

Red Cross admits AIDS 'risk areas'

by Warren Hamerman and
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On March 17, the American Red Cross urged that all of the estimated 30 million Americans who had received blood transfusions between 1978 and 1985 be tested to see if they had received AIDS-contaminated blood. In its statement, the Red Cross admitted for the first time what has previously been uniquely the contention of *EIR*—that there are now “high-risk zones” as opposed to merely “high-risk individuals” in the United States.

The Red Cross was one of the “authoritative” health institutions that opposed classifying AIDS as a communicable disease and applying standard public health measures to it—the approach advocated by *EIR* and put on the ballot last November in California as “Proposition 64.”

The Red Cross statement came less than 24 hours after the U.S. Public Health Service first indicated the need for screening the 30-34 million Americans in the same category. Even this magnitude of screening does not take into account any blood up to the present day which may be contaminated with the second or other variants of the AIDS virus. The Red Cross underscored particular concern with all blood supplies which originated in what it calls the AIDS “high-risk areas”—New York City, Miami, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

“We don’t
Sun quoted one federal health official. “We’re trying to come out with something that says: ‘This is a problem that physicians ought to be aware of, and a judgment has to be called for.’
is a responsibility that physicians will have to take.”

American Medical Association officials estimate there were 34 million transfusions during the eight-year period. AMA official William Hendee said, “Everyone now will have to think: ‘Am I one of those people? Has someone with whom I have to wonder about that. We have to be careful we don’t exacerbate that sense of anxiety.’”

35,000 more AIDS cases

The Public Health Service estimates that of the 34 million Americans who received blood transfusions between 1978 and 1985, some 35,000 will develop AIDS. An official told

the *Los Angeles Times*, that maybe not all of them have to be tested, only those who “ought to know that they are infected. . . . There are many things that have to be considered, such as the age of the individual and whether they are sexually active.”

This latest proposal comes a month after the farcical Feb. 14 conference at the Atlanta Centers for Disease Control, where a consensus was reached against mass testing for the lethal infection. The new moves represent attempts to avoid a total loss of credibility on the AIDS issue, as citizens respond politically to the government’s negligence, and rally support for Democratic presidential aspirant Lyndon LaRouche, as the only major political figure with a serious policy for dealing with the species-threatening disease.

The *New York Times* devoted two full pages March 15 and a March 16 front-page feature, to the problems AIDS is causing in New York. The *Times* reports that of the 9,188 reported AIDS cases in the city, black and Hispanic poor make up 54% of the victims. The *Times* connects the high incidence of the disease among minority groups with poor nutrition, poor health care, and homelessness.

The *Times* estimates that the federal, state, and city governments will spend \$277 million on AIDS in New York City during FY87, and \$349 million in FY88. The city’s share will be \$74 million this year and \$86 million next fiscal year. Eighty local hospitals are now treating almost 1,000 AIDS patients a day in the five boroughs, with the municipal hospitals being classified as “the treatment centers of last resort for the indigent” by the *Times*.

In Chicago, where school officials are in the process of putting an AIDS-infected child in Pilsen Academy over the protests of concerned parents, 25 new AIDS cases were reported in February, setting a new record and bringing the number of AIDS cases in the city to 47 for the first two months of the year, according to Dr. K.T. Reddi, chief of the Bureau of Public Health. City health officials expect 500 AIDS cases for the year, roughly the number reported from 1980 to 1986.

“There are more people in the state of Illinois with AIDS than in Great Britain,” stated Dr. Corboy in a March 17, television debate on AIDS in Chicago. Corboy, debating the American Civil Liberties Union, said: “This is not a civil rights problem. It is a public health problem. The genesis is what we must know. We need to get our politicians to allocate the necessary dollars for dealing with this killer disease.”

Idaho State Senate Bill 1100, requiring mandatory testing for AIDS prior to issuance of marriage licences, passed in the second week in March by 2 votes. It was sponsored by Sen. Larry Anderson, a Twin Falls Republican, and has a good chance of passing in the House as well.

Thus, less than six months after the Hollywood mafia, the Reagan administration budget-cutters, and their homosexual playmates celebrated the defeat of Proposition 64, pressure for even stronger measures against AIDS is being felt.