

FOIA MARKER

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Folder Title:

Mbeki [of South Africa]-AIDS Controversy [1]

Staff Office-Individual:

International Health Affairs-Bernard, Kenneth

Original OA/ID Number:

3646

Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:	Stack:
38	6	7	3	V

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. cable	Re: [Mbeki's Alleged Comment] (3 pages)	10/10/2000	P1/b(1)
002. cable	Re: [Mandela and Mbeki] (3 pages)	10/02/2000	P1/b(1)
003. cable	Re: [Mbeki's Remarks] (5 pages)	10/06/2000	P1/b(1)
004. cable	Re: VP Correspondence for President Mbeki (2 pages)	08/28/2000	P1/b(1)
005. cable	Re: Letter from President Mbeki to Vice President Gore on HIV/AIDS (8 pages)	07/27/2000	P1/b(1)
006. cable	Re: President Mbeki's HIV/AIDS Theory (3 pages)	05/19/2000	P1/b(1)
007. cable	Re: The Presidential AIDS Panel and the HIV/AIDS Debate in South Africa (4 pages)	05/12/2000	P1/b(1)
008. cable	Re: [The AIDS Panel] (4 pages)	05/12/2000	P1/b(1)
009a. memo	Nora Dempsey to Samuel Berger, re: Letter to President Mbeki of South Africa (1 page)	05/01/2000	P1/b(1)
009b. memo	Samuel Berger to the President, re: Response to President Mbeki of South Africa (2 pages)	ca. 05/2000	P1/b(1)
009c. letter	Draft letter from President Clinton to President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa (1 page)	ca. 05/2000	P1/b(1)
009d. letter	President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa to President Clinton (5 pages)	04/03/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
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C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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010. list	Re: [Objectives] (4 pages)	ca. 05/2000	P1/b(1)

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Keenan, Josefine (Chris) (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 10:16 AM
To: Almon, Timothy C. (INTEL); Babbitt, James F. (VP); Banbury, Anthony "Tony" N. (MULTI); Byrne, Catherine E. (AF); Cables; Harris, Grant T. (AF); McCarthy, Mary O. (INTEL); Mclean, Matthew K. (MULTI); Mitchell, Donald A. (INTEL); Naplan, Steven J. (MULTI); Patten, Wendy L. (MULTI); Schwartz, Eric P. (MULTI); Shea, Dorothy C. (MULTILAT); Smith, Gayle E. (AF); Smith, James A. (INTEL); Smith, Peter D. R. (MULTI); Wilcox, Richard M. (MULTI)
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO MBEKI'S ALLEGED CIA REMARKS

ActionAddres: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5362
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
DateTime: 121016Z OCT 00
Distribution: SIT: ALMON BABBITT BANBURY BYRNE NSC HARRISG MCCARTHY MCLEAN MITCHELL NAPLAN PATTEN SCHWARTZ SHEA SMITH SMITHJ SMITHP WILCOX

Identifier: M4673422
InfoAddres: RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY IMMEDIATE RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE 3629 RUEHDU/AMCONSUL DURBAN IMMEDIATE 0958 RUEHJO/AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG IMMEDIATE 4096 RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE OAAUZYUW RUEHSAA7978 2861016-UUUU--RHEHNSC.

Line1: ZNR UUUUU ZZH
Line2: O 121016Z OCT 00
Line3: FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
Line4: AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
Originator: IMMEDIATE
Precedence: ALMONT
Profiles: BABBITTJ BANBURYA BYRNEC CABLES HARRISG MCCARTHM MCLEANM MITCHELD NAPLAN PATTENW SCHWARTE SHEAD SMITHG SMITHJ SMITHP WILCOXR

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StationSerialNumber: 7978
TimeOfReceipt: 10/12/2000 10:15:24 ET

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 PRETORIA 007978

DEPT FOR AF AND AF/S; NSC FOR LEON FUERTH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SCUL, SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO MBEKI'S ALLEGED CIA REMARKS

REF: PRETORIA 7855

1. AS REQUESTED BY DCM BLANEY, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER AZIZ PAHAD HAS DRAFTED A SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO A MAIL AND GUARDIAN ARTICLE BY SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNALIST HOWARD BARRELL ATTRIBUTING TO PRESIDENT MBEKI ALLEGATIONS OF CIA INVOLVEMENT IN A CONSPIRACY TO PROMOTE THE VIEW THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS. (CITED REFTTEL) THE RESPONSE IS IN THE FORM OF AN ARTICLE, WITH A PAHAD BY-LINE, WHICH WILL APPEAR IN THE OCTOBER 13 EDITION OF THE MAIL AND GUARDIAN. PAHAD PROVIDED US WITH AN ADVANCE COPY OF THE ARTICLE (TEXT AT PARA 2 BELOW), WHICH ALSO REFUTES REPORTS THAT MBEKI HAD SUGGESTED THAT UNNAMED WESTERN POWERS WERE PLOTTING AGAINST HIM. THE RESPONSE GOES A LONG WAY TOWARD LIFTING THE CLOUD THAT HAS BEEN CAST OVER THE U.S.-SOUTH AFRICA BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP SINCE THE BARRELL ARTICLE APPEARED A WEEK AGO.

2. BEGIN TEXT OF THE PAHAD ARTICLE:

DANGEROUS CONSPIRACY THEORIES: A THREAT TO SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS

ONE CAN, AND INDEED HAVE TO, LIVE WITH BAD JOURNALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA. OVER THE YEARS HOWARD BARREL HAS CONSISTENTLY WRITTEN ARTICLES BASED ON "INSIDE SOURCES" AND "INFORMANTS." WHILE MANY OF THESE ARTICLES CONTAINED DISTORTIONS, LIES AND MISINFORMATION, ONE TENDED TO IGNORE THIS BECAUSE IT IS THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF ANYBODY TO BE A BAD JOURNALIST.

