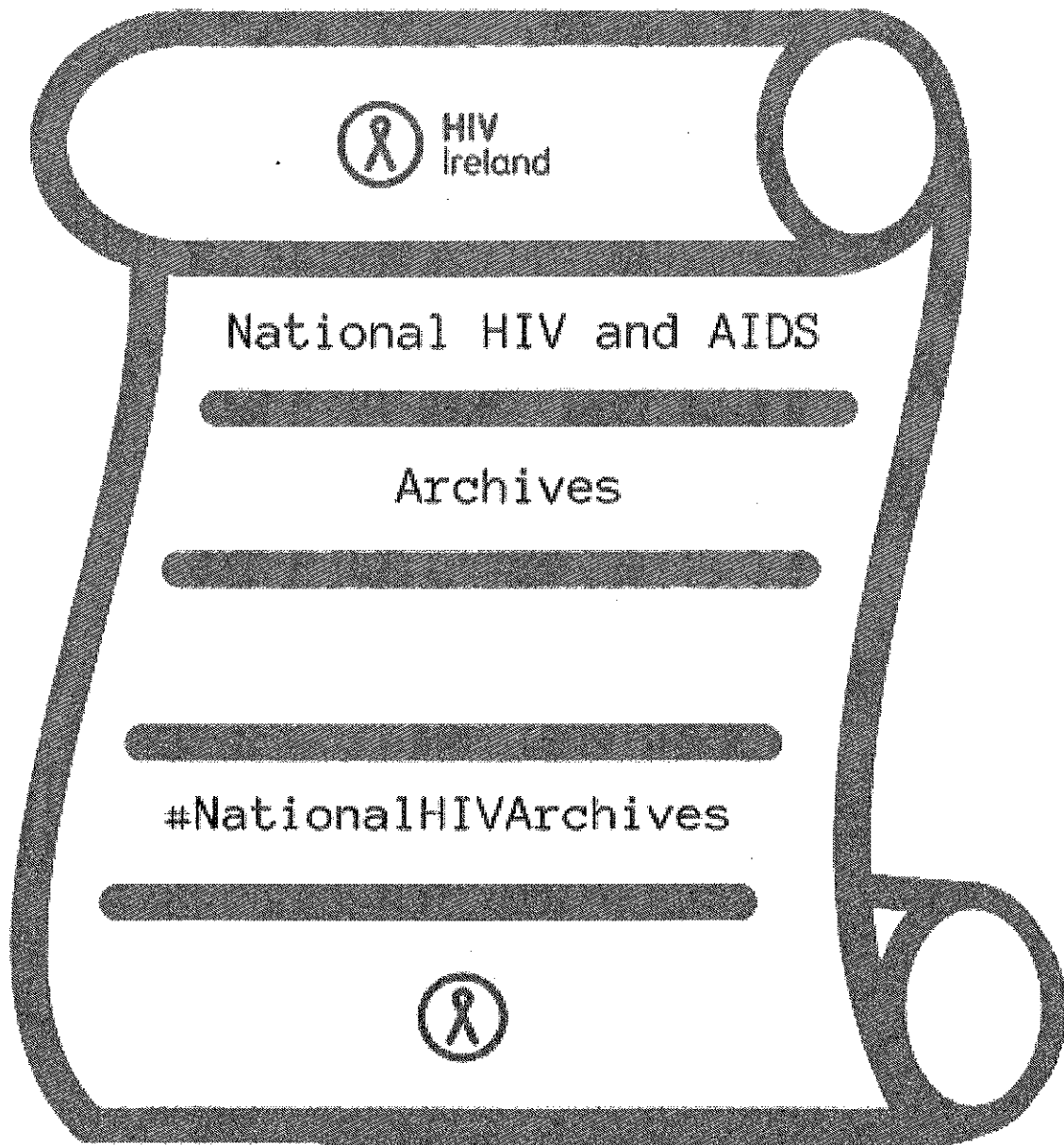


Print Media



10th to 15th March 1987

Irish Press
10th March 1987

**News in
brief**

**Aids vaccine
by 2,000**

Doctors will be able to cure two-in-three cancer cases and vaccinate people against Aids by the year 2,000, researchers forecast yesterday. New drugs to prevent heart attacks, joint implants for arthritis sufferers, and a longer lifespan for men and women are also on the way. But no one is likely to discover a cure for the common cold, they say. The predictions are based on interviews with 227 leading medical researchers, including Nobel prizewinners.

SL ✓

Irish Press
10th March 1987

AIDS—where's the campaign?

AS A former member but still an avid supporter of the I.C.A., I would like to congratulate the I.C.A. in urging a campaign on AIDS in all secondary and third-level schools.

This decision shows great maturity and awareness of the necessity to educate our young population on AIDS and how they can avoid it.

The proposer of this motion, Mrs. Nellie Dillon must be lauded for her concern for young people. I agree wholeheartedly with her call, "Don't let them die of ignorance. The only weapon against AIDS is education. There is no cure and no vaccine."

Mrs. Dillon made a very valid point in saying that if AIDS could be thanked for anything, it was that parents could talk to their children about AIDS without sounding like an old 78 record.

Let us hope that other organisations in this country will get the ball rolling and insist on a national media campaign of education about AIDS. This is one sex problem that must be taken on board by the Health Education Bureau. Their duty is to educate on health matters, otherwise why have them operating at all?

ANNE GILMARTIN,
Teesan,
Sligo.

56

AIDS campaign awaits Cabinet approval

By Dr David Nowlan,
Medical Correspondent

OFFICIALS of the Department of Health agreed yesterday morning with the Health Education Bureau on the content of the public education programme on AIDS, which is to be submitted for approval to the incoming Government.

The advertising campaign, if given Government approval, will be backed up by booklets which will be available in doctors' surgeries and chemists' shops, and there will be mention of condoms as one means of curbing the sexual spread of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus

(HIV), which causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

And plans are in train for senior officials of the Department of Health to meet shortly with a member of the Catholic Hierarchy to outline the proposed content of the education programme. The Secretary and deputy chief medical officer of the Department were to have met last week with Dr Desmond Williams, Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin, but the meetings were postponed because of the serious illness of the archbishop.

I understand that the meeting between the Department and the

Hierarchy is not designed to seek ecclesiastical approval for the campaign but rather to acquaint the Hierarchy with its likely content.

