Print Media

HIV Ireland

National HIV and AIDS Archives

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HIV Ireland

23rd to 31st January 1987
Board in bid to beat AIDS

The strategy on AIDS adopted by the Eastern Health Board is to include making more direct approaches to people in high risk categories.

This was revealed yesterday by Dr Angela Green, acting chief administrative medical officer of the board, at its monthly meeting.

She was responding to fears expressed by James Ford-Smyth who said that the board's strategy did not go far enough and that it should be more explicit.

Mr Ford-Smyth said that rather than having a "blanket approach" to advice and publicity, the campaign should aim to message at people in high risk categories and be "more specific."

Board vice-chairman Mrs Anne McCollum said she would "like to see a more positive approach to education people about the subject and to discourage promiscuity and encourage fidelity."

But Mr Ford-Smyth said he thought it was "immoral and wicked" to be talking in such moral terms.

The Government should give people specific information on the practices which were dangerous, he said.

Meanwhile plans to screen people anonymously for AIDS have collapsed, prompting fears that the fight against the disease will be hampered by a lack of vital information.

Over the past six months the Medical Research Council's working party on AIDS has sought to obtain doctors' support for surveys to find out how widespread the infection is.

But Prof Sir Richard Doll, chairman of one of the working party's committees, said yesterday: "So far I have failed to obtain it."

"This causes my colleagues on the sub-committee and I serious concern as the public health authorities and the general public need to have reliable information about the prevalence of infection and the rate at which that prevalence is changing."
The Department of Health last night denied that people worried by the AIDS disease have fewer advice facilities in Northern Ireland than those in Great Britain.

A voluntary group runs a phone-in service for 2½ hours twice a week — compared with a 24-hour service on the mainland.

A department spokesman said: "They can phone the special number — 0345-58115 — which, although it is outside the Province, is only charged at local rates.

"And there is the special Freephone number — 1800 669-777 — which they can use."

The Government's advice leaflet, now arriving in homes across the Province, says the advice number is available from 7:30 to 10 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays.

Meanwhile, a Free Presbyterian Church minister last night called on Christians in the Province to send the Government's AIDS leaflet back to the Department of Health.

The Rev. Ivan Foster said: "In essence the Government's advice is you should not murder anyone but if you must, make sure you don't leave any clues behind to connect you with the crime."

He said the source of the disease was among the gay community and drug addicts and both seemed to have been sheltered from public reproach and blame.

"Such a wrong attitude to this 20th Century evil will cost this society very dearly and all because the Government is willing to permit the perverted lifestyle of a few," the DUP man said.

"Christians should put this offensive literature in an unsealed envelope and send it back to the DHSS — that is what I have done."

A Presbyterian minister, however, has poured scorn on the claim that AIDS is God's wrath on homosexuals. The Rev. Bob Cobain, who is Press officer of the Church, said: "If it is, why is it that the group in society least likely to catch it is the female homosexual group, lesbians?"

Writing in the latest issue of the Presbyterian Herald, he said: "Has God only got it in for men? Why is He taking so long to conjure up something for rapists and child-abusers?"

Mr. Cobain said he believed AIDS was the natural consequence of sin, because society had disobeyed the ground rules for living. "We are not made for promiscuity," he said.

A Bill aimed at checking the spread of AIDS and identifying the number of carriers of the disease in Britain received the backing of MPs in the Commons yesterday.

The AIDS (Control) Bill, introduced by Edinburgh Labour MP Gavin Strang, received an unopposed second reading.

It was broadly welcomed by Health Minister Tony Newton, who said it would help fight the spread of the disease in Britain.

The Minister pledged that the Government would continue with its explicit advertising campaign on the dangers of AIDS. Future campaigns would be even more detailed and explicit.

The measure places a statutory responsibility on district health authorities in England and Wales and health boards in Scotland to produce detailed annual reports on the prevalence of AIDS in their areas.
PROMISCUOUS PADDYS

Name supplied: London, NW1

AS an Irish-born landlady who has rented accommodation to young Irish people, I am appalled at the promiscuous behaviour of some of them once they leave Holy Ireland behind. What is happening over there? Have all moral standards been thrown to the wind? Some Irish girls seem to think nothing of one-night stands — with all the risks involved, from pregnancy to AIDS. Are Irish youth really as promiscuous and immoral as some of the ones I see coming over here?

Treat contempt with contempt!
Quarantine for all AIDS victims

Peter C. Jackson,
St. Columba's Lodge,
Killiney,
Co. Dublin.

CONCERNING the recent statement of the Catholic bishops regarding AIDS, I find it naive of them to expect everybody to be sexually moral, considering that about three per cent, at least, are always going to go astray.

