors' plan for European economic union. Yesterday morning they had a long working breakfast together. Delors is French, but Major insisted there was "no confrontational aspect" to the discussions. Nobody believed him, of course.

In a spirit of fairness, however, the British delegation has agreed to distribute the insults more evenly. Bernard Ingham, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's personal press secretary, got the ball rolling with a sly dig at the Germans. He con- cluded an answer with, ... and this is particularly true now that West Ger- many has absorbed—sorry, 'unified with'—the G.D.R.' Appreciative chicklets all around at that one.

But one thing is certain: even the Brits, who have a deep xenophobic talents, will not insult the Yanks. That "special relationship" has been well and happily maintained by the Houston hospitality and the George R. Brown Convention Center cheeseballs.

—Jonathan Marshall, Oxford Uni- versity

Japan

The United States wouldn't like Japan to give economic aid to the Soviet Union. On this point, Japan agrees with America. The other day Taro Nakayama, the Japanese Minis- ter for Foreign Affairs, told a Japa- nese newspaper that his country would not spend money for the aid to the Soviet Union unless the Four North Islands come back to Japan.

Some Japanese think Japan should use a lot of economic aid to get the Four North Islands peace- fully. Such an approach toward the U.S.S.R. could not only contribute to peace in the world but also cause much of Japan's political, economic and military dependence on the United States to decline.

But American feels that such a Japanese approach to the Soviets could possibly cause Japan to threaten America in the future, if Japan tries to keep Japan from giving economic aid to the Soviets rapidly. So it may be impossible for Japan to come out from under "the umbrella of America" in the near fu- ture.

—Kyota Eguchi, The University of Tokyo

Propose

Yesterday, for one hour, the American President George Bush met the French chancell, Francois Mitter- and's. Their main disagreement con- cerned what kind of aid must be provided to Soviet Union. Should Western countries trust Mikhail Gorbachev and set up a huge loan project with the Soviet government?

This question is not new. How- ever, the answer is essential. Accord- ing to the French delegation, there is no doubt that Western nations have to commit to supporting perestroika. Thanks to the Soviet leader, many things have changed so far.

Since March, 1986, the opportu- nity to set up a new, prosperous era has been growing. Toward that pur- pose, Western countries must make an effort, otherwise, Gorbachev will probably be dismissed. In the help asked by Gorbachev a Communist strategy to dupe the western countries? Last year's events showed it's not. The Marxis- Lionist failure is obvious and can't be avoided. As a Soviet "Pandora's box" Italy

Among the problems to be talked about during the summit, a hot one—or as the United States and European Economic Commu- nity countries have totally opposite positions—is farm subsidies. The delegations have expressed optimistic views on the progress of the summit talks—but that Western democracies have little threat of war, and free trade systems are being accepted worldwide—at least concerning every issue but agriculture.

The Americans are strongly con- vinced that subsidies must be elimi- nated; they are considered to be the cause of the substantial trade violation. On the other side of the argument, Italy, as well as the whole European Commission, is more likely to consider the possibility of a compromise, but talks are not likely to be finished until next December, at GATT's deadline.

—Isabelle LkuiUier, University of Luigi Bocconi

Canada

On Monday, Canada laid out its priorities for the remaining discussions. At the top of the list was making a positive response to the request for "sustained economic dialogue." The last item cited by External Af- fairs Minister Joe Clark was reassuring developing nations that the focus on Eastern Europe would not impact aid to those countries.

In the ever political world of inter- national relations, this is not an easy task. As Salim Lone, editor of the United Nations Africa Recovery publication pointed out in yesterday's Globe Mail, good intentions are not enough. The economic crisis in Africa is chronic.

Unlike Eastern Europe, where a short-term infusion of cash may aid the setup of new economies, Africa needs ongoing support. To ensure the stability of African economies, the West must offer aid with little return. This is a far less politically attractive policy than aid to Eastern Europe, but it was presented a few years ago.

Thanks to the Soviet leader, many things have changed so far.

