National HIV & AIDS Archive

Print Media

16th to 30th September 1987

HIV Ireland 1987—2017 30
Optimism grows within UK AIDS research

By David Fishlock, Science Editor

A new £100m AIDS programme, announced this week by Sir James Black, minister of state for health, is expected to spur optimism in the field of AIDS research in the UK.

The £100m is part of a £500m international AIDS research programme, which is being funded by the World Health Organization. This is the largest single commitment to AIDS research ever made in the UK.

The programme will be managed by the Department of Health and the Medical Research Council, with the involvement of the Wellcome Trust. It is expected to start within 12 months.

In the six months since the government announced the £500m international AIDS research programme, a number of high-profile researchers have joined the UK team. These include J. David Lifson, currently at the University of California, San Francisco, and who is expected to return to the UK next year.

Dr Geoffrey Shaw, who is currently on a secondment to the Wellcome Trust, is expected to return to the UK by the end of the year.

On October 1, the two key leaders of the UK team, Dr David Lifson and Dr Geoffrey Shaw, will take over from Sir James Black as the head of the Department of Health's AIDS programme. They will also be responsible for the AIDS research programme of the Medical Research Council.

The new programme is expected to have a significant impact on AIDS research in the UK. It is estimated that the programme will provide funding for 500 research projects, which will involve a total of 1,000 researchers.

Tests may have to rely heavily on human volunteers

A simple vaccine can cure a similar disease in cats

The programme is expected to provide a significant boost to the research into AIDS in the UK. The government has already made a commitment to doubling the amount of money spent on AIDS research in the UK, from £50m to £100m.

The new programme is expected to provide funding for a number of key research projects, including the development of a vaccine against AIDS.

One of the key challenges in developing a vaccine against AIDS is the fact that the virus is highly variable and can mutate very quickly. This makes it difficult to develop a vaccine that will be effective against all strains of the virus.

However, the programme is expected to provide the funding needed to develop a vaccine against a limited number of strains of the virus, which could potentially be effective against a significant proportion of the population.

A number of researchers have already started working on developing a vaccine against AIDS, with a number of promising results so far. However, it is expected that a vaccine will not be available for at least 10 years.
Rock against AIDS

THE PUNK and new wave explosion contributed to many new directions in the current state of rock music. One of these things was to make people aware of issues going on around them and their relevance to everyone else's lives. So, Rock against Racism was born and it brought together the very contrasting musical cultures of reggae and punk.

Sunday night's Radiators' reunion gig in aid of the AIDS Alliance saw many different shades of musical and sexual sub cultures converge on Hackney. There were punks, Mohicans, bikers, straights, gays and many other shades of night life.

The performance of the Radiators stirred many memories and also raised a few issues — it brought home the depth of talent that the punk movement had unleashed. Phil Chevron's songs highlighted the relative lack of music and songwriting talent there is here at his moment.

The show did something else — it raised money for a cause that by some contrivance, appears to have become a forgotten one in this country. The danger of AIDS has not gone.
From Conor O'Clery, in Moscow

The Soviet authorities have begun the compulsory testing of foreign students resident in Moscow for the AIDS virus, and yesterday announced the launch ing of a publicity campaign about the dangers of contracting AIDS. Leaflets entitled "What you should know about AIDS" will be distributed through Moscow's estimated two million letter boxes within the next few days, the Soviet news agency Tass reported yesterday.

Most EEC embassies in Moscow have asked their home countries to provide them with stocks of disposable syringes and to anticipate more widespread screening of foreign nationals resident in the Soviet Union. The diplomatic community is awaiting the outcome of negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Department of Higher Education about the extent of the planned tests for foreign residents, including journalists, business representatives and workers attached to embassies or Soviet concern.

The Soviet authorities have said they will not accept foreign-issued certificates on the absence of AIDS, but it is expected that embassies will be allowed to provide syringes and monitor the process for their own nationals.

Some British students have already been tested but the three female Irish students at the Pustnach Institute have not been approached. Students residing in the Soviet Union for less than six months may not be affected by the test programme.

