

‘genocide’ is an appropriate term.”

Love said: “Al Gore . . . is head of the Commission on Binational Relations with South Africa. . . . He said that he had only allowed there to be ‘moderate’ sanctions . . . rather than the tough sanctions that have been called for by the drug companies. . . . What is Gore talking about? People are dying in big numbers, and they view people who are infected as already dead, so why give them any treatment? It is terrible and immoral!”

On June 30, Rep. Harold James, head of the Pennsylvania State Legislature’s Black Caucus, and one of the most widely known African-American leaders in the United States, issued a statement asking, “Will millions die in South Africa because of Al Gore’s policies?”

James’s statement reads in part: “Disturbing reports have come to public attention recently, concerning the apparent role of Vice President Al Gore in denying affordable AIDS medications to . . . South Africa. . . . Why would Al Gore take

actions, which would unnecessarily increase the suffering and deaths from AIDS in Africa?”

“In 1997, the government of South Africa passed legislation allowing the domestic production of generic versions of AIDS drugs, and the purchasing of cheaper types of AIDS drugs on the world market. The law also requires a reasonable fee to be paid by domestic producers to the drug companies which hold the patents. The pharmaceutical industry is worried that if South Africa and other Third World countries go ahead with these plans, their ability to charge vastly inflated prices . . . may be undercut. While AZT, for example, can be purchased on the world market for 42 cents for 300 mg, it retails in the United States for nearly \$6 a pill.”

The criticism from Representative James, a collaborator of Lyndon LaRouche in the policy fight for a New Bretton Woods monetary system, is the tip of the iceberg. Reports from the South Africa conference on AIDS will indeed begin to “break the silence.”

UNICEF: AIDS creating a dark age for children

by Colin Lowry

A UNICEF report, “The Progress of Nations,” paints a devastating picture of the impact of the AIDS epidemic on children around the world. The focus of the report is on Africa, where the epidemic has already killed 12 million Africans, and is poised to wipe out most of the current generation of African children. All of the modest gains in child mortality and life expectancy that were built up over decades have been eliminated, and they are now rapidly declining.

In the nine countries of southern Africa, AIDS is a leading killer of children under 5 years old. In Botswana, 64% of deaths in children under 5 are due to AIDS. In South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, 50% of child deaths under 5 are due to AIDS. In Zimbabwe, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2010, child mortality will be 350% higher than it would have been without the effects of AIDS. In many of the countries of southern Africa, AIDS is projected to account for a 100% increase in child mortality by the end of the year 2000. According to the report, in some of these African countries, three out of four pediatric hospital beds are taken up by children with AIDS.

A growing number of orphans

As horrible as these figures are, there is another side to this story: What happens to the children who survive past age 5? The most likely answer is that they will become “AIDS

orphans,” whose parents have been killed by AIDS. There are now 8.2 million children in Africa whose parents have been killed by AIDS. The total number of orphans is growing rapidly, with 13 million expected by next year, of whom 10.4 million will still be under the age of 15.

In 35 countries around the world, the rate at which children have been orphaned has doubled, tripled, or even quadrupled in just three years, 1994-97. In most of the industrialized nations of the world, no more than 1% of the child population is orphaned. In the areas hardest hit by the AIDS epidemic, 7-11% of the child population are orphans. In Uganda, there are 1.7 million children who have lost their parents to AIDS, and this is 11% of the total child population, the highest rate in the world.

