

Gore commits 'murder by decree' against Africa

by Scott Thompson

According to United Nations statistics, every day in Africa an average of 5,500 men, women, and children are buried, victims of the human immunodeficiency virus-acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV-AIDS) holocaust. This death toll, growing at an explosive rate, is several times more than that acknowledged by U.S.-British sources to have been murdered during the "ethnic cleansing" of Kosovo. Yet, while the media hammered on about the horrors in Kosovo, hardly one story was written about the AIDS devastation in Africa—a holocaust that was preventable, and one in which an entire continent is disappearing under the onslaught of the disease.

Could any human being sit by and permit such a holocaust to occur, were there a way to stop it? What kind of person would prevent a solution? According to documentation supplied by the coalition called AIDS Drugs for Africa, one man has taken steps to stop Africa—particularly South Africa, where 3.2-6 million people are already infected by HIV and condemned to a horrible death—from affordable access to life-extending medications. That man is Vice President Al Gore, Jr.

At a rally on June 28 in Philadelphia, some 3,000 members of the AIDS Drugs for Africa coalition took part in a protest demonstration against Gore, who was there campaigning for the Democratic Presidential nomination. While Gore is keeping the price of drugs high by preventing Africans from manufacturing or importing generics, the pharmaceutical companies that benefit from his callousness have begun to heavily fund his campaign.

But, dismay and outrage at the Vice President's murderous views, as well as alarm at the spread of the AIDS epidemic throughout the African continent, have begun to be expressed around the world.

How bad is it?

On July 1, Agence France Presse reported that nearly 3.6 million people in South Africa are infected with HIV, according to statistics gathered by the Medical Research Council. The MRC found that the number of people carrying the disease has increased 30-fold since 1990. Spokesmen for AIDS Drugs for Africa have estimated that as many as 6 million South Africans are HIV-positive. Given a population of 40 million, this means that 9-15% of South Africans are infected.

Among those hardest hit are young people. According to

the MRC study, the number of pregnant women in South Africa infected with HIV rose from 0.76% in 1990 to 22.8% last year—a staggering increase. The MRC findings support government statements that South Africa has one of the world's fastest-growing HIV epidemics, with some 1,500 new infections each day.

It is against South Africa, as this author documented in the July 2 *EIR* ("The Ehrlichs: Two Genocidal Maniacs Whom Gore Loves"), that Gore is working to stop the production of affordable generic drugs to combat the disease. Among other things, Gore has placed South Africa on a "watch list" as a violator of free trade laws, which denies the country certain tariff benefits. This is murder by decree.

As *EIR* pointed out, 300 milligrams of a generic brand of AZT (used in combination with other medications to combat the effects of AIDS) can cost as little as 42¢ a pill, whereas the pharmaceutical giants charge a retail price of \$6. A one-month supply of AIDS medications would, under the conditions enforced by Gore, cost more than the annual salary of an average South African.

Meanwhile, the Chinese news agency Xinhua has reported that Nigeria has an estimated 571,036 cases of HIV-AIDS infection, and averages 1,500 new infections daily, according to the national coordinator of Nigeria's National AIDS Control Program, Nasir Sani-Gwarzo. An estimated 139,282 adults died of AIDS last year, and there were 158,598 new adult AIDS cases reported in 1998.

In 1991-92, some 1.4% of the Nigerian population were infected with HIV-AIDS, and by 1993-94, that figure had risen to 3.8%. Now, there are 3.1 million HIV cases in Nigeria, and it is expected that there will be 5.5 million by the year 2004.

Xinhua also reported that the situation in Kenya has become so grim that the Kenyan government plans to form a National AIDS Council for prevention and control of the disease by the end of this year. HIV-AIDS has been a grave social problem in Kenya, seriously affecting the country's economic development. It is said that the number of AIDS orphans in Kenya is expected to reach 580,000 next year, and almost 1 million by 2005. Kenyan Health Permanent Secretary Philemon Mwaisaka said in mid-June that more than 200,000 Kenyans would die from AIDS before the end of this year.

Kofi Annan's 'Diana Memorial Lecture'

On June 25, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan delivered the first Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Lecture, entitled "The Global Challenge of AIDS," in London; his depiction of Princess Diana's simple search for a mission on this Earth stood in stark contrast to Gore's genocidalist policies. Much of the lecture focussed on the devastation that HIV-AIDS has wrought throughout Africa, including in South Africa, where Gore has blocked the production of protease inhibitors to combat the worst effects of HIV-AIDS, perhaps permitting

people to live until an AIDS cure is found. Here are some excerpts from Annan's lecture:

"First, of course, I am deeply moved at being asked to deliver the first lecture in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales. Today, we pay tribute to Diana's name; but more than that, we give thanks for her life, and for what she did to improve the lives of so many others. . . .

"But, above all, I am grateful for this opportunity to speak about the global challenge of HIV-AIDS, which ranks very high among the current concerns of the United Nations. In fact, there can never have been a disease so international. I want to speak particularly about the devastating impact of AIDS on the developing world—especially on Africa. . . .

