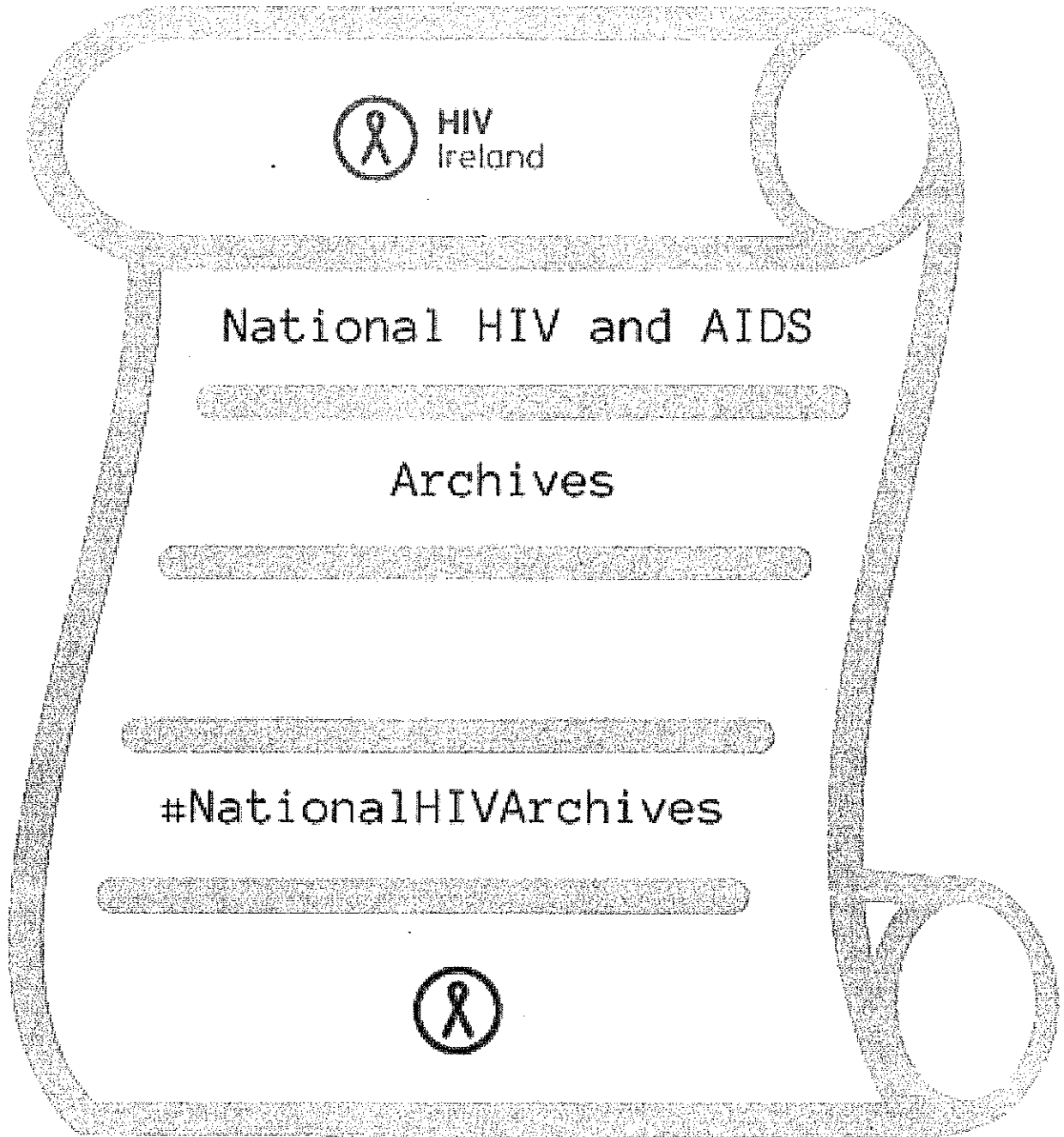


Print Media



21st to 30th June 1987

Hygiene advice for dentists

ALL dentists have been urged to wear gloves and install modern sterilising equipment in their surgeries in a bid to prevent the transfer of AIDS.

The advice was given yesterday by Professor Irene Hillary, boss of the National Virus Testing Centre at University College Dublin.

She complained that the standard of hygiene in some of the country's surgeries was so poor that it could prove a health hazard to patients.

"I strongly recommend that people should change their dentists if he is not using modern surgical equipment," she said.

"While the dental profession is very conscious of the dangers being presented by AIDS, some are slow to change dated working practices.

"For instance, they should all be wearing gloves but some are unfor-

tracted the virus from a patient.

It is believed that the infected patient's blood entered the dentist's system through a tiny gash on one of his fingers as he extracted a tooth.

The conference was also told of a case where a person with chapped skin on their hands became infected after coming into contact with contaminated blood.

Incubation

Professor Hillary warned that instances of AIDS in Ireland was bound to escalate in the years ahead, but she was unwilling to predict how much.

"The medical profession is continually revising their beliefs on the virus," she said.

"Originally it was thought that the incubation period was up to two years, now it is being suggested could be as long as two.