The campaign was originally scheduled to be launched in the middle of January but the Cabinet sent it back to the Department and the Health Education Bureau to be "redesigned" on the grounds that it did not contain sufficient emphasis on the risk of transmitting HIV by sharing contaminated needles in the process of intravenous drug abuse. This now appears to be the commonest way of spreading the virus in Dublin.

The newly designed campaign

includes a larger component dealing with this particular risk, and a significant section of it is targeted towards the homosexual community by way of homosexual activity. It remains to be seen just how much of it is directed towards the public who are at risk of picking up the HIV from those in high risk groups and how much is to be directed towards reassuring people about the ways in which the virus cannot be transmitted so that levels of hysteria based on misinformation may be reduced.

Meanwhile, an education programme for health service personnel was launched last week with two training seminars organised by the Eastern Health Board.

A third such seminar is being held this week and for all three experts have been brought in from Britain to share their experience of dealing with the AIDS problem there.

The deputy chief medical officer of the Department of Health, Dr James Walsh, who has been designated national AIDS co-ordinator in this country, has taken part in these training seminars and yesterday declared himself very pleased with the way they were going. It is his hope that the personnel who attended will be able to conduct similar training programmes with their colleagues in the eastern and other health board areas.

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Aids deaths down

But experts say: Don't be fooled

by CHRIS MIHILL, Medical Correspondent

THE monthly death toll from Aids showed a slight drop in February. The disease claimed 22 victims, 40 fewer than the previous month, according to figures released yesterday.

But the DHSS warned that the apparent improvement is just a "statistical hiccup" and not a sign that the disease is levelling off.

A spokeswoman said the reduction was probably a result of figures arriving too late to be included in calculations.

She added: "There are bound to be minor peaks and troughs. But what we are seeing is a continuous upward trend on the graph — the result of infection perhaps five years ago."

The DHSS figures show 45 new cases and a further 232 people carrying the Aids virus.

Increases

Five of these new victims are heterosexuals. Twenty-five heterosexual sufferers are now listed and 15 have died.

But homosexual men are still most at risk with a total of 640 cases and 317 deaths.

The total number of carriers established by blood check now stands at 5,283 but estimates of the actual number of people with the virus runs to at least 30,000.

London continues as the blackspot although small increases were reported in Wales, Manchester and Yorkshire.

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Today
10th March 1987

Aids aides struggling to survive



UNDER ATTACK: Sir Gerard

Clive's good food guide

☐ TRADE union leaders are duty-bound to show concern for the welfare of members, so it's nice to see that portly Clive Jenkins's concern even extends down to the protein content of their cafeteria meals.

He astonished fellow union bosses at a recent National Economic Development Council meeting with the Prime Minister by revealing that his union, the ASTMS, was calling in canteen menus from their members all over Britain so it could advise on improving the protein count.

"Perhaps Clive wants them to serve up lobster thermidor instead of fish and chips," chortles one union leader.

Or perhaps he just wants to suss out the best places to go on official visits.

☐ HAVING a posse of famous names behind you is no guarantee of success, and even the collective might of Sir Richard Attenborough, Sir Gerard Vaughan and Margaret Jay appears unable to save the UK Aids Foundation from collapse.

Launched in almost simultaneous blazes of publicity and controversy last year, the foundation looks likely to fold, with the Department of Health looking elsewhere for an umbrella body to co-ordinate all the voluntary organisations fighting the virus.

Now, in a desperate attempt to secure a government grant for the foundation, Sir Gerard is offering his own and Margaret Jay's resignations. "We will happily leave, if it makes a difference," he insists.

The controversy over the UKAF began when Sir Gerard was criticised for saying that all visitors to the UK from Africa should be screened for the virus. And Margaret Jay was threatened with legal action over a This Week programme she made on the virus. The Terrence Higgins Trust claimed it whipped up "unnecessary hysteria".

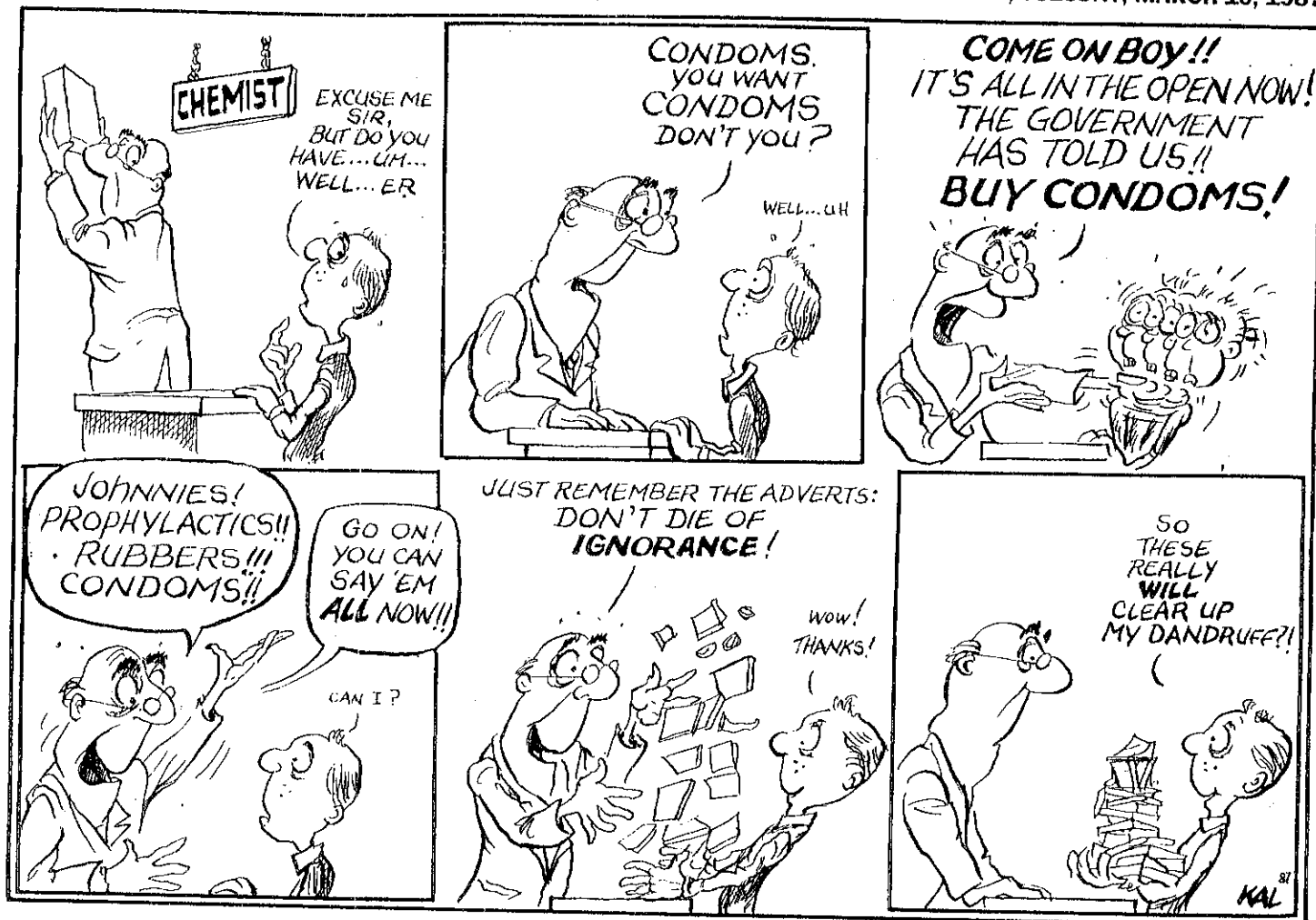
Sir Gerard insists that UKAF could still perform a valuable role in advising fund-raisers on the best way to spend their money. "I've just written again to the Health Minister, saying we can't go on without a grant.

