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WASHINGTON, May 12 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Vice President Gore today announced a five-point plan to significantly increase the safety of the nation's food supply.

The plan sets forth steps the administration will take this year to strengthen food safety, and details how we will use $43.2 million in new funds the president has requested in his fiscal year 1998 budget.

``When children reach for a piece of food, parents deserve to have peace of mind,'' said the vice president, who heads the National Performance Review to make government work better and cost less. ``This administration is using the most modern science and a common-sense approach to increase the safety of our nation's food supply and protect the public health.''

The plan, ``Food Safety From Farm to Table,'' is outlined in a report presented to the vice president today by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala, Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Dan Glickman and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Carol M. Browner. The president requested the report in January. It calls for improved inspections, public education and greater use of the latest science to dramatically reduce foodborne illness. It calls for stricter safety precautions for fruit and vegetable juices, improved seafood inspections and increased investment in research, risk assessment and surveillance.

In his January 25 radio address, the president announced he was requesting $43.2 million for food safety in his FY 1998 budget and requested a report detailing recommendations on ways to further improve food safety. The USDA and Department of Health and Human Services, and the EPA, working with state and local officials, the food industry, scientists, consumer and producer groups, developed the report.

Today's actions build on previous administration steps to modernize the nation's food safety programs, first proposed by the vice president's National Performance Review. Specifically, the National Performance Review encouraged the widespread adoption of preventive controls to food safety and the implementation of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems.

A key element of the administration's food safety efforts has been the HACCP approach that requires the food industry to use the most modern science to identify sources of potential contamination in food production and transportation and then put in place preventive measures. Already required by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for seafood and by USDA for meat and poultry, FDA will propose preventive measures, including HACCP, for the manufacture of fruit and vegetable juice products, and USDA will propose HACCP and other appropriate regulatory and non-regulatory options for egg products.

In addition to moving toward a science-based, preventive approach to food safety, the administration continues to improve the effectiveness of food safety inspections. Specifically, the additional funds requested for FY 1998 will allow the FDA to add inspectors to implement seafood HACCP and to expand its program to develop additional mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) with United States trading partners, ensuring that imported foods are produced and manufactured under systems that offer comparable safety measures to those used in the United States. With the new funds, FDA will also be able to provide technical assistance to foreign countries on safe growing and handling practices.

The administration already is taking steps to put in place the new National Early Warning System President Clinton announced in January to track and combat outbreaks of foodborne illness. This fiscal year, two new FoodNet sentinel sites were added in New York and Maryland. With funds requested for the upcoming fiscal year, an eighth site will open. This surveillance system is supported by the CDC, FDA and USDA, working with state authorities. New funds included in the FY 1998 budget will also allow these sites to update technology and build a ``fingerprinting'' database of bacterial DNA. This will enable food safety experts to clear any geographic hurdle to their work by having a national resource that can help them quickly identify contaminated foods that are the sources of foodborne illness.

Under the administration's plan, work will start immediately on a national public education campaign on safe food handling. Today, an unprecedented public-private partnership was established among government agencies and industry and consumer groups to develop a food safety education campaign aimed at consumers.

Research to develop quick, reliable scientific methods for detecting contamination -- like the Hepatitis A virus and cyclospora -- will ensure that public health agencies have the necessary tools to prevent and control outbreaks of foodborne illnesses. The latest research will also explore how pathogens become resistant to traditional food preservation techniques such as heat and refrigeration, and will support new pathogen control methods.

Also under the new initiative, EPA, FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will collaborate with state and local health departments on research to help health officials better predict and control outbreaks of waterborne microbial contaminants such as crypto sporidium.

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Elizabeth ... ERIC OLSEN Key I J

Headed for farms: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points.
It's inevitable that HACCP-type programs, which put the focus on controlling production processes, not end products, will hit farmers.
Meat and poultry packing & processing industries will ensure it.
They're already headed down the HACCP path themselves...led there by gov't regs as well as by consumer concern about potential contaminants.
The trend will ripple through agriculture. As HACCP is adopted by packers & processors, on-farm practices will also get greater scrutiny.

Packers will urge producers to adopt voluntary quality controls.
It's a way of protecting their own investment in food safety. Slaughter plants under pressure to meet new pathogen-elimination targets are hiring HACCP teams and installing new equipment. If pathogen counts don't fall, plants will look down the supply line, buy more selectively. Some packers may even consider setting up their own production facilities.
Producers will need to give packers more data on their animals... pesticide, chemical and antibiotic exposures, medical histories and more.

Consumer concerns will also drive the farm-level safety trend. Growing public alarm about foodborne pathogens and chemical residues give producers an incentive to implement voluntary HACCP-based systems.
They'll be needed to keep the U.S. competitive in world markets. New Zealand, the European Union, Canada and Australia are all committed to HACCP-based programs, working on them. Denmark already has a system for tracking animals from farm to slaughter...fully unified from A to Z.

Uncle Sam won't mandate HACCP for farms. It's a political no-no. Industry doesn't yet have the capability to absolutely control pathogens before slaughter, so gov't won't push for comply-or-else farm regulations.
But the gov't will give producers guidance. Ag Dep't is looking for suggestions on practical, economical preharvest activities that work. It will provide specific advice to farmers on ways to avoid contamination of the pork, poultry, nonfed beef and lamb that they send to processors.

Meanwhile, the President's food safety initiative is in limbo. Earlier hoopla surrounding announcement of the big multi-agency project has fizzled, and details are sketchy. They've never been fleshed out.
Uncertainty has gripped key gov't offices in charge of the plan. Seven food safety areas have been targeted for improvement under the plan: Bioscience research, early-warning systems, inspection systems, education, risk assessment, strategic planning and interagency gov't coordination. White House, gov't agencies are anxious to move, want $43 million. But...

Congress is keeping mum about funds, has offered no assurances. So Ag Dep't, the Food & Drug Adm., the Centers for Disease Control and EPA have backed off, put little meat on the bones of a draft released in Feb.
Gov't agencies don't want to waste resources. What's the point, they ask, if lawmakers don't follow through? Their hopes of raising funds from the private sector are also in idle. Not much interest in that.

Yours very truly,

The Kiplinger Editors

THE KIPLINGER WASHINGTON EDITORS

April 25, 1997

TAINTED BY POLITICKING?

BY MARGARET KRIZ

In early 1993, two children died and hundreds of others in the Pacific Northwest became ill after eating Jack in the Box restaurant hamburgers contaminated with a deadly *E. coli* virus. Because the poisoning occurred during President Clinton's first days in office, food safety suddenly became a White House priority.