The Soviet Health Minister, Dr Yevgeni Chazov, has given an undertaking that tourists and visitors on business trips will be exempt from compulsory testing.

This Soviet press has been monitoring the progress of the virus. Reliable estimates last month showed that 172 people have become carriers, of whom four are described as ill. Eighty are foreign students, mostly from Africa. More than 1 million Soviet citizens have already been screened for AIDS and 100 AIDS laboratories have been opened by the end of the year.

Soviet scientists have synthesized a preparation for treating AIDS called Adcinatin which is currently undergoing trials and several research centres are looking for an AIDS vaccine. The Cuban's entire 10 million AIDS, the Health Deputy Minister, Mr Hector Terry, said on 16th September 1987. (Reuters)
Dental symposium on AIDS risks

By Carol Custer

DENTISTS should treat all patients as if they carried the AIDS virus, a Dublin dentist told a recent symposium on AIDS held by the Irish Dental Association (IDA).

"There's a perception in general that there is a group of patients who are perceived to be dangerous, and there are those who are not," said Dr. Brian Tabb, at the symposium, which was held in Dublin and attended by more than 200 dentists from all over Ireland.

"Our responsibility as dentists is to treat all patients equally, regardless of their perceived risk," he said. "We should not discriminate against patients who may be at higher risk of contracting the virus."
AIDS mother sent to Mountjoy

A CALL to the Minister for Justice, Mr Collins, to grant compassionate release to a young Dublin mother suffering from AIDS who has commenced a six-month jail sentence in Mountjoy prison, was made by Mr Joe Costello, chairman of the Prisoners Rights Organisation, yesterday.

Lorraine Hickey (21), of Champions' Avenue, Dublin, was found guilty in the Dublin District Court yesterday of stealing 200 cigarettes from a Cash and Carry Store. Justice William Hamill said he had to take into consideration that she had 21 previous offences. He directed that both the defendant and her daughter receive medical treatment while in custody. However her daughter Joanne (16) was taken from the prison last night to her grandparents home.

The court was told that the defendant had been a heroin addict since she was 14 years old. Both she and her daughter were in the second stage of the disease and may not have very long to live.
Anger over AIDS show on schools TV

PARENTS' leaders bitterly attacked the BBC last night over a new package of school programmes dealing with AIDS, child abuse and how to become a Page 3 model.

The hard-hitting subjects are hailed by broadcasters as a 'social action campaign' to mark the 30th anniversary of the schools service. But most parents do not want their children to see them, claimed James Hammond, deputy general secretary of the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations. He said school governors should be allowed to vet controversial material before it is shown.

Scene — a series aimed at adolescents, will feature a programme about AIDS next month. It will also show a play, This Year's Model, about a girl who decides to become a topless pin-up.

Child abuse will be the subject of a programme in the series You And Me — aimed at youngsters of four and five. Puppets called Cosmo and Dibs will be used to get the message across.

The producer of the AIDS programme, Roger Tonge said: "We won't just give a list of don'ts which make safe sex sound boring. AIDS is treated as an opportunity to reassess personal relationships and remind us that there are enjoyable yet responsible ways of being in love."

Police attacked — Page 19
Minister to study medical report on AIDS prisoner

By Sean Flynn and Carol Carpenter

Minister for Justice, Mr Joe Costello, said the government was prepared to accept a medical report on the condition of the Kinvara prisoner who has contracted an initial stage of the AIDS virus, but at this stage there is no question of him being paroled, according to the Department of Justice.

The Minister is to study the medical report after the Ancillary Board of Review, whose report he is due to receive this week, completes its deliberations on the prisoner's case. The Government is not prepared to contemplate early release of the prisoner unless he is fit to work or is sentenced to a non-custodial sentence.

The jailing, sick and segregated prisoner: page 9.

Last night, the Minister said that the prisoner had received two medical examinations since he contracted the virus and he would continue to monitor the progress of his medical condition. He said that his primary concern in examining the report was his concern for the prisoner's health and well-being.