"The UKAF still has money coming in from private sources, but these people want their money to go into research or care, not administration. It's an ideal case for a government grant. If we don't get one, survival is a question of weeks, rather than months."

Let's hope other famous figures involved in the campaign listen to the advice the real experts are giving.

Today
10th March 1987

TODAY, TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1987



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Wall Street Journal
10th March 1987

France Clears AIDS Drug

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

LONDON - Wellcome PLC said the French government cleared Retrovir, its new medicine for treating acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

The French Department of Social Affairs, Health and Family couldn't be reached for comment on the U.K. pharmaceutical concern's announcement.

France becomes the second country to permit sale of the drug, which clinical tests have shown to be effective in treating certain AIDS patients. Retrovir doesn't cure AIDS, though. The British government cleared the drug, generically known as azidothymidine, or AZT, last week. It was developed by Wellcome's U.S. unit, Burroughs-Wellcome Co.

Wellcome will allocate supplies of Retrovir to countries that approve its use according to the number of AIDS cases reported by those nations to the World Health Organization, said Philip Ward, Wellcome's assistant investor-relations manager.

As of Jan. 29, the health organization had received reports of 610 cases of AIDS in Britain and 1,040 cases in France, a WHO spokeswoman said. The British government said 731 cases of AIDS had been diagnosed in the U.K. as of Feb. 28, of which 377 so far have proven fatal.

Mr. Ward said distribution of Retrovir will begin in the U.K. "within weeks." He added that roughly half of AIDS patients are sufficiently ill to qualify for Retrovir treatment. The company has priced the drug world-wide at \$188 for 100 capsules of 100-milligram strength. For a patient, the drug could cost as much as \$10,000 a year.

On London's Stock Exchange yesterday, Wellcome's shares slid 27 pence (43 U.S. cents) to 458 pence (\$7.26), from Friday's close of 485 pence (\$7.69). Robin Gilbert, an analyst at James Capel & Co., blamed the drop on newspaper reports over the weekend that questioned Retrovir's effectiveness and suggested Wellcome's stock was overvalued.

5.

*French, Americans
Call Truce in Fight
On AIDS Discovery*

* * *
Scientists Neglected Research
In an Unseemly Squabble
For Royalties, Some Say

By MARILYN CHASE

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
SAN FRANCISCO — American and French scientists called a truce in their bitter dispute over discovery of the AIDS virus.

Simultaneous communiques from Washington and Paris said lawyers representing the U.S. National Institutes of Health and France's Pasteur Institute are seeking a settlement to the 15-month-old lawsuit in which the French claimed credit for the discovery and a share of royalties from sales of AIDS blood-test kits.

A spokesman for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services said in Washington that there was some speculation a settlement could be reached within a month. Both sides said any such settlement would recognize "the important contributions" of each, without "providing either party with an advantage over the other party."

The long-smoldering dispute brought issues of scientific credit and personal and national prestige into the courtroom. In December 1985, the Pasteur Institute filed a lawsuit charging that NIH scientist Robert C. Gallo committed a "breach of contract" by claiming his patent on research and virus samples of Pasteur scientist Luc Montagnier. Dr. Gallo's virus, named HTLV-3, and Dr. Montagnier's virus, named LAV, are virtually identical, differing by less than 2% of their genetic building blocks. Dr. Gallo has denied the charge.

The dispute has been viewed by many scientists—including the principal disputants—as an unseemly theater of ego in the midst of a fatal epidemic. It has diverted much of the scientists' time, inhibited scientific exchange, and spawned a spate of lurid tabloid-style coverage. Some observers ironically credit recent editorial polemics with pushing both sides back to the negotiating table.

SW

Television/Christopher Dunkley

AIDS breaks conspiracy of silence

There have been many remarkable aspects to the AIDS campaign on television. The speed with which it has been produced has been impressive, the co-operation between BBC and ITV has been unprecedented. The explicit nature of the language, after a lifetime of umbling euphemisms on the subject of sex, has been interesting. The courage of several presenters has been admirable, in particular one of Mike Smith's sensible handling of ITV's outspoken First Aids marathon aimed at teenagers, and Patti Goldwell's competence and common sense in dealing with callers to the Open Air evening programmes. (Incidentally, what has the woman been living on, benzodrine and black coffee? Having appeared on live shows every morning and late every night — or so it seems — she turns up in a hard hat as a DIY builder in *On The House* at the weekend!).

The role of the condom alone in the past fortnight could form the subject for a thesis. Throughout the entire history of the medium British television has cowered in wittering fear from Rubber Johnnie.

The IBA has steadfastly refused advertisements for condoms, and when the London Rubber Company (brought your sharps yet? be quick) decorated a racing car with Durex ads the BBC refused to film it. But in the past two weeks we have seen a man rolling a condom onto the great fingers of his lady companion on peak-time nationwide television. The spitting image puppets have chanted "We've put a condom on our Willie" and a model of Lord Whitelaw has appeared, sheathed in rubber. Ian Dury has rolled a condom onto a life-size plaster phallus. We have heard about banana flavoured condoms, black condoms, and traditional fish-skin condoms. As in the childhood game of repetition, the word has been said so often that it is becoming meaningless.