FOOD SAFETY

Eager to prevent similar outbreaks, the Clinton Administration took steps to begin overhauling the slow, unresponsive federal food-safety bureaucracy. It sought to restructure the Agriculture Department's food-safety program and refocus the national food-inspection system.

The food-safety concern isn't solely a matter of appearances. Federal regulators say contaminated food kills as many as 9,000 Americans every year and sickens nearly 33 million others.

Now the White House is poised to unveil the details of another food-safety initiative, this one announced by Clinton in a January radio address. The $43 million initiative would expand a rudimentary nationwide early-warning system for foodborne illnesses and enhance seafood inspections.

But the money Clinton requested for that program would be directed to several federal agencies that handle food-safety issues, a move that citizens groups charge would dilute the usefulness of the proposals. "It's a patchwork of good ideas for a patchwork of food-safety programs," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, director of food safety at the private Center for Science in the Public Interest.

The President's push could also be weakened by top-level departures from the Administration—chiefly Food and Drug Administration (FDA) commissioner David A. Kessler and the Agriculture Department's Food Safety and Inspection Service administrator, Michael R. Taylor. Kessler and Taylor, both widely credited with keeping the White House focused on food-inspection programs, haven't been replaced.

Some activists, as well as some former federal regulators, say more-ambitious steps are needed to prevent future food-safety problems. They want Congress to create an independent food-safety agency that would replace today's piecemeal system. Jurisdiction over the nation's food supply is shared by the Agriculture Department, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Environmental Protection Agency and the FDA, among other agencies.

"Without that kind of real reform, we're going to be left with agencies that are just acting as recall management agencies, not protecting the food supply," DeWaal said. "That's not good enough."

But the Administration has been lukewarm about merging federal food-safety programs. In the aftermath of the hamburger contamination, Vice President Al Gore suggested that the FDA take on all federal food-safety duties. But that proposal went nowhere. Regulators are now debating whether to include a similar proposal in their coming report on Clinton's January food-safety initiative.

Industry executives oppose the push for a new umbrella agency for food safety, arguing that the congressional committees that now oversee the FDA and Agriculture would resist giving up their jurisdiction. "We'd rather put our energy into improving the coordination between the agencies," said Rhona Applebaum, an executive vice president of the National Food Processors Association.

In any event, some Administration officials concede that their efforts to improve the food-safety system have produced mixed results. For example, most of the specialists who could be assigned to food

DNC DONOR: STILL JOB HUNTING

Money may buy coffee with the President, a spin on Air Force One, even a slumber party in the Lincoln Bedroom, but it doesn't always help fat-cat donors win Administration jobs.

Take the case of San Francisco businessman Robert Earl Dornbush. Back in 1992, Democratic National Committee (DNC) officials listed him as a "must-consider" for no fewer than 13 Administration posts, ranging from undersecretary for land management in the Interior Department, president of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, administrator of the Small Business Administration, and deputy U.S. trade representative. In the end, Dornbush didn't get any job.

But it wasn't for lack of trying. Documents recently made public by the White House show that Dornbush was one of 63 "leading national fund raisers" the DNC recommended for high-level appointments. About a third eventually landed jobs, including Erskine B. Bowles, now White House chief of staff; Molly M. Raiser, now U.S. chief of protocol; and Thomas L. Siebert, ambassador to Sweden.

DNC officials said they could not estimate how much money Dornbush raised. He personally gave the DNC $20,000 in the 1991-92 election cycle, according to Federal Election Commission (FEC) records.

But that's small potatoes, compared with what his family has contributed.

From 1989-94, Atlanta businessman Kirk Terry Dornbush Sr., Robert Dornbush's older brother, gave Democratic candidates and party committees $80,900, while members of his immediate family gave $256,757, according to FEC documents.

While Kirk Dornbush's name never appears on any must-consider list, he was tapped to fill the long-vacant post of ambassador to the Netherlands. Though eventually confirmed, his nomination was held up for months amid questions about his qualifications and his large campaign contributions.

The Dornbushes continue to be major donors. FEC documents show that since 1995, Kirk Dornbush has given Democrats and party committees $9,730, while other family members have given $90,000.

Robert and Kirk Dornbush are the former owners of the Hipolex Corp., an Atlanta plastic bag manufacturing firm, which they sold in 1988.

—**Annys Shin**

FROM THE K STREET CORRIDOR

Energy companies scrambling for an edge in the debate over electricity deregulation poured almost $12 million into the coffers of Democratic and Republican candidates and parties during the 1996 election cycle, according to an April 24 report released by the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics. Republicans gained the vast majority of the haul, getting more than $8 million from the utility, nuclear power, natural gas and alternative-energy companies.

Enron Corp. was by far the biggest donor. The Texas-based natural gas giant and its executives gave $1.16 million, including $687,000 in "soft money" to the political parties, $172,000 from the company's political action committee (PAC) and $250,000 in contributions from Enron officials. Eighty per cent of the money went to Republicans, who tend to be more sympathetic to Enron chief executive Kenneth Lay's aggressive crusade for quick passage of legislation to allow nonutility companies to sell electricity directly to businesses and households.

The runner-up among the top energy company contributors was the Action Committee for Rural Electrification (the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's PAC), which gave $758,000 in political action money and soft-money contributions. The rural co-ops want to slow down the deregulation process. The other top contributors were Entergy Corp., $727,000; the Southern Co., $697,000; and Edison International, $470,000. —**Margaret Kriz**

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Journalists may not be fazed by early deadlines, low salaries or barking politicians. But nothing gives them the jitters like the prospect of a new owner.

"Any time you know you're for sale, you'll be nervous," said Eric Effron, publisher and editor of *Legal Times*. The 19-year-old weekly was put up for sale in February.

"The status quo has been good for us. People don't think it makes sense to bail out until we find out what's going to happen," Effron added. "We're more or less taking a wait-and-see kind of attitude."

Several blocks away, reporters in the Washington bureaus of *The Kansas City Star* and the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* are getting their bearings after the April 4 sale of their papers to the Miami-based Knight-Ridder Inc. Knight-Ridder, which owns the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *Detroit Free Press*, paid Walt Disney Co. $1.65 billion for the two dailies and two smaller papers in Illinois and Pennsylvania.

