

## The new violence: America's kids are victims of menticide

by Michele Steinberg

There is nothing accidental about the “new violence” sweeping America, in which children are killing each other, their parents, and themselves. Creating killer kids using Nintendo techniques and animated violence is a multimillion-dollar business, and it is *deliberate*.

Babies under a year old are being prescribed Ritalin to keep them quiet, and the insane craze of Pokémon, or Pocket Monsters, as the Japanese-created animated hit is known, is being investigated for causing photosensitive epilepsy.

Indeed, the “new violence” has reached the level of a national emergency. Recently, in little more than a week, the nation witnessed a wave of child shootings and killings. The Feb. 28 shooting of a six-year-old girl, by another six-year-old, in their Flint, Michigan schoolyard, was immediately followed by the non-fatal shooting of a classmate by a seven-year-old, who learned to load and shoot a gun from viewing television. That was followed by a rash of teenage killings and shootings at schools throughout the country.

Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche has been the only national leader to address this emergency, and offer a way out of it. On Feb. 25, LaRouche called for the formation of a “National Commission Against the New Violence,” and pledged that his campaign will continue to shine a spotlight on the growing crisis of media-induced violence in many facets of American life.

The issue of the “new violence” was also addressed in a Feb. 20 speech to the Schiller Institute-International Caucus of Labor Committees Presidents’ Day conference in Virginia, by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the wife of Lyndon LaRouche and founder of the Schiller Institute (see last week’s *EIR*). In her speech, entitled “America’s Children Are in Mortal Danger,” Zepp-LaRouche zeroed in on Pokémon, which addicts children as young as two or three years of age. Pokémon, she

warned, has been underestimated as a trigger for violence, an instrument for desensitizing children to violence, and for actually encouraging sadistic violence against others.

A study published in the March 2000 issue of *Nature Neuroscience* reports that Pokémon is being investigated for links to visually induced epileptic seizures. According to the article, “During a recent showing of the ‘Pocket Monster’ cartoon in Japan, 685 children experienced epileptic seizures.” It says that “photosensitive epilepsy” is the most common form of stimulus-induced epilepsy, and its prevalence in children ages 4-14, which is already “substantial, . . . is increasing as a result of the proliferation of television display units and video games which may act as triggers.” More than 200 children who suffered epileptic convulsions during the Pokémon showing remained hospitalized for some period of time, says the article.

### Nintendo killers

Speaking to Hispanic-American leaders on March 3, which was simultaneously broadcast on his website ([www.larouchecampaign.org](http://www.larouchecampaign.org)), LaRouche stressed the importance of the commission against the new violence:

“As most of you know,” he said, “something which should be of concern to people, not only in the United States, but outside: We’ve had a pattern of incidents, triggered to attention, not only by the Columbine shooting in the Columbine High School in Colorado some time ago, but also by the case of a shooting of an unarmed student [Amidou Diallo], near his home—entering his home—by police, in the Bronx in New York. And this case was just decided in favor of the police in a criminal proceeding which was moved out of New York City into Albany.

“. . . We’re getting killings which are caused by the use

of Nintendo-style games, such as the game Pokémon, with children, and also with police and others. In the case of the Diallo shooting, the problem was that the Mayor of New York, like many other officials, has been training the police force in Nintendo-style killing techniques. . . . So we have Nintendo-killers.”

LaRouche emphasized that this is what happened in Columbine: “We have Nintendo game-style killings which are occurring, from students. This affects young people three years of age and higher. So, what’s happening throughout the United States: *We’re building up a recruitment of mass killers through Nintendo-style games broadcast on the television stations, broadcast on the Internet, and broadcast in the form of games, which people can buy through video stores and game stores.*”

“This is a very serious problem. It is the result of the mass media programs. *We are producing zombies from our students*, by this means, and by the use of Ritalin and other dangerous drugs in classrooms, to try to control student populations.”