She said the number of samples being received for AIDS testing at her

SUNDAY WORLD, JUNE 21st, 1987

8 SUNDAY WORLD, JUNE 21st, 1987

AIDS TEST IRELAND'S SHOCK FOR ENVOYS! CHINESE

By
**CATHAL
O'SHEA**

CHINA'S embassy staff in Ireland have been ordered to undergo tests for AIDS.

Those who travel home on an annual basis will be checked for the deadly virus on their immediate return.

But officials remaining in Ireland for longer periods have been told to submit clean bills of health from their Irish doctors once a year.

A suggestion that the compulsory testing had been prompted by the recent deportation of an Irish AIDS carrier from China

of one billion and they must be protected.

"The virus has not been found within the native population, but we have to guard against it being brought in from outside the country."

Mr. Shutong said that all twelve staff at the embassy including ambassador Xing

Zhongxiu would be tested. "The new regulations were approved by the Chinese People's Congress last month and we were recently informed of them," he said.

The first officially announced deportation of an AIDS carrier from China took place last month when Dub-

liner John Mordaunt was ordered from the country.

He was found to be HIV positive when he went for medical treatment in Peking after injuring himself on a visit to the Great Wall.

Mr. Mordaunt from Ring-send, maintained that the Chinese had so little understanding of his condition that they evacuated the airport lounge as he waited to be put on a plane.

"The barman threw away my glass after I used it and when I asked for food it was slid across the floor to me on a tray," he said.

Irish Times
22nd June 1987

Obligatory AIDS testing rejected

From Sean Cronin,
in Washington

THE AMERICAN Medical Association will vote this week on a report by its board of trustees that rejects mandatory testing for AIDS and urges legal safeguards for those who test positive. The report recommends voluntary testing.

The AMA report points out that the epidemic "is now more than six years old, and the growing magnitude of the problem has been apparent for nearly that long." It goes on to comment that the Administration's plan to spend \$1 billion next year combating the disease is insufficient.

The AMA report asks the Reagan Administration to estab-

lish a commission with broad powers to develop a national policy acceptable to federal, state and local governments as well as industry, in order to deal with the epidemic.

"Testing should not be extended to all individuals anywhere who are considering marriage or to all persons in hospital," the AMA board of trustees say in their report.

"Public health authorities have advanced a plausible premise for their opposition to mandatory testing," the report continues. "Until those premises are shown . . . to be incorrect, a policy rejected by the vast majority of public health officials, including the Centres for Disease Control and the Surgeon General, cannot be recommended."

Aids group welcomes £1m fund

By DON LAVERY

THE setting up of a £1m Aids fund to help sufferers of the disease was welcomed by groups combatting the deadly virus yesterday, who said that there should be close co-operation with them about the fund.

The £1m fund is to be administered by a charitable company set up by a group of medical, business and legal experts and will be based on the same model as The Ireland Fund, the body that raises money in America for Irish development.

The fund will be chaired by Judge Kevin O'Higgins and senior counsel Nicholas Kearns is also involved. It will be

non-sectarian and non-political and aims to raise money which can be claimed by different bodies through an application process.

The objects of the proposed company, to be officially launched on July 13, include the establishment of treatment centres, the commissioning and maintenance of research projects and the provision of housing and other social and ancillary services to deal with all aspects of the disease.

Mr. Nicholas Kearns said last night that they had already made contact with a number of groups combatting Aids and they would give them any help they could. He declined to be specific about how the £1m was to be raised.

Mr. Donal Sheehan of the Gay Health Action Group, which has been one of the most active and successful groups in educating the public about the virus, said the idea of a large scale charity to fight Aids was a good one but he urged close co-operation with groups who are already working in the area. He said there seemed to be group of well meaning and capable people involved but the fund should be representative of people and groups more centrally involved in fighting Aids.

Similar reservations were voiced by Ms. Marguerite Woods, of the Aids Action Alliance which includes a cross-section of groups such as the LGPSU, the Wellwoman Centre, the Irish Family Planning Association and Gay Health Action.

It was important that groups on the ground be involved, because they had the experience in dealing with the Aids problem, she said. Earlier this month, it was revealed that the £500,000 allocated to the Health Education Bureau for the Government's Aids campaign has already been spent. The Government was severely criticised by a variety of groups concerned with fighting the disease for its "watered down, ineffective" campaign.

AIDS TRIAL ON RISK BABIES

Dr. Daniel Zagury, the French scientist who last year injected himself with a potential Aids vaccine, announced that he wants to start trials of an antibody treatment on babies born to mothers carrying the Aids virus.

Dr. Zagury told an international conference in Stockholm that he intends to attempt to build on the advantage of the small "window" in which babies born to mothers carrying the virus appear to have a natural immunity.

The proposed treatment would probably be carried out within the first hour of birth.

Some studies suggest that babies born to mothers carrying the Aids virus have at least a 50 per cent chance of becoming HIV positive them-

selves. But a large European study presented here now finds that the chances of such babies becoming HIV positive may be as low as one in four.

Dr. Zagury's proposed trials raise enormous ethical problems. Clinical guidelines lay down that informed consent is usually necessary before experimental substances can be used on volunteers.

Dr. Zagury, of the University Pierre et Marie Curie in Paris, also said that he has injected himself with a booster shot of his potential Aids vaccine and appeared to have improved his potential immune response.

