

The green monkey isn't our enemy. The IMF is."

Dr. Muhammad, who is a trained surgeon, said he traveled to Kenya to see for himself what the alpha interferon derivative, which goes under the trade name Kemron, was really all about. Dr. Muhammad reported that he interviewed the research team in their laboratory, was permitted to review their data, and to examine AIDS patients currently undergoing treatment with Kemron and with a new, more advanced form of Kemron, the drug Immunex, which contains a greater number of alpha interferon components than the original drug. Dr. Muhammad stressed that although the new drug was only a treatment and *not a cure* for the deadly HIV virus, he was tremendously hopeful and encouraged by the dramatic improvement in the condition of those undergoing treatment.

Dr. Muhammad introduced Dr. Barbara Justice, a well-known New York City-based cancer surgeon who has sent 54 AIDS patients to Kenya for treatment over the past year. Dr. Justice reported that 97% of her patients showed marked improvement within eight weeks of beginning treatment, and that most were able to regain some degree of normalcy in their ability to function.

### The coverup

It has been almost impossible for anyone outside of Kenya to assess the work of the Kenyan team, which has been administering Kemron on an experimental basis in the treatment of AIDS since 1989, since it has been systematically blacked out of the scientific literature. Dr. Koech was to present his data, first at the International AIDS Conference in the United States in 1987, and then again at the 1991 AIDS Conference in Italy. On both occasions, his invitation was inexplicably withdrawn.

Last year, Dr. Koech decided to take his data directly to the U.S. medical community, and an extensive U.S. lecture tour was planned. That tour was abruptly canceled when the State Department refused to issue Dr. Koech the necessary permission to enter the United States.

This is certainly not the first time that important AIDS research has been suppressed. Quite the contrary, it is part of a continuing criminal pattern of lies and coverup. The importance of a rapid evaluation of Dr. Koech's work with Kemron and Immunex is obvious. Currently, the only treatment available to AIDS victims is the drug AZT; however, AZT therapy is prohibitively expensive and carries with it extremely destructive side effects, especially with prolonged use. Additionally, a recent study conducted by the U.S. Army showed that, for unexplained reasons, AZT therapy is not only largely ineffective in the treatment of blacks, but that, in fact, AZT seems to aggravate symptoms in an alarming number of black patients.

Kenya's President Daniel Arap Moi clearly finds the Koech team's findings to be convincing. He recently announced that his government was building a factory to allow the mass production of alpha interferon.

## Milk 'strike' aimed at Bush food policy

by Marcia Merry

Plans are taking shape for a widespread milk "strike" by dairy farmers on or about Oct. 1. This protest action reflects the revulsion felt in farm communities against the Bush administration's overall agriculture policy. So far, farmers in 15 states are involved. There will be a national meeting in Vermont Sept. 20-21 to debate dairy policy. Farmers are now getting 30% less per gallon of their milk than they were getting a year ago, and cannot stay in operation.

The Bush administration holds that low farm prices manifest the "free market" at work, and no remedy will be taken. Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and others in Congress have voiced objections to this, but so far they have been ineffectual in legislating relief. Leahy has recently announced new legislative efforts to relieve the farmers—two previous attempts failed during the last session. Leahy complained to reporters in August, "The administration won't raise the support price by even one cent to help our dairy farmers." The current floor price for farm milk, set by federal order, is \$10.60 per hundredweight (cwt, roughly 12 gallons). A year and a half ago, some farmers received about \$15 per cwt. At present, some farmers may be getting over \$11 per cwt, but this is nowhere near the parity price level needed to meet their costs, provide a return, and guarantee supply to the public. A parity price would be about \$26 per cwt. Most farm strike coordinators are asking at least \$17.

Some farmers are discussing dumping milk, but the more informed strike coordinators are working out plans to deliver milk to processing plants, and arrange to obtain milk-equivalent dairy products like cheese, butter, or dried milk to give to those in need. Farmers are discussing sending dairy foods to food banks, hungry children, and for shipment to children in Iraq. A series of meetings to organize the nationwide action has taken place in Pennsylvania, New York, Missouri, Wisconsin, and other states, with an eye to planning a coordinated strike action Oct. 1 that would dramatize the fact that dairy farmers are being ruined by the government-sanctioned low farm prices, while milk shortages hurt millions.

As of June, several Wisconsin dairy counties have declared themselves economic disaster areas. Even the U.S.