However, the most interesting aspect of the whole campaign is not the content of the programmes but the long term implications. How can the IBA possibly sustain its opposition to family planning commercials

now? If the Aids campaign works and the disease is successfully contained in Britain, will television be given the credit, or will people say "Typical of television, a lot of song and dance about nothing" and then take no notice next time some emergency gets television's blitz treatment? Above all could it be, as I suspect, that this campaign will eventually be seen as a classic illustration of the chasm which exists between television and much of the general public as regards so many social attitudes?

If you have been watching television exhaustively you may have gathered a couple of clues about the true risk of Aids among heterosexuals. *Horizon* for example, reported on 1,000 male heterosexual haemophiliacs who became antibody-positive six or seven years ago thanks to contaminated blood transfusions. In all the intervening years only about 5 per cent of their female partners have also become antibody positive. This led a doctor from the Royal Free to conclude that it was "very difficult" to transmit Aids heterosexually.

But that is not the message that has been hammered home everywhere else. What we have been told repeatedly is that

although the figures still show an overwhelming majority of Aids cases among male homosexuals and (to a smaller but growing extent) drug addicts and bisexuals "We are all at risk now." Because the incidence of Aids among British heterosexuals is still so low figures for heterosexual Aids in central Africa have often been held up on television as a frightener, without any mention of the crucial differences between Africa and the UK in regard to public health and the statistics for other sexually transmitted diseases. For facts of that sort you have had to look to newspapers.

The television campaign has given the impression, more often than not, of being primarily concerned with avoiding any possibility of promiscuous homosexuals being "blamed" for spreading the dread disease. This approach is commendably humane, particularly when contrasted with the apparent gloom behind some of the "Gay Plague!" headlines in the tabloid press. Yet in bending over backwards to avoid blaming homosexuals and then leaning much too far the other way in the pretence that heterosexual practices are just as risky, television may have shown how far out of touch it is with the public.

On one of *Open Air*'s phone-

in programmes last week one of those modern clergymen who look and sound like social workers declared that homosexuality was perfectly "natural." Oh not it wasn't, said the woman on the phone. Certainly, there was nothing "natural" about one man introducing his penis into another man's rectum. With a shock one recognised the authentic voice of a large part of the public usually missing from television. In the studio the clergyman and the representative of the Terence Higgins Trust grinned sheepishly and one of them muttered something about there being other ways for men to make love.

It was a fascinating example of what can happen when television puts aside the conventions. If you abandon the usual television taboos on words such as condom and vagina and even "rimming" — which Anna Ræburn defined eagerly the night before — and you allow the public onto the air, if only in sound, then you run the risk of breaking wide open the tacit but immensely strong conspiracy which has dominated public intercourse on British television for decades.

It is the conspiracy which prevents ordinary people, those not professionally involved in the mass media, from expressing what they really feel about homosexuality, race, capital punishment, feminism, and so on. Of course there is a liberal minded group among the public who argue for the continued abolition of capital punishment, the tolerance and decriminalisation of homosexuality, and "positive discrimination" in race. But it seems clear — not least from the results of the last two general elections — that there is in Britain a vast body of opinion, deeply conservative with a small "c," which is allowed only the smallest and most disproportionate expression on television (and radio, incidentally).

Capital punishment is a classic, and well-researched, example. Every opinion poll shows that an overwhelming majority of people, 85 per cent or more, favour a return to capital punishment. Parliament evades the weight of that opinion with an argument

(specious in my view, though I am a convinced abolitionist) about British practising "representative democracy" and not law by plebiscite. But what is television's argument for failing to give proper voice to such opinions?

So far as I can see virtually every "gatekeeper" or "agenda setter" in broadcasting, whether in charge of a channel, head of a drama department, or simply editor of a current affairs series, appears to be of that "liberal" sort which spends much of its time ensuring that the attitudes and feelings of many ordinary people are kept off the air. Whatever the BBC's real reasons for getting itself into such a pickle over Ian Curteis's *Faithlands* play, there is a large section of the public which believes the work has not been produced because it would have represented traditional conservative (or possibly Conservative) attitudes, pro-British and sympathetic to Mrs Thatcher.

You do not have to share either the conservative social attitudes or the Conservative political attitudes of many Britons to conclude that the tacit conspiracy within broadcasting to keep those attitudes out of programmes is both wrong-headed and potentially dangerous. By keeping right wing attitudes towards race, homosexuality, capital punishment and so on off the screen you ensure that they remain unquestioned and maintain an underground respectability.

If they were brought out into the open, their implications clearly illustrated, and their odiousness subjected to public ridicule, then we might begin to get a populace which actually believed in the liberal values currently receiving such widespread but unrepresentative public expression, instead of ridiculing them.

Of course it could all go wrong: the liberal mass media folk might lose the argument. But if their supposed belief in freedom of speech is anything more than a cunning piece of camouflage hiding a totalitarian soul, they should put it to the test and open up the airwaves, not just for AIDS campaigns but for all shades of public opinion.



Mike Smith

SW

Irish Times
11th March 1987

AIDS helpline ^{11/3/87} to be set up

An AIDS helpline is to be launched in Dublin early next month. Its aim will be to provide a telephone information service on AIDS prevention for the general public.

The new service will be launched on April 3rd, International AIDS Day, and is being provided by an AIDS Action Alliance aimed at co-ordinating work on all aspects of AIDS prevention. Groups affiliated to the AAA include the LGPSU, the ASTMS, Gay Health Action, the Well Woman Centre, the Irish Family Planning Association and Cairdre.

Experienced volunteers will staff the line after undergoing a 12-week course.

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY MARCH 11 1987

March 10 1987

PARLIAMENT

New Aids campaign to be directed at gays

The next stage of the Government's advertising campaign to educate the public about the dangers of Aids will be directed specifically at drug users and homosexuals, Mr Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Social Services, said during Commons question time.

The objective of the campaign was to ensure that people were given the facts about Aids, the threat it posed to society, how infection was transmitted and how individuals could help to control its spread.

The results of the latest Gallup opinion poll showed that encouraging progress was being made in meeting those objectives. The strategy for the next stage of the campaign was being

considered in the light of the results of research commissioned by the Government.