HOWEVER, THE ARTICLE ENTITLED "MBEKI FINGERS THE CIA IN AIDS" (OCT. 6), IS NOT ONLY INACCURATE BUT HIGHLY DANGEROUS AND HAS SERIOUS FOREIGN POLICY IMPLICATIONS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY SO BECAUSE OF OTHER SUCH ARTICLES, VIZ, EUGENE GUNNINGS ARTICLE "PLOT TO OUST MBEKI UNCOVERED," WHICH ALLEGES THAT THERE WAS A UNITED STATES/BRITISH CONSPIRACY TO HAVE CYRIL RAMAPHOSA REPLACE THABO MBEKI AS PRESIDENT.

THESE ARTICLES THAT ARE NEVER SUBSTANTIATED GET MASSIVE INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE. I AM THEREFORE COMPELLED TO RESPOND TO BARREL'S ARTICLE.

I ATTENDED THE CAUCUS MEETING AND CAN CATEGORICALLY STATE THAT THE PRESIDENT NEVER SAID THAT THE CIA WAS "PART OF A CONSPIRACY TO PROMOTE THE VIEW THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS" AND THAT "THE CIA IS WORKING COVERTLY ALONG THE BIG USA PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURES (SIC) TO UNDERMINE HIM BECAUSE BY QUESTIONING THE LINK BETWEEN HIV AND AIDS HE IS THOUGHT TO POSE A RISK TO THE PROFITS OF DRUG COMPANIES ..."

THE ARTICLE ALSO ERRONEOUSLY ALLEGES THAT THE PRESIDENT TOLD THE CAUCUS THAT "SA UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP WAS EMERGING AS A LEADER OF ATTEMPTS BY THE DEVELOPING WORLD TO GET A BETTER DEAL IN THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND WAS A THREAT TO THE USA AND OTHER WESTERN POWERS."

THE QUESTION THAT MUST BE ASKED IS -- WHAT ARE BARREL'S OBJECTIVES? CLEARLY HE IS DESPERATELY TRYING TO SUGGEST THAT THE PRESIDENT IS HOSTILE TO THE USA AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND IS ACCUSING THEM OF BEING PART OF A CONSPIRACY TO GET RID OF HIM.

AS AN EXPERIENCED JOURNALIST HE SHOULD KNOW THAT COUNTRIES ARE VERY SENSITIVE ABOUT ALLEGATIONS THAT THEIR SECRET SERVICES AND GOVERNMENTS ARE INVOLVED IN DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES. TO ERRONEOUSLY SUGGEST THAT

THE PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICA HAD MADE SUCH FOOLISH STATEMENTS CAN ONLY BE AN ATTEMPT TO CREATE TENSIONS, DISTRUST AND DIVISIONS BETWEEN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT.

LET ME INFORM BARREL, THAT WHATEVER HIS AGENDA, HE WILL NOT SUCCEED. OUR GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT RELATIONS WITH THE USA IS ON A VERY STRONG FOOTING AS REFLECTED BY THE BINATIONAL COMMISSION AND OUR INTERACTION AT VARIOUS OTHER LEVELS.

THE PERSONAL RELATIONS AND INTERACTION BETWEEN PRESIDENT MBEKI AND PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE-PRESIDENT GORE IS ALSO VERY GOOD. THIS WAS CLEARLY REFLECTED DURING PRESIDENT MBEKI'S VERY SUCCESSFUL STATE VISIT TO THE USA AND HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT.

THE NON-SENSICAL SUGGESTION THAT PRESIDENT MBEKI ALSO SAID THAT OUR EFFORTS TO GET A BETTER DEAL IN THE INTERNATIONAL WORLD ORDER IS SEEN AS A THREAT BY THE USA AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES AND IMPLYING THAT HE WAS SUGGESTING THAT UNNAMED WESTERN POWERS WERE ALSO PLOTTING AGAINST HIM, MUST BE REFUTED WITH THE CONTEMPT IT DESERVES.

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 04 PRETORIA 007978

DEPT FOR AF AND AF/S; NSC FOR LEON FUERTH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SCUL, SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO MBEKI'S ALLEGED CIA REMARKS

PRESIDENT MBEKI AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THE USA, THE EUROPEAN UNION, OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THE UN, AND THE BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS AS IMPORTANT PARTNERS TO ACHIEVE A COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR AFRICA.

IS BARREL CONVENIENTLY FORGETTING THAT PRESIDENT MBEKI ADDRESSED THE EUROPEAN UNION SUMMIT IN PORTUGAL? HE PARTICIPATED IN THE NORDIC SUMMIT, HE WAS THE ONLY AFRICAN PRESIDENT TO BE INVITED TO THE BERLIN SUMMIT WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY EIGHT OTHER PRESIDENTS. HE REPRESENTED THE OAU AND THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AT THE G8 MEETING IN TOKYO ON JULY 2000. FINALLY HE PRO-ACTIVELY INTERACTED WITH MANY LEADING STATESMEN DURING THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT.

IN ALL THESE SUMMITS, AS WELL AS IN COUNTLESS BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS, THE KEY ISSUE DISCUSSED WAS GLOBALISATION AND ITS UNEVEN COSTS AND BENEFITS.

PRESIDENT CLINTON IN 1998 SAID: "IF CITIZENS TIRE OF WAITING FOR DEMOCRACY AND FREE MARKETS TO DELIVER A BETTER LIFE FOR THEM, THERE IS A REAL RISK THAT DEMOCRACY AND FREE MARKETS, INSTEAD OF CONTINUING TO THRIVE TOGETHER, WILL BEGIN TO SHRIVEL TOGETHER ..."