LaRouche called for the formation of the commission after the verdict in the Diallo case, in which the four policemen who killed Diallo, firing 41 shots at him in five seconds, were acquitted, on Feb. 25.

In his March 3 webcast, LaRouche stressed that the police who killed Diallo, were responding “as they had been trained” to do. So, to get at the cause of the violence, LaRouche said, go after the incompetent and evil leaders responsible.

“We must eliminate the kind of public official, especially elected officials, responsible elected officials, who will allow the kind of training and directives which are being given by [New York Mayor Rudolf] Giuliani, or by George W. Bush in Texas, or Jeb Bush in Florida, or [James] Gilmore, the Governor of Virginia,” LaRouche said. “We must eliminate those kinds of people from positions of power, and put in and demand, as a qualification, that the people who go in, are the kind of people who know what to do with this kind of problem.

“If we don’t, we can only blame ourselves. And I’m determined to do everything I can, with my campaign and in other ways, to deal with this problem. This has come to a danger point, where . . . we are faced with a kind of violence this nation can not survive, unless we bring it under control. And therefore, it has almost the highest priority, among all world issues, in bringing this under control.”

## **Ban Ritalin and the rest**

It is well known that many of the student mass murderers were being prescribed mind-altering psychiatric drugs. T.J. Solomon, the 15-year-old from Conyers, Georgia who shot six classmates in May 1999, was on Ritalin; Eric Harris, 18 years old, the Columbine killer, was being prescribed the anti-depressant Luvox; and Kip Kinkel, the 15-year-old from Springfield, Oregon who killed both parents, two schoolmates, and wounded 20 other students on May 21, 1998, was

being prescribed Prozac, one of the most widely prescribed among the anti-depressants.

These are not isolated cases. Of the estimated 2 million kids under 18 years of age in America who have been prescribed Ritalin, Luvox, Prozac, Paxil, and other anti-depressants and psychiatric drugs, many have committed violent acts, even killings. Many others are walking time-bombs.

On March 6, *U.S. News & World Report* documented other cases of violence connected to these type of drugs. In 1995, in California, 16-year-old Jarred Viktor was convicted of first-degree murder for stabbing his grandmother 61 times. Ten days earlier, Jarred had been prescribed the anti-depressant Paxil, for his pre-existing problems—drinking, drug abuse, and threatening suicide. The article reports how 13-year-old Matt Miller committed suicide in Kansas (he was found hanging in his closet) after taking the anti-depressant Zoloft for a week. The Miller family has filed suit against Pfizer, the manufacturer of Zoloft.

Articles in the U.S. magazine *Health and Healing*, and in the British daily, the *Observer*, charge that Prozac, produced by Eli Lilly company, has the effect of producing akathisia, a condition of severe agitation and disorientation, which they describe as a fuse for violent outbursts. A study conducted by Dr. David Healy, director of the North Wales Department of Psychological Medicine at the University of Wales, found that Prozac produced violent behavior in mentally healthy volunteers, and claims the drug may have been the trigger for many violent acts, including murders for which people are in prison.



But by far the most horrible revelation to date is the documentation that increasing numbers of infants, toddlers, and pre-school children are being zombified with psychiatric drugs produced for adults, before these children can even learn to talk, let alone read.

According to an article in the Feb. 23 *Journal of the American Medical Association*, entitled “Trends in the Prescribing of Psychotropic Medications to Pre-Schoolers,” poor children, especially black children in the United States, are being prescribed the dangerous drug Ritalin (methylphenidate) in unprecedented numbers, at younger and younger ages, with the number of prescriptions having increased more than 300% during 1991-95 in two study groups. The use of Prozac (fluoxetine hydrochloride) is just as abused; the article says that a psychiatric newsletter, citing marketing data compiled by the Food and Drug Administration, reported that in 1994, some 3,000 prescriptions for fluoxetine hydrochloride were written for children younger than one year of age!

