SOHO mission was extended from 2000 to 2003, NASA agreed to the extra time, "provided that there is some streamlining of the operations so that costs can be lowered," says Trella. This led to certain procedures being rewritten, with some simplifications. "By modifying certain procedures, which were correct for the last 2 years, they introduced some errors," says Trella.

–ALEXANDER HELLEMANS

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SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

Five Researchers Die In Plane Crash

Jonathan Mann, former director of the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Global Program on AIDS (GPA), and his wife, Mary Lou Clements-Mann of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, were killed last week in the crash of a Swissair jet on its way to Geneva from New York. Mann was a charismatic and outspoken epidemiologist who earned high marks for his dedication to the fight against AIDS, even from those who did not always agree with his sometimes scathing criticisms of public health leaders. Clements-Mann, a virologist, was an expert on AIDS vaccine development.

Also killed in the crash were two physicists from Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island, New York: Klaus Kinder-Geiger, a German citizen who specialized in the quark-gluon plasma—the state of matter that existed moments after the big bang—and Per Spanne, a Swedish citizen who had helped pioneer techniques for medical x-ray imaging and cancer therapy. Spanne, a guest researcher at Brookhaven, was head of the medical x-ray facility at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility in Grenoble, France. A fifth scientist on board, Roger Williams, was en route to chair a WHO meeting on early identification of heart disease. He was a cardiovascular geneticist at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

Mann and Clements-Mann were traveling to attend a meeting in Geneva on AIDS vaccines convened by UNAIDS, the United Nations' special program on AIDS, which replaced the GPA in 1994. In a press statement, UNAIDS Executive Director Peter Piot praised Mann as "a visionary global leader in the fight against AIDS" who "tirelessly promoted a response to the epidemic based on respect for human rights and human dignity." Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in Bethesda, Maryland—an institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) which coordinates federally funded AIDS vaccine trials—said the deaths of Mann and Clements-Mann are "a double great loss to the HIV/AIDS effort." Mann was the dean of Allegheny University School of Public Health in Philadelphia.

Appointed GPA's first director in 1986, Mann quit 4 years later, publicly accusing then–WHO chief Hiroshi Nakajima of a lack of commitment to fighting the disease. Earlier this year, he drew fire from many of his colleagues after accusing NIH of dragging its feet on AIDS vaccine research. "He said things that rattled some people," says Fauci. "But he did it to push a cause he believed in. He was the conscience of the field."

AP/COURTESY OF JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

"Double great loss." AIDS researchers Mary Lou Clements-Mann and Jonathan Mann.

–MICHAEL BALTER

JAPAN BUDGET

Bad Economy Is Good News for R&D

TOKYO—Japan's recession is once again proving to be a boon to science. Last week government R&D ministries put in their bids for a slice of a $71 billion pie that the government has promised to distribute over the next 18 months to revive a stagnant economy. At the same time, along with their regular 1999 budget requests, they submitted proposals that include tapping into a one-time $1.1 billion appropriation to boost the nation's research and development infrastructure. However, the requests offer no relief for existing scientific facilities that have been forced to reduce operating expenses to shrink a large budget deficit (*Science*, 1 May, p. 669).

The latest developments reflect the impact of an 8-year economic slump. While ministries have been told to cut spending, politicians have looked for ways to stimulate the economy and reward constituents. The result has been a succession of sizable supplemental spending packages that provide a vehicle for funding projects rejected in the annual budget cycle. This summer, in an effort to create jobs, the Diet also created the R&D infrastructure fund that, although targeted at information technology, environmental facilities, and other science projects, seems open to all comers.

The Science and Technology Agency (STA), for example, is asking for a $2 billion slice of the government-wide supplemental pie in addition to a 5.3% increase, to $5.6 billion, in its regular budget. Big winners include brain, information science, and genetics research programs already under way, as well as a planned research vessel for ocean drilling. The Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture (Monbusho) has requested a jump of 22%, to $1 billion, in funding for its competitive Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research program that supports small teams at universities and national labs.

The proposed budgets are likely to be trimmed in negotiations with the Ministry of Finance before they are finalized by the end of the year. And the details of the supplemental spending bill won't be resolved until next month. Still, the country's overall R&D spending seems certain to rise sharply from its current level of $25.7 billion.

In particular, STA is asking for $41 million to begin construction of a $500 million ship capable of drilling up to 3500 meters into the sea floor. "It's the project's official 'go' from the STA," says Takeo Tanaka, ocean drilling program officer for the Japan Marine Science and Technology Center, which is overseeing the project slated for completion in 2003. A 59% boost, to $197 million, in information science includes adding a genome informatics component to a new Genetics Frontier Research Center at the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research (RIKEN) in suburban Tokyo and simulating how the brain processes information as part of RIKEN's Brain Science Institute.

Although scientists welcome the increased funding, some worry that these special programs and supplemental budgets are distorting Japan's scientific portfolio by emphasizing applied fields over basic science and hardware over actual research. Akiyoshi Wada, a biophysicist at the Science Council of Japan, the nation's most prestigious scientific association, says government officials tend to focus on high-profile new buildings and equipment while providing too little for intangible operating expenses. "[Government] officials don't understand how real science is carried out," he says.

–DENNIS NORMILE