PRESIDENT CLINTON SPEAKING IN SEATTLE SAID: "I THINK WE HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE A RESPONSIBILITY PARTICULARLY THOSE OF US IN THE WEALTHIER COUNTRIES, TO MAKE SURE THAT WE ARE WORKING HARDER TO SEE THAT THE BENEFITS OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY ARE MORE WIDELY SHARED AMONG AND WITHIN COUNTRIES. THAT IT TRULY WORKS FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE THAT ARE DOING THE WORK FOR US."

CAMDESUS - THE OUTGOING MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE IMD RECENTLY SAID: "... A NEW KIND OF CITIZENSHIP MUST BE CREATED ... A

GENUINE CITIZENSHIP AT ALL LEVELS. HOW CAN IT BE ACHIEVED? BY MAKING GLOBAL SOLIDARITY MORE THEN JUST AN ADJUNCT OF NATIONAL POLICIES. THE GLOBAL SOLIDARITY REQUIRED DOES NOT SIMPLY MEAN OFFERING SOMETHING SUPERFLUOUS; IT MEANS DEALING WITH VESTED INTEREST, ... LIFESTYLES AND MODELS OF CONSUMPTION, AND THE ENTRENCHED POWER STRUCTURES IN COUNTRIES."

MICHAEL PROWSE, WRITING IN THE LONDON FINANCIAL TIMES - 8TH APRIL, SAYS: "VIGOROUS MARKET COMPETITION HELPS CREATE HUMAN INDIVIDUALS OF A PARTICULAR SORT: HOMO ECONOMICS, OR EGOISTIC ... MAN. THOSE, ALTHOUGH SOLD AS POLITICALLY NEUTRAL, MARKETS IN FACT ENCOURAGE THE SPREAD OF WESTERN MATERIALISTIC VALUES.

... THE PROTESTORS IN SEATTLE AND ELSEWHERE ARE SURELY JUSTIFIED IN COMPLAINING THAT THOSE CHARGED WITH MAKING GLOBAL ECONOMIC DECISIONS OFTEN FAIL TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE MANY ADVERSE SIDE EFFECTS OF MARKET CAPITALISM ...

WE SHOULD NOT STIGMATISE AS LUDDITES OR REACTIONARY THOSE WHO QUERY THE UNIVERSAL VALIDITY OF THIS SOCIAL MODEL. THEY HAVE A CASE THAT DESERVES A REASONED REPLY."

WHAT WERE THESE LEADERS REFERRING TO? THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT CHARACTERISED GLOBAL POVERTY AS A STRUCTURAL FAULT IN THE WORLD ECONOMY.

ACCORDING TO THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 1999 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT, MORE THAN 80 COUNTRIES HAVE PER CAPITA INCOMES THAT ARE LOWER THAN THEY WERE A DECADE OR MORE AGO. MOST OF THESE COUNTRIES ARE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.

SINCE 1990, 55 COUNTRIES, MOSTLY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, EASTERN EUROPE AND THE FORMER SOVIET UNION HAVE HAD DECLINING PER CAPITA INCOMES.

THE RICHEST FIFTH ACCOUNTED FOR 86 PERCENT OF WORLD GDP WHILE THE BOTTOM FIFTH SHARED 1 PERCENT.

THE ASSETS OF THE TOP THREE BILLONAIRES ARE MORE THAN THE COMBINED GDP OF ALL LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND THEIR 600 MILLION PEOPLE.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, MR. KOFI ANNAN STATES THAT: "NEARLY HALF THE WORLD'S POPULATION STILL HAS TO MAKE DO ON LESS THAN 2 DOLLARS PER DAY. APPROXIMATELY 1.2 BILLION PEOPLE - 500 MILLION IN SOUTH ASIA AND 300 MILLION IN AFRICA - STRUGGLE ON LESS THAN 1 DOLLAR. PEOPLE LIVING IN AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA ARE ALMOST AS POOR TODAY AS THEY WERE 20 YEARS AGO."

SURELY AN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC WORLD ORDER CAN'T SURVIVE IF THIS STARK REALITY CONTINUES.
UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 04 PRETORIA 007978

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E.O. 12958: N/A
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SPEAKING AT THE HISTORICAL UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM SUMMIT

PRESIDENT MBEKI SAID: "BILLIONS AMONG THE LIVING STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE IN CONDITIONS OF POVERTY, DEPRIVATION AND UNDER-DEVELOPMENT ...

THE QUESTION THESE BILLIONS ASK IS - WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO END THE DELIBERATE AND SAVAGE VIOLENCE AGAINST US THAT, EVERYDAY, SENTENCES MANY OF US TO A DEGRADING AND UNNECESSARY DEATH."

HE WENT ON TO SAY "THE FUNDAMENTAL CHALLENGE THAT FACES THIS MILLENNIUM SUMMIT IS THAT CREDIBLY WE MUST SHOW THE WILL TO END POVERTY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT. WILL WE, AT LAST, RESPOND TO THIS APPEAL? ALL OF US INCLUDING THE RICH, WILL PAY A TERRIBLE PRICE IF WE DO NOT, PRACTICALLY, ANSWER - YES, WE DO."

THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION CLEARLY SIGNALLLED A MESSAGE THAT THE NEW WORLD ORDER CAN NOT SURVIVE IF VESTED INTERESTS DO NOT DEAL WITH THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBALISATION.

THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT DECLARATION STATED THAT "THE CENTRAL CHALLENGE WE FACE TODAY IS TO ENSURE THAT GLOBALISATION BECOMES A POSITIVE FORCE FOR ALL THE WORLD'S PEOPLE. FOR A WHILE GLOBALISATION OFFERS GREAT OPPORTUNITIES, AT PRESENT ITS BENEFITS ARE VERY UNEVENLY SHARED, WHILE ITS COSTS ARE UNEVENLY DISTRIBUTED.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION FACE SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES IN RESPONDING TO THIS (SIC) CENTRAL CHALLENGES.

THUS ONLY THROUGH BROAD AND SUSTAINED EFFORTS TO CREATE A SHARED FUTURE, BASED UPON OUR COMMON HUMANITY IN ALL ITS DIVERSITY, CAN GLOBALISATION BE MADE FULLY INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE."