Last year Dr. Zagury produced a copy of the Aids virus based on a form of the smallpox vaccine. The rebuilt virus appears to work by

effectively "tricking" the immune system.

Dr. Zagury said he wants to expand the present trials of his potential vaccine on high risk volunteers in Zaire to a larger group in Europe.

A spokesman for the World Health Organisation said that they had not been approached by Dr. Zagury on either of his proposals.

● Crack, the smokable form of cocaine, is adding to the risk of Aids because increasingly young addicts are exchanging sexual favours for drugs.

Dr. Don des Jarlais, of the New York state division of substance abuse services, said that an increase in syphilis appeared to be linked to the rise in the use of crack and syphilis made transmission of the virus more likely.

Irish Independent
23rd June 1987

Fears of AIDS hit blood tests on drivers

By FRANK KHAN and
MARESE McDONAGH

FEARS OF contracting AIDS is resulting in some motorists refusing to give blood samples to doctors in garda stations.

But one general practitioner involved in testing alleged drunken drivers told the *Irish Independent* yesterday that no danger exists.

Dr. Perceval Patton said: "There has been a few cases where people objected, but all but one caved in when reassured. There is one case however outstanding which has yet to come before the courts."

There was more danger to the doctor than to the alleged drunken driver, he pointed out, but he added: "I'd have no fear unless I was dealing with an open wound. And if I was, I'd use gloves."

Another doctor described as "non-sensical" drivers' objections to give samples for fear of the killer disease.

Dr. John O'Keeffe explained: "Syringes and needles are used only once in these situations. Everything in the kit used by the doctor taking a blood sample is sterile. A driver could just as well say he might get AIDS if he shook hands with the sergeant," he added.

Meanwhile, a leading Catholic publication has moved to allay fears that communicants might contract the disease from a chalice.

In the latest issue of "Intercom" the magazine of the Catholic Communications Institute of Ireland, Father Edward Matthew declares: "The medical evidence overwhelmingly states there is no danger of contracting the AIDS/HTLV 3 virus by receiving communion from the shared cup."

A new charitable organisation "The AIDS Fund," has been set up which aims to raise £1m. to fight the disease here, it was announced yesterday.

Government accused over Aids danger to travellers abroad

By Jill Sherman, Social Services Correspondent

The Government was accused yesterday of not doing enough to protect British travellers from the risk of being infected by Aids abroad.

A doctor specializing in tropical diseases warned travellers to areas such as the sub-Saharan that they were 100 times more likely to catch Aids there than they were in this country.

Dr Paul Clarke, medical director of the Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad (Masta), accused the Government of concentrating its publicity on the minimal risks of heterosexual transmission in Britain while overlooking the risks of receiving infected blood abroad.

Twenty-nine Britons had contracted Aids in sub-Saharan through sexual contact or infected needles but only 10 had caught the disease in that way in Britain, he said.

Dr Clarke, a former consultant adviser to the Ministry of Defence on infectious diseases, also called on the Foreign Office to set up a database of all areas in Third World countries where blood was being screened for the HIV virus.

"Some areas such as Nairobi have already introduced screening. British travellers

should be aware where they are most likely to be able to receive blood free from infection", he said.

The Government should also put money into countries with a high incidence of Aids to ensure that screening facilities were more widely available, he said.

Dr Clarke challenged Mr Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Employment, after his address on Aids and employment at the Confederation of British Industry. "There is a risk to travellers but nobody is addressing it", Dr Clarke said. Mr Fowler said that he would look into the issue.

Masta has in the past three months sold 5,000 travellers' packs, which include sterile syringes and needles, to companies such as ICI, British Telecom and Shell. The packs are also provided to Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence personnel.

The company, which is based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, plans to include a small HIV blood-testing kit being developed by the American company, Dupont, so that travellers can test any blood used in transfusions.

The scheme has been backed by the CBI which

yesterday launched a health information service for businessmen travelling abroad. The service, which is linked to the Masta scheme, gives company staff and advisers instant access to reliable health information worldwide.

Addressing the CBI conference, Mr Fowler said it was important for employers to emphasize both how Aids is spread and, more importantly, how it was not spread. "It is not dangerous to handle items such as cups used by an infected person and you cannot get Aids by sharing the same workbench", he said.

Employees should not be discriminated against if they had the virus and the Government would want to consider any examples of discrimination against individuals who were HIV positive.

Mr Fowler appealed to employers to deliver the same message that he had first given as Secretary of State for Social Services. "By 1991 over 180,000 people will have died of Aids in the United States, three times the death toll from the Vietnam war." Experts agreed that a vaccine or cure would not be developed for at least five years. "If the spread of Aids is to be contained it must be through changes in our behaviour."

How dare they test us for their disease

IN about three months immigrants to America may be required to undergo a mandatory test for AIDS. There has been a bitter and noisy row about this in Washington. The tests are not infallible and the US Surgeon General, one E. Everett Koop, is opposed to the move.

Surgeon Koop wants voluntary tests only while the Education Secretary demands compulsory tests. President Reagan wants something called "routine" testing but nobody seems very certain what that is supposed to mean.

But the President supports his Education Secretary so perhaps "routine" has been supplied to take the harm out of "mandatory."