The sale is the end of the road for the two Washington bureaus, which will be folded into the Knight-Ridder office a few floors below in the National Press Building. The *Star's* three-person operation will soon shrink to two, with the return of a reporter to Kansas City. The personnel change was in the works before the sale of the paper. The *Star-Telegram's* three-person team will stay intact—at least for now, said bureau chief Ron Hutcheson.

Hutcheson and the *Star's* bureau chief, James Kuhnhenn, will drop their titles and some assignment duties—a move that has hidden advantages.

"No more performance reviews," Hutcheson said. "My mail will go down considerably, and my in-box will be smaller," Kuhnhenn added. Both will report to Knight-Ridder Washington bureau chief Gary Blonston.

Editors in the home offices will continue to do most of the editing, with stories headed for Knight-Ridder's national news wire getting an extra read by wire editors, Hutcheson said. No beat changes are expected at either paper.

If the reporters seem to be taking things in stride, public perception is another matter. "People think we've been swallowed up by a big chain and wonder what that means," said Kuhnhenn, who has found himself having to explain that the difference to readers will be negligible. —**Annys Shin**

Will food safety be a red-meat issue?

safety are at the Agriculture Department, which Congress tends to favor, not at the FDA, which has tangled with the Republicans on Capitol Hill over tobacco and drug approval issues. As a consequence, Agriculture Department inspectors maintain nearly daily contact with food processors; FDA agents may not visit the same plant twice in 10 years.

To make up for that gap, FDA regulators have begun limiting their spot inspections and are requiring food suppliers to maintain records that, regulators say, will help them track future outbreaks of food contamination.

Experts say keeping food contamination-free is getting more difficult because of new trade agreements that have increased the amount and kinds of food being imported into the United States from countries with less stringent safety controls. Americans are also eating fewer processed foods and more fresh fruits and vegetables, which are more likely to carry pathogens. And they're eating more meals in restaurants, which might or might not be careful about the freshness and preparation of food. ■

Threat in Tainted Strawberries Has Eased, Officials Say

By LAWRENCE K. ALTMAN

Further investigation of the outbreak of hepatitis A infection from frozen strawberries among schoolchildren has eased concern about the extent of the health threat posed by strawberries shipped from the same lots for use in restaurants and homes, Federal health officials said last night.

But there is still the mystery of how the strawberries became contaminated with the hepatitis A virus. Strawberries from lots implicated in Michigan — where 163 children and teachers developed the liver infection after eating the tainted fruit since early March — were also sent to five other states as part of the Federal school lunch program: Arizona, California, Georgia, Iowa and Tennessee.

The strawberries used in the program account for about half of a shipment of one million pounds imported from Mexico and processed in California a year ago. The rest were shipped to a number of distributors for commercial sale, raising concern that the outbreak might have affected people other than those in the lunch program.

A substantial but unquantified portion of the commercial-use strawberries were included in such products as jams, jellies, preserves and fruit juices that were heated, said Dr. Michael Friedman, the Deputy Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration.

If standard techniques were used, the heating would have destroyed any hepatitis A virus present, Dr. Friedman added in an interview. He said his agency would check the records of the companies that used the strawberries to determine whether the standard heating temperatures were reached.

In Michigan, 10 new cases of hepatitis A linked to the tainted strawberries were reported yesterday, bringing the total number to 163 in the state, said Dr. Claire V. Broome, the Deputy Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in Atlanta. So far Michigan is the only state to report hepatitis A cases linked to the strawberries, Dr. Broome said.

The tainted strawberries were processed by the Andrew & Williamson Sales Company of San Diego, a unit of Epitope of Beaverton, Ore. Yesterday, Dr. Friedman said, health officials found that containers of Andrew & Williamson strawberries were still available to consumers in Michigan.

The food agency said its inspectors had found six-and-a-half-pound plastic tubs labeled as "AW Frozen Sliced Strawberries" at distributors, restaurants and retailers in the Detroit area. The lot numbers are 4141961, 6541963, 6541964, 7741962, 7741963, 31507612, 3150862, 3150863, 31508612, 7750862, 7750863, 7750864 and 7750865.

Health officials in Michigan and the five other states are urging that individuals notify local health departments if they believe that they have eaten strawberries from the suspect lots within the last 14 days. Health officials have recommended that such individuals be offered gamma globulin shots. The shots were given yesterday to 2,000 schoolchildren in California and Georgia.

The disease-control agency is also asking all states to make an extra effort to check previously reported cases of hepatitis A for a possible link to the tainted strawberries and to search for unreported cases.

"Who knows, there could be no more," Dr. Broome said. "Or it could be that we uncover something."

An average of 25,000 cases of hepatitis A are reported to the disease-control agency each year. But because many such cases are unreported or unrecognized, epidemiologists estimate that the actual number is 135,000.

Although gamma globulin is in short supply, apparently enough is available to cover the needs of the outbreak, Dr. Broome said. The amount of gamma globulin injected is determined by a patient's weight. Thus doses do not strictly correlate with numbers of patients receiving injections.

The disease control agency says that it is aware of a supply of at least 40,000 adult doses (which would cover many more children) and that about 13,000 of those doses were committed for use in the hepatitis outbreak, Dr. Broome said. But the agency is exploring contingencies in case more gamma globulin is needed, she added.

Only one other outbreak of hepatitis A has been traced to frozen strawberries, and it might shed some light on the current outbreak, in part because the contaminated frozen strawberries originated from one processing plant in California.

The earlier outbreak involved 28 cases in two states, at an elementary school in Georgia and an institution for the developmentally disabled in Montana. Tainted strawberries were included in a shortcake in Georgia and in desserts in Montana.

The lot number on empty containers from Georgia and Montana showed that the strawberries had been picked, processed, packed and frozen on the same day and shift at a single plant two years before the two outbreaks. The plant was not the same that is involved in the school lunch outbreak, Dr. Broome said.

Scientists with the disease control agency who investigated the outbreaks wrote in The Journal of Infectious Diseases in 1992 that "contamination probably did not occur from an infected worker within the processing plant but most likely from an infected picker."

National News Briefs

Pyramid Scheme Victims To Be Paid $41 Million

PHILADELPHIA, April 3 (AP) — Hundreds of organizations that profited from the bankrupt Foundation for New Era Philanthropy have agreed to pay $41 million to reimburse groups that lost money in the pyramid scheme, a bankruptcy trustee said on Wednesday.

The money comes on top of $30 million handed over by securities houses and a settlement of $15 million to $18 million expected to be reached with Prudential Securities.