Mr John Townsend (Bridlington, C) said there was public concern that the campaign had been even-handed between homosexual and heterosexual activity despite the fact that the spread of Aids had come particularly from homosexuals.

What proportion of those who had died from the disease had been homosexual? Had not the time come to ban homosexual propaganda from schools and television?

Mr Fowler said, in respect of schools, that he entirely agreed with the point. It was right to say that deaths from the disease had been predominantly

among homosexuals, but ministers also had to take account of the fact that a number of cases had involved drug users sharing needles and also heterosexuals.

It was known that the virus could spread heterosexually so it was right to be prudent about the information given to the public on how it could be prevented.

Mrs Renee Short (Wolverhampton North East, Lab) said that the Select Committee on Social Services, of which she is chairman, had identified certain areas where very much more help would be needed. There was an urgent need for more clinical medical posts and counsellors and there would shortly be a very acute need for

more hospice places. There was also a need to educate young children in schools about how to avoid the disease.

Mr Fowler said that the Government, which looked forward to seeing the select committee's report on Aids, had shown by the resources it had devoted to public education and to research the importance it placed on fighting the spread of the virus.

Mr Patrick Nicholson (Leighbridge, C) said that even if the heterosexual community was at risk from Aids contamination, the time had come to make it clear that by far the greatest degree of risk was posed by drug abusers and sexual pervers.

Mr Fowler agreed and said the next

stage of the campaign would be specifically directed at those groups.

Mr Patrick Duffy (Sheffield, Alliance, Lab) wondered if Mr Fowler really believed that exhortation or even terror would be adequate, because they had not been sufficient in the United States where there were nearly 1,500,000 people infected by the virus, apart from the dead and dying.

In the next stage of the Government's campaign, Mr Fowler should consider, without preaching, that there were moral choices available for the family and the community.

Mr Fowler agreed and said it had always been made clear that it was

best to rely on a faithful, loving relationship. They needed to say something more than giving direct and straightforward health education.

Mr Patrick Thompson (Norwich North, C) wanted more details about talks between Mr Fowler and the Secretary of State for Education and Science (Mr Kenneth Baker) about the best way to get the moral and educational message across to young children.

Mr Fowler said that Mr Baker had recently issued a new leaflet for teachers about Aids and information on video would also be provided for schools.

SL

New anti-AIDS task force established

A NATIONAL Task Force, with a full-time Co-ordinator, has been established by the Catholic Hierarchy to combat AIDS.

At a news conference following the Spring meeting of the Bishops in Maynooth College yesterday, Bishop Joseph Cassidy of Clonfert said the Bishops pledged to place at the disposal of the Task Force all the resources it could muster.

Announcing an opening £20,000 to get the initiative started, Bishop Cassidy said he believed people who would not respond to the plight of AIDS sufferers were not worth their Christian salt.

The Task Force will be based initially in the Catholic Social Service Conference in Dublin and will reach out to the whole country. It will include people with expertise in various aspects of the problems associated with the disease.

Bishop Cassidy said the Task Force would work in co-operation with other bodies responding to the AIDS situation. This, he confirmed, would include the Department of Health which had its function in recommending condoms.

The Bishops would be approaching the issue from a purely Christian caring approach and would not impede the Department which also had its function.

Bishop Cassidy said that the function of the Task Force would be to educate people in positive

Christian lines. The Bishops believed the best response to be the moral response. Sex was best and safest within marriage. "The best vaccine for this virus is virtue," he stressed.

The Task Force would put particular emphasis on prevention and care. The needs to be met would include the need to make available accurate information about the medical, psycho-social and pastoral issues to priests, religious, seminarians, community and Church workers.

The Bishops felt there was a need for a great deal of further thought and action about the care of AIDS victims and HIV positive persons and their families in the home, hospital and hospice settings. These places would need to prepare for the increase in the number of victims which now appeared to be inevitable, warned the Bishop.

They believe chaplains in hospitals and prisons would need special training in pastoral care programmes, and counselling services for groups and individuals who have to be developed through existing Catholic agencies, both national and diocesan.

Recognising that the plague of AIDS would bring with it suffering, despair, isolation, fear and rejection, the Hierarchy pointed out that Christ's care for the sick and the outcast had always been seen as an inspiration for His Church.

SV

AIDS fight 'more important than drugs'

By RAY MANAGH

STOPPING the spreads of AIDS is now more important than controlling the abuse of drugs, an expert on the killer disease warned today.

And he said that if the spread of the deadly disease in Ireland followed trends in other countries, we could have more than 1,000 cases within three years.

Dr. Zachery Johnston, of the Eastern Health Board, said there could also be as many as 2,000 carriers of the virus walking around who had not developed the disease.

The threat of an increase in the spread of the disease in Ireland prompted new Health Minister Dr. Rory O'Hanlon to announce priority measures in combating it through a major education campaign soon to be announced.

Dr. Johnston, speaking on the Gay Byrne radio programme today, said there had been 18 cases of AIDS reported in Ireland, "which did not seem a lot".

But five years ago in America there were only about 80 cases reported. Now there were over 30,000 cases of AIDS there and half of the victims were dead.

Dr. Johnston said various factors may differ between Ireland and America, such as the number of partners a homosexual may have, the number of intravenous drugs users and the rate of spread between heterosexual couples.

"But the worrying thing is that experience in America and elsewhere has shown that for every single case of AIDS there are between 50 and 100 others who are infected and walking around feeling quite well," he said.

Dr. Johnston said the average incubation period for the development of AIDS was 4½ years and at the moment infection would appear to be confined to certain high-risk groups — intravenous drug abusers and, to a lesser extent, homosexual men.

"The danger is that the infection may spread into the rest of the community through heterosexual contacts by drug abusers who may have multiple heterosexual partners or homosexual men who may be bi-sexual," he said.

He dispelled beliefs that AIDS could be contacted through using cups, plates or cutlery used by infected persons or living with them or through kissing.

Sex and intravenous drugtaking were the two main culprits in the spread of the disease, he said.

SW

Evening Press
12th March 1987

Fans advised 'beer safer than sex'

Thousands of Welsh rugby fans are being urged to steer clear of casual sex when they travel to Edinburgh for the international match with Scotland.

Organisers of the Welsh AIDS campaign are telling supporters: "Stick to the beer and rugby -- it's much safer than casual sex."