The Surgeon General is an interesting man and a brave one too. He has had the courage to change his convictions. He used to be a conservative hardliner but now he goes on television every night to recommend condoms, safe sex and an abortion option for AIDS-infected women.

The 21,000 American deaths from AIDS have converted C. Everett Koop. The erstwhile conservative needs a radical solution and Mr. Koop does not think that compulsory testing is part of that solution.

The Irish AIDS Programme Director Dr. Jim Walsh put the case against mandatory testing at an AIDS conference in Washington some weeks ago. He said "My argument is that non-voluntary testing drives the victim underground and causes dangerous under-reporting."

Surgeon Koop clearly agreed with that view but other, more hysterical voices prevailed.

Now America is in no particular danger from AIDS-infected immigrants. Indeed, America is more likely to export AIDS rather than import it. As Dr. Jim Walsh said "Frankly it makes me very sad that Reagan is taking this illogical step of pushing mandatory tests for immigrants when the United States is the source of most of our cases."



**KATE
CRUISE
O'BRIEN**

A retrograde step certainly, but I think that this is a political move rather than a practical one. There isn't very much that the American authorities can do about AIDS. There is no known cure for the disease and no immunisation against it. So all the authorities can do is what Surgeon Koop has done. That is to tell the American people how to prevent the disease from spreading.

But Surgeon Koop's practical, necessary advice is something of a political liability.

The mandatory AIDS test for immigrants does something to redress the balance. It is practical. It is not even sensible — as far as AIDS prevention is concerned. But it is a splendidly suggestive political gesture.

It tells the American people that the American government does not approve of degenerate behaviour. It suggests that promiscuous behaviour — the kind of carry on that spreads AIDS — is un-American. This kind of thing is foreign and alien so look, see, we're bringing in an AIDS test for immigrants to stop the rot. We're not going to let those Europeans bring their filthy foreign diseases here.

So Mr. Middle America can hold up his head again. Despite all that upsetting advertising, Mr. Reagan's heart is where it always was — in the right place and beating stoutly for conservative values.

But is mandatory AIDS testing ever justified and should AIDS be a notifiable disease? Whose business is it if you have AIDS? Well, the British Medical Association is already divided on this issue. Some doctors agree with Dr. Jim Walsh. Mandatory AIDS testing, they argue, will simply force the disease underground.

But other members of the BMA insist that total confidentiality about AIDS could be dangerous. If a specialist tests a patient and finds that the patient is HIV positive then the specialist should be allowed to inform the patient's GP. The GP can then protect himself from the disease and he can also avoid giving his patient inappropriate treatment through ignorance of his patient's true condition.

It is a sensible argument and a long way from the political hysteria that promoted the mandatory tests for American immigrants. Doctors and nurses are at risk and one American dentist has already contracted the disease from an AIDS patient. But is the risk great enough to justify breaking the rule about confidentiality?

I don't think that it is. All doctors and nurses and dentists know by now that they run some sort of risk when treating any patient in these days of AIDS. It would certainly help them to know which patients were HIV positive and which were not. But if one link in the chain of confidentiality was broken where would it stop?

Let us think about a hypothetical case. A specialist tells a GP, a nice family doctor called Dr. Black, that Dr. Black's patient, Mr. White, is HIV positive. Dr. Black knows that Mr. White has at least a 30 per cent chance of developing full-blown AIDS. Dr. Black also knows that it may be some time before unmistakable symptoms of the disease appear.

In the meantime the patient's wife, Mrs. White, is in danger of infection. So Dr. Black tells Mr. White that he should warn his wife. Mrs. White should have a test and Mr. White should take precautions against infecting his wife.

But Mr. White does not want to tell his wife that he is HIV positive. He was infected by a prostitute on a business trip and he doesn't want his wife to know. He is also reluctant to use condoms because that might make his wife suspicious.

So what should Dr. Black do now? In an ideal world mandatory AIDS tests and full publication of the results would be desirable. But this is not an ideal world and AIDS victims have lost their jobs, their homes and their friends.

So unless possible victims can be guaranteed total confidentiality then they won't risk having tests — however mandatory. AIDS would then become a secret epidemic. We need to know as much as we can about AIDS to help prevent it and we can't learn without tests.

So confidentiality is — literally — essential.

So confidentiality is — literally — essential.

4 EVENING PRESS, FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 1987

Hollywood cuts down on sex to give AIDS message

Actor Tom Hanks reaches for a box of condoms as he is about to take a lady to bed in the forthcoming film "Dragnet." He discovers the box is empty — and promptly calls off the lovemaking.

AIDS has started changing Hollywood scripts as well as Hollywood lives.

The scene involving Hanks, part of a comedy film version of the old "Dragnet" television detective series, is part of Hollywood's move to preach to film audiences that sex with numerous partners, particularly without taking precautions, can be lethal in the AIDS age.

In the latest James Bond film, "The Living Daylights," Welsh actor Timothy Dalton, making his debut as Bond, confines himself to just one girl friend, actress Maryam d'Abo.

Bond used to share his talents with at least three women in a film. "Indiscriminate sex is out," Bond script writer Richard Maibaum said. "It is just the sensible and

responsible thing to do in reflecting the world around us."