Confederate Battle Flag Sought for License Plates

COLUMBIA, S.C., April 3 (AP) — Three months after refusing to remove the Confederate battle flag from the Statehouse dome, the South Carolina House voted today to put the banner on some license plates.

The Republican-controlled House voted 71 to 30 to let descendants of Confederate Civil War veterans have special license plates with the flag.

The bill now goes to the Senate, where Democrats are in control and where it is expected to be defeated.

Texas Executes Man In Killing of Youths

HUNTSVILLE, Texas, April 3 (AP) — An execution was carried out today on man who had been convicted in the 1982 torture killings of two teen-agers whose throats were slashed in a murder-for-hire scheme.

The inmate, David Spence, 40, was put to death by injection for the killings of Jill Montgomery, 17, and Kenneth Franks, 18. Mr. Spence and two accomplices were accused of killing the two and Raylene Rice, 17, on July 13, 1982.

Muneer Mohammad Deeb was convicted of planning the scheme and was sentenced to death but on a retrial was acquitted in 1993. He was accused of hiring Mr. Spence to kill a former girlfriend. Investigators suspected Mr. Spence of assuming that Miss Montgomery was Mr. Deeb's girlfriend, then killed the other two.

His accomplices, Anthony Melendez and his brother, Gilbert, pleaded guilty. Anthony Melendez was sentenced to 99 years in prison, and his brother received a life sentence.

The New York Times
FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 1997

F.C.C. Approves 2d Channels for High-Definition Television

WASHINGTON, April 3 — The Federal Communications Commission formally began the transition to digital, high-definition television today — a change-over that will, in time, affect virtually every American household.

Ending more than a year of bitter debate, the commission voted to lend each of the nation's nearly 1,600 television stations a second channel to broadcast digital versions of the programming that now appears only on conventional channels.

Ultimately, the introduction of digital television will render obsolete all 240 million television sets now in use across the country, since under the commission's order the television signals they now receive will no longer be broadcast after 2006. That means every consumer will most likely have to buy a new digital set by then to continue watching television. These sets are expected to go on sale late next year.

The commission today gave television stations a rapid schedule to begin broadcasting on their new digital channels.

Under the F.C.C. rule, 53 percent of households will be able to receive digital, high-definition programming on at least three television stations by the end of 1999.

Digital television will offer super-sharp, high-definition pictures on a new, wide screen, as well as six-channel, digital audio systems. Since the transmissions are digital, the new television sets will take on many of the characteristics of a computer, providing interactivity with broadcasters and cable operators, as well as a range of digital services that are only now being devised. For that reason, the computer industry plans to get into the television market and begin selling large-screen products they are calling PC theaters.

The first sets from television manufacturers will be large-screen home-theater models that cost at least $2,000. Many will be far more expensive. But manufacturers say that prices will fall rapidly as mass production begins; smaller, cheaper sets, they say, are expected to go on sale a year or two later. When the first of them go on sale next year, "HDTV sets will be the highly sought- after gift of the 1998 holiday season," Gary Shapiro, president of the Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Association, predicted.

At first, and perhaps for a good number of years, the new digital programming will be available primarily to people who receive their television signals on antennas — not cable hookups. Even though the Supreme Court ruled this week that cable companies are required to carry local broadcast-television channels, it is not at all clear that the ruling applies to the new digital channels.

About half the nation's television sets are connected to a cable system, and the F.C.C. intends to draft a rule answering this question sometime in the next year. In the meantime, cable companies are buying new digital systems that will allow them to offer a larger number of channels. But digital signals can be of any resolution, and little, if any, of the equipment the cable industry is purchasing is capable of transmitting high-definition programming. "Nobody's even talking about high definition," a cable-industry official said.

At the same time, direct-broadcast satellite dishes, now used at about eight million homes, already receive digital programming, and that can easily be shown on the new digital television sets. But the satellite industry has announced no plans to offer high-definition programming.

High-definition signals are more complex, so they require more bandwidth. As a result, satellite systems would have to reduce the number of channels they offer to provide high-definition programming.

Many broadcasters are more optimistic about high-definition television. "Eighteen months from now, we will bring network television in high definition to the nation," Michael Sherlock, an executive vice president of **NBC**, said tonight.

Robert C. Wright, NBC's president, said, "Broadcasters have been waiting for this day for 10 years."

With a monopoly on high-definition programming in the early years, at least, broadcasters think they may be able to take some customers away from cable companies and prompt them to hook antennas to their television sets.

"This new high-definition programming is so superior that this premise may hold true for broadcasters," said Eddie Fritts, president of the National Association of Broadcasters.

In the early years at least, the new television sets will be capable of receiving both digital signals and the conventional signals broadcast now.

The awarding of second channels to television broadcasters has been controversial. A variety of Government officials and consumer groups have called the plan an unconscionable giveaway, since in the last few years other industries have had to buy new space on the airwaves, spending billions of dollars.

As he was running for President last year, Senator Bob Dole called the plan "a big, big corporate welfare project." Even the F.C.C.'s chairman, Reed E. Hundt, who voted to approve the new rule today, once called the second-channel plan "the biggest single gift of public property to any industry in this century."

But broadcasters said they could not make the transition to digital broadcasting without the loan of a second channel, and their arguments held sway. Last summer the leaders of the Senate and the House, as well as President Clinton, directed the F.C.C. to go ahead with the second-channel awards. But to meet the opponents' concerns, the commission stipulated today that broadcasters would have to meet certain public-interest obligations in exchange for the second channels. The exact nature of those is to be determined later.

Even with the second-channel awards today, the commission held back Channels 60 to 69; none of the new digital channels were placed there. The Government plans to allow police and fire departments to use some of that spectrum; the rest will be auctioned soon.

When the transition period ends, in 2006, all the television stations now on the air are to be shut down. Those channels will be turned over to the Government and auctioned.

Mr. Hundt and another commissioner, Susan Ness, pushed the industry to get digital programming on the air more quickly than they had intended so the transition could be completed in eight years. And if the public likes digital television, "I don't think it will even be an issue any more in 2006," Mr. Hundt said. "It will be like saying we need to make provisions for people who have Betamax VCR's."

In any case, the Government may later choose to extend the transition period. At the end of the transition, digital-converter boxes will probably be put on the market for people who do not want to buy digital television sets.

But since the new sets and the programs on them will be wide, in the shape of a movie screen, if played through a converter onto a conventional TV, the picture would have to be "letter boxed," with wide black strips at the top and bottom of the screen.

