
Conference Report

EIR sparks national debate on AIDS epidemic in Italy

by Muriel Mirak

As the AIDS pandemic sweeps through Europe, institutions are beginning to realize that an effective effort to block its course must include not only public health measures of screening and quarantine, but a moral, cultural renewal as well. This is in essence the conclusion reached by a large gathering of scientists, medical personnel, politicians, and religious leaders who met at the Hotel Universo in Rome, Italy on Feb. 12. Organized jointly by the Fusion Energy Foundation and *EIR*, the conference issued both a series of political directives for scientific research and governmental action, and a challenge to society to rediscover and abide by the moral laws governing our universe.

That the pandemic is currently out of control, became clear as Dr. Jonathan Tennenbaum of the FEF and Dr. John Seale of the London Royal Society of Medicine spelled out the facts and figures regarding the spread of the fatal virus. Using the only computer simulation of the pandemic thus far developed, Tennenbaum illustrated the process by which AIDS, initially spread by "fast-track" methods among so-called risk groups, slowly moves from this reservoir of infection into the population as a whole. It is this disconcerting aspect of the AIDS phenomenon which has discredited those theories according to which the sickness can be transmitted only by dirty needles or sex. Recent statistics released by U.S. health authorities show that urban centers are being overrun by AIDS, and, unless current trends are reversed, in Tennenbaum's estimation, a full 80% of the U.S. population will be either infected, sick, or dead by the year 2015.

The "risk groups" themselves, in Dr. Seale's view, are fast reaching saturation with the virus. Condom use cannot put a halt to the alarming contagion, according to Seale, an expert in venereal diseases, for the simple reason that AIDS is not a sexually transmitted disease, but rather a blood-transmitted disease. The reason the plain truth on AIDS is

not common knowledge, lies in the fact that a de facto "secret society" of covert homosexuals, among medical professionals and politicians, has deliberately suppressed information and fudged scientific data. The most urgent task, in this British scientist's opinion, is therefore to break through the information control, in order to prevent a "national or international catastrophe," in which "every citizen's life is at stake," from playing itself out to the tragic end.

The challenge to science and government

Just how, then, can mankind defend itself from what the Italian press has dubbed "the plague of the year 2000?" Universal testing, followed by isolation of carriers, is the minimum requirement of governments, according to the scientists convened in Rome; simultaneously, governments must launch a crash program in optical biophysics research, comparable to the effort being launched to develop space-based beam-weapon systems. Only such a "biological SDI" can force through the fundamental conceptual breakthroughs required to comprehend the very nature of the AIDS virus, and thence, to develop a cure and vaccine. In this context, laboratory research and clinical treatment developed by Dr. Bruno Brandimarte of Rome University, opened up new vistas on possible approaches to combatting AIDS, as well as cancer. Dr. Brandimarte presented evidence showing that the rate of healthy cell growth can be deliberately accelerated or slowed down through the application of magnetic fields, and showed how human tissue had been regenerated through this treatment.

Thus, the avenues of approach on the theoretical scientific plane are clearly defined; whether governments choose to pursue them or not is the political question which will decide the life or death of the human species. Lyndon LaRouche minced no words, in presenting his views to the audience: "If

governments do not act, this will lead to a process whereby populations, particularly in more violence-prone Protestant countries, will respond with irrationality." And those governments which "are not willing to defend their own populations from the threat of extinction" will have demonstrated their moral incapacity to survive. "And they will not survive," he said. The reasons behind political inaction in the face of the pandemic, are to be sought in budgetary considerations and in appeasement of the so-called gay lobby. Just as neo-Malthusian policies are at the origin of the collapsed living standards which have aided the spread of AIDS, so today, neo-Malthusian economic thinking is dictating cost-cutting measures in medical care, which leave the AIDS carriers and victims virtually abandoned. "Governments say they cannot afford to help the sick," LaRouche scorned; "they say they cannot offend the homosexuals and the drug users. But we have to care for them." Despite the awfulness of the looming catastrophe, LaRouche declared himself "optimistic," much in the same way that a commander must be optimistic about winning a war.