Scotland play Wales on March 21, and an estimated 10,000 Welsh fans are expected to travel to the Scottish capital, where the scale of the AIDS problem is second only to London.

About half the 2,000 intravenous drug users in Edinburgh are believed to be AIDS carriers and some 300 are women, according to health experts.

There is concern because infected female drug addicts have turned to prostitution to finance their heroin habit.

Independent
12th March 1987

'Virtue best vaccine to halt AIDS' say Bishops

By JOSEPH POWER

Religious Affairs Correspondent
THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS, in establishing a national task force with a full-time co-ordinator to combat AIDS has also pledged to place at its disposal all the resources it can muster.

An initial £20,000 is to be donated by the Bishops to get the initiative off the ground. It was announced at the end of the Spring meeting of the Hierarchy at Maynooth, yesterday.

Bishop Joseph Cassidy, the spokesman for the Bishops, said people who

would not respond to the plight of AIDS sufferers in a practical way were not worth their Christian salt.

The task force will be based initially in the Catholic Social Service Conference in Dublin and will reach out to the whole country. It will include people with expertise in various aspects of the problems associated with the disease.

Bishop Cassidy said the unit will work in co-operation with other bodies which are responding to the AIDS situation. This, he confirmed, would include the Department of Health which had its function in recommending condoms.

The bishops would be approaching the issue from a purely Christian caring approach and would not impede the Department which also had its function, he said.

Bishop Cassidy said that the function of the unit would be to educate people in positive Christian lines.

The bishops believed the best response to be the moral response.

Sex is best and safest within marriage "the best vaccine for this virus is virtue", he stressed.

The new unit would put particular emphasis on prevention and care. The needs to be met would include the need to make available accurate information about the medical, psycho-social and pastoral issues to priests, religious, seminarians, community and Church workers.

In the context of Prevention, the bishops believe the need for information and support was great in order to prevent discrimination and to ensure just treatment of sufferers.

There was a need, the bishops believed to help schools provide accurate information within the context of a programme for positive Christian living. Moreover, there was the need to continue to improve Church support for programmes to combat drug abuse.

The Catholic bishops felt a need for a great deal of further thought and action about the care of AIDS victims and HIV positive persons and their families in the home, hospital and hospice settings.

These places would need to prepare for the increase in the number of victims which now appears to be inevitable, warned the bishops.

The bishops went on to stress the urgency of bringing home to the whole Catholic community the responsibility to pray for victims and their families.

Recognising that the plague of AIDS would bring with it suffering, despair, isolation fear and rejection, the Hierarchy pointed out that Christ's care for the sick and the outcast has always been seen as an inspiration for His Church.

Meanwhile an AIDS helpline is being launched next month to provide much needed information on the disease.

No concern over mixed marriages

THERE have been no serious cases of difficulty or misunderstanding in mixed marriages in Ireland during the past year, according to an Inter-Church Standing Committee, which yesterday expressed general satisfaction in a report to the Catholic Bishops.

The committee agreed that it was helpful when clergy established good working relations among themselves. Difficulties only seemed to arise when priests and ministers did not know each other sufficiently well.

During the year there was discussion regarding priests and ministers who were made unwelcome when the marriage took place in the other church.

Pointing out that there had been great growth on a pastoral level on mixed marriages, Bishop Joseph Cassidy announced that the four main Christian churches had now produced guidelines which recognised the divisions on a doctrinal level.

The committee considered the appointment of people in different areas with a special interest in, and responsibility for, mixed marriages. It was explained that the object of this, was not to bypass the clergy of the couple concerned, but to have some more fully in-



● Bishop Cassidy... No serious difficulty.

formed person to assist at the request of local clergy.

Joint classes of mixed couples have been very successful in Dublin, the committee reported. It was stressed that these gave assistance in preparation for marriage as a whole and did not deal only with church aspects of marriage. The courses were drawn up and fully supported by the churches involved.

Arising from the community tension in Northern Ireland, the report said special difficulties existed for inter-church couples. It was noted that the place of work could be an area of stress and tension, as well as the neighbourhood of the home.

SL

Hierarchy plans to set up task force on AIDS

By Joe Carroll

THE Catholic Bishops' Conference has decided to set up a national task force with a full-time pastoral care co-ordinator to deal with the prevention of AIDS and the care of victims of the disease.

An initial budget of £20,000 has been set aside for the work, the Hierarchy spokesman, Bishop Joseph Cassidy, announced yesterday in Maynooth following the spring meeting of the conference. The national task force will be based in the Catholic Social Service Conference in Dublin but will operate for the whole country. The full-time co-ordinator is expected to be appointed shortly and the task force will include other people with expertise in various aspects of the problems associated with AIDS.

The Hierarchy's task force will work with other bodies responding to the AIDS situation, including the Department of Health, but Bishop Cassidy said that so far there had been no communication between the Hierarchy and the Department about their AIDS campaign, which has been postponed. There would be a meeting between the Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin, Dr Williams, and officials in the Department as reported this week in *The Irish Times*, but he would be exchanging views with them on behalf of the Hierarchy, not representing the Hierarchy, Dr Cassidy said.

Under the heading of prevention, the task force would be providing education and information about the medical, psycho-social and pastoral issues arising from AIDS, to priests,

religious, seminarians, community and Church-workers. Schools would be provided with "accurate information within the context of a programme for a positive Christian living" and there would be improved Church support for

East Germany highlights AIDS: page 5.

programmes to combat drug abuse.

Asked about the Church's attitude to a future Government AIDS campaign which would recommend the use of condoms, Dr Cassidy said that aspect had been addressed in the statement of the Bishops' Standing Committee last January and was not discussed at yesterday's meeting.

Under the heading of care, the Church's task force will be looking at how hospitals could prepare for the increase in AIDS victims "which now appears to be

The Hierarchy did not know what was in the Government campaign but the bishops had "no reason to believe that the Department of Health would not discharge its function in a responsible way."

Bishop Cassidy said that the

inevitable". Chaplains in hospitals and prisons will need special training in pastoral care programmes and counselling services will need to be developed through existing Catholic agencies.

The bishops feel that the consequences of AIDS are so appalling that there is no human predicament that calls for such support and solidarity. "Unless we respond with practical aid and compassion, we are not worth our Christian salt — that is the message we want to go out loud and clear from this conference," Dr Cassidy said.