The New York Times
FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 1997

153 Hepatitis Cases Are Traced To Imported Frozen Strawberries

A1

By LAWRENCE K. ALTMAN

WASHINGTON, April 2 — Strawberries imported from Mexico and processed in California have caused 153 cases of hepatitis A infection among schoolchildren and teachers in Michigan, Federal health officials said here today.

Thousands more children in five other states, Arizona, California, Georgia, Iowa and Tennessee, may also be at risk, and they are being advised to get gamma globulin shots to help prevent the viral liver ailment, which generally causes a mild illness, the health officials said at a news conference.

The officials sought to reassure the public about any concern over the risk of contracting hepatitis infection from strawberries, saying that no other clusters of cases had been found and that fresh strawberries were not implicated. The source of the contamination is not yet known.

The contaminated strawberries were served as part of the school lunch program conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture. Inclusion of foreign food products in the school lunch program is illegal. All suppliers are required to certify in writing that the product is domestic, and a false statement is a criminal offense, punishable by up to five years in prison and substantial fines.

The strawberries were frozen and processed by the Andrew & Williamson Sales Company of San Diego, health officials said. It is a division of Epitope of Beaverton, Ore. Soon after Federal officials said the Agriculture Department's inspector general would investigate how the company had sold foreign produce as domestic, Epitope said Andrew & Williamson had mislabeled some strawberries. Epitope also said it had accepted the resignation of Fred L. Williamson, the president and chief executive of Andrew & Williamson.

Andrew & Williamson received and processed at least one million pounds of strawberries on three days in 1996 — April 19, May 7 and 8, the

Continued on Page A18, Column 1

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Food and Drug Administration said, and less than half that amount went to the school lunch program.

Dr. Claire Broome, deputy director of the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said in an interview that in its weekly report the agency planned to advise state and local health officials to search for cases of hepatitis A that might have escaped detection or reporting in recent months, and to investigate any possible link to frozen strawberries.

The food processor and Federal health officials told distributors to destroy any remaining strawberries from the lots implicated in the Michigan outbreak. But Dr. Michael Friedman, the F.D.A.'s principal deputy commissioner, said his agency had yet to determine what proportion of the original shipment remained.

Hepatitis A is generally milder than other types of viral hepatitis. Hepatitis A can cause fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal pain, and dark urine. Inflammation of the liver can cause the eyes and skin to turn yellow from a buildup of bile pigments. The illness usually lasts about one to two weeks, but it can be longer in severe cases. Death occurs in about one in 1,000 cases.

The virus is often transmitted orally from contamination of food and water through human waste. Symptoms can develop from two to six weeks after exposure to the virus, and usually occur within 30 days. The infection occurs worldwide. About one-third of Americans have been infected with the virus, but many never knew they had it because they may have had no symptoms.

There is no test to detect hepatitis A in food. The only other outbreak of hepatitis A from frozen strawberries was reported in 1990, Dr. Broome said.

Gamma globulin, which is prepared from human blood, can be injected to help prevent illness if given before exposure to the hepatitis A virus or within 14 days afterward. The gamma globulin is pooled from many donors so that antibodies that are naturally produced to protect against infection can be used. The immunity offered by gamma globulin is short-lived. Immunization with the hepatitis A vaccine is needed to provide long-term protection.

Because gamma globulin is in short supply, it is being recommended only for those who were known to ingest strawberries from the 13 lots that were implicated in the Michigan outbreak and also shipped to California, Dr. Broome said. Dr. Friedman said the F.D.A. believed that there was enough gamma globulin available to meet the needs of those affected by the strawberry outbreak. But a complicating factor is in trying to reach the families that are on spring break.

In Los Angeles, health officials plan to offer gamma globulin shots to the 9,000 students and teachers who may have been exposed in schools there. School and health officials determined that strawberries were included in fruit cups that were served from March 25 to 28 in 18 Los Angeles public schools.

Although the strawberries were known to be imported from Mexico, the source of the contamination is not known.

In Mexico, Israel Camacho, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Baja California State, where the strawberries were grown, said he did not think irrigation water was the source of the contamination, The Associated Press reported. "It is more likely that the strawberries were contaminated, if they were contaminated, during processing and packing rather than during cultivation," he said.

The contamination could have occurred at any of a number of steps, from the fields where they were grown to the time they were served, said Dr. David Satcher, the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. But Dr. Satcher said that preliminary epidemiologic investigations seemed to have ruled out food handling at the schools in Michigan.

Matt Kramer, a spokesman for Epitope, said the company's strawberry processing regimen included washing, slicing, sorting, packaging with sugar, blast-freezing and putting them in cold storage. The company follows Federal processing regulations but will review its procedure once the current problem is solved, Mr. Kramer said.

Dr. David R. Johnson, chief medical officer of the Michigan Department of Community Health, said his state's first knowledge of the hepatitis problem came several weeks ago when officials were notified of an outbreak at schools in Calhoun County, a mostly rural area in south-central Michigan. Additional cases have been detected in Saginaw County in east-central Michigan.

On March 24, Michigan invited epidemiologists from the disease-control centers to help investigate the outbreak. Three days later, the centers notified the Food and Drug Administration and Agriculture Department of a possible link between the cases and strawberries in the school lunch program. On March 27, the food agency called Andrew & Williamson, sent agents to the premises on the March 28 and determined that the strawberries were shipped for bulk distribution to the school lunch programs in December, Dr. Friedman said in an interview.

Late last Friday, epidemiologists from the centers completed two studies, one among children and the other among teachers. Preliminary analysis of the studies found that "people who ate the strawberries were 5 to 10 times more likely to get hepatitis than people who did not eat the strawberries," Dr. Miriam Alter, a hepatitis expert at the centers, said in an interview.

The magnitude of the statistical link was considered strong, Dr. Satcher said.

On Friday night, the centers called health officials in the six states to inform them of the results, and on Saturday followed up with an electronic message, Dr. Broome said. On Tuesday in Iowa, the state education department assigned about 50 workers to call and alert school districts about the problem with the tainted strawberries.

Tom Womack, a spokesman for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, said the suspect lots were distributed in a 15-county area around Chattanooga.

The New York Times
THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 1997

The New York Times

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MEMOS TO CLINTON KEPT HIM INFORMED ON FUND-RAISING

HE OFFERED SUGGESTIONS

Documents Provide Details of White House Coordination in Party's Activities

By ALISON MITCHELL

WASHINGTON, April 2 — President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore received a constant stream of memorandums providing them the most minute details of the Democratic Party's fund-raising in 1996, including monthly dollar tallies and projected sums to be raised at scores of events, White House coffees among them, according to documents released by the White House today.