AIDS has hit hard in Hollywood where there are few actors who do not know of people who have died of the disease. Stars, led by Elizabeth Taylor, have taken part in numerous drives to raise millions of dollars for medical research into AIDS.

The death of Rock Hudson from AIDS in 1985 brought home the impact of the disease to Hollywood. The increasing number of obituaries of young actors and studio officials being published in one of the industry's newspapers, Variety, have deepened the sense of tragedy.

"Rock Hudson's revelation that he had AIDS brought home the personal threat to everyone," said Tina Sinatra, daughter of Frank Sinatra and an organiser of a group called the Entertainment Industry Support Committee for AIDS Project, Los Angeles.

Burt Reynolds, who once felt impelled to go on a television show

to bitterly deny he had AIDS, Sammy Davis Jr., Shirley MacLaine and Burt Lancaster have played leading roles in making the public aware of the dangers.

The chief story editor of a major studio said he believed more and more films during the coming months would concentrate on single relationships. "Instead of having affairs and getting back together afterwards, a couple in a film will work out its problems without at least one of the partners jumping into bed with someone else," he said.

The Screen Actors Guild has said its 58,000 members must be given the right to refuse to take part in open-mouth kissing scenes if they fear this could give them AIDS. But, Shirley MacLaine, despite her fundraising activities for AIDS research, believes screen kissing is safe. "Actors know how to act love scenes," she said. "We don't do deep kissing in love scenes. If any actor did that to me — I'd slap him."



Shirley MacLaine.

Cut-price condoms launched

By Christopher Parkes,
Consumer Industries Editor

CONDOMS at 10p each—less than half the price of existing brands—will be launched shortly by a new non-profit-making trust.

The contraceptives called Mates, are a central element in an anti-AIDS campaign initiated by Mr Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group. He has set up the Virgin Healthcare Foundation using £5m of his own money to protect young people from the threat of AIDS.

Mr Branson said he hoped shops, pubs, clubs, petrol stations, newsagents, and even airlines would stock Mates. Some 80m condoms would be supplied by the Ansell Corporation of the US.

All profits will go towards health education, patient care, and research. Mr Norman Fowler, former Health Secretary, had given him 100 per cent support, said Mr Branson, who plans to see ministers next week to ask for financial backing.

Ms Anita Roddick, founder of the Body Shop chain, was also supporting the initiative as a trustee of the foundation.

Branson joins fight against AIDS

MILLIONAIRE businessman Richard Branson introduced a cut-price condom yesterday to spearhead the war against AIDS.

The idea is to make condoms "as easy to buy as brown bread", the head of the Virgin empire told a London press conference.

Profits from sales of the Branson condom — which will be called "Mates", and retail at 10p sterling each — will go to a new charitable trust for AIDS Research, care and education in Britain.

Branson hopes shops, pubs, aircraft and filling stations will stock the sheaths when they go on sale in September. Showbusiness

stars including Elton John have pledged support for the Branson campaign, which will be co-ordinated in the trust, the Virgin Healthcare Foundation.

The "Mates" brand will be made by the American Ansell Corporation and retailers will be asked to sell it at no profit to themselves.

Branson said yesterday he wanted the sheaths sold on such a wide variety of counters "that no one will ever have to be embarrassed or inhibited about buying a condom."

"If nothing is done we could be talking about hundreds of thousands of people being stricken with the AIDS virus over the

next 15 years. Many of them will die. We are not prepared to wait and watch."

The Virgin entrepreneur, who has backed the "Mates" venture with £5 m. of his own money, said he was prompted to launch it "because I realised that my own children would not be able to grow up with the same attitudes to sexual relationships that I grew up with in the Sixties."

"Everyone agrees that the safest way to stop the spread of AIDS is to wear condoms."

It is estimated that about 120 million condoms are sold in Britain each year, and Branson's organisation has ordered 70 million.



Branson . . . a £5m. investment.

Evening Herald
29th June 1987

Aids man arrested

A MAN alleged to have sold his blood to several blood banks although he knew he had Aids has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder in Los Angeles.

"If this case goes ahead, it will be the first criminal prosecution in the United States of someone alleged to have donated blood knowing the blood was contaminated with the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Aids) virus," said a spokesman for the district attorney's office.

An American Red Cross spokeswoman said all blood collected was screened for the virus and any affected blood would be discarded.

Evening Press
29th June 1987

EVENING PRESS, MONDAY, JUNE 29, 1987

AIDS blood donor arrest

A MAN alleged to have sold his blood to several blood banks although he knew he had AIDS has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder, a prosecutor's spokesman said in Los Angeles last night.

"If this case goes ahead, it will be the first criminal prosecution in the United States of someone alleged to have donated blood knowing the blood was contaminated with the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome virus," said a spokesman for the District Attorney's office.

The investigation started when police, during routine questioning, discovered a receipt for the blood donation among the man's belongings and upon checking discovered he had been diagnosed by a Los Angeles hospital as having the AIDS disease.

An American Red Cross spokeswoman said all blood collected was screened for the virus and any affected blood would be discarded.

Financial Times
29th June 1987

AIDS victim arrested

✓ An AIDS victim has been arrested in Los Angeles and accused of attempted murder. He is alleged to have sold his blood to several blood banks.

The time has come to talk about it

"DON'T die of embarrassment" the billboards should have read in the Aids-scare spring of '87.