IN THE LIGHT OF ALL THIS IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THERE WAS NOTHING SINISTER OR CONSPIRATIONAL (SIC) IN THE DISCUSSIONS AT THE ANC CAUCUS AND THE NEC ON GLOBALISATION. "VESTED INTERESTS AND ENTRENCHED POWER STRUCTURES" MUST ACCEPT THAT UNLESS GLOBALISATION BENEFITS ALL, THE PROSPERITY AND SECURITY OF THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WILL BE THREATENED.

CLEARLY BARREL IS TRAPPED IN A TIME WARP AND/OR TOO BUSY CONSPIRING WITH "DEEP THROATS" THAT HE IS IGNORANT OF THE VERY RICH AND EXCITING DEBATES ON GLOBALISATION.

ANOTHER DANGEROUS ASPECT OF THE ARTICLE IS THAT AFTER QUOTING A DR. SCHELL, WHO NAIVELY CALLS ON THE ANC TO GET MBEKI TO RESIGN, HE SUGGESTS THAT HE HAS BEEN TALKING TO UNNAMED DIPLOMATS WHO HAVE TOLD HIM THAT "THEY DO NOT THINK HE (I.E. MBEKI) IS DAMAGED GOODS YET." IS HE SUGGESTING THAT WHEN THEY CONCLUDE THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS BECOME "DAMAGED GOODS" THEY WILL BE PART OF DR. SHELL'S PLOT TO GET RID OF HIM. I WHO HAVE TO DEAL DAILY WITH THE DIPLOMATIC FAMILY AM QUITE CONVINCED, THAT LIKE HIS "DEEP THROATS," THE REPORTED VIEWS OF THE UNNAMED DIPLOMATS ARE A RICH BUT DANGEROUS FIGMENT OF HIS IMAGINATION.

BARREL ALSO ALLEGES THAT THE PRESIDENT IS CONFUSING PEOPLE ABOUT THE ISSUE OF AIDS (SIC). IT IS MY BELIEVE THAT BARREL AND OTHER JOURNALISTS ARE CONTRIBUTING TO THE "CONFUSION." IT IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED THAT IN ANY EMERGING DEMOCRACY THE

MEDIA PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN HELPING TO EDUCATE PEOPLE ABOUT MANY ISSUES, INCLUDING AIDS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY SO IN SOUTH AFRICA GIVEN THE LEGACY OF APARTHEID AND THE ALMOST TOTAL ISOLATION FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS. LET ME ONCE AGAIN REITERATE THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS. OUR 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TO COMBAT AIDS (WORTH MILLIONS OF RANDS); OUR FUNDING OF RESEARCH TO SUCCESSFULLY FIND A VACCINE; THE CAMPAIGN SLOGAN, ABSTAIN, BE CAREFUL AND RESPONSIBLE AND CONDOMISE (ABC CAMPAIGN), ARE SOME MANIFESTATIONS OF THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS.

HOWEVER GIVEN THE SERIOUS THREAT OF THE AIDS PANDEMIC, WE MUST NOTE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL AND DENTAL COUNCIL ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE "PRESIDENT IS RIGHT IF HE IS ATTEMPTING TO FORCE US TO CONSIDER MORE THAN JUST THE VIRUS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES ON THE ISSUE OF HIV/AIDS."

WE MUST ALSO NOT CONVENIENTLY IGNORE THAT THE LATEST WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION STATISTICS IDENTIFIED THREE MAJOR KILLERS IN AFRICA. FIRST IS RESPIRATORY DISEASES, SECOND IS MALARIA AND THE THIRD IS AIDS (10 PERCENT).

IT IS TIME FOR ALL OF US TO ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS
UNCLAS SECTION 04 OF 04 PRETORIA 007978

DEPT FOR AF AND AF/S; NSC FOR LEON FUERTH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SCUL, SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO MBEKI'S ALLEGED CIA REMARKS

TO SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO TACKLING ALL THREE MAJOR KILLERS. A GOOD STARTING POINT WOULD BE TO CRITICALLY ACCESS AND IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC 5-YEAR PROGRAMME. THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE SPECIALISED NGO GROUPS AND OFFERS FROM SPECIFICALLY TACKLING THE HIV/AIDS ISSUE. INDEED THEIR ACTIVITIES SHOULD ENHANCE AND ENRICH THE STRATEGIC 5-YEAR PLAN.

END TEXT.

3. A COPY OF THE TEXT AND COVER LETTER HAS BEEN FAXED TO AF/S.
BLANEY

Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Friday, September 08, 2000 3:57 PM
To: Babbitt, James F. (VP); Banbury, Anthony "Tony" N. (MULTI); Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH); Byrne, Catherine E. (AF); Cables, Dempsey, Nora B. (AF); Harris, Grant T. (AF); Mclean, Matthew K. (MULTI); Naplan, Steven J. (MULTI); Patten, Wendy L. (MULTI); Schwartz, Eric P. (MULTI); Shea, Dorothy C. (MULTI); Smith, Gayle E. (AF); Smith, Peter D. R. (MULTI); Wilcox, Richard M. (MULTI)
Subject: HEALTH MINISTER'S REFUSAL TO ANSWER QUESTION ON WHETHER HIV CAUSES AIDS CREATES POLITICAL ROW (U) SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

ActionAddres: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4680
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
DateTime: 081735Z SEP 00
Distribution: SIT: BABBITT BANBURY Bernard BYRNE NSC DEMPSEY HARRISG MCLEAN NAPLAN PATTEN SCHWARTZ SHEA SMITH SMITHP WILCOX
Identifier: M4619724
InfoAddres: RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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Line2: ZNR UUUUU ZZH
Line3: P 081735Z SEP 00
Line4: FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
Originator: AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
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WILCOXR
StationRoutingIndicator: RUEHSA
StationSerialNumber: 7103
TimeOfReceipt: 09/08/2000 15:56:31 ET

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PRETORIA 007103

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN
AF/S FOR A. RENDER
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER
IO/T FOR A. BLACKWOOD
WHITE HOUSE ONAP FOR DIRECTOR S. THURMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: TBIO, KHIV, PGOV, SF

SUBJECT: HEALTH MINISTER'S REFUSAL TO ANSWER QUESTION ON
WHETHER HIV CAUSES AIDS CREATES POLITICAL ROW

(U) SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE PROTECT
ACCORDINGLY.