The documents add to a growing body of evidence that undercuts the President's early efforts to draw a distinction between his activities on behalf of his own campaign and those of the party.

The papers, from the files of Harold M. Ickes, former deputy White House chief of staff, show that the White House closely coordinated the fund-raising program of the Democratic National Committee.

The documents provide an even fuller portrait of the President's role in the party's fund-raising than memorandums obtained last month by The New York Times, which described the fund-raising goals set by the White House for Mr. Clinton's coffees with major contributors.

The party's fund-raising is now under investigation by the Justice Department and Congressional committees, and the hundreds of pages of memorandums released today were turned over to Congress several weeks ago.

Among the documents are three memos, sent to both Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore, showing that an appearance by the Vice President at an event set for last April 29 in Los Angeles was projected to raise $250,000.

When it was first disclosed last fall that Mr. Gore attended a fund-raising luncheon that day at a Buddhist temple in the Los Angeles area, he said he had thought it was a "community event" and not a fund-raiser. Later, he said he had known he was addressing a group that made contri-

Continued on Page A20, Column 1

Continued From Page A1.

had not known that the luncheon itself was intended to raise money.

Joe Lockhart, a spokesman for the Vice President, said today that at one point the Democratic National Committee had planned for April 29 a "different and separate fund-raiser" from the temple event but that "at some point in the process" this other fund-raiser was dropped.

"As we said before," Mr. Lockhart said of the luncheon at the temple, "the Vice President didn't believe this was a fund-raiser but knew it was a finance-related event and in retrospect that it was a mistake to attend."

The memos show that Mr. Ickes kept Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore up to date on the outcome of weekly fund-raising strategy sessions between White House and Democratic officials. Some show that the President himself occasionally checked off matters of interest or offered suggestions.

At one point in late 1996, for example, Mr. Clinton advised that the party's direct-mail solicitations should explain the problem that the Democrats were having raising donations because of the legal limits on contributions that could be spent directly on individual candidates.

"I think we can do better w/mail if we have the right message," Mr. Clinton wrote, adding that this included "the federal $ prob."

On another document, in October 1996, which projected the debt that the Democratic committee was likely to face after the election and recommended that the committee budget $1 million for potential fines, Mr. Clinton wrote, "Ugh."

In a memo to Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore in February 1996, Mr. Ickes wrote, "The fund-raising needs for the D.N.C. will require a very substantial commitment of time from the President, the Vice President, the First Lady and Mrs. Gore." The phrase "very substantial" was underlined.

Several documents suggest that the White House or the party envisioned using access to Mr. Clinton as a fund-raising tool as early as 1994.

One document, dated June 27, 1995, comparing the committee's fund-raising in 1995 with that of the previous year, referred to eight breakfasts with the President that were planned in 1994 to raise more than $1.3 million for "health care" — presumably a Democratic advertising campaign to promote the President's proposal for a national health care overhaul. Officials of both the White House and the Democratic National Committee said today that they did not know whether those breakfasts had ever taken place.

Like a previous set of Mr. Ickes's documents made public by the White House, these were heavily censored. Lanny J. Davis, special White House counsel, said some of the material had been held back by Mr. Ickes's lawyers on the ground that it had not been requested by Congress. Other sections were blanked out, Mr. Davis said, because of claims of confidentiality made by lawyers for the party, who consider much of it proprietary information.

All in all, the documents convey a tone of urgency and even desperation as Mr. Clinton's aides sought to pile event upon event in 1995 and 1996 to meet ambitious goals. They also show that in addition to the President and the Vice President, senior members of the White House staff were kept informed of the fund-raising. Those who received the memos included Leon E. Panetta, then the White House chief of staff; Margaret A. Williams, chief of staff to Hillary Rodham Clinton, and Ron Klain, Mr. Gore's senior aide.

In November 1995, with efforts to raise money to pay for the party's television advertisements falling short, Mr. Ickes relayed to the President the recommendation of Democratic officials that Mr. Clinton, Mr. Gore and the First Lady all make telephone solicitations. Mr. Ickes said the only way to raise $1.2 million quickly would be for the President to make approximately 20 calls, the Vice President 15 calls and Mrs. Clinton about 10 calls.

Asked today whether Mrs. Clinton had made such calls, Mr. Davis said that "as far as we know, she did not."

Mr. Clinton has said he does not remember making such calls at that time. Mr. Gore has acknowledged making fund-raising calls on a few occasions, including some from his office in December 1995.

A document setting out a list of fund-raising events for June 1996 projected that Mr. Clinton would raise $100,000 merely through a "NY conference call." Amy Weiss Tobe, a spokeswoman for the party, said today that this call was to have been a thank you to members of a fund-raising event's steering committee but that it had never been made.

The documents show that, as was disclosed several weeks ago, the coffees Mr. Clinton held at the White House with prospective donors were routinely budgeted to raise $400,000. In one instance, Mr. Ickes received a list showing that those at two June 1996 coffees with the President had each raised or donated between $50,000 and $100,000. Names of a few donors carried asterisks, to denote that "contributions are in installments."

The President's aides have repeatedly tried to distinguish these White House coffees from other fund-raisers, saying that they had no specific price tag and that no money was solicited at the events themselves. Mr. Davis said once again today that no one had been required to write a check in order to attend the coffees.

"I am not denying that the purpose of these events was support and financial support with a goal that was going to be met," he said, adding that "it is not illegal" for the coffees to have had fund-raising goals.

Mr. Davis said the documents portrayed a President trying to stay competitive with a Republican Party that was outspending the Democrats.

"At the end of the day," he said, "there is neither anything inappropriate or particularly unusual about a White House during an election year engaged in that kind of legal and appropriate activity."

One memo at the Democratic National Committee, written by Joe Sandler and Neil Reiff, both officials there, and marked "privileged and confidential," discussed whether the Democrats could make contributions to tax-exempt, nonpartisan voter registration groups.

"I would strongly recommend that if we pursue this course only a limited amount of funds be used for such grants as the D.N.C. has done in the past," it said, recommending that the amounts be kept in the range of $500,000 to avoid close scrutiny from either the Federal Election Commission or the Internal Revenue Service.

"Grants of amounts much larger would risk drawing public, press and F.E.C. and/or I.R.S. attention," the memo said.

Mr. Sandler, the counsel for the Democratic committee, said today that the memo had referred to a "perennial question" that arose in election cycles and that he did not know how much the committee gave to such organizations that year. Both parties have made donations to tax-exempt groups.