Minister seeks medical report on prisoner

(Continued from page 1)

In his statement, Mr Costello said that he was informed to date of the case by the chairman of the Ancillary Board of Review and it was his view that the prisoner was fit to work or was sentenced to a non-custodial sentence.

Mr Costello indicated that the prisoner had received two medical examinations since he contracted the virus and that the government would continue to monitor the progress of his medical condition.

The prisoner has been in hospital for treatment of a chronic medical condition and has not been paroled as a result of his medical condition. However, the government has not ruled out the possibility of the prisoner being considered for parole in the future.

The Ancillary Board of Review has not yet made a decision on the prisoner's case. The government will continue to monitor the prisoner's condition and will make a decision on his future when the Ancillary Board of Review has made its final decision.
Study finds AIDS tests deficient for up to 14 months

By Dick Ashbrook
Special Correspondent

AIDS tests now in use may fail to detect infections for a much longer period than originally thought. A study, reported in the Lancet, suggests that it can take up to 14 months before reliable tests can confirm the presence of the virus.

Yet new tests, including a test for a protein called p24, have been developed. The use of this test would allow doctors to diagnose the presence of AIDS in its earliest stages.

Antigens are proteins found in the suspect for about 6 to 10 weeks, and these are present in the body from the moment of infection.

There is an urgent need for improved testing to enhance the accuracy of diagnosis. A rapid test would allow doctors to diagnose the presence of AIDS in its earliest stages.

The subject in the test reported in the Lancet were women who were seropositive for HIV and who were already known to be HIV positive. None of the study group were found to have been infected when antibodies were used. But when they were tested retrospectively for HIV antibodies, the retrospective tests showed that 27 out of 29 women had been infected.

AIDS tests have been designed to detect the presence of antibodies to HIV. It is recommended that a test be performed on all individuals who are suspected of having AIDS.

Antigens are proteins found in the suspect for about 6 to 10 weeks, and these are present in the body from the moment of infection.

Antigens are proteins found in the suspect for about 6 to 10 weeks, and these are present in the body from the moment of infection.
The jailed, sick and segregated prisoners

The sentencing to six months imprisonment of a 25-year-old Dublin woman, Lorraine Hickory, who is suffering from an initial stage of the AIDS virus, has prompted considerable public discussion. SEAN FLYNN, Security Correspondent, has been examining the treatment of prisoners with AIDS-related problems at Mountjoy.

Dealing with the female prisoners with AIDS antibodies has proved even more difficult because of the poor condition of the women's health at Mountjoy. Last year, the female prisoners with AIDS antibodies were accommodated in Arthur Hill, but earlier this year they were moved to a special Separation Unit at Mountjoy after a series of difficulties, including a lack of proper facilities for those with AIDS antibodies. There are now 81 male prisoners with AIDS antibodies at Mountjoy, but given the difficulties with the prison, the accommodation is not yet satisfactory. The women's condition is in a more critical state, with 30 prisoners in the unit, of whom 15 are infected with AIDS antibodies.

It is a clear indication of the problems that still exist with the separation of prisoners with AIDS antibodies, and it is still not clear whether those who have been diagnosed with AIDS antibodies are treated differently from others at the prison. The proposed transfer of the female prisoners with AIDS antibodies to another prison is still under consideration, but it is clear that the conditions at Mountjoy are not satisfactory. The Women's Office at the prison is in charge of the medical aspects of the treatment of prisoners with AIDS antibodies, but it is clear that more work needs to be done to ensure that these prisoners are treated properly.

There is still no specialist medical facilities available in the prison, and it is clear that more resources are needed to deal with the problems of prisoners with AIDS antibodies. The Department of Justice needs to take action to ensure that these prisoners are treated properly, and more resources are needed to deal with the problems of prisoners with AIDS antibodies.