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: A HEATED EXCHANGE ABOUT HIV/AIDS BETWEEN HEALTH MINISTER MANTO TSHABALALA-MSIMANG AND POPULAR LOCAL RADIO HOST JOHN ROBBIE HAS CREATED A POLITICAL STIR IN SOUTH AFRICA. AFTER AN INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT EXCHANGE ON SEVERAL HIV/AIDS ISSUES, THE HEALTH MINISTER DECLINED IN THE SEPTEMBER 5 RADIO INTERVIEW TO ANSWER A QUESTION FROM ROBBIE ON WHETHER HIV CAUSES AIDS. ROBBIE, CLEARLY FRUSTRATED, ENDED THE INTERVIEW ABRUPTLY TELLING THE MINISTER TO "GO AWAY .. I CANNOT TAKE THAT RUBBISH ANY LONGER." THE RULING PARTY, THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC), SUBSEQUENTLY DEMANDED THAT ROBBIE RESIGN OR BE DISMISSED, BUT THE RADIO STATION IS STANDING BY ITS EMPLOYEE. THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE, THE ANC'S POLITICAL OPPOSITION AND A CRITIC OF THE GOVERNMENT'S HIV/AIDS POLICIES, VOICED SUPPORT FOR ROBBIE AND THE STATION'S REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THE ANC'S DEMANDS. END SUMMARY.

RADIO ROW

2. (U) DR. TSHABALALA-MSIMANG'S SEPTEMBER 5 APPEARANCE ON ROBBIE'S TALK RADIO SHOW WAS JUST ONE IN A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ROBBIE HAS FEATURED ON HIS POPULAR PROGRAM. KNOWN FOR HIS HARD-HITTING STYLE, ROBBIE BEGAN THE INTERVIEW BY ASKING THE HEALTH MINISTER WHETHER SHE HAD DISTRIBUTED EXCERPTS FROM WILLIAM COOPER'S BOOK, "BEHOLD, A PALE HORSE", TO PROVINCIAL PREMIERS AND HEALTH OFFICIALS. COOPER IS A CONSPIRACY THEORIST. IN HIS BOOK, HE MAKES THE WILD AND UNSUPPORTED CLAIM THAT A HIGHLY SECRETIVE ORGANIZATION CALLED THE ILLUMUNATI CONSPIRED TO INTRODUCE AIDS TO AFRICA THROUGH A SMALL SMALLPOX VACCINE IN 1978 IN AN ATTEMPT TO REDUCE THE AFRICAN POPULATION. WHEN ASKED ABOUT HER DISTRIBUTING SECTIONS OF THE BOOK, TSHABALALA-MSIMANG MAINTAINED THAT IT WAS JUST A ROUTINE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. ROBBIE FOLLOWED WITH A DIRECT QUESTION AS TO WHETHER SHE BELIEVES HIV CAUSES AIDS. THE HEALTH MINISTER REFUSED TO COMMIT HERSELF, SAYING, "YOU WILL NOT FORCE ME INTO A CORNER INTO WHETHER SAYING YES OR NO." IRRITATED AT ROBBIE'S USE OF HER FIRST NAME "MANTO," TSHABALALA-MSIMANG SAID, "I AM NOT MANTO TO YOU. I AM NOT YOUR FRIEND." AFTER FURTHER BACK-AND-FORTH, A FRUSTRATED ROBBIE CUT OFF THE INTERVIEW WITH, "GO AWAY. I CANNOT TAKE THAT RUBBISH ANY LONGER. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?.I HAVE NEVER IN MY LIFE HEARD SUCH RUBBISH."

APOLOGY DEMANDED

3. (U) THE FOLLOWING DAY, A SPOKESMAN FOR TSHABALALA-

MSIMANG'S PARTY, THE RULING ANC, ISSUED A STATEMENT SAYING THE RADIO STATION, RADIO 702, OWED THE MINISTER AN APOLOGY FOR ROBBIE'S "SHABBY, DESPICABLE TREATMENT AND DISRESPECT" OF THE MINISTER. IT ALSO CALLED FOR ROBBIE TO RESIGN OR BE DISMISSED. ACCORDING TO THE STATEMENT, "JOHN ROBBIE ABUSED HIS POSITION AS A JOURNALIST. SUCH PRACTICE CONSTITUTES A FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE JOURNALISTIC CODE OF ETHICS." RADIO 702'S MANAGER, DAN MOYANE SAID THE STATION HAS NOT ASKED ROBBIE TO RESIGN, AND DOES NOT PLAN TO SUSPEND HIM, ALTHOUGH ROBBIE HAS ASKED FOR A FEW DAYS LEAVE TO ASSESS THE SITUATION. THE ANC'S POLITICAL OPPOSITION, THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE, LENT ITS SUPPORT TO ROBBIE AND RADIO 702, SAYING ROBBIE AND THE STATION WERE TO BE APPLAUDED BECAUSE THEY WERE "NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT AND PROMOTE THE ANC, ITS LEADERS AND ITS POLICIES AT FACE VALUE."