The Hierarchy also welcomed the latest report from the Inter-Church Standing Committee on Mixed Marriages which expressed "general satisfaction that no serious cases of difficulty or misunderstanding required the com-

mittee's attention" in the past year. Where difficulties did arise they seemed to be of a "minor nature and to be only isolated instances, not ones that had the support of the Church authorities."

The report states that "frequently the social and cultural implications were of greater significance to those involved than the theological differences." Special difficulties exist for inter-Church couples in Northern Ireland arising from community tension. It was pointed out that the place of work could be an area of stress and tension as well as the neighbourhood of the home. "As Churches we should be aware of the problems in the place of work and offer as much support and help as is possible to these couples," the report says.



Bishop Joseph Cassidy ... the best vaccine for this virus is virtue.

Church leaders set up Aids task force

THE Roman Catholic hierarchy has set up an Aids task force in Eire.

It will include a full time pastoral care co-ordinator as a response to the threat of the deadly disease.

The move was announced yesterday after the bishops' spring meeting in Maynooth.

The task force will include people with expertise in the problems associated with Aids and have an initial budget of £20,000.

Announcing the initiative which will be based in Dublin, Bishop Joseph Cassidy, principal spokesman for the hierarchy, said the group would put particular emphasis on prevention and care.

There will also be an emphasis on schools to provide accurate information within the context of a programme for "positive Christian living" and the need

Experts recruited to combat disease

to continue and improve church support for programmes to combat drug abuse.

The bishops said there would be a need to bring home to the whole Roman Catholic community the responsibility to pray for the victims and their families.

"We trust the establishment of the new task force would mark the beginning of a response from the Irish Church which would be generous, practical and compassionate," they said.

The meeting also heard that the inter-church standing committee on mixed marriages had no serious cases of difficulty or misunderstanding in the past year.

There would seem to be a growing understanding between the churches at parish and district level, the bishops said.

They also welcomed the growing pastoral cooperation between the churches at the level of pastoral care of couples before and after marriage.

Meanwhile, a Tory MP yesterday called for a day of morals to campaign against homosexuals — who he blamed for spreading Aids.

Mr Nicholas Winterton said the day should be similar to National No Smoking Day.

He said: "If we are prepared to take such a moral stand on alcohol and

nicotine why should we not take a moral stand on homosexuality and say it can damage your health because it can and does. It is unnatural and can damage your health.

"If we can do it with cigarette smokers should we not have a non-homosexual activity day? We are talking about a killer disease."

Recent Aids programmes on television suggesting that "unbridled sexual activity is not only inevitable, but the normal way people act", has been condemned by the Archbishop of Glasgow.

Archbishop Thomas Winning said countless people had expressed to him their anger and disgust at what had been presented.

"Obscenity and shock tactics can be seen for what they are, but the sinister dismissal of the Christian perspective in the recent saturation coverage by the BBC and ITV is a lamentable disservice to viewers," said Archbishop Winning.

The Times
12th March 1987

Stamping on Aids

Reykjavik (Reuter) —
Iceland is to quarantine
carriers of the Aids virus
who continue to have sex
with uninfected people.

Mr Pall Sigurdsson,
health ministry secretary-
general, said yesterday that
the authorities were look-
ing for a place to house
"careless" Aids carriers.
"It may be very difficult to
identify those who qualify
for this extreme measure,
but we live in a society
where everybody knows
everyone else," he said.

● DELHI: A Swiss man
arrested on drugs charges
and found to be suffering
from Aids was deported
from India yesterday on a
special ambulance plane.

Today
12th March 1987



IN AID OF AIDS: Andy Summers, Elaine Paige, Holly Johnson and Katie Rabett yesterday. PICTURE: MIKE MOORE

Edward invited to star in Aids show

PRINCE Edward has been asked to take part in a massive fund-raising campaign for Aids victims.

Other members of the Royal Family have also been invited to International Aids Day at which 100,000 free condoms will be distributed.

The Prince is being lined up for the part of Fortinbras in a musical version of Shakespeare's Hamlet called Will Aids. Theatre producer Ned Sherrin said: "I think he will be great in the part."

If Edward agrees, he will appear at Sadler's Wells in London on April 12. Stars due to appear include

EXCLUSIVE by AVRIL CONNARD

Francesca Annis, Alan Bates, Virginia McKenna and Anita Dobson from EastEnders. An answer is expected from Buckingham Palace today.

International Aids Day is officially being celebrated on April 3, but events have already begun around the country.

Among those taking part are Andy Summers of The Police, singer Elaine Paige and Katie Rabett whose name was once briefly linked with Prince Andrew.

One of the main attractions

will be a concert at Wembley on April 1. So far Bob Geldof and George Michael have agreed to take part amid claims that it is being snubbed by major rock bands who fear being linked to the "gay plague."

Frankie Goes to Hollywood's lead singer Holly Johnson, who will be appearing, said: "I am in complete sympathy with them. It took months for me to decide but the pros outweighed the cons."

The campaign hopes to raise £2 million for research and is being organised by the Terrence Higgins Trust and Action against Aids.



EDWARD: Palace decision on role expected today

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The INSIDE page

DIARY by SARAH GIBBINGS



Sting is sent an Aids SOS



PLEA: Andy Summers

☐ THERE is nothing like a worthy cause to re-unite a rock band, and the Aids concert at Wembley next month is proving no exception.

Now The Police — who haven't appeared together for a year — may be persuaded by guitarist Andy Summers to reunite to headline the event.

He spent yesterday pleading with his former Police colleagues to get back together for a Wembley concert on April 3.

And he's so keen for them to appear together that he says he will bully them into going on stage if necessary.

The group last united for the

1986 Amnesty tour of America, and Andy believes their future could lie in annual reunions to raise money for worthy causes.

The 44-year-old guitarist explains, "I think it's a great idea to reunite the Police for this concert, and I have put the idea to the boys. We're all here in the country at the moment, so it's possible."

"Aids is more than enough of a good reason for getting back together again."

Sting has been the most difficult to get hold of lately, having spent much of the past six months relaxing on the American west coast with girlfriend Trudie Styler and their children.

Andy is angry that more top

stars haven't already agreed to appear at the concert.

"Big stars are always slow to respond to causes like this," he says. "Someone has to take the plunge and then everyone else joins in. It's a shame that it has to take something like this to bring people together again. I hope the Aids concert will have the same effect as Live Aid."