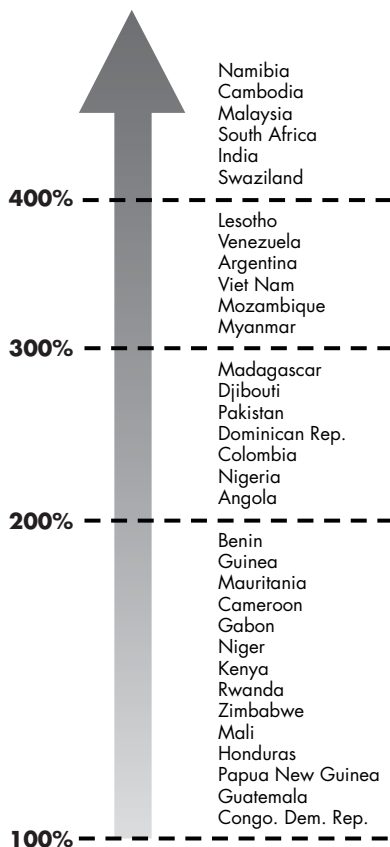
The orphan problem is not limited to Africa. In Asia, the orphan population may triple by next year due to AIDS. The epidemic, and the rate of children being orphaned, is exploding in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and India. Add to that the fact that there are at present more children living with an HIV-infected parent, than all the orphans combined. The worst affected areas of the world are struggling to care for the ill and “a generation of orphans, on a scale unprecedented in human history.”

The epidemics’ impact on children is even more pernicious. Orphaned children suffer from malnutrition, are often denied any real education, and are more likely to die from other preventable and treatable diseases. A study in Tanzania found that families that lost one adult to AIDS suffered a 15% drop in their level of nutrition. Malnutrition at an early age can be especially damaging to development, and among AIDS orphans, stunting of growth occurs in about half of these children.

In most countries in Africa hardest hit by the epidemic, the skilled adult workforce has been devastated by AIDS. But

Mounting toll

Where the number of children orphaned by AIDS has increased sharply over three years*



* Countries are listed in descending order of percentage rate of increase over the three-year period, 1994-97. Here, orphans are defined as children under the age of 15 who have lost their mother or both parents to AIDS.

Source: UNAIDS/WHO.

now, with millions of children dying of AIDS, and millions more being orphaned, who will be left to replace this workforce? Among orphans in Zambia, 32% in urban areas were not enrolled in school, and in rural areas, 68% were not in school. But then, where will the necessary numbers of skilled teachers come from to teach the children? In Malawi, a study found that more than 30% of the schoolteachers were infected with HIV.

If the situation is not turned around in Africa, the future for the children will be filled with funerals, orphans, and an early death. The "Dark Age" that is currently sweeping through Africa, cutting down the young like a huge thresher, will continue to spread, unless a crash program of infrastructure building and medical research is undertaken on a scale also never before seen in human history.

Book Review

George Stephanopoulos, Gore, and Dick Morris

by Debra Hanania Freeman

All Too Human: A Political Education

by George Stephanopoulos

Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1999

456 pages, hardbound, \$27.95

I read this book back in March and decided then that I wouldn't review it. I read an awful lot of books of this genre: memoirs by "political insiders." I read them because it helps me do my job, not necessarily because I like them. In fact, the only such book I can honestly say I liked was the one written by Barbara Bush's dog. After reading that book, I liked the dog, even though the dog was a Republican.

Now, I should tell you right up front that I harbored prejudice against the book before I read it. It had to do with the book's title, "All Too Human." Presumably, it is taken from Nietzsche; I really hate Nietzsche. After reading this book, though, I decided that I really didn't like George Stephanopoulos, and that's why I wasn't going to review it. I couldn't seem to separate my dislike of him from his book.

Stephanopoulos wants the reader to feel sorry for him; for all he went through during his tenure in the White House. It was no picnic for poor George. The President even yelled at him! Stephanopoulos reveals that the experience was so stressful, his skin broke out, he experienced depression and anxiety, he began seeing a therapist, and he started taking the mood-elevating prescription drug Zoloft while working as the President's senior adviser. He tries to make the case that it was Bill Clinton's fault. He may have a better case against his therapist; I think she may have over-prescribed the Zoloft.

He repeatedly asks, "What is a nice boy like me doing in a brothel like the Clinton White House?" His moralizing can grow very tiresome, as the reader is treated to the story of how a good Greek Orthodox altar boy was almost corrupted by power, but, in the end, escapes.

An astute reader will see, however, that Stephanopoulos was never in danger of being corrupted by power. He *was*, however, corrupted by his fear of losing it. He was so afraid of losing it, in fact, that he was willing to climb in bed (figuratively, as far as I know) with Republican mole Dick Morris,