

Medicine by John Grauerholz, M.D.

LaRouche 'bugs' AIDS lobby

Reality has started to intrude on the fantasies of the Atlanta Centers for Disease Control.

The pressure is beginning to tell on the AIDS lobby. What with the cases of three health care workers infected by touching AIDS infected blood, a recent spate of legislation calling for routine testing and other public health measures, and the President's limited, but still significant, testing policy announced on the eve of the recent AIDS conference in Washington, D.C., one gets the impression of a definite trend toward an approach based on presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche's proposals.

Indeed LaRouche's prediction, after the defeat of Proposition 64 last November in California, that within six months those who spoke against the proposition would be calling for the same measures, has been borne out in spades.

One of the more amusing manifestations of how thoroughly LaRouche has come to dominate the AIDS issue occurred around the announcement of a study conducted at the Medical Entomology Laboratory of Vero Beach, Florida. The study, carried out under a contract from Dr. Robert Gallo's laboratory at the National Cancer Institute, demonstrated that the AIDS virus can live for several days in mosquitoes fed on infected blood.

When this story was reported in the *Atlanta Constitution*, a homosexual-dominated social service group, called "AID Atlanta," called a press conference to denounce it as a "right-wing scare tactic" attributed mainly to Lyndon LaRouche! The statement was carried on most major Atlanta media,

including a two-column article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

An even more revealing development occurred around a conference convened by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment to examine evidence for the ability, or inability, of insects to carry and transmit the AIDS virus. A number of scientists were contacted and told to stay away from the meeting because it was a "LaRouche operation."

When Dr. Robert Gallo was contacted about the study, he acknowledged that the preliminary data indicated that mosquitoes could carry the virus but that transmission of infection had not yet been demonstrated.

Interestingly Gallo was one of the scientists *not* interviewed for an article on AIDS and mosquitoes published in the July 7 issue of the *Washington Post*. Subtitled "Transmission by Insects Is Deemed Virtually Impossible," it contains statements by various CDC officials every bit as categorical and authoritative as the statements made by Red Cross and other officials in 1983 that AIDS absolutely could not be acquired by blood transfusion.

One scientist interviewed was Dr. Thomas Monath of the CDC's Division of Vector Borne Viral Diseases in Fort Collins, Colorado. According to the article, Monath contends that mechanical transmission of viruses in humans, the postulated mechanism for AIDS transmission by insects, is only hypothetical and is highly unlikely because AIDS is difficult to transmit and

it takes a lot of virus to cause infection.

This might sound reassuring if it weren't for the fact that a little over 10 years ago human infection by any retrovirus was only hypothetical; that, as the recent cases of health workers infected by touching infected blood show, the virus is not that hard to transmit; and that there is no scientific basis for the contention that it takes a lot of virus to cause infection. Indeed this latter statement sounds hauntingly similar to the oft-heard assertion that semen is a particularly rich source of virus, which serves as the basis for advocating condoms to prevent AIDS' spread. There is no evidence that there is any virus in semen other than that in a few white blood cells which may be present in the semen.

Mechanical transmission of two animal retroviruses, equine infectious anemia and bovine leukemia, is well documented. As Dr. Ricardo Veronesi, of Sao Paulo University Medical School in Brazil, recently observed, "If [equine infectious anemia] is transmitted from horse to horse by flies, why not the human AIDS disease?"

The *Post* interviewed Dr. Mark Whiteside of the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Miami, Florida, on the question of environmental factors, except they decided to refer to him as Mark Whitehead. Then citing a CDC study which supposedly ruled out insect transmission, the article discussed evidence for insect transmission of hepatitis-B and concluded with some reassuring words of wisdom by Dr. Robert Windom, assistant U.S. secretary for health, that "we're as sure as you can be in science" that insects don't transmit AIDS.

Obviously only a spoilsport like Lyndon LaRouche would disagree. When reality intrudes on CDC's fantasies, it must be a LaRouche operation.