Those who have agreed to appear so far include George Michael, Holly Johnson — who officially leaves Frankie Goes To Hollywood this week — Bob Geldof, and Jimmy Somerville of The Communards, who will team up with his old band Bronski Beat for an Aids concert in Brixton, south London, the next day.



RESTING: Sting and girlfriend Trudie Styler

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AIDS campaign awaits Govt. OK

THE LAUNCH of a major public campaign to stop the spread of AIDS — deferred since January — is one of the urgent tasks facing new Health Minister Rory O'Hanlon.

But today, a spokesman for the Department of Health said they had "no idea" when the public information package will go to the Cabinet.

The package, which includes a "multi-media" campaign using TV, radio, newspaper and poster

By MICHAEL LAVERY

advertising, must be submitted by the Minister to the Cabinet for a decision.

The Coalition Government sent the campaign, originally scheduled to be launched in mid-January, back to the Department of Health and the Health Education Bureau (HEB) for "redesign".

The Government believed that not enough emphasis was placed on the risk of transmitting HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

which causes AIDS — by drug abusers sharing contaminated needles.

The "redesigned" information package has a larger section dealing with this risk, while another section is aimed at the hazard of spreading the disease through homosexual activity.

A spokesperson for the Health Education Bureau, which co-operated with the Department of Health in producing the AIDS information package, said they have redesigned the package but had "no real indication" when it

would be submitted to the Cabinet.

It is understood that the "redesigned" campaign mentions condoms as one means of curtailing the spread of HIV.

The "multi-media" advertising campaign, if given Government approval, will be backed up by booklets which will be available in doctors surgeries and chemists shops.

Senior Department of Health officials are due to meet a member of the Catholic hierarchy shortly to outline the contents of the AIDS education programme.

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Priest on Aids challenge

13/3/87

THE priest tipped to head the Catholic Church's new task force to combat Aids said yesterday he did not foresee any conflict developing between the Church and the Government on ways of fighting the disease.

Fr. Paul Lavelle, who has worked on the Dublin diocesan Aids programme, is now likely to become the pastoral care co-ordinator as part of the Church's task force.

The task force, to be based in Dublin, is to have an initial cash injection of £20,000. And the appointment of the full-time co-ordinator will be announced soon.

Fr. Lavelle said over 800 people were now infected with the Aids virus and the new task force will have to look at the possibilities of using hospices over the next two to

three years.

The use of premises and the provision of religious orders prepared to give their services to Aids patients, were two areas where the Church could help, he said.

Referring to the condoms issue, Fr. Lavelle said that if the Government suggested their use to prevent the spread of the disease, that was its responsibility and it had an obligation and duty in that regard. But that did not mean that the Church would agree with it.

Meanwhile, the Minister for Health, Dr. O'Hanlon, welcomed the statement on Aids made by the Catholic Bishops Conference on Wednesday and their intention to co-operate in the fight against the disease.

The Minister said Aids posed a

serious threat to society which can only be combatted if all the resources available are brought to bear on the problem in a responsible, humane and effectively co-ordinated way.

He welcomed the positive initiative which the bishops have now taken to provide pastoral and counselling services and to further investigate how the resources can best be used.

Dr. O'Hanlon said he noted their intention to work with the Department of Health and will be glad of their co-operation in the development of services to cope with Aids.

● The Church of Ireland House of Bishops warned yesterday that only a return to Christian principles could stop the spread of Aids.

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Irish Times
13th March 1987

**INFORMATION ON
AIDS**

Sir, — The National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs of the Republic of Ireland supports the ICA in its call for an explicit campaign on AIDS through education.

BPW is also gravely and increasingly concerned about AIDS. At a recent inter-club forum on "Women in Health" reports were received on research into many areas affecting women today. Among these was a very comprehensive report on AIDS which served to underline our already growing concern on the need for some positive action.

The ICA, representing such a large section of our community, is to be congratulated on its decisive approach, and we look for immediate implementation of their recommendation by those in authority. — Yours, etc.,

OONAGH MANNING,
PRO, BPW,
22 St Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2

SL

Scots preparing for large surge in Aids deaths, MPs told

By Martin Fletcher, Political Reporter

Authorities in Edinburgh are preparing for a dramatic explosion in the number of Aids deaths from next year because of the unique circumstances in which the disease was introduced to the city.

Deaths in the region of the capital could by then be one or two a day. MPs on the urgent parliamentary inquiry into Aids (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) were told yesterday during their two-day visit to Edinburgh.

Members of the Social Services Committee were also told that the police had exacerbated the problem through their insistence on taking needles away from drug addicts when arresting them.

Evidence given by doctors to the committee said that Aids had reached Edinburgh, possibly through an American addict, in September 1983.

Its arrival coincided with an "epidemic" of heroin addiction and widespread needle sharing in the city, leading to the rate of incidence of infection among tested addicts increasing from nought to 50 per cent in two years, "the fastest rate yet recorded in the world".

There were now estimated to be at least 2,000 Aids

carriers in the city. Some were already showing symptoms of the disease. With an incubation period of four years and an expectation that one in five carriers will develop the disease, at least 400 terminally ill Aids patients were expected next year.

That contrasts with just 16 cases of Aids and 11 deaths in Scotland so far.

"We are waiting for an enormous surge and trying very hard to equip ourselves", Mr Roger Kent, director of social work for Lothian Regional Council, said.

"At the moment we are keeping our heads above water but we have to get ready for something very, very much greater which is about to hit us."

Existing medical and social services would have to be dramatically expanded and staff retrained. The budget could be "completely skewed up". Council representatives pleaded either for more government money or to be allowed to spend more on Aids treatment without incurring grant penalties.

Allegations about the police were made during the MPs' visit to an Edinburgh drug advice centre and came from

organizations helping addicts

They are supported by a government committee on Aids infection in Scotland which reported last autumn that one explanation for the rapid spread of the virus was police emphasis on removing syringes and needles.

"The resultant non-availability of sterile equipment in the city appears to have contributed to extensive sharing of equipment", the report said. Police forces in other cities were less rigid, it said, calling for a review of procedures to ensure "they do not prejudice infection control measures".

Mr William Sutherland, chief constable of Lothian and Borders police, agreed with MPs yesterday that Aids was now a greater threat than heroin but said that the law required injection equipment to be produced in court as evidence.

He said he would co-operate with the experimental scheme to exchange old needles for new which begins in Edinburgh next month, but feared it might appear to condone drug abuse. Greater emphasis should be given to discouraging the young from using drugs, he said.

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