By contrast, the Prisoners' Rights Organization says that the Department of Justice and the National AIDS Trust are not doing enough to deal with the problems of prisoners with AIDS antibodies. The proposed transfer of the female prisoners with AIDS antibodies to another prison is still under consideration, but it is clear that more resources are needed to deal with the problems of prisoners with AIDS antibodies. The Department of Justice needs to take action to ensure that these prisoners are treated properly, and more resources are needed to deal with the problems of prisoners with AIDS antibodies.
Body Matters

Support group for lovers of people with Aids

AT THE risk of provoking a chorus of dissent I'll admit that I consider myself a caring and capable person. If a friend has a problem I hope they find that I have time and a broad shoulder ready for them. Why is it then that I get into such a state with my lover George and his Aids? Not that it's quite Baby Jane at our house but there are times when it is not the fountain of love and support that I want it to be. In situations where I think I ought to smile lovingly, prepare chicken suppers and carry a fevered brow I find myself angrily clattering the pots and pans, lashing after the week-ends with the neighboring building site, and what semblance of a loving smile I can muster has to be gland in face. I love George but hate his disease, his depressions and his lack of vitality.

It is tough being the lover of someone with Aids. It isn't even easy to admit that. What right have I to feel sorry for myself - he is the one with Aids, not me. How can I talk to George about my worry or anger or depression when I am so much better than he?

This way trouble lies. If these feelings are not brought out into the open and dealt with then real and dangerous resentments fester until a volcano more violent than HIV infects your relationship.

For the past few months the Terrence Higgins Trust has been running a support group for the lovers of people with Aids to help us recognize and talk about these problems. No one promises instant solutions. The one thing we all want - a cure - isn't on offer. But realizing that others share your feelings and experiences begins to put things into a clearer perspective. For one thing it is the only place where you can bitch and moan and cry and not feel guilty.

Lovers of people with Aids have to understand and care for their own needs if they are to be able to help their partners. This is not something that many of us can do alone.

For more information about the support group for lovers of PWA's contact Jackie Hocking at the Terrence Higgins Trust.

New information on the incubation period for Aids

THE LENGTH of time between becoming infected with the virus and the development of the full blown disease is known as the incubation period. This will vary considerably from person to person and many infected people may never develop Aids. However the best few years the statistical norm in those people going on to Aids has been pegged at 3 years.

One obvious problem facing anyone studying the incubation period is estimating when the infection occurred. The time it was probably just another cold.

There is less uncertainty for people who were infected from a blood transfusion. Researchers in London and the US have examined the records of people who received infected blood and have found an average incubation period of 5.62 years for men and 8.77 years for women.

Whether these figures hold true for people infected through sex is uncertain. A blood transfusion will introduce a lot more virus into the body than sexual activity will and this may hasten the development of disease. Neither do such figures mean that an antibody positive man can breathe a sigh of relief after 6 years. Statistical errors in groups not individuals and your chances of developing the full syndrome do not necessarily decrease.

Communards Benefit

THE COMMUNARDS will be raising money for The Mark Ashton Trust on October 30th with a benefit gig at the Academy, Brixton. Organizers hope to arrange a warehouse party in Brixton after the show to raise further money for the trust.
Radiating goodwill—10 years on

NOT only did the Radiators bring tears to the eyes of many an erstwhile punkette (now BMW-driving yuppies), they also inadvertently revived a few of the genre's baser habits.

Last Sunday night saw Hawkins turn into a veritable snitchroon. Tame 10 years ago, says the Rove— but pretty pathetic now.

Steve Rapid, Arculli had the right idea. He let Phil Chevron do the honours for most of the show and didn't come on until he was sure the reservoir of slime had dried up. Imagine the delight of prancing about on stage in front of an audience mostly made up of clients you had designed album sleeves for.

But there was evidence of far more, particularly when the bar closed before 10. Naturally the place was stuffed from early on with an assorted bevy of wrinkle-pickers holding in the beer bellies and trying desperately not to look at the day over 17. A cocktail of age and anarchy all rolled into a pair of size 34 slacks.

Opening the show was The Real Wild West, followed by Gavin Friday, who promptly one teenage goffer to say: "He's great looking. But if you stare at your shoes long enough he sounds like Dickie Rock."

The Radiators had a ball. But it's 10 years on, the flames are a taming and not a list was raised in anger throughout the happy night.