Other memos show that the party directed some donors to give contributions directly to state Democratic committees. Such donors included two tobacco companies — Philip Morris and R. J. Reynolds — even though Mr. Clinton at the time was planning a campaign against tobacco sales to minors.

Even after the White House released today's documents, preoccupation with party fund-raising did not diminish. The election left the Democrats heavily in debt, and tonight Mr. Clinton was the star attraction at a dinner that was to raise $750,000.

File Food Safety (Nco)

General

USA TODAY
· FRIDAY, JULY 19, 1996

NATIONLINE

Stepsister begs jurors to spare Klaas' killer

AP

Polly: Abducted, killed in 1993

Lawyers trying to save Richard Davis, 42, from the death penalty in the slaying of 12-year-old Polly Klaas rested their case Thursday in a San Jose, Calif., courtroom. The case sparked a national drive for get-tough-on-crime laws, particularly against previous violent offenders like Davis, who had been sentenced to 16 years in prison but got out in eight. His stepsister, Brenda Kidd, begged jurors to spare the habitual criminal's life. "I love him," she said. "I'm a Christian and I feel that Rick can change." Davis was convicted June 18 of the 1993 abduction and murder of Polly from a slumber party at her Petaluma home. Jurors must decide whether Davis' penalty should be death or life in prison. Deliberations could begin next week.

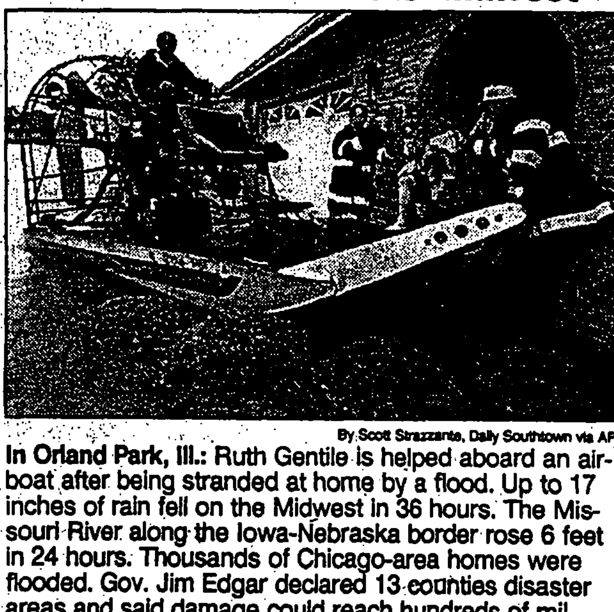
BAD BERRIES: Raspberries from Guatemala are the probable carrier of the Cyclospora outbreak that has sickened almost 1,000 people in the USA and Canada, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. It's still unclear how the one-celled parasite — which can cause diarrhea, vomiting, weight loss, fatigue and muscle aches — got on the berries. The news came too late for frustrated California strawberry growers, whose crop Texas officials had named as a suspected source of infection, prompting $20 million in losses over the past four weeks.

Elizabeth
Chris
Sandy
Jen
Diana

ARTHRITIS RESEARCH: Scientists at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center have performed the first human gene therapy to treat rheumatoid arthritis. Doctors injected a gene that produces an inflammation-blocking hormone into the knuckles of a patient with severe arthritis in hopes it would produce the anti-arthritis chemical. The procedure won't help the patient — she is scheduled to have her arthritis-crippled knuckles removed Wednesday and new, artificial joints implanted — but doctors will examine tissue from the hand to see if the gene therapy worked and if the body is producing the arthritis-blocking hormone.

DENVER AIRPORT: The control tower at problem-plagued Denver International Airport was operating on emergency generator power, almost a week after power surges knocked out electricity. The FAA says a surge cut power for 66 minutes last Friday, leaving the tower without communication and delaying 32 flights. Batteries that are supposed to take over during a power outage also failed. Controllers used cellular phones and hand-held radios until the generator kicked in. The $5 billion airport opened in February 1995, 16 months late and $2.5 billion over budget.

Record rains drench the Midwest



By Scott Strazzante, Daily Southtown via AP

In Orland Park, Ill.: Ruth Gentile is helped aboard an airboat after being stranded at home by a flood. Up to 17 inches of rain fell on the Midwest in 36 hours. The Missouri River along the Iowa-Nebraska border rose 6 feet in 24 hours. Thousands of Chicago-area homes were flooded. Gov. Jim Edgar declared 13 counties disaster areas and said damage could reach hundreds of millions of dollars. More rain is possible today.

EXECUTIONS: Tommie Smith, 42, was put to death by injection in Indiana for the 1980 gunshot murder of Indianapolis Police Sgt. Jack Ohrberg. The execution was delayed because a technician couldn't insert a needle into a vein in Smith's arm after trying 15 minutes. A physician then put it in a foot artery and the execution proceeded. In South Carolina, Fred Kornahrens, 47, was to be executed today by injection for the 1985 gunshot and stabbing murders of his ex-wife, her father and her 10-year-old stepson.

ANTI-GANG MOM CONVICTED: Mary Thompson, 41, an anti-gang activist in Eugene, Ore., was convicted Wednesday of aggravated murder for arranging a gang-related killing in 1994. She also was found guilty of hindering prosecution for lying to police and helping dispose of the gun that killed Aaron Iturra, 18. Once Thompson's friend, Iturra had told police her son pulled a knife on a boy. Two teens have pleaded guilty to Iturra's murder.

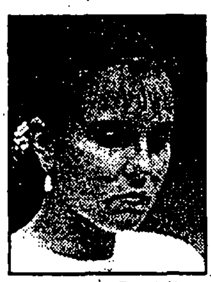
ALSO THURSDAY . . .

▶ **BIBLE CONTEST SLAYING:** A Dadeville, Ala., man who was angry that he lost a Bible-quoting contest killed the man who bested him, police said. Gabel Taylor, 38, was shot once in the face. The name of the suspect was withheld.

▶ **EXTRADITION CLEARED:** A U.S. Supreme Court justice rejected an appeal by Irish prison escapee James Smyth, clearing his extradition from San Francisco to Northern Ireland. Smyth, a Catholic and Irish nationalist, was serving time for attempted murder when he and 38 others escaped from the Maze prison near Belfast in 1983.

▶ **TOBACCO LAWSUIT:** Connecticut filed a $1 billion lawsuit against the tobacco industry, joining at least nine other states seeking to recover taxes spent treating tobacco-related illnesses. Attorney General Richard Blumenthal said Connecticut taxpayers spend $100 million on Medicaid alone to treat the diseases caused by tobacco.