The article was written by a group of doctors led by Dr. Judy Magno Zito, from the University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins University, and the Center for Health Research, Kaiser Permanente, in Portland, Oregon, and the findings were presented already in May 1999, at a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in Washington, D.C. But, the dangerous practices have still not stopped.



Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) at the March 3 press conference, to urge better oversight and more research of pre-schoolers taking prescription drugs.


**NOVARTIS**  
**Ritalin<sup>®</sup> hydrochloride**  
**methylphenidate hydrochloride**  
**tablets USP**


**DESCRIPTION**  
Ritalin hydrochloride, methylphenidate hydrochloride USP, is a mild central nervous system (CNS) stimulant, available as tablets of 3, 10, and 20 mg for oral administration; Ritalin-SR is available as sustained-release tablets of 20 mg for oral administration. Methylphenidate hydrochloride is methyl  $\alpha$ -phenyl-2-piperidineacetate hydrochloride, and its structural formula is

**WARNINGS**  
**Ritalin should not be used in children under six years, since safety and efficacy in this age group have not been established.**

Sufficient data on safety and efficacy of long-term use of Ritalin in children are not yet available. Although a causal relationship has not been established, suppression of growth (i.e., weight gain, and/or height) has been reported with the long-term use of stimulants in children. Therefore, patients requiring long-term therapy should be carefully monitored.

**PRECAUTIONS**  
**Long-term effects of Ritalin in children have not been well established.**

The physicians studied ambulatory care prescription records from 1991 to 1995 from two state Medicaid programs (one in a Midwest state, and one in a Mid-Atlantic state), and from one salaried “group-model” health maintenance organization (HMO) in the Northwest. The records were checked for enrollees between 2 and 4 years old (all pre-school) during those years in three cross-sections for the years 1991, 1993, and 1995.

The results should shock the nation: In all three programs, psychotropic medications prescribed for pre-schoolers increased dramatically. The use of methylphenidate increased in all three sites: threefold for the Midwest database, 1.7-fold for the Mid-Atlantic group, and 3.1-fold at the HMO. These records involved hundreds of thousands of patients—there were more than 158,000 enrolled in the Mid-western state, 54,237 in the Mid-Atlantic state, and 19,322 at the HMO. One noticeable pattern is the prevalence of prescribing these drugs for poor children. The article says that the Medicaid youth populations were almost entirely eligible under Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC, the Federal welfare program, which has since been replaced by the state-by-state welfare administration, TANF), and, within the Medicaid groups, “non-whites were over-represented,” i.e., a greater number than in the general population of the country.

There’s no question that the poorest children are being abused. The article also notes that, “in a 1998 professional meeting report, pediatric researchers noted that 57% of 223

Michigan Medicaid enrollees aged younger than 4 years with a diagnosis of ADHD [Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder] received at least one psychotropic medication to treat this condition.” Among the drugs, methylphenidate was one of the two most often prescribed.

These results are more than alarming: They indicate a pattern of pre-meditated medical abuse of children. At a press conference on March 3, Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) addressed the “concerns” posed by the *Journal of the American Medical Association* article. Dodd displayed wall charts that showed the warning labels that are printed on every bottle of Ritalin. In large type, the inserts say: “Warning: Ritalin should not be used in children under six years, since safety and efficacy in this age group have not been established.” A second warning says: “Precautions: long-term effects of Ritalin in children have not been well-established.”

Dodd had sponsored legislation in 1997 requiring that this type of warning be provided, and that pediatric drugs be tested before being prescribed to children. He bemoaned the slowness of the process, and admitted that doctors who are prescribing these drugs are “playing Russian roulette with the health” of these children. At the same time, Dodd praised the “useful” aspects of these psychotropic drugs on troubled children, and called upon the National Institutes of Health to “speed up” the research so that the drugs could be cleared for use on children.

He’s wrong. The use of psychotropic drugs for children should be banned, now.