As one young'un remarked after the show: "Brilliant. How come they never made it?" It's aptly Chawick Records aren't around to answer that one.
Jeers for the Pope meets AIDS victims as he passes through Nelson Mandela Park.
The Radiators' rave-up

THE ignominious Seventies were fondly recalled with a quick pogo down memory lane at The Radiators' reunion gig at Hawkins last week.

The gig, a benefit for the AIDS to Fight AIDS campaign, had all the clout of a Happening or a Vibe - confirmed by the presence of Vibe-Master R.P. Fallon as MC.

It was seven years since The Radiators' last hometown gig — and it was easy to divide the packed audience into old fags and curious onlookers.

The assembled young for whom rock and roll began with Duran Duran, gazed on in amazement as their elders and betters disported themselves in a frenzied fashion to the tuneless bashings of a stageful of lunatics.

Philip Chevron, who took time out onstage to praise everyone, bravely cracked out classics such as "Sunday World" and "Television Screen".

Various friends of The Radiators surfaced onstage, such as Gavin Friday and Steve "Rapid".

Fronted by the dynamic Dave King, who was undoubtedly born to rock, QED are a loud-noseholds-barred heavy rock band of the highest calibre.

However, this is not just relentless rock; Dave King is the possessor of a dramatically powerful voice which adds rare depth to the usual two-dimensional fists-in-the-air heavy rock tirades.

Also in the Baggot on Wednesday nights, steam-rock and rollers Blue In Heaven continue to produce the most electrifying, energetic sounds this side of Richmond.

Voculist Shane O'Neill, a tangle-haired demon with a voice of blues and a soul full of red-hot rock and roll, leads a re-vitalised band through a passionate, steamy set that, like the best tequila, leaves one breathless.

While Blue In Heaven await a new deal they will shortly release a five-track EP, which will include a live track or two. Watch this space.

SOMETHING Happens! are taking time off from preparations for recording their debut album on the Virgin label to play several dates around the country.

The band will play the Baggot next Friday, Boxing Club, Drogheda on Saturday; Sir Henry's Cork on October 2, and Tralee on October 3.

Glaswegian band, Deacon Blue, currently the darlings of the UK rock press, are scheduled to play Hawkins next Friday, September 25. Deacon Blue have just released their first album, "Rain Town" and have been hailed for their excellent live show.
YOU'LL have to go back in time to find a Dublin band playing punk music anymore — unless you fall in with some garage band doing dodgy Clash covers.

But Dublin resounded with real Irish Seventies punk last Sunday when the legendary Radiators From Space re-formed for one last bash at Hawkins Street.

Probably the best-remembered Dublin punk band, apart from the Rats, the Radiators went their separate ways a long time ago. But they came together again as part of the lineup for last weekend's charity gig in aid of the light against AIDS.

Grow up

Ex-Radiator Phil Chevron, now making it big elsewhere as a Pogues, talked to SUNDAY WORLD about punk rock ten years on...

"It started when there was a reaction against the plainness of music in the mid-'70s," he explained, "and bands like The Ramones, The Damned, The Pistols, and The Rats were set up.

When we set up the Radiators, it was very Irish punk — we were picking up on what we had grown up with in Ireland in the '60s and '70s against a backdrop of moral, political, and religious hypocrisies."

According to Phil, the Irish music scene was totally sewn up by middle-age boys singing songs about drinking sequels and sitting in the sun: "We wanted to reflect what was going on in our lives," he said.

And with influences like T-Rex, the Velvet Underground, and Bowie, the five young Dublin lads set out to make their fortune in the world. The Radiators cut two albums during their six-year existence, complete with songs such as Television Screen and, believe it or not, SUNDAY WORLD.

But when punk died, so did the Radiators. Phil eventually joined up with the Pogues; Pete Holidai works with Light A Big Fire; Jimmy Wynne works with the BBC; Steve Rapid is better known as Steve Averill, U2 album sleeve designer; and Mark Mccarthy works with Honor Helfman and the Gay Woods Band.

"I think punk rock died after about six months," Phil said sadly. "When punk became a media thing, loads of bands who hadn't been punk suddenly called themselves punk.

Exploitation

"The spiky hair, pins, and bondage came out of the High Street exploitation of punk," he said.