However, when they say free condoms for homosexuals would increase the risk of spreading AIDS they are quite right, since the failure rate of some condoms can be as high as 10 per cent.

We must, if we are to contain the AIDS problem, have a policy of long term quarantine for all AIDS sufferers and those with AIDS antibodies (excluding those innocent victims, e.g. haemophiliacs, who have contracted the disease through a blood transfusion).
Boxers risk AIDS — Eastwood

BOXING MANAGER Barney Eastwood is worried that his top stable of boxers could contract the killer disease AIDS. The Belfast bookmaker admitted last night that he was "horrified" at what happens to boxers in the ring when they are cut.

He said he had watched corner men sticking antiseptic cotton wool swabs in their mouths. "It's distasteful and dangerous," he said.

The shrewd fight manager who took Barry McGuigan to a world title and is now guiding middleweight Herol Graham to the top revealed: "I'm truly horrified because sports doctors have openly admitted that AIDS virus can be transmitted by saliva.

"Yet these swab sticks are coming out of seconds mouth and applied straight onto boxers cuts." He said many young boxers climbing into the ring did not even see their corner man until seconds before the fight.

He is so concerned that he has now written to the British Boxing Board of Control's medical representative in the North, Dr. Pat MacHugh. In his letter he tells Dr. MacHugh: "I wish you to raise this appalling practice with the Boxing Board in London right away. This is a matter of extreme urgency.

"It is absolutely essential that a directive is sent out covering all promotions in the U.K. and Ireland — banning this practice now."

Already Eastwood has banned his own fighters' handlers from the swab stick habit but he realises the risk from cross-infection to his stable if opponents inadvertently catch the virus.

The former Irish champion boxer, Fred Teildt, claimed yesterday that he had never, in all his years of boxing and coaching, seen the corner men put the swabs into their own mouths.

"Boxing people are very clean, particularly the 'cuts men'. I've seen a lot of 'cuts men' over the years, and I've never seen one put the swabs into his mouth."
Cork doctor criticises Government AIDS leaflet

By Anne Ryan

THE Health Education Bureau leaflet on AIDS was last night criticised as being unspecific, at a time when education and information are the only known cure for the killer disease.

Dr. Jack Cantillon, of the Victoria Hospital Sexually Transmitted Diseases Clinic, claimed the leaflet is difficult to acquire and that it does not "confront the issues squarely."

Speaking at a Cork Speakers Club debate on 'AIDS, Drugs and Moral Decay', Dr. Cantillon alleged that the leaflet warns against unsafe sexual practices without stating what these are.

He said that in Ireland a person has to write specifically for the leaflet which he claims is a deterrent. "The leaflet is of no good if it can only be got by applying for it," he said. In England a detailed and factual leaflet was posted through the door of every household.

Abstinence and faithful monogamy is the only way of avoiding AIDS, Dr. Cantillon said. However for people who cannot comply with this ideal, the use of condoms is strongly recommended.

He stressed the reason the use of a condom is recommended is to reduce the spread of the killer virus and not to encourage promiscuity, as some bishops suggested.

Dr. Cantillon praised the work of the Gay Health Action group. He said they should be given the funds they urgently need for their information campaign to combat the spread of the disease. And he said the campaign has proved remarkably successful.

Dr. Cantillon said he agreed with the viewpoint that "we cannot afford the luxury of a moral debate" about a disease that has the potential to kill so many people. Indulging in moral condemnation only alienates those we must seek to change and help, he said.

Meanwhile, the chief of the Cork Drug Squad, Detective Sergeant Paul Mangan, stated that Cork has a growing drug problem which could become an "alarming" problem if it is allowed to escalate.
William Webb Ellis must be spinning in his grave in Paris. At the end of the national squad training session at Lansdowne Road a fortnight ago yesterday, the players were brought in behind closed doors to hear some words of advice from Dr. Mick Molloy, one of the RFU's medical team.

Mick's address was not concerned with sports injuries, their treatment or their prevention, or related matters. No sirree!

But the Football Association's much-publicised initiative by a good ten days or so, Mick told the lads all about AIDS. Which is no laughing matter, most definitely; nevertheless, I hear that his audience found it hard to keep serious.

And let's be clear about this: Mick was discussing the prevention of AIDS — purely in precautionary terms — on the field of play, and not in any other context.

Rugby players, of course, do not indulge in the sort of consenting-adults-in-public behavior so beloved of soccer stars, but still, it seems, there are minor risks which should be avoided.

