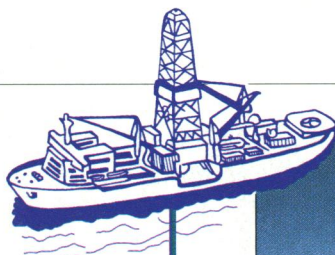


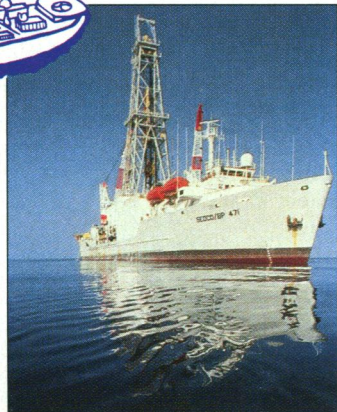
edited by RICHARD STONE



Earth Scientists' Big Science Woes

You've heard of the Space Station, the Superconducting Super Collider, and the Human Genome Project: all U.S. efforts to retain its "Big Science" preeminence in space, particle physics, and genetics. But have you heard of Japan's *Godzilla Maru*? To earth scientists, this proposed research ship is a warning that U.S. scientists could lose their majority stake in the Ocean Drilling Program (ODP), a Big Science project the United States has dominated for 25 years.

ODP has done impressive science: For example, it has confirmed continental drift and doc-



Sea change? Japan's contender (left), to replace U.S. ship (above).

umented 100 million years of global climate change. Since beginning as a U.S. program in 1968, ODP has brought aboard more and more foreign help, such that 19 countries now ante up half of its \$43 million annual budget.

But ODP officials want to increase foreign participation—and save costs—to avoid losing partners with tight budgets. For starters, ODP's planning office,

which has always rotated among U.S. institutions, will move to the University of Wales, Cardiff, in 1994 for a 2-year stay. And last June, ODP's executive committee recommended the program move one of three U.S. collections of core from Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory near New York City to Bremen University in Germany, in part because the Germans would make a large contribution toward repository costs.

But the big jolt to the status quo is a Japanese bid to build a \$500 million drill ship nicknamed the *Godzilla Maru*, which would be 50% bigger and better equipped than the current 143-meter, U.S.-outfitted ship. Unless the United States offers a sweeter alternative, ODP operations would move overseas in the next decade.

Concerned by these developments, U.S. earth scientists hope to chart their course next month, when a "wakeup committee" meets in Seattle to discuss ODP's increasing overseas flavor.

Healy Stirs Political Pot With Bid for Senate

Bernadine Healy wants to come back to Washington—this time as a Republican senator from Ohio. In an assembly at her daughter's high school in suburban Cleveland last week, the former National Institutes of Health (NIH) director declared her candidacy for the Senate seat to be vacated next year by retiring Democrat Howard Metzenbaum.

Healy plans to run as a political outsider (few voters outside Washington know much about NIH), and she's banking on her personality to attract and impress voters. She'll need to wear that charisma like armor to survive what promises to be a bruising campaign. Although the primary election isn't until May, her opponents are already calling her a "carpetbagger" and a member of the Washington establishment. (She moved to Ohio in 1985 but commuted to Cleveland on weekends for 2 years while at NIH.) The campaign manager for

the frontrunner, Lieutenant Governor Mike DeWine, notes Healy has never voted in an Ohio primary; a spokesman for the other candidate, state senator Eugene Watts, admits Healy "brings some knowledge" to health care but says, "Do you really want physicians to work on

fixing a problem they've caused?"

A recent poll has DeWine with 60% of the vote and Healy and Watts in single digits, but everyone agrees it's still early and that DeWine enjoys impressive name recognition. The leading Democratic candidate is lawyer Joel Hyatt, Metzenbaum's son-in-law.

Freedom's Just Another Word...

Most everything about Space Station Freedom—except the spacecraft itself, which doesn't exist yet—is up in the air these days. And that includes its name. As National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) officials wrestle with yet another space station redesign, this time with Russia as a full partner, the only thing they know for sure is that the joint station won't, in fact, be called Freedom.

Former President Ronald Reagan coined the name in 1988 to symbolize his view of the United States as the world's defender of liberty. But that was at least four blueprints ago; now NASA officials are distancing themselves from the "old" space station as fast as they can. In that vein NASA is assembling several review committees, including one to suggest a new name. According to spokesman Jim Cast, the six-person panel, chaired by NASA deputy associate administrator for space flight Bryan O'Connor, will seek outside input.

Don't assume O'Connor's team has the easiest job—the name game will last months, Cast predicts. Not only must a moniker convey the space station's final-frontier spirit, it must also avoid offending possible financial contributors: For example, says Cast, the panel has to "make sure the name doesn't mean something nasty in Japanese."

WHO to Revamp Vaccine Programs?

International vaccine research may soon receive an important boost, *Science* has learned: a plan to restructure the vaccine programs run by the World Health Organization (WHO).

At the United Nations' (UN) "Children's Summit" in New York City in 1990, five major sponsors signed on to the Children's Vaccine Initiative (CVI)—a 10-year, \$150 million effort to improve existing vaccines and produce new ones for children in developing countries. But 3 years later, the CVI still exists only in embryonic form, its aims largely unfulfilled.

That's why WHO officials have begun devising a plan to unify major portions of WHO's fragmented vaccine activities. The favored option, according to public health sources outside WHO, is to spin off a new "special program" that would include both WHO's Expanded Program on Immunization—a drive to improve the delivery of vaccines to developing world children—and the research-based Program for Vaccine Development. The combined effort would be co-sponsored by several UN agencies and run at arm's length from the central WHO bureaucracy by an independent management board. Observers say the reorganization should translate into more money from donor agencies and stepped-up vaccine development.

WHO officials declined to comment on the plan; doing so, they say, could undermine delicate discussions under way with the CVI's other main backers: UNICEF (the UN Children's Fund), the UN Development Program, the World Bank, and the Rockefeller Foundation. "We are still early in the discussion phase," says WHO assistant director-general Ralph Henderson, "so we have to step very carefully." WHO's strategy should become clearer at a multiagency meeting in New York City starting 4 October.