

# WHO officials nervous as truth on AIDS in Africa comes out

by Mark Burdman

*EIR* has received first-hand reports from Geneva that officials at the World Health Organization are beginning to exhibit nervous agitation whenever the subject of AIDS in Africa is broached. This, however, does not represent a belated expression of concern over the fact that millions of Africans have been infected with the deadly disease. Rather, charges first published in *EIR* that the Soviet-dominated WHO is covering up the African situation, in collusion with the Atlanta Centers for Disease Control (CDC), are beginning to be echoed in major circulation newspapers in Europe.

In October 1985, *EIR* obtained information from a WHO official that an internal evaluation was then circulating, secretly, within the agency's Geneva headquarters that the AIDS situation in Africa was desperate, and urgent public health measures would have to be adopted immediately to prevent a catastrophe on the continent. This, of course, conflicts sharply with the information and evaluations released by the WHO's Communicable Diseases division under Soviet health official Sergei Litvinov, who insists that AIDS originated in the decadent United States, and all talk of it spreading in Africa was nonsense. The author of the secret memo himself was determined that the contents of his memo not become widely known, out of fear "of what the truth about AIDS in Africa would do to the credibility of the WHO."

However, on Jan. 11, the French daily *Le Monde* published an article entitled "Censure on AIDS in Africa," echoing *EIR* charges that the extent of the AIDS epidemic on the African continent was being *deliberately misreported*.

*Le Monde* special correspondent Franck Nouchi charged, several days later, that the WHO was clearly involved in a coverup, given that WHO bulletins released in January 1986 listed only 31 cases of AIDS for the whole continent (some researchers have placed the number as high as 30 million)! Nouchi raised questions about the collusion of Atlanta CDC in this affair. The CDC's Dr. Jonathan Mann, until now head of the CDC's team in Zaire, had just been named the new WHO "Mr. AIDS," for all of WHO work internationally.

During mid-January, the French government-linked daily *Le Matin* also published an article, raising questions about the CDC's role in covering up the AIDS situation in Africa.

Nouchi's *Le Monde* report also took up the issue of intimidation directed against medical professionals, lest they make the truth known. Numbers of them are not willing to identify themselves with what they know of the AIDS catastrophe in Africa, for fear of the consequences to their professional reputations and careers. Nouchi quoted "anonymous" researchers only.

Nouchi filed his report from Fort-de-France, Martinique, where a conference on AIDS was being co-sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, the National Center of Bethesda, Maryland, U.S.A., and the French Association for Cancer Research. The release began, "In Africa, AIDS is much more widespread than the official statistics affirm." He wrote: "A certain number of researchers of global renown have decided to alert international public opinion, about the collusion that, according to them, exists between the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, and African governments, a collusion which definitively succeeds in undermining research and in masking the reality of the AIDS epidemic which is raging in certain regions of Africa."

According to Nouchi, "Some among the most significant American and European researchers have decided to say out loud what, for months, they were only mentioning among themselves, without daring to say it publicly: In Africa, where, they think, the situation concerning AIDS is very alarming, the Centers for Disease Control, whose links with the American government are very close, has decided, at the price of millions of dollars, to arrogate to itself the monopoly of research on AIDS."

This, the reporter noted, is preventing researchers outside the CDC visé from reporting the truth about AIDS in Africa, as happened at the conference on AIDS in Brussels in December 1985. Reported Nouchi, "This or that European speaker, at the last moment, at the pressing demand of the CDC, was pleaded with not to present the findings of an epidemiological study. Another researcher, an African this time, consciously presented truncated results."

At the Brussels conference, as *EIR* reported, Soviet delegates circulated among the attendees charging that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency had manufactured AIDS, and

that all discussion of the epidemic in Africa was a Western racist plot against Africa.