"Don't die of feeling uncomfortable about asking a man if he's going to put on a condom and then feeling ashamed of getting your packet of three out of your handbag if he's not."

Overlong maybe, but it illustrates more accurately than the Government's wording what will be to blame if Aids becomes the pandemic we all fear.

Aids information aimed at the heterosexual population will fail unless it acknowledges what many people really feel about sex. But so far the approach of the Aids campaign has been remarkably similar to that of contraception provision and propaganda. Both are reluctant to be explicit about sex but have an unspoken assumption of what is normal sexuality.

The point of using contraception has always been to have the pleasure of sexual intercourse without conceiving, but those who provide contraception hardly ever mention sex in a direct way. It's as if they think sex is something that happens instinctively and without conscious thought, desire or choice. So we have to be prepared before being overtaken by the uncontrollable carnal rush which obliterates the intellect.

The greatest advantage a contraceptive method could have, we are led to believe, is that it should not "interfere" with sex. So we are advised to put in a diaphragm hours before the sexual act occurs, take our Pills as part of a nightly routine, or be protected from pregnancy every hour of every day with an IUD. We are then ready to be romantically swept away by the mood of the moment.

For many years the single benefit in a contraceptive of allowing supposedly spontaneous sex resulted in the Pill becoming the

Embarrassment is a potential killer in the Aids crisis, finds Rose Shapiro

most commonly used method. The Pill suited the population "managers" — those who had legislated in the Seventies for free contraception on the NHS — because of its high reliability rate in preventing pregnancy. It suited drug-oriented doctors who were happiest writing prescriptions, and it suited men who could assume any woman who wanted to have sex would have "got her contraception sorted out" and gone on the Pill.

Women had the burden of possible health risks, but even these seemed tolerable when set against the ignominy of having your man see you squatting and ungainly as you put in your diaphragm. Society was permissive as long as you knew how to adhere to the Barbarella etiquette of the Pill generation.

Even before Aids it was known that barrier methods offered protection against a range of sexually transmitted diseases, as well as the virus that is thought to cause cervical cancer. That this benefit was never widely publicised shows how low prophylaxis was on the list of priorities.

Presumably the medical profession calculated the risk of these diseases was outweighed by the risk of the unwanted pregnancies which would inevitably follow the widespread use of barrier methods, involving as it would transferring responsibility to fallible, sexually active women and men.

Women who did want to use barriers could get no help or advice on how their use could be integrated into sex. We were uncomfortable out on our own with the rubber dome and bulky tube of spermicide, cautioned against leaving insertion too long in case we were overtaken by a rush of lust which made us forget it. Preferably we would insert it every single night so we were as constantly ready for action (or as available) as our sisters on the Pill

or IUD. No one, user or prescriber, dared discuss factors that may have been crucial to whether we were happy with the method, like the taste of spermicides. Instead we were told that the two essential requirements for a barrier user were, in the words of one doctor, "a stable relationship and a bathroom".

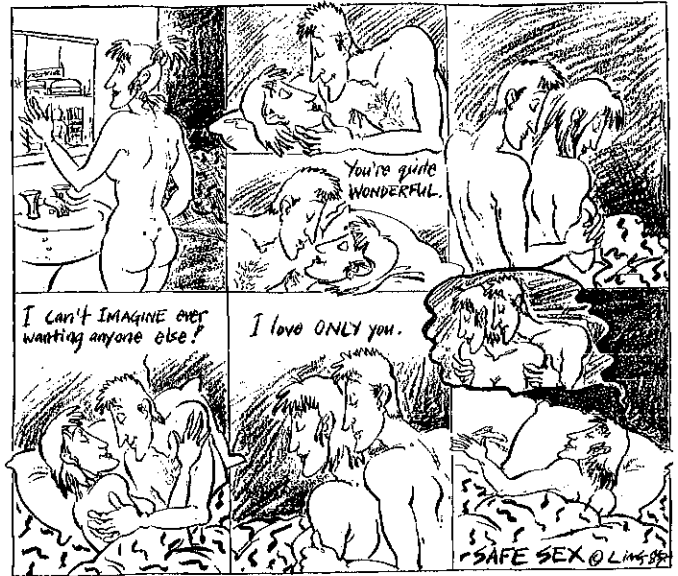
Most doctors know only how to prescribe the Pill and no other contraceptive. Most aren't even trained to fit IUDs, and still fewer the diaphragm or cap. Some GPs have never wanted to provide condoms as contraceptives even though they will prescribe every other method, but they are available free from family planning clinics. But even before the Aids crisis, FP clinic provision of condoms was haphazard. One survey found clients given between three and 24 condoms a week, with no rationale for either amount.

And now, when Aids puts condoms back in favour and makes prophylaxis a priority, doctors' organisations and the Department of Health still don't think it appropriate for GPs to become additional providers of condoms, though organisations like the Family Planning Association think they should. The British Medical Association argues "no clinical advice is required" for condom use yet it does recognise that condoms are now central to primary health care for Aids.