"The whole point was that it was individual, but it became a sort of uniform. Now, you have got people in ugly clothes that don't say anything individual, but only make a communal statement..."
Sunday Tribune
21st September 1987

THE WEEK IN WORDS

What we have now is thriving and efficient — British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, speaking of industry in Teesside, where one in five of the adult population is out of work.

Dissent from church doctrine remains what it is — dissent — Pope John Paul II, speaking to Catholic bishops in Los Angeles.

The government campaign states “Casual sex spreads Aids”, when in reality it’s unsafe sex that spreads Aids — Mick Quigley of Gay Health Action.

The next best thing to winning the Sam Maguire Cup — Fr Michael Murphy, parish priest of Sneem, Co Kerry which won the Tidy Towns competition.

History is in the making — Soviet spokesman, Gennadi Gerasimov, at the Shultz-Shervardnadze disarmament talks.

Flanna Fail have blandly and consistently voted to pass these outdated, destructive roads, always under a whip — a whip imposed from Kinsealy by a man who knows nothing about city life except to sweep through it before elections. — Deirdre Kelly of the Living City Group on the Dublin City Council’s decision to run a dual carriageway through the area of St Patrick’s Cathedral.

I myself personally speaking think that the standard of literary is quite high — Mary O’Rourke, Minister for Education, on RTE’s Morning Ireland.
THE HEAT IS ON AGAIN

THE RADIATORS, GAVIN FRIDAY, AND THE REAL WILD WEST. (Gay Health Action Benefit, Hawkins' Arms)

The Radiators were born before their Irish time. Running through the seven years since their debut LP, "Ghosttown," documents how their sound has evolved in the years since they met, and ultimately left, the studio. Their first record in almost three years, "Grease," is a testament to how they have grown and changed.

The album, recorded in a single week in London, was the result of the band's desire to make a record that would be more accessible to fans. They recorded the entire album in under a week, with the exception of the cover of "Sweet William," which was recorded in the studio.

The album features a mix of rock, folk, and country music, and is a departure from the band's previous work. The band's sound has evolved over the years, and "Grease" is a reflection of that evolution.

The band's touring schedule is extensive, and they are looking forward to performing in front of new audiences. They are excited to continue to grow and change, and to continue to make music that resonates with their fans.

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Bill Graham
Governor OKs Aids prisoner to go on the run...

AN AIDS virus prisoner is going on the run from Dublin's Mountjoy Jail — with the blessing of the governor.

Gerard Cusack from the city is suffering from encephalitis, a rare form of brain ailment which is one of the symptoms of the virus.

His 16 month sentence is not getting in the way of his ambition to compete in the Dublin City Marathon. In order to ensure that he becomes the first prisoner to compete in the prison, the prison authorities are allowing keeping him in their sights.

On Wednesday of last week, Gerry was released from Mountjoy. With him were three prison officers jogging along for security reasons.

But both prison officials are also serving in the marathon and the race that suits them as well. On their last outing they covered 11 miles — nine roadwork and two cross-country runs in preparation for the real thing on October 26th — the Bank Holiday Monday.

Gerry is not only the first prisoner to compete in the marathon but the second to reach the finish line, after being allowed freedom from the segregation unit until the police.

He has been diagnosed as having the AIDS virus in the last half of the race and is considered in the less severe period of the disease.

The Governor of Mountjoy, Mr. John Longman, refused to intervene on the prisoner's participation in the marathon.

But at the headquarters of the Bookbuses Houses Athletic Association which organises the race in conjunction with RTE Radio 2 a spokesmen confirmed his entry.
ORIGIN OF AIDS VIRUS

COLM KEENA'S article on AIDS (S.P. September 20) quoted Professor Irene Hilley as stating that "The most accepted theory for the origin of the virus is that it is a descendant of a monkey virus STLV. Some African tribes inject monkey blood into themselves as part of a ritual." That may be true, but it is not the only means by which the monkey virus has been transmitted.