—Gerald Lawless, University of Phoenix

United States

One world development increas- ingly obvious at the summit makes Americans uncomfortable. There is growing evidence that our country is out-of-step with the other large democracies on a number of issues and, what's more, is no longer such an economic power that it wields more clout than West Germany and Japan at these annual affairs.

Hence, it may be that the United States is becoming a follower rather than a leader on the world economic scene. A model for this is President Bush's acquiescence last month to the agreement limiting the use of ozone-damaging chlorofluorocar- bons—an agreement the President had initially opposed.

Will the summit environmental discussions bear any evidence that Bush is softening on his resistance to the agreement to stabilize the emis- sions of gases which cause the "greenhouse effect"? None in the G- 7? The United States opposes this agreement.

—Michael Raphael, Rice University

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Rich versus poor underlies political analysis of 1980s

The Politics of Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath, Kevin Phillips predicts that America is about to change from an era of conservative politics to a more liberal one.

Sound like a yawner? After all, that prediction has already been issued by professional pundits, such as the eminent historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in The Cycles of American History and the Harvard political economist Robert B. Reich in The Resurgent Liberal. And in any case, when a Republican president starts going around telling people he wants "education" and "environment" before his name, most people don't need political experts to inform them that a bit of L-word action might be creeping into the political picture.

But two main things make Phillips' book unusual. First, Phillips is one of the most powerful Republican consultants in the nation. His 1968 book, The Emerging Conservative, became a Republican bible of sorts. Hence, his present savage criticism of what he calls "a second Gilded Age" has that special about-face credibility no one's seen since Reagan's budget director David Stockman suddenly admitted that supply-side economics was a sham.

Secondly, the book focuses on the enormous division of wealth that has occurred in the last decade, to the point where at mid-decade the richest .5 percent of Americans owned 26.5 percent of the country's wealth. "We are talking about a major transformation," writes Phillips. "Not only did the concentration of wealth intensify, but the sums involved took a megaleap."

This is the stuff, Phillips believes, of which American political revolutions are made. His statistical evidence for the 1980s massive redistribution of wealth to the rich is exhaustive and convincing. He uses charts and tables to bolster his text better than any book of the political genre I have seen.

The mechanisms of redistribution to the wealthy are uncontestable: tax cuts that delivered income to the rich; cuts in federal spending for the poor; government reliance on the regressive social security tax to fund the budget; deficit-driven interest rates which benefitted the wealthy; atmospheric CEO salaries and "golden parachutes"; deregulation that opened doors for executive greed at taxpayer expense; and a redistributive "tight money" policy at the federal reserve.

But Phillips' argument that public tolerance for such pronouncements has reached a breaking point is more difficult to support. After cautioning that "historical parallels are dangerous," Phillips proceeds to spend large chunks of his book making arguments by historical parallel. There is the uneven division of wealth from other Republican "heyday periods" such as the Gilded Age and the Roaring Twenties led to public backlashes and new eras of egalitarian politics; the 80s division of wealth will too.

This historical argument is convincing since so many aspects of American government (large scale social spending, monetarist economics, a global economy) create a different situation today from any other time in the past. This is not to say that Phillips is wrong, but that his case for an unfair division of wealth—and, further, a corresponding American decline in productivity, as a result, and competitiveness—is much better supported than are his future predictions on what will happen to the American electorate in the Reagan aftermath.

Phillips uses Reagan's policies to jump to a discussion, backed with some shocking statistics, that shows America's economic decline during the past decade. A cautious prognosticator, Phillips chooses his words carefully so as to imply the catastrophic without explicitly predicting it. His main chart of historical comparisons links the depression of 1893 and the Great Depression with something called "relevant events of the 1990s." It sounds like quite an ominous comparison.

In fact, an assumption that serious damage has been done to American prosperity is that the predictions from Phillips' 1968 book came true, it only meant the political tide turned toward Republicans and conservatives after the liberal 1960s. If his 1990 crystal ball is correct, and of course it is, the result will not be simply political victories for Democrats and liberals. It will be losses for all Americans after a decade that has fundamentally harmed our country.