

spoke before a physicians' union in one of the civilian hospitals, and I spoke to a mass meeting in Sao Paulo that was convened by my colleague Ricardo Veronese of the Brazilian Society of Infectious Diseases.

Brazil has a number of problems. One is the whole sub-culture of *Carnival*. The most interesting aspect of that sub-culture is the tremendous number of transvestites in Brazil. These people are highly promiscuous. They supposedly average 3,800 sexual contacts a year. At least 27% of them are presently infected with the AIDS virus. Some 70% of them use some form of drugs. Many of these transvestites use steroids such as cortisone which are immune suppressants, to reduce the body's immune reaction to the silicone injections that they use to augment their breasts. As a consequence, you have this huge population, potentially hundreds of thousands of these individuals, immuno-suppressed, with high frequencies of sexual contact with many people. This population is totally transparent to the transmission of this disease, and provides a tremendous reservoir in the major cities. Then, you go up north to places like Pernambuco, and you have literally African conditions prevailing.

So, Brazil has the worst of both worlds. The conservative estimates are that between 300,000 and 500,000 are already infected in the country. This is a matter of great concern to

both the civilian and military people I spoke to.

EIR: What about Colombia?

Grauerholz: The problem appears—and I have to stress, *appears*, because we're just beginning to look at the data—that they have a significant problem in Cartagena among the prostitutes. Colombia certainly has significant poverty, both in the cities and in the rural areas. And we don't yet know what is going on in terms of these viruses in these areas. They have a malaria problem, and the one new strain of AIDS virus that I mentioned in Venezuela is highly associated with malaria.

The real point is, they are just beginning to see cases, 50-100, in each of these countries—other than Brazil which has the second-largest number of officially reported cases in the world—because they're just beginning to look.

There is a high degree of concern with the whole question of insect vectors. The insect problem is much more palpable in these countries generally than it is in the United States where it might be limited to areas like Belle Glade and other parts of southern Florida and southern Texas. These are countries where you have a year-round problem of not only mosquitoes but numerous other biting insects, such as these large kissing bugs which spread chagas disease.

LaRouche program dominates CDC meeting

When the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) convened their much-publicized AIDS conference in Atlanta Feb. 24, presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche's program quickly came to dominate the proceedings. The conference was originally publicized as a "national public hearing" on mandatory AIDS testing; however, CDC restricted its format after spokesman for LaRouche made clear they would be present. The "in-house" effort failed, however.

Participants were greeted with copies of LaRouche's statement, "My Program to Stop AIDS." Many requested additional copies.

During the workshop period, a panel on the rights of AIDS victims, featuring CDC head William Curran and Dr. Levine, Dr. Novick of Yale protested measures to outlaw sodomy, calling it "the legitimate expression of love between two men." The first two speakers talked of budget constraints. The third railed against the danger of LaRouche and waved a copy of Proposition 64, the Cali-

fornia ballot referendum on AIDS endorsed by LaRouche.

The next speaker rose, and identified herself as Belinda Haight: "I am an associate of LaRouche." She said she was most concerned about "the rights of the uninfected." Citing a British skin graft patient who contracted AIDS, she asserted that much remains to be known about modes of AIDS transmission. Referencing the key points in LaRouche's program, she also asserted that there is no rational alternative to universal screening and humane quarantine. The conference participants' efforts would be better spent in a political lobbying effort to break loose funding for a Biological Strategic Defense Initiative, she said.

Members of the panel just shut up, while speaker after speaker discussed LaRouche's program. Finally, a panel member declared, "Although no one on this panel has raised or supports the idea of mandatory quarantine, it seems to have become an issue. I'd like a show of hands of all those public health experts in the room who support this policy."

Haight and one other person raised their hands. The panelist smugly continued, "Now let hands of all those who oppose such measures." Of more than 150 people, fewer than 20 raised their hands.

Pandemonium broke out. Haight was besieged by reporters and surrounded by howling "homosexual activists" who attempted to drown out rational discourse.