It was not too many years ago that Dr. Frederick Kleiner, of Reidsville, North Carolina, had published in the professional literature that the Salk and Sabin vaccines, produced from monkey's kidneys, may well one day be allied to the increase of leukemia in the United States. Kleiner's comment is reinforced by the article recently written by Dr. Harold Buttram and his associate Dr. John Chris Hoffman, in 1983, where they make the interesting observation that in all the literature on AIDS no mention has been made of the possibility of its relationship with modern mass immunizations, even though this particular disorder has arisen in a generation subjected to such procedures.

Dr. Robert Gallo, the U.S. expert who first identified the AIDS virus, told the London Times (May 11, 1983): "The link between the WHO programme (the World Health Organisation effort to eradicate smallpox in Third World countries) and the AIDS epidemic in Africa is an interesting hypothesis. I cannot say that it actually happened, but I have been saying for some years that the use of live vaccines such as that used for smallpox can activate a dormant infection such as HIV."

Has Dr. Gallo been making these speculations "for some years" only in the British press? Or, if he and US surgeon general Koop and the experts from the US Centres for Disease Control have mentioned this to US reporters, have their words been drowned in the cacophony of propaganda telling people that it's their own fault if they got AIDS? WHO information indicates that the AIDS table of Central Africa matches the concentration of smallpox vaccinations, i.e., the greatest spread of HIV infection coincides with the most intense immunisation programmes. Thus Zaire, at the top of the AIDS list, had 36 million people vaccinated. Next is Zambia, with 19 million, followed by Tanzania with 13 million, Uganda with 11 million, Malawi with eight million, Rwanda with 3.3 million and Burundi with 2.2 million.

Brazil, the only South American country covered by the smallpox eradication programmes, has the highest incidence of AIDS in that part of the world.

Latest AIDS news to hand concerns the discovery of Dr. Eva Lee Snead, of Texas, USA, who had been conducting research into AIDS. As a result of this research, she discovered some horrifying facts which implicate a virus SV40, found in the African green monkey, upon which the polio vaccine was initially prepared. Dr. Snead queries how the virus has been circulated amongst people throughout the world who have never seen a green monkey and concludes that it could only have been conveyed by the polio vaccine. She further asserts that US government and so-called scientists are covering up for fear of public backlash.

PATRICK J. CARRIGAN
Priory Lawn, Waterford.
AIDS SCARE OVER PREGNANCY DRUG

A BATCH of drugs designed to protect Rhesus babies has been suspended by American military hospitals after a pregnant woman who took it contracted AIDS. The maker of the drug, RhoGam, is a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson which has denied the drug was responsible.

Doctors in California say that 100 women treated with the drug last year made them suspicious that a batch had been contaminated with the virus.

(Reuters)
AIDS victims take to stage

Instead of performing plays created by health playwrights unfamiliar with the feelings that accompany an AIDS diagnosis, the actors develop their own scripts as what Glassman called a "testament and record of thesepeople's experiences."

He said he had to develop material so that if any piece were dropped it would not be critical to the whole performance. The group had to allow for the inevitability that some actors would be sick, he said.

Nonetheless, the group — an offshoot of the US Gay Men's Health Crisis Organisation — is so popular that replacements and understudies are easy to find, said assistant director Sylvia Stein.

AIDS is no stranger to the American theatre, with the dramas "As It" and "Safe Sex" addressing the subject on Broadway and "Beirut" and "The Normal Heart" playing off-Broadway. AIDS has claimed well-known victims in the performing arts: movie star Rock Hudson, and Chorus Line" creator Michael Bennett, and showman Liberace.

The actors re-create AIDS-related experiences they have had in doctors' offices, including a hospital running out of beds, a patient's lack of health insurance, grisly medical treatments and the poignant day AIDS was diagnosed.

In addition to producing good theatre, the group's purpose is to empower people with AIDS and to combat the feelings of helplessness and passivity that accompany sickness, said Nick Pippin, an assistant director of the group and an actor infected with AIDS.

The actors expressed frustration over the health care system and over the government's slowness in approving experimental drugs to treat their illness. Although the group's purpose is not to advise or to counsel, its workshops seem to have a psychological therapeutic effect.