COMMENT

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 PRETORIA 007103

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN

AF/S FOR A. RENDER
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER
IO/T FOR A. BLACKWOOD
WHITE HOUSE ONAP FOR DIRECTOR S. THURMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: TBIO, KHIV, PGOV, SF
SUBJECT: HEALTH MINISTER'S REFUSAL TO ANSWER QUESTION ON WHETHER HIV CAUSES AIDS CREATES POLITICAL ROW

4. (SBU) WHILE ROBBIE WAS DISCOURTEOUS IN THE WAY HE ENDED HIS INTERVIEW WITH TSHABALALA-MSIMANG, HIS FRUSTRATION AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS SHARED BY MANY OTHER SOUTH AFRICANS WHO WONDER AT THE GOVERNMENT'S APPARENT INABILITY TO PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS. HER STEADFAST REFUSAL TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION WAS NOT A REASSURING SIGNAL AND ONLY SERVED TO HEIGHTEN THESE CONCERNS.

BLANEY

PRESIDENT MBEKI AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN AIDS CRISIS

Background: *The human toll of AIDS is staggering. Fifty million people worldwide have been infected with the HIV virus; 33.6 million are now living with HIV/AIDS, and annual AIDS-related fatalities hit a record 2.6 million last year. Ninety-five percent of all cases are in the developing world. AIDS is now the leading cause of death in Africa and fourth in the world. In at least five African countries, over 20 percent of adults are HIV-positive. And the highest rates of new infections are often among young women who will soon be mothers.*

AIDS Statistics for South Africa:

- *South Africa has more people living with HIV/AIDS than any other country in Africa – 4.2 million (1 in 10 of the total population, and 1 in 5 adults.)*
- *1600 new infections each day*
- *1 in 4 pregnant women positive for HIV*
- *by 2003, more than 1 million South African children will be orphaned by AIDS.*

President Mbeki has some controversial views surrounding AIDS. He has embraced some scientific dissidents who even question whether AIDS is even caused by a virus. Will you discuss this with him?

- Yes, the issue of AIDS in Africa will be on the agenda for discussions with the President.
- There is no question that President Mbeki understands the depth of the health crisis facing much of Africa, including his own country. South Africa is doing a great deal, including appointing a senior government task force, an AIDS council between the public and private sector, and a country-wide education campaign.
- We intend to discuss ways to deal with AIDS in South Africa in the context of poverty – to assist in finding an African solution – but a solution based on the best science.

But what about his controversial statements that seem to question whether AIDS is caused by the HIV virus?

- You will have to ask him.
- But, President Mbeki has clearly engaged in the struggle to control AIDS in his country. He is questioning everything in an attempt to come to terms with a disease devastating his country. As part of his quest he is talking to a wide variety of people, including some with unorthodox views that don't reflect the broad international consensus about the science of the disease.
- Do we agree with the views of every expert he's consulted? No, we don't and we have communicated that to the South African government. But we do agree with his premise that more has to be done globally, and more needs to be done in Africa.

Is AIDS is different in Africa, as some claim?

- The virus that causes AIDS, HIV, has several strains. The strain mostly found in the U.S. is different from the one in Africa. However, the strain differences do not affect the severity of disease, how it is transmitted, or whether or not anti-AIDS drugs are effective.
- We recognize that the AIDS epidemic in Africa, including South Africa, is manifesting itself in different ways than it has in the United States – but not because the science of the disease is different. They don't have the same health care infrastructure that we do, for example, which means that in addition to what the South African government is already doing for prevention, education and care, they also need to look at additional approaches relevant to specific conditions in Africa.
- But there are also evolving similarities in the two epidemics - - In the U.S. the disease is now spreading most rapidly among heterosexuals, people of color, and the poor, just as in Africa.

How much are we assisting South Africa?

- In FY 2000, the USG has obligated about \$11 million, up from about 2 million in 1999. CDC and USAID are actively involved in a wide ranging set of prevention and care activities.

The Washington Post announced that the Administration has formally designated the disease for the first time as a "National Security Threat." Why now?

- This has been an evolving process. We have recognized for a long time that the spread of AIDS is undermining the health, development, economics and potentially even the political stability of the hardest hit nations. And we have invested in combating the international AIDS epidemic since the early 1980s. Nearly two years ago, the NSC established an office of International Health Affairs, to expand the security community involvement with issues such as AIDS. The expansion of the epidemic has focused the broad national security community on the significant negative impact on growing economies and democracies.
- AIDS threatens to undermine progress towards democracy and reform, it weakens societies by decimating all classes of society, drags down economies, fuels corruption, and has a greater humanitarian impact than major regional wars.
- A recent National Intelligence Estimate (which is unclassified) laid out some of the security concerns for the U.S. and others, including demographic upheaval, (reduction in life-span by up to 20 years, doubling infant mortality, loss of workforce, increase in orphans), and possible political instability as state resources are drained and economic productivity vanishes. Not to mention the humanitarian tragedy of losing millions and millions of lives each year.

What are we doing for controlling AIDS, especially in Africa?

- Since 1986, USAID has dedicated over \$1.2 billion to mitigate the epidemic. For FY 2000, Congress appropriated funding for our global AIDS prevention and care program of \$225 million – four times as much as the next largest donor. And nearly two thirds will go to Africa. The FY2001 budget request includes an additional \$100 million increase in our global AIDS effort (for a total of \$325 million, excluding research) which will be targeted to: prevention; basic care and treatment; support for orphans; and health infrastructure development, and implemented by USAID, HHS (CDC), DOL and DOD. In addition, NIH is spending over \$1.8 billion annually on AIDS research, with over \$200 million each year in the search for a vaccine.

Should we be doing more?