"The struggle against AIDS is a moral imperative—who could deny it? . . .

"And finally, to Diana, Princess of Wales, were she with us today, I would say this: . . . You were among the first in this country to fight the conspiracy of silence and prejudice against AIDS. . . . Maybe that takes a special kind of sensitivity to do what Diana did. The rest of us can only draw inspiration from it. Faced with her example, we simply cannot leave the neediest on this Earth to needless death and degradation. . . .

"Today, we have the chance to practice hard-headed realism and heartfelt idealism at the same time—to combine self-interest with a sense of shared responsibility. It is a chance that does not come often."

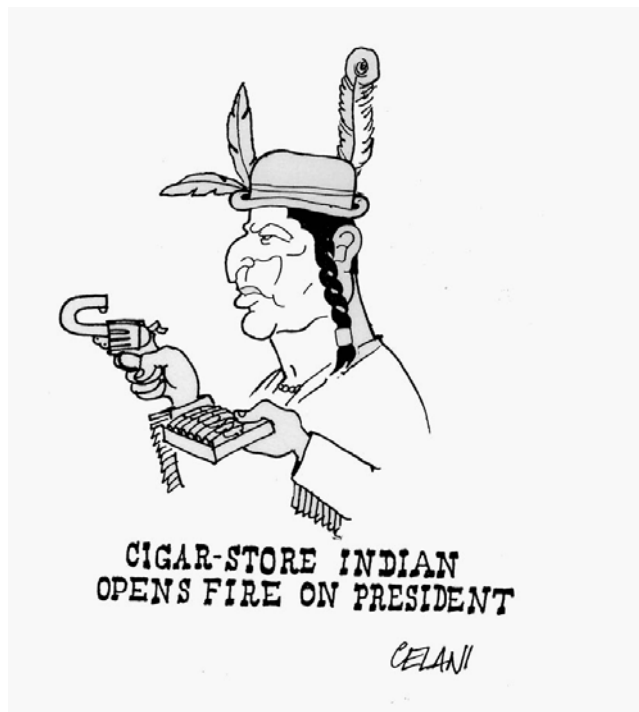
For the amoral Gore, the idea that fighting AIDS might be seen as a "moral imperative" by a world leader, is certain to have no meaning. As *EIR* documented in its July 2 issue, Gore not only promotes the fallacy that the world is "overpopulated," but he is preparing to line his campaign coffers with more contributions from large pharmaceutical companies. In contrast, Rep. Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D-III.) has sponsored a bill that would prohibit U.S. sanctions against African nations' efforts to secure abundant, affordable AIDS medications.

Greed

However, in addition to his sick belief that Africa is "overpopulated," and that the HIV-AIDS infection may be nature's way of helping to resolve that problem, Gore has demonstrated corruption as well. According to the *Ouch! Report*, dated June 16, entitled "Al Gore, AIDS Drugs and Pharmaceutical Money: Gore's Patented Moves," Gore is starting to rake in his filthy lucre:

"Despite the fact that the WTO [World Trade Organization] explicitly allows members to take such steps in the face of a national emergency or for public non-commercial use, the U.S. has placed South Africa on a 'watch list' as a free-trade violator and denied it special tariff breaks on its exports. . . .

"The Gore campaign is also well-positioned to reap a bumper crop of pharmaceutical cash. Anthony Podesta, a close friend and top adviser to Gore, is one of the PhRMA's



[Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association's] chief lobbyists. His firm was paid \$160,000 by PhRMA to lobby on patent issues, among other matters, between January 1997 and June 1998. He was also retained by Genentech, a major biotech firm with intense interest in protecting its patents, to the tune of \$260,000 for the same period. . . . Peter Knight, Gore's head fundraiser, made \$120,000 lobbying for Schering-Plough, another deep-pocketed drug company, in the first half of 1998. And Gore's chief domestic policy adviser, David Beier, was previously the top in-house lobbyist for Genentech.

"These people know who to dial for dollars.

"One last sign that the pharmaceutical industry is warming to Gore: \$11,000 in contributions to Gore 2000 from PhRMA, Pfizer, Bristol-Meyers Squibb, Genentech, and Glaxo-Wellcome lobbyists in the first three months of 1999, including a thousand-dollar check from Glaxo-Wellcome's Director of Government Relations on March 31. Most of this money rolled in after consumer and AIDS activists started putting pressure on Gore's office to change his South Africa policy."

These firms have started pouring money into Gore's campaign coffers, and they are demanding tough economic sanctions against South Africa for seeking to produce generic AIDS medicines. Ironically, AIDS Drugs for Africa coalition members told *New Federalist* (the weekly newspaper of the LaRouche movement) that most of the more advanced drugs for combatting AIDS were developed with U.S. taxpayers' dollars, so there were no huge research and development costs borne by the pharmaceutical giants.