Nouchi quoted one unnamed researcher, who agreed to talk on condition that "anonymity would be preserved": "No one knows what is happening in Africa. An iron curtain has fallen on this continent. It is a question of a power struggle, on the scale of a continent. For the CDC, it is a question, above all, of conserving its budgetary prerogatives. . . . We have good reasons to believe that the CDC and, most especially its director, James Curran, know what the situation in Africa is. He has carried out, for this purpose, large epidemiological inquests, but he refuses to communicate the results. . . . Is the African virus the same as that which is raging in the West? Impossible to answer. Why is AIDS, in Africa, a heterosexual malady, while in the West, it has a largely homosexual character? No response. How many Africans have been infected? No response. What are the co-factors of AIDS? No response. Etc."

Nouchi then comments that, according to available information, the U.S. government, which has "very close" relations to the CDC, has an attitude of "apathy" on the AIDS question in Africa. But, he concludes, this is not justified by the situation on the ground: "In certain cities of central Africa, one-third of the beds for treatment for internal medicine, are occupied by patients sick with AIDS. And they are dying to the general indifference of a disinformed public opinion."

Other sources are reporting equally alarming figures, confirming that an "AIDS Belt" has captured large parts of central Africa, and perhaps beyond.

One expert has informed *EIR* that a high percentage of African patients reporting to a sexually-transmitted diseases clinic in one African country, actually have AIDS. A second individual, with long experience in Africa, reports that there are, minimally, "a couple of hundred thousand infected with AIDS, in the eastern part of Zaire alone," and that in Zaire, Rwanda, and other countries, the disease only recently labeled "AIDS" has been rampant for years.

This last appraisal, contrasts graphically with the documentation of the WHO, which, while listing only 31 cases now, listed no official cases of AIDS in Africa prior to 1985!

### **The WHO reacts**

Two kinds of reactions have been emitted by WHO officials responsible for AIDS work.

One is typified by Dr. Fritz Deinhardt of West Germany, who is based in Munich and who heads the work of the "WHO Collaborating Center" for West Germany. Asked what he thought of the *Le Monde* piece, Deinhardt barked, "Absolute nonsense! It is very unfortunate that these claims are being made, all over the place, that there is a coverup about AIDS in Africa. This is total nonsense. . . . We won't know about AIDS in Africa for at least another 6-12 months, and we don't need wild statements."

Dr. Deinhardt claimed that certain African nations have

forbidden studies on AIDS, and that they were right for doing so, "because of the unfair publicity about AIDS in Africa, particularly from the United States."

Dr. Deinhardt claims, against all evidence, that there are only 350 cases of AIDS in all of West Germany! He is getting the strong backing of his Soviet masters at the WHO in Geneva. WHO Press and Information official Abramov was recently seconded to the WHO from his 11-year stint at Moscow Radio and Television. During a private discussion in late January, he contrasted the "objective medical" coverage of AIDS in the Soviet media with the "strictly sensational" coverage of the West German media, which seeks "to blow up the issue of AIDS."

By some special arrangement whose full details are not yet known, Deinhardt collaborates with a WHO "serum bank" based in *Czechoslovakia*, which studies historical blood samples of Africans from the late 1950s, and early 1960s, to

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*The French press is charging health officials with deliberately misreporting the extent of the AIDS epidemic in Africa. Le Monde special correspondent Franck Nouchi accuses the World Health Organization of a cover-up, since WHO bulletins released in January listed only 31 cases of AIDS for the whole continent, while some researchers have placed the number as high as 30 million!*

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ascertain whether AIDS already existed at that time, or is a new disease.

The second WHO line is from Dr. Fakhry Assad, AIDS Task Force coordinator at the WHO. Assad is less categorical, more cautious and defensive. His assertion, now, is that *Le Monde's* citation of the official WHO figure of 31 cases of AIDS in Africa, omits to mention that the WHO also asserts that "information reaching WHO indicates that AIDS may be a serious public health problem in Tropical Africa. Estimated incidence rates in some Central African cities are comparable to those in New York or San Francisco, and cases have been identified in residents or migrants from over a dozen African countries."

This statement, itself vastly understating the situation according to the figures used by many researchers, reflects

new fear over WHO's credibility. Assad himself, barely 10 weeks ago, was pooh-poohing all expressions of alarm over AIDS in Africa, and insisting that the transmissibility of the disease was purely restricted to certain sexual activities.

### The deeper level of the coverup

The problem with the World Health Organization and the CDC, is that they deny the basic parameters of how diseases are spread in all their information and analyses of AIDS.

