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THE PEOPLE'S DOCTOR

A Second Opinion  
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WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION LINKS  
AIDS TO SMALLPOX VACCINE

by Dr. Robert S. Mendelsohn

Dear Reader:

Have you read anything in your newspaper which links the AIDS epidemic with vaccinations? Have you seen or heard any television or radio reports on the subject? I haven't, and as you know, I've been following the AIDS epidemic very carefully.

Have you heard Dr. Robert Gallo, the U.S. expert who first identified the AIDS virus, talk about AIDS and vaccines? I haven't. But, Dr. Gallo did tell the "London Times" (May 11, 1987), "The link between the WHO PROGRAMME [the World Health Organization effort to eradicate smallpox in Third World countries] and the [AIDS] epidemic in Africa is an interesting and important 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" to only the British press? Or, if he and Surgeon General Koop and the experts from the Centers for Disease Control have mentioned this to U.S. reporters, have their words been drowned in the cacophony of statements telling people that it's their own fault if they get AIDS?

Government scientists have been quick to point the finger at peoples' lifestyles -- "You don't have the right sexual partners," "You don't wear enough condoms," etc. But nowhere on the front pages of U.S. newspapers

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has there been a hint that the doctors may have played at least as important a role in spreading AIDS as have the people.

Look how quick government doctors are to blame drug addicts for spreading AIDS by sharing needles. But have they told you that, in the recent WHO smallpox vaccination campaign, needles were re-used 40 to 60 times? The main method of "sterilization" was waving the needle across a flame. Doctors are quick to play the game of "blame the victim," but what if it turns out that doctors themselves are responsible for the victims' plight?

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 immunization programs. Thus, Zaire, at the top of the AIDS list, had 36,000,000 people immunized with the smallpox vaccine. Next is Zambia, with 19,000,000, followed by Tanzania with 15 million, Uganda with 11 million, Malawi with eight million, Ruanda with 3.3 million and Burundi with 3.2 million. Brazil, the only South American country covered in the smallpox eradication campaign, has the highest incidence of AIDS in that part of the world.

This theory -- that the AIDS epidemic in Africa may have been triggered by the smallpox immunization program, has sparked intense debate among scientists. You may not have heard about this debate, but an urgent call for evidence to support the idea has been demanded by the World Health Organization. This theory was discussed by WHO officials last autumn. No follow-up data are available from the smallpox eradication campaign because no systematic studies of the complications produced by the mass immunization have been done (!).

According to Professor Oswald Jarrett, an AIDS researcher at the University of Glasgow (Scotland); "We need to know whether the virus was  
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spread from a small to a large group of people through the immunization programme." And Dr. Laurence Gerlis, a clinical AIDS researcher, states, "Previous circumstantial evidence looks more persuasive alongside the latest research that shows AIDS can be stimulated by smallpox vaccination."

Here's what the unnamed WHO adviser who disclosed the problem to the Times had to say; "I thought it was just a coincidence until we studied the latest findings about the reactions which can be caused by vaccinia. Now I believe the smallpox vaccine theory is the explanation to the explosion of AIDS." This theory also provides an explanation of how AIDS infection is spread more evenly between males and females in Africa than in the West.

Further evidence of the link between AIDS and the smallpox vaccine comes from the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. where routine smallpox vaccination of a 19-year-old army recruit was the trigger for the stimulation of dormant HIV virus into full-blown AIDS. This discovery was made by a medical team working with Dr. Robert Redfield at Walter Reed. The recruit developed AIDS two and-a-half weeks after being immunized against smallpox, and he died shortly thereafter.

While in no way diminishing the role certain lifestyles play in AIDS causation, isn't it high time that we turn the spotlight on the possibility that modern medical miracles -- immunizations included -- can help cause modern medical plagues?

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(Distributed by Columbia Features, Inc.)

(Dr. Mendelsohn welcomes questions from readers. While he cannot reply to them all individually, he will answer those of general interest in his column. Write to Dr. Mendelsohn in care of this newspaper.)