Even if condoms do become more widely available the approach of the information-givers will have to change, specifically in relation to the way in which sex is discussed. The heterosexual establishment has much to learn from the gay community and organisations like the Terence Higgins Trust, who know how to make contact with individuals in their own language and how to discuss their real concerns. Many people have been shocked by their literature simply because it does not deal with a sanitised and romanticised version of sex. Contraception and prevention of disease are now inextricably linked and we cannot take control of either without changing our sexual practice and daring to talk about it too.

Contraception by Rose Shapiro is published by Virago on Thursday

MAGGIE LING



Marketing an epidemic

CAN Richard Branson's £3m condom campaign succeed where the Government, the London International Rubber Group, manufacturers of Durex, Jiffy, Red Stripe, Lifestyles and others have failed?

Over the last two years there have been various attempts to make condoms acceptable, even fashionable: the designer Katharine Hamnett manufactured boxer shorts with their own condom pocket and a Filofax insert has been produced with four compartments for the condoms of your choice. Durex made a lame effort by introducing Durex Gold and Black Shadow, but despite holding the monopoly on the market since the war, and benefiting from the Aids scare with a 20 per cent increase in sales, failed to develop a condom recommended for safe homosexual use.

It has been up to the new, smaller companies to attract the people most at risk, gay men, and the young promiscuous. Three years ago, Jiffy condoms were imported from Germany by Michael

Conitzer, the owner of the Stirling Cooper clothes chain, and sold inside and outside his shops, in vending and cigarette machines (which delivered a pack of Jiffy to the inattentive smoker who pulled the wrong slot). They were aimed particularly at young people, and sold in packs of 20 instead of the standard British three. In Japan, condoms are marketed in packs of 25, 50 and 100 and sold door-to-door by housewives.

Now, since men still seem to be reluctant to make a habit of buying — and using — condoms on grounds of vanity and sensitivity, to say nothing of laziness, the onus is falling on women here. Presumably, having overcome the agonies of buying sanitary towels, and habituated to responsibility by the Pill, women are more likely to move on to buying the family Durex along with the washing powder.

Since *Cosmopolitan's* Safe Girls Carry Condoms campaign earlier this year, most other women's magazines have followed suit, far more likely to succeed with a re-

ceptive audience of regular women readers, where TV advertising has failed.

Ken Livingstone had a point when he suggested that Mrs Thatcher should have played it straight and taken responsibility for telling the nation, right at the beginning of the Aids scare, that they were at serious risk. What has resulted is a marketing war, with all the opportunities that opens up: Wisdom, the toothbrush manufacturers, are already encouraging sales on the back of the Aids campaign.

However well-researched and altruistic Richard Branson's sales technique might be, the fact remains that it has come too late. It doesn't really matter who buys the condoms, so long as somebody does, but if, as Michael Conitzer says, it costs him less than 2p to import condoms from Germany, why couldn't the Government have really taken the lead, told everyone about them, and given them away free?

L.J.

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Irish Times
29th June 1987

AIDS blood donor held

A man alleged to have sold his blood to several blood banks, although he knew he had AIDS, has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder, a prosecutor's spokesman said yesterday in Los Angeles.

"If this case goes ahead, it will be the first criminal prosecution in the United States of someone alleged to have donated blood knowing the blood was contaminated with the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome virus," said Schueller Sprowles, a spokesman for the District Attorney office.

GPs call for right to refuse Aids carriers treatment

By Jill Sherman, Social Services Correspondent

Doctors will call this week for the right to be able to refuse to treat a patient who is HIV positive (a carrier of the Aids virus) if the patient does not consent to that information being passed on to other medical professionals.

Doctors from the Brighton and Cuckfield branch of the British Medical Association have proposed a motion to be debated at the BMA's annual representative meeting in Brighton this week, stating that it is a doctor's professional duty to ensure that all information relating to a patient is made available to any other doctor involved in that patient's care.

"The patient's consent should normally be sought, but where this is refused it is not unethical for a doctor to decline to continue with the patient's management."

However, the secretary of the British Medical Association, Dr John Havard, made it clear yesterday that the BMA council would oppose the motion, due to be debated on Thursday.

"In this case we would support the General Medical Council's view that it is unethical for a doctor to refuse treatment on the grounds of any illness, and Aids should not be an exception", Dr Havard said.

However, BMA leaders are likely to support another motion also concerning the confidentiality of information

relating to Aids. The motion states that if a patient is found to be HIV positive the patient's GP and other medical professionals involved in the direct care of that patient should be informed.

Dr Havard made it clear that that should be with the patient's consent and he indicated that the council would not support the whole of the motion, which also called for information to be given to health professionals sharing in the patient's care.

A further motion to be debated this morning calls on the British Medical Association to accept that a com-

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prehensive health service free at the point of need is no longer economically feasible, and that alternative methods of financing the NHS should be considered.

The composite motion, which reflects calls from doctor in Brighton, North-east Thames and Northampton, was quickly knocked down yesterday by Dr Havard who made it plain that the council would oppose the motion.

"It is the policy of the BMA that there should be a National Health Service free at the point of delivery", he said. "The BMA is committed to the NHS and we will do all we can to save the NHS."