Little Maranda 'in good hands'



Detroit News

Ireland: Put daughter in day care

A Macomb County, Mich., judge hearing the second trial of a custody fight over Maranda Ireland Smith, 5, met with the child and said "she seems to be in pretty good hands." The hearing is continuing.

The case — pitting Maranda's father, Steven Smith, against her mother, Jennifer Ireland — drew national attention when a judge in 1994 awarded custody to Smith because his mother would care for Maranda, whereas Ireland put the girl in day care. The judge said Maranda was better off with "blood relatives" rather than "strangers."

The Michigan Supreme Court ordered a new trial, saying Ireland's use of day care while attending the University of Michigan was not pertinent to deciding the girl's custody. The court also ordered that a different judge hear the case.

Written by Paul Leavitt. Contributing: Adam Weintraub, Angela Townsend and Shannon Tangonan.

Lyn

Severe Food Poisoning Sweeps Japan

8,200 Ill, 5 Dead Nationwide; Several Sources Suspected

By Mary Jordan
Washington Post Foreign Service

A1

SAKAI, Japan, July 22—Swimming pools are boarded up and playgrounds are empty. Anxious parents keep children—those who are not hospitalized—inside and away from others. Nervous restaurant owners boil everything, even melons. A small plane equipped with loudspeakers flies low, warning citizens to wash up.

Japan is in the midst of its worst outbreak of food poisoning in recent years, with five dead and more than 8,200 sickened, the national Health Ministry said today. The outbreak has spread to 32 prefectures and to almost every region except the northern island of Hokkaido.

More than 6,100 of the ill live here in Sakai, an industrial city across Osaka Bay from Kobe.

Most of the sick are children, including 600 who remain hospitalized. Two young girls—one with a cerebral hemorrhage and another with a damaged heart—are struggling to live.

Doctors believe virtually all those poisoned were infected by a strain of E. coli bacteria called O157, and many appear to have contracted it from something in their school lunches.

Atsuka Tsuge, 7, never likes her school lunches anyway, especially because teachers force students to eat every bite. Now, after five days in the hospital with severe pain and fever, the little girl, wearing a glittery headband and clutching a favorite book about a pig that went shopping, does not want to spend another hour in a hospital overflowing with sick children.

See JAPAN, A14, Col. 2

JAPAN, From A1

"The anger and anxiety over what has happened is in every corner of this city," said her mother, Michiyo Tsuge, who sat beside her daughter at Sakai City Hospital awaiting the latest blood test. "Nobody can relax. We don't know where this came from, and we don't know how to stop it."

Health officials ordered schools in the hardest hit areas today to test their water supply for O157. They also ordered food preparers, including those who make school lunches, to preserve leftovers for two weeks to help epidemiologists track the source of bacteria. A task force, based in Sakai's city hall, is coordinating efforts nationwide. It has established an emergency hotline, and 500,000 leaflets are being distributed warning area residents to take precautionary measures. In a country where meat is often eaten raw, people are being warned to cook everything, including meat, at high temperatures.

The first cases of poisoning showed up in May in Okayama Prefecture in southwestern Japan, causing the death of two children. On July 11, Atsuka and other children started showing up at the hospitals here curled up in pain, with fever, vomiting and, in the worst cases, kidney failure. Ten days later, city officials still are not sure what caused the epidemic.

Raw eel in sushi was first suspected and still has not been ruled out, because many of the children who were rushed to hospitals ate it at school. But doctors announced Sunday that in one case south of Tokyo they believe a boy was poisoned by eating six slices of raw beef liver, a local delicacy. Authorities now speculate that there may be several causes of the poisonings.

There are hundreds of strains of E. coli, most of which live in the intestines of animals and usually pose no threat to humans. In fact, E. coli bacteria are commonly found in the human intestinal tract and serve to ward off other, more harmful bacteria.

But the strain known as O157, first discovered in humans in 1982, is particularly virulent. It can damage the lining of the intestine, cause bloody diarrhea, kidney damage and, in the severest cases, death.

O157 was the culprit in an outbreak of food poisoning in the U.S. Northwest in 1993, in which four children died and more than 600 became ill after eating undercooked hamburger at Jack in the Box restaurants. At least 25 Americans have died from O157 poisoning since 1982 in outbreaks from Maine to New Mexico.

The outbreak is especially disturbing to public health specialists because the infection can be transmitted from one person to another. It can spread from one infected child to an entire preschool or day-care center through fecal contamination; two of the children who died in the Jack in the Box incident had not eaten at the restaurant, but contracted the illness after playing with children who had.

President Clinton announced new national meat and poultry inspection practices this month that are designed to detect contamination with E. coli and other bacteria before meat reaches the supermarket.

In Japan, slaughterhouse inspections are carried out by local government employees who visually inspect the meat. No government inspections are required in processing plants where meat is cut and packaged for sale. Atsushi Oda, an official in the Ministry of Health and Welfare, said the government is considering more stringent inspection regulations because of the current outbreak.

As children get sicker in Sakai, a port city known for its role in perfecting the traditional Japanese tea ceremony, parents are getting angrier at city officials. One month before the outbreak here, food handlers at the school had warned that because of the food poisoning in other parts of the country, perhaps all food should be cooked. But the menu was already set for July, and no changes were made.

Now 27 school children are in critical condition, many on kidney dialysis machines and so ill that even if they survive, they are expected to suffer lifelong health problems.

Because Sakai health officials are still speculating on the source of the contamination and on precisely how infected children are passing it to others, rumors have taken over the city.

"It was probably American hamburger" or beef from British cows with "mad cow disease," said Michiyo Kawabata, 51, as she shopped at Itoyokado, a downtown supermarket that is finding it hard to keep antibacterial soap and other cleaning supplies stocked.

While popular sushi shops were empty as people avoided raw fish, and city trucks blared warnings to cook all food at high temperatures, parents at Sakai City Hospital and other clinics that are jammed with ailing children had it worst of all.

"People are angry," said Yuki Mizutani, who accompanied her son Futoshi, 10, to the hospital when he complained of stomach cramps. Five of his friends from school are sick. Now all of them have been told to remain as still as possible to avoid putting stress on their kidneys. That's not so easy for a 10-year-old, said his mother, adding that she could not imagine the grief of parents whose children were even sicker.

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TUESDAY, JULY 23, 1996

Ext.