Not all governments have remained totally passive in the face of the pandemic. Italy, which hosted the conference, has indeed done more than most, in at least declaring AIDS to be a reportable disease, and conducting testing, albeit on a limited scale. Furthermore, as Christian Democratic Senator Vincenzo Carollo pointed out in his remarks to the conference, the Italian government has taken significant strides in providing outright gifts of funds to developing-sector countries, in an effort to industrialize these countries. "Since poverty spread throughout the Third World is one of the prime causes of illness and death," the senator said, "the only remedy can be sought in the elimination of poverty, which can only be achieved through industrial development."

Natural law and the morality of culture

Senator Carollo located his development perspective in the context of the recent document issued by the Vatican, on the problem of Third World debt. More than any government in the world, it has, in fact, been the Catholic Church which has spoken out against the ravages of this new pestilence and against its underlying causes in an unjust, usurious world monetary-economic system. Following up the November 1985 Vatican symposium dedicated to the morality of economics, which blasted the theories of Adam Smith "free-market" economists as "immoral," the Church has recently issued a paper on debt, which specifies that moral imperatives reject bankers' looting resources of developing countries necessary for their own industrialization (see *EIR*, Feb. 6, 1987, pp. 4-6). In relation to the AIDS pandemic nurtured by underdevelopment and misery, the Church put out a paper in November 1986, on the eve of the Proposition 64 referendum on AIDS policy in California, which condemned homosexuality as contrary to natural law. And, on the occasion of the Rome

conference, the Church has elaborated its approach to AIDS further, addressing the questions of public health measures from a theological standpoint.

Don Dario Composta, scholar of the Pontifical University "Urbaniana," began unequivocally, that treating the question of morality in the face of the AIDS pandemic "is not a question only of an appeal to individual conscience faced with the certainty of death, but also a commitment to preserve humanity from extermination." Saint Augustine and Thomas Aquinas teach us that human life is "the first of all human values," and that morality is founded on the imperative to "conserve being (life), propagating it, and progressing socially, culturally, and morally." This applies not only to the individual, but to the species as a whole. "It follows that, faced with the threat of the extermination of humanity, certain norms derive from the very value and nature of human life." This means that "it is urgent that individuals and states take all precautions to prevent the spread of the illness."

In specifying concrete proposals to stop AIDS, Don Dario differentiated among the healthy, those testing seropositive, and those with full-fledged AIDS symptoms. The healthy should follow the teachings of Pope John Paul II, who in several public statements from 1981 to 1984, stressed the importance of temperance and continence. "If his words had been heeded in 1981, perhaps the 'plague' of the century would not have spread," he said. Not to be overlooked, in this regard, are those theologians who, with a "false sense of compassion and help, fell into permissiveness, tolerance, and even loud cries for the supposed rights of deviants." As for those testing positive, "there is the obligation not to transform them into carriers," therefore, governments must intervene even "with coercive measures." For those already afflicted with AIDS, "it is the duty of the State to prevent the spread of contagion" through the creation of clinics and hospitals, and the immediate registration of those testing positive. On the individual level, Don Dario renewed a call for true compassion, but resolutely rejected any idea of euthanasia, passive or active, as "contrary to divine law."

A culture so shaped, to identify the need to direct individual activity, in the interests of preserving the well-being of the species, is the only culture capable of facing this, "the first species-threatening epidemic," with moral justice. The problem, as Helga Zepp-LaRouche stated, is that our culture currently lacks precisely the understanding of morality, as outlined by Don Dario Composta. Therefore, even if individuals, out of fear of contracting AIDS, may be persuaded to alter their degenerate practices, such as drug consumption and homosexuality, this will not suffice. "We are facing the biggest moral, intellectual, and emotional problem mankind has ever known," she said; we are called upon "to reflect on and comprehend the sacredness of human life" in the profoundest sense. Only by grasping again the notion of "man as made in the image of God, and returning actively to this

image, as was the case in the 15th-century Italian Renaissance," will we be capable of effecting the moral regeneration of society we require. The challenge posed by the AIDS threat is the challenge to "search for and understand biological processes, the very processes of life." Such a scientific effort involves the noblest of human labor, as defined in the Papal encyclical *Laborem Exercens*. By exercising the powers of our creative intellect, we can "master an understanding of those laws of nature," which have been violated, and in so doing, "participate in the process of self-perfection, which is indeed the characteristic of creation itself."