Front row forwards run the most risk, apparently, if what my informant says is correct. Apparently, Mick Molloy warned the squad members to pay proper attention to cuts when locked in the scrum against the opposition.

And there are not many activities which bring you into closer physical contact than a scrum, or a ruck or a maul.

Well, there are, but I can't discuss them in a family newspaper. But I hope that the lads were told all about AIDS, off the field, as well.
Anderton has a moral duty

WHY, according to your editorial (TODAY, January 19), should Chief Constable Anderton be silent about his faith as long as he remains a police chief?

You point out that he holds an "important and sensitive job". Surely this is the place where the highest moral standards should be seen?

You would have him separate his faith from his lifestyle; you call his views indulgent. But who are we to edit and amend the Lord's standards?

Paul & Cynthia Stokes, Birmingham

Direct line

COUNCILLOR Eddie Gallagher said: "I doubt if even the Pope would claim to have a direct line to God...we have a Chief Constable who appears to think he has to phone Heaven before every decision."

May I tell him kindly that that is exactly what every Christian has and does?

Mrs Jill F Rowe, Godalming, Surrey

Whose law?

WHEN will we hear the last of this self-righteous policeman?

It's so easy to hide under the cloak of "Christianity" and spout bigoted views that he claims come from God. But the real God is a caring being, not a cruel beast.

To borrow his phrase, the man could be accused of swigging in a cesspit of blinkered religion. Thank God all Christians aren't the same.

Mr Anderton should stick to the law of the land.

Annie Humphries, Barnes, London

Charge them

WHY stop at confiscating only proven ill-gotten gains? All criminals should have to pay as much as possible from their assets towards the cost of their wrongdoing to the community.

No one should be beguiled, but all luxuries down to pens and calculators should be seized and sold. And, for petty nuisance offences, the penalty should be a bill including the cost of police and court time, the fine and compensation — to be repaid in cash, work or prison.

As it is, it probably costs the taxpayer £100 to collect a £10 fine.

I recall a case where bookmakers were cheated and everyone laughed: "They can afford it." But not many observed that months later the cheats were caught and jailed at a cost to the public of more than £50,000.

Brian Wallis, Margate, Kent

Don't slip up

MR SPEAKMAN (Letters, January 18) complained about shopkeepers not clearing snow and ice from their frontages.

However, a newspaper recently reported that an accident on a footpath could lead to a court case against a person who had cleared it. Council advice, the report said, was to leave footways alone.

Also, when clearing the front of our shop during the bad weather I was told by several passers-by that I was only making it worse and to leave it alone. However, we did put salt down, which was worthwhile. So, I cannot imagine any shopkeepers clearing their frontages when they have to worry all day long until the weather clears that someone might slip up, then sue.

Colin Wellard, Caister-on-Sea, Norfolk

Death wish

ONLY the physically and mentally incurable can have a death wish — not counting the odd martyr or the blue-eyed politician. Nuclear weapons are lunacy.

So, perhaps we should rely on votes, not 41 minutes (TODAY, January 18), to keep us from the nuclear brink.

J E Brookshaw, South Dale, Hereford
Aids warning to the blind

BLIND PEOPLE are to receive a braille warning about the dangers of Aids.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind is sending out 8,000 special copies of the government leaflet and also making special cassette tapes.

There is no evidence that the blind are at particular risk, said an RNIB spokes...
New hope over Aids

HEALTH Secretary Norman Fowler returned from his Aids fact-finding tour of America last night confident that Britain can escape a major outbreak of the virus.

He was backed by American specialist Dr Andrew Moss, who is on attachment at Middlesex Hospital's Aids unit in London.

Dr Moss said: "The British government is far more aggressive than in the US in the use of its advertising material and TV commercials. I think people can be grateful."
B. News
27th January 1987

Di is spared
Aids blush

The Princess of Wales watched shots from a frank video yesterday in which young people tackled the problem of their own sexuality and Aids.

The Princess, who has been kept aware of the fight against Aids by visiting patients in hospitals and day centres, spent 40 minutes at the headquarters of the British Red Cross in London.

She was hearing about plans to develop the charity's youth work to meet the challenges of the 1990s.

She was given a preview of a video education package aimed at 13-to-16-year-olds which highlights the HIV-Aids issue, from the point of young people.

Christine Reeves, director of the Red Cross's Services Division, said: "We were able to tell the Princess that one of the major comments of young people we have talked to was 'Thank God someone is doing something because our schools and parents are not.'"

The shot the Princess was not shown featured a teenager using a four-letter word and asking if "... meant making love, why was it said to be such an awful word?"