Culture of crisis, page 16

London Times
29th June 1987

In the culture of crisis

Adam Mars-Jones puts his own experience of helping Aids victims into a remarkable volume of short stories to be published next week: interview by Anne Billson

Adams Mars-Jones feels he must be "drawn to the way that illness dramatizes health". "When I think about it, I've written quite a lot about illness", he says. "It contains the buried things about health that we don't really want to confront." In *Hoosh-Mi*, a short but shaggy-dog story which appeared in his first book, *Lantern Lecture*, the Queen contracts rabies after being licked by one of her corgis. The year of publication was 1981, and rabies, at that time, was the only illness he could think of (apart from an obscure one brought about by the consumption of inadequately cooked brains) which invariably turned out to be fatal.

Now, post-1981, there is a disease other than rabies which is proving to be lethal. *The Darker Proof: Stories from a Crisis*, by Mars-Jones and Edmund White, is published today week. The word "Aids" appears once on the jacket, but is to be found nowhere within the book. Mars-Jones's four stories and White's two deal less with the disease and its case-histories than with the effect it has had on the consciousness of people who are living in close proximity to it.

Last year Mars-Jones acted as a "buddy" — someone who is available for practical help and moral support — for two Aids sufferers. At

the time, he had never considered the task as being something he could write about but, he admits, "I suppose the book wouldn't have been written if I hadn't buddied, because I wouldn't have had a sense of knowing the reality of Aids, rather than just the culture of it".

The idea for the book first came to him in December and, Faber and Faber proving willing, the manuscript was delivered in April. It included a story by White, *An Oracle*, already published in *Christopher Street*, and one by Mars-Jones, *Slim*, which had appeared last year in *Granta*, although he had originally never intended it as anything other than a one-off. In *Slim*, by replacing the word "Aids" with the African term for the disease, Mars-Jones hoped to remove many of the reader's automatic responses to it.

The title of the volume proved to be tricky, since, with two writers' work included, it could not be named after any one particular story. "We wanted something sombre, but not suicidal", says Mars-Jones. Both men had been

reviewing the diaries of Jean Cocteau; White pointed out a reference to a production of Racine, where Cocteau had instructed the actors to echo their rehearsal for the actual performance, but to pull "a darker proof". "The idea is either that these stories are rather more sombre versions of two writers' styles and preoccupations or else that, in a crisis, there is a darker proof of humanity, of friendship, of love and all that."

Writers of fiction, and writers of gay fiction in particular, are still struggling to get to grips with Aids, which for them is a literary problem as much as a physical one. "What you notice", says Mars-Jones, "is that gay books tend to be set in 1981. It is so much easier to pretend that Aids hasn't happened. And, in many of them, Aids is just an excuse for a nostalgic look at the Seventies."

Short stories, reasons Mars-Jones, are more effective than a novel would be, simply because the illness itself has its own "very

potent narrative drive — seemingly towards death, as things now stand. And it's very hard to write a novel resisting that whereas in a short story you can choose your own time-scale. You can somehow make an aesthetic slice which avoids the push towards an apparently obvious solution."

The "aesthetic slices" in this volume deal with a broad range of emotion and experience, unclotted with medical facts. Though depressing, they are surprisingly not unduly so. White's stories are more valedictory, his characters moving from Paris to Venice to Crete as they mourn the passing of a golden age. Mars-Jones is rather more pragmatic, dealing with the day-to-day realities of coping with reduced immunity, fatigue and the attitudes of family and friends.

"The nearest I can get to internationalism is a New Zealand character. But I hope the effect is that this isn't something that's just happening to particular individuals, but to a lot of people. At the same time we can't write about Africa, because it's not something we know about. There's bound to be an oddity in the fact that the continent most directly affected by the illness doesn't get a look-in."

● *The Darker Proof: Stories from a Crisis* by Adam Mars-Jones and Edmund White is published on July 6 by Faber and Faber at £3.95.

Irish Times
30th June 1987

Aids man on murder charge

AN Alleged male prostitute, who sold his AIDS-contaminated blood to a plasma centre was charged yesterday with attempted murder.

District Attorney Ira Reiner said he would ask that Joseph Edward Markowski be held, without bail, following arraignment on ten charges including attempted murder, assault and attempted poisoning.

"I know of no other case," Reiner said. Markowski (29), admitted he sold blood knowing he might be spreading the disease. He allegedly told authorities: "I know that AIDS can kill. But I was so hard up for money I didn't give a damn."

Govt. AIDS campaign "inadequate"

A local county councillor has hit out at the Government's "totally inadequate" publicity campaign about Aids.

Fine Gael councillor for Templeogue, Mr. Martin Lynch, claimed at a recent meeting of the County Council that the Government's publicity campaign would only "perpetuate further ignorance" about Aids.

He told the meeting that more explicit information should be distributed through local libraries and in official government handouts if the disease is to be tackled.

Information pamphlets about Aids were "practically hidden" when he visited three chemists in south Dublin recently, he claimed.

"I was made to feel highly embarrassed when I enquired about the leaflets which were produced from under the counters of these chemists," he told the meeting.

The chairwoman of the meeting, Dun Laoghaire Cllr Betty Coffey said she "wholeheartedly" agreed with Cllr. Lynch, but said a motion — calling for greater publicity about Aids — was tabled by her over a year ago and was due to be heard by the Council in the coming weeks.

But, Cllr. Lynch claimed: "By the time we get around to discussing Cllr. Coffey's motion we could have an Aids epidemic throughout the Dublin region."