Press Response

The Italian press gave extensive coverage to *EIR's* Rome conference, noting especially the speech there by Lyndon LaRouche and his role in mobilizing an international effort for a crash program to halt the spread of the AIDS disease.

Newspapers reported the criticism by conference participants of the failure of the world's governments to act in the face of the crisis—prompting an official denial by the Italian health ministry Feb. 13. "Referring to news spread by the press about a conference held in Rome on Feb. 12, organized by *EIR*," the press release said, "the National Commission on AIDS communicates that it never failed to study the documents produced by the named agency, particularly concerning supposed transmission risks through blood-sucking insects, aerosols, saliva, etc. The figures reported in the document refer to some seropositive cases and/or AIDS cases described in the literature and known to the commission. Those are isolated cases, and it is not certain that they cannot be ascribed to high-risk categories, while there is much clinical evidence which shows that there is no transmission through professional contacts." The statement also emphasized that the health ministry is against the free distribution of condoms as an anti-AIDS measure.

The following press coverage of the conference was monitored by *EIR's* Rome bureau:

Corriere della Sera, Feb. 13, "From the U.S., Alarm About Saliva and Mosquitos."

Il Giornale, Feb. 13, "A Magnetic Field Against AIDS."

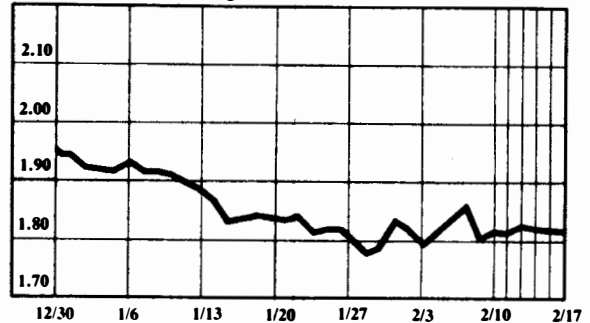
Il Tempo, Feb. 13, "AIDS Worse Than Nuclear War."

Il Giornale, Feb. 14, reported that "LaRouche is not wrong when he says, 'If no measures are taken to check seropositives, we will soon see gangs killing gays in the streets. Something like that is already happening. In New York the violence against homosexuals doubled last year. . . .'"

Currency Rates

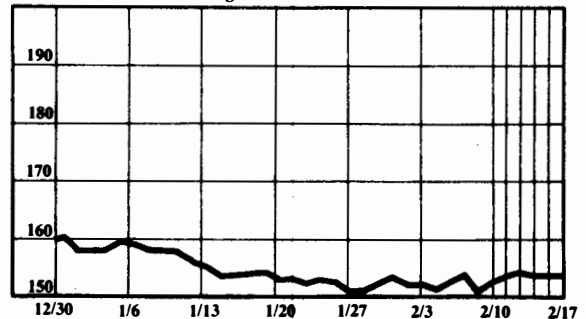
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



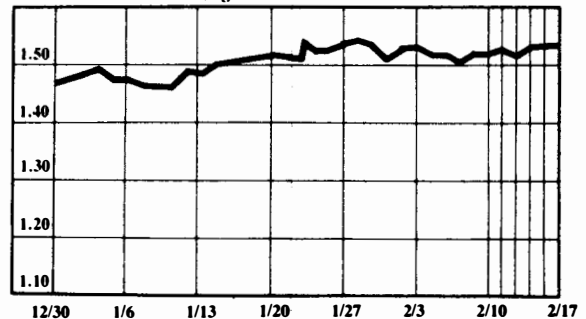
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