The video will be launched later this year and will be made available to young Red Cross members, schools and other youth organisations.
Cork Examiner
27th January 1987

AIDS: media saturation no yardstick

Sir—There is presently maximum saturation by the media on the subject of AIDS. I presume most people are totally confused at this stage. They should also be completely bored with the subject since total saturation implies continual repetition of a confused mass of contradictory information and misinformation.

There are some facts about AIDS which are definitely known. Most other information is either speculation or of doubtful origin. Large sums of money have been allotted to research and some new knowledge about this dread disease is coming to hand.

What do we definitely know about AIDS? Firstly it is caused by a particular virus which is being identified. The most recent research indicates that the lymphocytes found within the rectum and colon of those afflicted contain larger numbers of the virus than any other cells including the blood lymphocytes.

Second, known fact is that those afflicted can be identified by a blood test, and there may be a lengthy incubation period. Third, known fact is that medical science has no effective vaccine or treatment. Fourth, known fact is that the disease is overwhelming a disease of those who practise sodomy.

Unfortunately the disease has spilt over. A considerable number of haemophiliacs and a few people who received contaminated blood before screening of blood was introduced, did contract the disease. Drug addicts who may use dirty and contaminated needles for intravenous injections may contract the disease. So far, very few females have so far been infected either from contaminated blood or semen.

It seems evident therefore that those at risk can be identified. Those who practise sodomy, drug addicts who may use contaminated needles and the few females who may have sexual intercourse with a victim or carrier of the virus.

Now to the grey area of knowledge. How is the disease spread?

Certainly it can be spread by direct blood contamination. It is definitely spread by the practice of sodomy.

It was thought to be due to entry of the virus via abrasions etc. It may not be so, since recent research cited above shows presenece of the virus in large numbers in the intra-rectal and colonic lymphocytes.

Females can be infected via direct blood and by infected semen. It is of interest to note, however, that vaginal lymphocytes have not been found to contain the virus in female carriers.

Now that we have AIDS, I would incline to the view that its elimination is remote. Like the other venereal diseases, it will remain endemic. Syphilis is still with us despite penicillins etc.

Since AIDS is such a fatal disease, one would certainly expect health authorities to make genuine attempts to contain the disease. The efforts made so far are almost a joke.

Those who have advised to the use of condoms for the whole population are wishful thinkers or worse. What have condoms done for the other V.D.s (620,000 cases in Britain last year). Explicit media information bulletins beamed at children and non-promiscuous family groups are frankly irresponsible and quite useless as are all "panic" measures.

Any campaign should be aimed at those at risk. The whole population is not at risk. Drug addicts and promiscuous people may be at risk. Sodomists are certainly at risk.

Church leaders are therefore correct in saying that if people are serious in attempting to fight the plague of AIDS, a more responsible attitude to sexual morals should be a priority.

It is surely time that society ceased to give free rein to those trendy promoters of permissiveness and promiscuity.

Having said that it would be regrettable if any "witch hunt" mentality was organised against homosexuals. Only a small number of those with a homosexual orientation practise sodomy, just as only a percentage of heterosexuals indulge in adultery. But it is time we again called sodomy a perversion, just as we should not fail to refer to adultery as an immoral practice.

Dr. A. M. E. Kennedy,
Beausthe,
Rushbrooke,
Co. Cork.
Church 'no help to AIDS battle’

A DOCTOR at the centre of the fight against AIDS last night criticised the Catholic Church in Ireland for 'indulging in moral condemnation over the controversial issue.

And asked why the bishops claimed the use of condoms would only encourage promiscuity, Dr. Jack Cantillon of the Society for Sexually Transmitted Diseases said bluntly:

'Indulging in moral condemnation only alienates those we must seek to change and help. At least the Catholic bishops in Wales waited until their Government had started a campaign before they issued a statement.

'I, too, am not in the business of promoting promiscuity but people have to be educated and there's no use in delaying the message. Condoms don't promote promiscuity; they stop the spread of AIDS.

'Up until now the Catholic Church seems to look upon the AIDS problem in a very simplistic way by indulging in moral ethics,' said the doctor. 'But what I am trying to do is to stop the spread of this deadly infection.'
Irish Times
27th January 1987

AIDS TRANSMISSION

Sir, — First, I would like to congratulate Dr David Nowlan and The Irish Times for the excellent and informative series on AIDS. However there is one point I would like cleared up.

When he was describing the methods of transmission of this disease Dr Nowlan did not mention mosquito bites. Recently when I was in the USA I heard a certain amount of talk about this question. Is it a possibility? And if not, why not? I know that elephantiasis can be spread in this way. There seems to be a lay person only a difference in degree between a prick from a needle and a prick from an insect.