Department of Agriculture statisticians project that, due to the low farm milk price, aggregate dairy farm income this year is expected to drop by \$3 billion. The USDA condones this extermination of dairy farms. In a recent report, "Toward 2005," the USDA made these projections for the Northeast United States, currently an important "milkshed" to supply fresh milk for fluid consumption in the major cities: The number of dairy farms is to decline from 37,016 to 21,650; cows per worker to increase from 28 to 42; number of processing plants to decrease from 686 to 189; total processing employment to decrease from 30,100 to 9,600; number of dairy farm employees to decrease from 80,600 to 43,300.

Despite the national news blackout to date, there has been strong regional attention to this crisis. Local television in Erie, Pennsylvania covered a farm strike meeting of 70 people which convened Sept. 6 in western Pennsylvania. In western New York, there are signs dotting the countryside with such messages as, "This farm will strike Oct. 1."

### **European farmers protest cartels**

Farm strike action in the United States could potentially boost the expected farm protest demonstrations in Europe this fall. The German Farmers Federation has announced a series of protest rallies and demonstrations beginning in late September against farm income cuts being demanded by the U.S. at the General Agreement in Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the European Community's compromise position. The rallies will take place all over Europe. Addressing the question of so-called surpluses, German Farmers Federation President Constantine Heeremann said Sept. 10 that food surpluses should be used up for food aid to eastern Europe and the republics of the former Soviet Union. He warned against excessive trade liberalization for eastern Europe which would expose it to the "brutal force of the market," and destroy traditional agricultural structures. There would be two effects from such "liberalization," he said: either to reduce eastern European farmers to mere producers of cheap food for western cartels, and/or to turn those countries into a consumer market for western food production.

Farmers have joined in support of German mine workers who have been involved in symbolic protest actions for the past year against U.S. GATT demands for subsidy cuts which will eliminate 40-50% of the mines. Employing similar polemics as the farmers, the coal miners have protested the importation of cheap coal, both because it hurts German workers, and because it is produced under inhuman conditions.

### **Milk for children**

One of the foremost issues under discussion by farmers is how to bring home to the public the moral question of allowing nobody to go hungry.

One farm leader, John M. McGuire of Union City, Pennsylvania, who is the northwest Pennsylvania coordinator for

the Oct. 1 milk strike, has been circulating a resolution which states in part, "Our cause is not just a 'special interest' of dairy farmers. Unless the independent family farm system is protected and strengthened, then *all people*, especially poor people in the big cities, along with people in the poorer countries around the world, will be at the total mercy of giant food conglomerates.

"Farmers need to receive a fair, minimum price for their product, just like a worker needs a decent minimum wage. Today, the dairy farmer gets less for a quart of milk than it costs to buy a postage stamp. Not only has the federal government refused to set a fair, minimum price to farmers, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture has a plan, called 'Toward 2005,' to eliminate over 40% of dairy farmers in the Northeast!

"The government tells us that there's a 'surplus' of milk. But we add up the growing millions of poor in America, the hundreds of thousands whose unemployment benefits are running out, plus malnourished people in other countries who are dying needlessly of disease and hunger, and we know there is no 'surplus.' The nation of Iraq, for example, needs about 40 million pounds of powdered milk this year alone, just to save the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent children.

"We can no longer afford to sell our product for less than it costs to produce it. So, as part of the planned milk strike, we will offer to give away our milk to food banks and charitable organizations, to help feed those hungry people at home and abroad.

*"We call upon every American who values his or her freedom as much as do those brave people in Eastern Europe, to support the independent family farmer in this crisis."*

### **Why the low farm milk prices?**

A small number of mega-companies are imposing the low milk prices on farmers—with the connivance of the USDA and Department of Justice; the famous name processors include Kraft, Borden, and some others. Typical is the Bronfman dairy empire, connected to the Seagram's whiskey group, which dominates fluid milk sales in the Northeastern cities. Over recent years, the Bronfman family firm Labatts Brewery Co. of Canada systematically bought up dairies in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and nearby regions. Now this chain underpays farmers and continues high prices to consumers. The Justice Department has turned a blind eye to this blatant food profiteering.

Internationally, the "free trade" movement is a front for similar profiteering on a grand scale. The looting to date has been severe—family farms have been destroyed and malnutrition and starvation are spreading. The companies of the international dairy cartel include Nestlé and Unilever.

But the farm protest actions hold promise that even at this late hour there is potential for public revolt against the evil agriculture policies behind the usury and misery.