- Yes, we – and all concerned countries – should be doing more. Our response is focused on two key components: leadership and resources. The USG is now engaged in an interagency process to identify and refine a series of new initiatives and partnerships to deal with the critical issues of prevention, treatment and care.
- The President's joint statement with India on HIV/AIDS, and India's recent IDA loan to fund AIDS activities are good examples of the leadership needed.
- But the resources required – more than \$3 billion/year for prevention and care in Sub-Saharan Africa alone, will be a formidable obstacle. The average sub-Saharan African country has only \$5-20 million from all sources to spend on AIDS prevention and care – a ludicrously insufficient amount. No matter how much we spend as a nation, we cannot do it alone. To help solve that problem we are working on a four-point strategy: Increased bilateral assistance; multilateral coordination; debt forgiveness; and engaging the private sector.
- We must leverage an enhanced response from other bilateral donors and multilateral institutions through a U.S.-lead international cooperative effort.
- At the US-EU Summit next month, we will be joining the EU in drafting new initiatives to increase activities to combat the epidemic, especially in Africa. The Japanese have indicated that HIV/AIDS will be a major agenda item on the G-8 meeting in Okinawa in July. The U.S. will be joining our G-8 partners in pushing for increased international funding of AIDS efforts and leader-to-leader dialogue to raise awareness and priority.
- Ongoing discussions with James Wolfensohn at the World Bank indicate that the multi-lateral development banks are willing to make substantial funds available to eligible countries to meet the prevention, treatment and care requirements of eligible countries. This will complement the Cologne debt initiative agreement last year in which, for the first time, we agreed with our G-7 partners to fund debt relief for the HIPC countries with the thus-freed up resources to be used for social and health programs such as AIDS control.

Keenan, Josefine (Chris) (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2000 1:40 PM
To: Cables
Subject: HEALTH MINISTER DODGES QUESTIONS ON CAUSE OF AIDS

ActionAddres: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6741
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUCPDC/USDOC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEADWW/NSC WASHDC
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Profiles: CABLES
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StationSerialNumber: 1553
TimeOfReceipt: 09/19/2000 13:39:57 ET

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CAPE TOWN 001553

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN
AF/S FOR A. RENDER
OES FOR N CARTER-FOSTER
IO/T FOR A. BLACKWOOD
WHITE HOUSE ONAP FOR DIRECTOR S. THURMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KHIV, TBIO, PGOV, SOCI, SF
SUBJECT: HEALTH MINISTER DODGES QUESTIONS ON CAUSE OF AIDS

REF: (A) PRETORIA 7304; (B) PRETORIA 7103

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY. NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: DURING A SEPTEMBER 18 PRESS BRIEFING, HEALTH MINISTER MANTO TSHABALALA-MSIMANG REPEATEDLY DODGED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER HIV CAUSES AIDS. SHE BERATED THE PRESS CORPS FOR FAILING TO READ PRESIDENT MBEKI'S SPEECHES CAREFULLY. SHE ALSO SAID SHE WOULD NOT BE LOCKED INTO A "YES" OR "NO" ANSWER ON WHETHER HIV CAUSES AIDS, AND REFUSED TO RESPOND TO A QUESTION SEEKING A CLARIFICATION OF MBEKI'S COMMENT IN A RECENT TIME MAGAZINE INTERVIEW SEEMING TO SUGGEST THAT PEOPLE WITH TUBERCULOSIS COULD CONTRACT AIDS WITHOUT BEING HIV-POSITIVE. THE MINISTER'S PERFORMANCE FAILED TO REASSURE

JOURNALISTS, DIPLOMATS, AND NGO REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO ABANDON ITS CURRENT POSITION ON HIV/AIDS, AND CONTRASTED WITH RECENT STATEMENTS BY OTHERS IN THE MBEKI GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) HEALTH MINISTER MANTO TSHABALALA-MSIMANG BRIEFED THE MEDIA AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS ON SEPTEMBER 18 AS PART OF THE SEMI-ANNUAL ROUND OF MINISTERIAL PRESS BRIEFINGS. SHE BEGAN BY PROVIDING AN OVERVIEW OF THE MINISTRY'S EFFORTS TO ADDRESS HIV/AIDS AND OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEMS. DURING THE QUESTION ANSWER SESSION, THE MINISTER WAS ASKED WHETHER HIV CAUSES AIDS. SHE RESPONDED, "I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES I SHOULD ANSWER THIS QUESTION AGAIN," AND SAID, AS SHE HAS IN THE PAST, THAT SHE HAD NEVER SAID THAT HIV DOES NOT CAUSE AIDS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK AT OTHER ISSUES IN EXAMINING IMMUNE SYSTEM BREAKDOWN, SHE SAID, ADDING, "IF WE SAY IT'S JUST A VIRUS WE'LL JUST RUSH AND USE ANTIVIRALS. WE WILL NOT LOOK AT OTHER THINGS." SHE REPRIMANDED THE PRESS FOR TRYING TO FORCE HER TO ANSWER YES OR NO QUESTIONS, SAYING "I AM NOT A BABY. I'M NOT A CHILD, I'M NOT A SCHOOLGIRL." THE MINISTER WAS REPEATEDLY ASKED TO CLARIFY PRESIDENT MBEKI'S STATEMENT IN A RECENT TIME MAGAZINE INTERVIEW (REFTEL) IN WHICH HE HAD APPEARED TO SUGGEST THAT PEOPLE WITHOUT THE HIV VIRUS CAN DEVELOP AIDS THROUGH A BREAKDOWN IN THE IMMUNE SYSTEM CAUSED BY TUBERCULOSIS. SHE DECLINED TO RESPOND.

3. (U) A REPORTER NOTED, "YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN IN POWER SIX YEARS, AND EACH YEAR THE INFECTION RATE HAS INCREASED." HE ASKED WHAT ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE CAUSE OF THE EPIDEMIC ARE GUIDING THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON HIV/AIDS. THE MINISTER REPRIMANDED THE JOURNALIST FOR USING THE PHRASE "YOUR GOVERNMENT," SINCE HE WAS ALSO SOUTH AFRICAN. "I THINK A LITTLE BIT OF PATRIOTISM WOULD BE GOOD," SHE ADDED. SHE TOLD THE PRESS CORPS THAT PEOPLE SHOULD READ THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS ON HIV/AIDS, WHICH ARE EASILY COMPREHENSIBLE "IF ONE UNDERSTANDS ENGLISH." WHEN ANOTHER JOURNALIST ASKED IF THE MINISTER HAD EVIDENCE THAT ANYONE HAD DIED OF AIDS WITHOUT HAVING THE HIV VIRUS, THE MINISTER REPLIED THAT SUCH EVIDENCE WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN, SINCE AIDS IS NEVER LISTED AS A CAUSE OF DEATH.