I know Central Africa fairly well, where AIDS is widespread, though there are many tribes who are not at all promiscuous. Has any research been done to see if these remote and isolated people have the same number of sufferers as others of a different culture?

I feel that this is an interesting and important point, as if there is this possibility, however remote, travellers should be warned to take every precaution against being stung. There are now excellent preparations one can rub on oneself to ward off mosquitos — I know, because I used them in the Okavango Delta in Botswana last
By Jill Sherman

The Royal College of Nursing wants the Government to provide £60 million a year, and thousands of extra nurses, for community-based services for people suffering from Aids. "Thousands more community nurses need to be employed in order to provide proper 24-hour nursing care in peoples homes," RCN primary health care adviser Anna Fawcett-Henissy said. Mr Fowler could not expect to come back with a magic solution from San Francisco without providing more funds.

The Government's chief nursing officer, Mrs Anne Poole, told a conference on caring for Aids in the community, held by the RCN in London yesterday, that the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre now estimated that 5,200 cases of infection by the Aids virus would be reported by the end of 1988.

Experts are still unclear how many people would go on to develop the disease. Mrs Poole said, as the incubation period could last for several years. "It is thought that between one in five and one in three who have the virus will develop Aids at some time, but some experts now think that everyone who is infected with Aids will develop the disease."

Mrs Poole said that the skills of all those working in the community was absolutely vital. "While we look at hi-tech treatment we must not forget that it is to the nurses and their support in the caring for patients that we shall be looking at in future plans."

The RCN emphasized that extra money was needed for drugs and specialised equipment so that hospital care could be delivered in the community.

In many cases people were choosing to go into hospital to die when they could be more suitably cared for in their own homes, Mr Richard Wells, the RCN oncology advisor, said. "We will need at least £60 million a year to inject into community services and to improve education programmes for nurses," he said.

Some health authorities still refuse to accept that the virus would ever cross their boundaries, he said. These health authorities had no contingency plans and no in-service training. "They are just refusing to recognize that it is a problem. But we know that if the client population increases we will have a tremendous problem in supporting them. We have to continue educating ourselves and continue educating the general public."

- Primary school teachers in Devon are being given rubber gloves as part of a campaign costing up to £20,000 to fight aids.

The surgical gloves will be issued to teachers at 350 schools to wear while treating youngsters who cut themselves. Staff will also be given a series of seminars about Aids.
Sisterly caring on Aids front

AIDS nurse Sister Mary Anthony might have one of the saddest jobs in Britain, but she certainly makes a lot of people happy on their death beds.

And it made me happy just reading her story (TODAY, January 23). For too long we have heard about this terrible, "dirty" plague that is amongst us, with no cure in sight.

Blame it on the perverts, the drug addicts, the Africans, they said. It's God taking his vengeance.

But no one ever seemed to talk about the victims. They are innocent, no matter what the self-righteous moralists claim. These poor people are, as your headline so aptly put it, on the front line, and all the rest of us seem to be able to talk about is: How far will it spread? We're not worried about them; just that they will not become us. Meanwhile, people are dying horrible deaths.

So it's reassuring to know that, in our inefficient and often inhumane health service, there are those who care. Thank you, Mary Anthony.

Alan Sharp, London SE9

Sorry tale

IT'S a tragic indictment of the NHS that, as Sister Mary Anthony said, everyone involved with Aids patients knew four years ago how serious the situation was. Yet the authorities sat back and waited.

Let's hope that now they really do understand the severity of the problem.

P Morgan, Brixton, London

Others suffer

AREN'T we all getting a little tired of hearing about the old fool's plight in the recent cold weather?

Yes, it can't be easy surviving on a pension, I take my hat off to them for their true grit.

But let's not forget the young. Unemployment isn't easy either. And redundancy for men with families to support isn't easy. They are also cold and miserable and have to face heating bills when they arrive.

Mrs Julia Fairman, Cowilt, Spalding

Phone fury

I WANT to congratulate County Durham ambulance man Bob Hewitt for his DIY repair to a 999 line when Telecom engineers were out of strike (TODAY, January 19).

J Buchan, Southampton

Not so Great

AFTER just a few days of bad weather, we again saw British industry grind to a halt. Including the two-week Christmas break enjoyed by most people, I wonder what the cost to the country in lost output was.

While 30 million people languish on the dole, those lucky enough to be employed - the complacent majority - should prepare more thoroughly for winter in future.

What other country would allow its industry to be interrupted for four weeks?

If Britain is to succeed against fierce foreign competition, people should stop looking for any excuse to be absent from work - Christmas, bad weather, sore backs, etc. - and get down to business. Let's stop stumbling from week to week and put the Great Back into Britain.