For example, the WHO's Media Service in January was distributing a bulletin, in its "In Point of Fact" series, called, "WHO Guidelines for Prevention of AIDS and Infection." The guidelines, expressing the official collective wisdom of the WHO, assert that the virus is spread in three ways, and only three ways: sexual contact with an infected person; direct contact with infected blood or blood products; and from infected mother to child before, during, or shortly after birth.

The same bulletin asserts how AIDS is *not* spread:

"AIDS is not spread through food, water, or air.

"AIDS is not spread by casual contact, such as occurs when people work together.

"AIDS is not spread among members of the same household, unless they have sexual contact or are born of an infected mother.

"AIDS is not spread by mosquitoes."

The last contention, in particular, demonstrates WHO's lying character. How do they know that AIDS is not spread by mosquitoes? Significant evidence shows it could be. Once it is admitted, widely, that AIDS is transmitted by infected blood, mosquito transmission seems eminently plausible as an hypothesis worth investigating. Why have the straightforward experiments to test this hypothesis not been done?

One reason may be that mosquito transmission is tied up with a broader issue: the manner in which public health breakdown, as a function of economic breakdown, necessarily leads to new pandemics, and to weakening of resistance in populations to pandemics.

The greatest coverup by the WHO and CDC, then, is to ignore, or deny, the matter of *causality* in disease. Of course, the truth would upset the economic deals and policies, East and West, that now prevail, with the International Monetary Fund as enforcer.

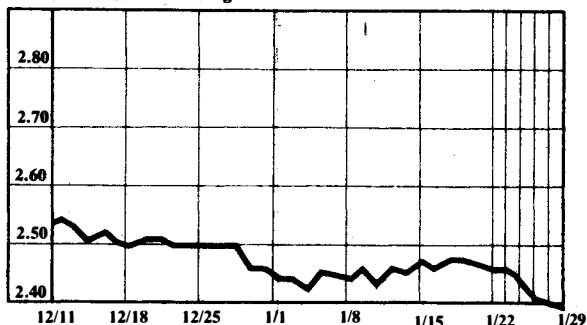
By the same token, autumn 1985 documents by the WHO, outlining what measures must be taken to deal with AIDS, list "Exchange of information" first, and *never once talk of improvement of, or revival of, public health infrastructures of nations.*

The same, finally, holds for how the WHO makes calculations about who or who does not have AIDS in Africa. According to internal minutes from the WHO's Oct. 22-25 AIDS/Africa conference in Bangui, Central African Republic, the "definition" of AIDS in African adults is dependent on several major or minor symptoms, but begins with the proviso, "Any patient without major malnutrition. . . ." For Central Africa, that is quite an extraordinary proviso.

## Currency Rates

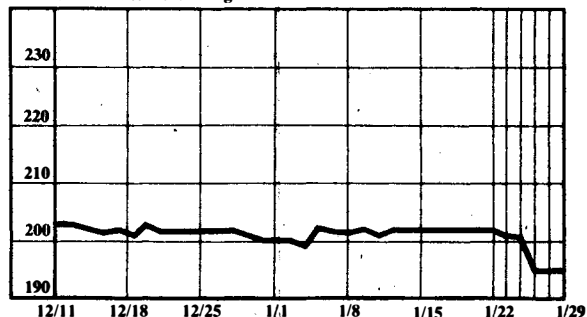
### The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



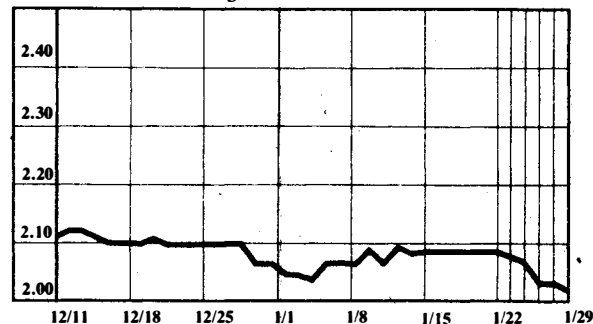
### The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



### The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing



### The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing

