

velop a cure for AIDS. Leading AIDS experts have admitted that this approach would work, but is "politically unfeasible" given the do-nothing attitude of advanced-sector governments. But, given that an alternative exists, is the adoption of the WHO policy—which admittedly would mean allowing entire nations of Africa to be wiped out—anything else but calculated murder?

The evolution of AIDS

Various studies presented at the conference confirmed earlier data indicating an extremely high rate of genetic change in the AIDS viruses. Once a person has become infected, the virus "colonizes" various tissues of the body, for example, lymph nodes, blood cells, or the brain. Each time the virus goes through its reproductive cycle in the cell, new variants are produced and selected, adapting to the particular tissue type in which they grow. Furthermore, the malignancy of these variants appears to grow as the disease progresses. If the infected person transmits the infection to another person, the clinical course of disease in the second person will depend upon which of the growing number of variants was transmitted. The more people are infected, the faster the AIDS viruses will evolve.

A somber note was added by University of Alabama researcher G.M. Shaw, who presented data showing that the concentration of AIDS virus particles in the blood is vastly larger than is commonly assumed, particularly in the late stages of the disease. His studies indicate that titers of a million infectious particles per milliliter may be common among persons sick with AIDS. This compares with the levels attained in the viremic phase of equine infectious anemia, a disease of horses caused by a virus quite similar to HIV; in that phase, the disease is easily transmitted from animal to animal by flies. Given that AIDS patients in Africa are commonly sent home rather than hospitalized, we must expect an explosion of insect-transmitted AIDS in the villages as soon as the number of AIDS victims reaches a critical level.

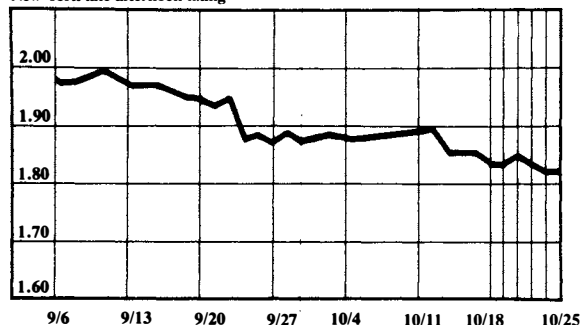
Africa has become a breeding ground for evolution of a vast and growing AIDS virus family, including emergent strains of great pathogenicity. The new "mystery strains" suggested by the ambiguous test results may be part of this. Leading researchers have warned of a possible "nightmare" development: the emergence of a strain adapted to spread by the respiratory route, like the common cold. At that point *homo sapiens* would be virtually doomed to extinction! As the AIDS tragedy in Africa unfolds, the probability of such an event grows larger with every passing day.

If for no other reason, people all over the world must realize that the fight against AIDS in Africa is not just a life-or-death issue for Africans, but will to a large extent decide whether mankind as a whole will survive this pandemic. Africa must be saved, at whatever the cost. Otherwise we may all become victims, in a real-life version of Edgar Allan Poe's chilling story, "The Masque of the Red Death."

Currency Rates

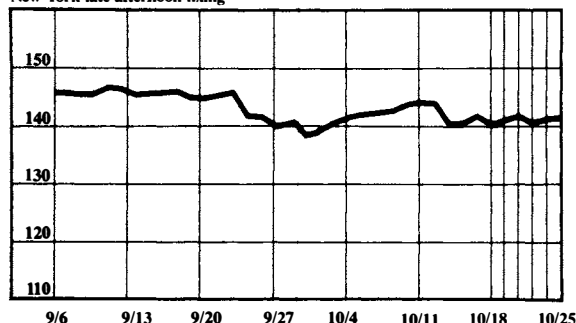
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



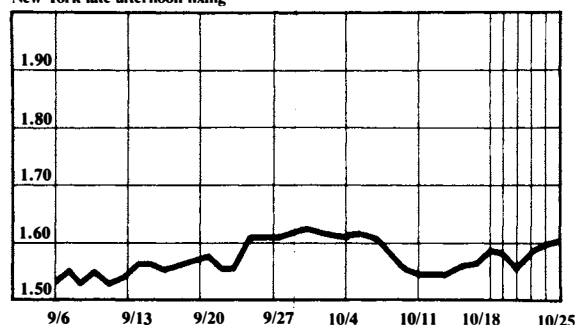
The dollar in yen

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