Cliff T Nolan, Manchester
Faced with public impatience for a cure, scientists have already made awesome breakthroughs in understanding AIDS. Tony Jackson explores the difficulties involved in converting this knowledge into a practical cure for a disease which has caused panic worldwide.

Into war with an enemy they know

In the last month, the last of 21st Century AIDS vaccines has become, more and more, the focus of public attention. The vaccine itself is one of the most promising agents of all those it is said there is no cure.

The fact that the vaccine is made by the British company, AstraZeneca, has put the point of view in the media. However, scientists have known for some time that if the vaccine is to be effective, it must be taken more than once, and it is only in the last few years that the government has been able to drag its feet.

"They are not simply saying it is too late to do anything," says one. "There is no time to lose in the battle to find a cure for AIDS." The situation is so desperate that it may be dragging its feet.

"This is the first time we've had a real chance to put something on the market," says Dr. Peter Duesberg, professor of molecular biology at the University of California, San Francisco. "But it's too late to do anything about it."

"The best we can do is to try our best, but it may be too late to do anything about it," says Dr. Duesberg. "We must live with the facts that the disease is incurable."
Anti-AIDS drive delayed

HEALTH Minister John Boland, has ordered the anti-AIDS advertising campaign to be 're-designed'.

The £250,000 drive to highlight the dangers of the killer disease was to begin yesterday.

But after the Cabinet discussed the proposed campaign last week, Mr. Boland ordered it to be re-designed.

A Department of Health spokesman denied that the campaign had been postponed because of the General Election campaign.

"We cannot elaborate," he added.

But it is understood that advertising agency bosses warned of a clash between the AIDS campaign publicity and the political advertising.

The delay in getting the campaign off the ground has angered the anti-AIDS group, the Society for Sexually Transmitted Diseases which described the government's move as 'deplorable'.

"Unless there has been new medical evidence, the campaign should have gone ahead as planned," said Society spokesman, Dr. Jack Cantillon.

There had been no dramatic changes to alter the starting date of the campaign he said.

The Health Education Bureau which is involved in organising the campaign, said they had no word on when the introduction is now due.

"We are awaiting the government go-ahead. We have heard nothing so far," said a spokesperson.

Meanwhile, former Health Minister, Labour deputy Barry Desmond, denied the campaign had been postponed. "It's an on-going thing," he said.
Bishop backs AIDS campaign

THE Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Dr James Mehaffey has backed the British Government's advertising campaign against the disease AIDS.

Writing in the current issue of the Diocesan News Sheet, Dr Mehaffey said the decision to launch the campaign was a wise one and the message must be got across in the most effective way.

But he said that there was great concern regarding certain aspects of the campaign, particularly the moral issues which were inevitably raised.

The impression could be given that promiscuity and homosexual relationships were only wrong in that they made people especially vulnerable to AIDS and contributed to the spread of the disease. A further impression could arise that to act in a responsible way was to take all possible precautions and use a contraceptive, Dr Mehaffey said.

The bishop said Christian moral teaching stated quite explicitly that the way to health and happiness was by practising chastity outside marriage and fidelity within marriage.

"For too long, Christian moral standards have been eroded and the Churches have either remained silent or when they did speak it was to offer self righteous condemnation," the bishop went on.

"The only valid Christian response is one of concern and compassion for AIDS sufferers, and for their families, and unceasing prayer for those who look after them, and for those, who through research, are seeking a remedy for this terrible disease."
AIDS: morals matter, says Thatcher

The British Prime Minister yesterday repeated her support for Manchester's Chief Constable, Mr. James Anderton, over his controversial speech on AIDS.

During Commons Question Time, Mrs. Thatcher said: "I was pleased that some people, whether from the church or elsewhere, had spoken out to the effect that morals do matter in AIDS.

"Governments cannot prevent people from getting AIDS but people themselves, by their own conduct, can do so."

Labour MP, Mrs. Renee Short (Wolverhampton NE), had asked her to "reconsider" her support for Mr. Anderton's "highly emotional and not very helpful" speech.

Later, Mrs. Thatcher said she was considering whether to give free disposable syringes to diabetics.

Mr. Anderton had described AIDS sufferers as "swirling about in a cesspit of their own making."

Christians have a duty to take the fear out of AIDS, a leading Methodist minister declared.

The Rev. Dr. Donald English, Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, said: "To frighten people may momentarily cause more restraint, but it is no basis for a sustained change of lifestyle. To inform people of the consequences of certain actions in a way which causes them to give up such actions as one thing: to exploit them by causing terror will in the end be counter-productive."

A teacher who feared she contracted AIDS when she picked up a dirty syringe at her school jumped out a fourth-floor Rone apartment window, the third suicide this month in Italy blamed on the dread of the fatal disease.
AIDS AND THE BISHOPS

Sir,—I would like to clarify some of the confusions appearing in a letter (January 22nd) entitled "AIDS and the bishops." (A strange title, by the way, since there is not one word in it about either AIDS or Catholic bishops).

Confusion I: The writer claims that his literal interpretation of the passage, "Each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life" in the encyclical "Humanae Vitae" implies that "sexual intercourse cannot, without being sinful, take place (1) between infertile couples (2) once the woman is postmenopausal and, most interestingly (3) during the safe period of each cycle."

Clarification I: This "literal interpretation" is explicitly considered and rejected in the document in question: "Neither the Church nor her doctrine is inconsistent when she considers it lawful for married people to take advantage of the infertile period but condemns as always unlawful the use of means which directly exclude conception... In reality these two cases are completely different. In the former married couples rightly use a facility provided them by nature. In the latter they obstruct the natural development of the generative process... (sexual activity) does not cease to be legitimate even when, for reasons, independent of their will, it is foreseen to be infertile." ("Humanae Vitae", paras. 16 & 11).

Confusion II: The writer claims that a change has taken place in Church teaching so that "procreation is no longer considered to be the only purpose of sexual intercourse, nor is it even held to be the primary purpose." Clarification II: This claim embodies a confusion of the purposes of marriage and sexual intercourse. Whatever Church teaching may be in regard to the status of procreation in marriage, in relation to "sexual intercourse, procreation remains," by biological necessity, its primary purpose.

Confusion III: The writer claims that the words "intrinsically evil and seriously sinful" are used "to accuse the infant and the young child of being evil and sinful."

Clarification III: It is a basic point of Church doctrine that infants and young children cannot commit sin since they lack the knowledge requisite for an act's being sinful.

In other parts of her letter, the writer intimates that translations of Church documents may be "slanted" for sinister reasons. Allowing for the obvious fact that every translation involves a judicious selection from among the various alternative equivalents in each language, the insinuation does not hold in the case we are immediately concerned with. A glance at the relevant documents will show this clearly. ("Humanae Vitae", "Acta Apostolicae Sedis" 60 (1968), 481-503; "Persona Humanae", "Osservatore Romano", January 16th, 1976).—Yours, etc.

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Suicide blamed on Aids fear

Rome (AP) — A kindergarten teacher who feared she contracted Aids when she picked up a syringe at her school jumped out a fourth-floor apartment window, the third suicide this month in Italy blamed on dread of the fatal disease.

The Rome daily newspaper *Il Messaggero* said that Signora Antonietta Mattel, aged 39, a mother of two children, killed herself hours before a scheduled appointment on Tuesday for medical tests to determine if she had Aids.

Signora Mattel had complained during the last seven months of feeling weak and nauseous and having diarrhoea, which could be signs of Aids as well as other ailments.
Fowler to bolster community care

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

The Government is sponsoring the creation of a new voluntary organization to assist with the care in the community and their homes of dying Aids sufferers.

At the same time Mr Norman Fowler, the Secretary for Social Services, is planning an explicit public campaign directed at drug-users after receiving alarming evidence of the spread of the disease among addicts.

The moves follow Mr Fowler's week-long visit to the US to study how the more serious Aids epidemic there is being tackled.

The measures were disclosed to The Times as the Prime Minister, implicitly backing Mr James Anderton, chief constable of Manchester, told the Commons that she was pleased that people had spoken out to the effect that "morals do matter in Aids".

Mr Fowler's American trip and his visit to see Aids patients in a London hospital this week have convinced him of the need to improve community care facilities.

Partly financed by the Government, the new organization will relieve some financial and physical pressures on hospitals.

As disclosed in The Times last week, Ministers are already considering plans for a network of Aids hospices.

The new organization, which Mr Fowler hopes will be headed by some well-known public figures, would bring together the work already being done by various bodies and help terminally-ill patients to be cared for and visited in their own homes.

A new campaign aimed at drug-users will be conducted mainly through radio and television. The sharing of infected needles is one of the main causes for the spread of the disease.

The proportion of people attending drug dependency clinics who have Aids has soared from 5 to 20 per cent in two years.

Mrs Thatcher was urged by Mrs Renee Short, Labour MP for Wolverhampton North East, to reconsider her support for Mr Anderton's controversial speech on Aids.

Mr Anderton had described Aids sufferers as "swallowing over in a cesspool of their own making".

While the Prime Minister appeared to distance herself from that remark, she made plain that she was in sympathy with Mr Anderton's moral line: "I was pleased that some people, whether from the church or elsewhere, had spoken out to the effect that morals do matter in Aids," she said.

"Governments cannot prevent people from getting Aids but people themselves, by their own conduct, can do so," Later Mrs Thatcher indicated that she was considering whether to give free needles to diabetics. Mr Alan Beith, Liberal MP for Berwick-upon-Tweed, had said: "It would be morally wrong to deny disposable syringes free to those who have no choice but to inject themselves. When you ... make them available for drug addicts."
Bishops to open Aids hospice

SCOTLAND's bishops are to open a hospice for Aids sufferers. The bishops will also distribute more than 800,000 leaflets to Catholic homes in opposition to the Government's own "defeatist anti-Aids campaign". Both decisions were announced by Archbishop Winning of Glasgow before the recording of a special Church debate on Aids, shown on Scottish television.

The Church decided to open the hospice because "the instinctive Christian reaction was not to condemn but to care", said the archbishop.

Archbishop Winning criticised the Government for concentrating on contraceptive advice in the Aids campaign.

"It seems to view Aids as merely a hygiene problem, he said.

"No attempt has been made to bring about a change in moral attitudes and behaviour," he added.

The leaflet will be distributed to every Catholic home.

Fr Tony Connolly, Catholic Press Officer, said the bishops decided to launch their own leaflet campaign because the Government campaign was "morally defeatist".

"We wish to stress in our leaflet the Christian view of sex. All the evidence indicates that chastity outside marriage and fidelity within is the most effective way of combating Aids."
Hoffman AIDS Drug May Get U.S. License


Hoffman-La Roche, Inc.
30th January 1987

The Hoffman-La Roche, Inc. AIDS drug, AZT, may be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the company may receive approval for its use next week, according to the Wall Street Journal.

The drug, a nucleoside analog, has been shown to reduce the progression of HIV infection in patients infected with the virus. The approval is pending, and Hoffman-La Roche plans to distribute the drug in the United States.

AZT, also known as zalcitabine, is a reverse transcriptase inhibitor that blocks the production of HIV-1 reverse transcriptase, an enzyme that is essential for the replication of the virus. The drug has been shown to reduce the amount of viral replication in infected cells and to slow the progression of HIV-1 infection in patients with AIDS-related complex (ARC) and AIDS.

The approval of AZT for use in the United States would be a significant milestone in the fight against HIV/AIDS, as the drug has been shown to be effective in treating patients with early-stage HIV infection. However, the drug is associated with a number of side effects, including nausea, diarrhea, and bone marrow suppression.

The approval of AZT is expected to be welcomed by patients and healthcare providers, as the drug has been shown to extend the lives of patients with HIV/AIDS. The approval is also expected to be welcomed by the pharmaceutical industry, as AZT is a key product for Hoffman-La Roche.

The approval of AZT is part of a broader effort by the U.S. government and the pharmaceutical industry to develop effective treatments for HIV/AIDS. The federal government has invested billions of dollars in research and development of HIV/AIDS medications, and pharmaceutical companies have invested heavily in the development of new drugs for the condition.

The approval of AZT is also expected to have a significant impact on the global battle against HIV/AIDS, as the drug is expected to be distributed to patients in low-income countries through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. The approval is expected to help reduce the burden of HIV/AIDS on the world's poorest countries, and to save thousands of lives.

The approval of AZT is also expected to have a significant impact on the stock market, as Hoffman-La Roche's stock price is expected to rise significantly. The company's shares have been trading at approximately $150 per share, and the approval is expected to push the stock price higher.

Overall, the approval of AZT is expected to be a major victory in the global battle against HIV/AIDS, as the drug is expected to extend the lives of patients with HIV/AIDS and to help reduce the burden of the condition on the world's poorest countries.
Legal AIDS

SOME Dublin solicitors are going to great lengths to gain immunity from AIDS sufferers with whom they come in contact in the courts.

About a fortnight ago, solicitors and barristers working in the District Court began referring to victims of the dreaded disease not as AIDS victims or carriers of AIDS, but as persons "suffering from a serious disease".

Questioned by reporters, the solicitors said that they had received instructions from the Law Society not to use the phrase "AIDS sufferer or AIDS victim" when defending or prosecuting.

A spokesman for the Incorporated Law Society said this week that no such instruction had gone out to its members, but he could see difficulty in a solicitor describing a client as an AIDS sufferer. "It probably has more to do with avoiding slander and having an immunity from being sued than anything else," said the spokesman.