4. (U) A JOURNALIST NOTED THAT A PUBLIC HEALTH WORKER HAD BEEN QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING THAT THERE HAS BEEN A DECLINE IN THE NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE UNDERGOING VOLUNTARY TESTING FOR THE HIV VIRUS. ASKED WHY, THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKER REPLIED THAT THE VIEW AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE SEEMS TO BE "WHY TEST IF NOT EVEN THE PRESIDENT IS SURE THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS?" THE MINISTER RESPONDED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD NEVER DENIED THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS. SHE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ESTABLISHED A PANEL, MADE UP OF CONVENTIONAL SCIENTISTS AND DISSIDENTS, WHICH IS EXAMINING THE QUESTION OF WHAT CAUSES AIDS. THEIR REPORT WILL BE COMPLETED IN NOVEMBER. THE ORTHODOX AND DISSIDENT SCIENTISTS ARE WORKING TOGETHER WELL, SHE ASSERTED.

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 CAPE TOWN 001553

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN
AF/S FOR A. RENDER
OES FOR N CARTER-FOSTER
IO/T FOR A. BLACKWOOD
WHITE HOUSE ONAP FOR DIRECTOR S. THURMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KHIV, TBIO, PGOV, SOCI, SF
SUBJECT: HEALTH MINISTER DODGES QUESTIONS ON CAUSE OF AIDS

5. (SBU) COMMENT: TENSIONS BETWEEN THE MINISTER AND THE PRESS CORPS AT THE BRIEFING WERE PALPABLE. IT DID NOT HELP THAT THE BRIEFING BEGAN HALF AN HOUR EARLIER THAN THE ANNOUNCED STARTING TIME, CAUSING MANY JOURNALISTS AND DIPLOMATS TO MISS MOST OF THE MINISTER'S PREPARED REMARKS. MOREOVER, THE MINISTER'S RESPONSES TO THE JOURNALISTS' QUESTIONS FAILED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CLARIFY OR AMEND ITS CONTROVERSIAL HIV/AIDS STANCE. THE MINISTER'S REMARKS GAVE NO INDICATION THAT THE MBEKI GOVERNMENT WOULD CHANGE ITS STANCE, DESPITE DIFFERING VIEW OF SEVERAL CABINET MINISTERS, THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH (WHO SAID IN AN SABC-TV INTERVIEW THE NIGHT BEFORE THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS), AND SOME MEMBERS OF THE ANC.
END COMMENT.

NOLAN

Keenan, Josefine (Chris) (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2000 11:14 AM
To: Babbitt, James F. (VP); Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH); Byrne, Catherine E. (AF); Cables; Harris, Grant T. (AF); Smith, Gayle E. (AF)
Subject: PRESIDENT MBEKI EXPANDS ON HIS VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS

ActionAddres: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6744
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
DateTime: 211506Z SEP 00
Distribution: SIT: BABBITT Bernard BYRNE NSC HARRISG SMITH
PRT: thurman
Identifier: M4638923
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RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUCPDC/USDOC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
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Line2: ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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Profiles: BABBITTJ
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StationRoutingIndicator: RUEHTN
StationSerialNumber: 1580
TimeOfReceipt: 09/21/2000 11:13:07 ET

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CAPE TOWN 001580

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN
AF/S FOR A. RENDER
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER
IO/T FOR A. BLACKWOOD
WHITE HOUSE ONAP FOR DIRECTOR S. THURMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, KHIV, TBIO, SOCI, OPDC, SF
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MBEKI EXPANDS ON HIS VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS

REF: (A) CAPE TOWN 1553, (B) PRETORIA 7304

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY.
NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: DISCUSSING HIS VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS AT PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION TIME ON SEPTEMBER 20, PRESIDENT MBEKI CONFIRMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON HIV/AIDS IS PREDICATED ON THE VIEW THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS. ASKED TO CLARIFY WHETHER HE HIMSELF BELIEVES THIS IS THE CASE, HE EXPOUNDED AT LENGTH ON HIS BELIEF THAT A VIRUS CANNOT CAUSE A SYNDROME. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT THE REPORT OF

A GOVERNMENT PANEL WILL LEND CLARITY TO THE ISSUE OF WHETHER OTHER FACTORS THAN THE VIRUS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO AN HIV-POSITIVE STATUS. ASKED WHETHER PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD RESPONDED TO HIS LETTER EARLIER THIS YEAR ON HIV/AIDS, MBEKI RESPONDED THAT HE HAD, BUT DECLINED TO REVEAL THE CONTENTS OF THE REPLY; HE NOTED THAT THE USG HAD ASKED TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF THE SAG'S DELIBERATIONS ON HIV/AIDS. THIS IS THE CLEAREST STATEMENT THUS FAR OF MBEKI'S VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS. EMBASSY WILL PROVIDE FURTHER ANALYSIS OF MBEKI'S STATEMENT AND LOCAL REACTION IN SEPTTEL. END SUMMARY.

THE PRESIDENT ON HIV/AIDS

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DISEASE. MALARIA IS SECOND, AND AIDS IS THIRD. AIDS CAUSES 12 PERCENT OF DEATHS; WE MUST NOT IGNORE THE OTHER 88 PERCENT.

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SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN
AF/S FOR A. RENDER
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER
IO/T FOR A. BLACKWOOD
WHITE HOUSE ONAP FOR DIRECTOR S. THURMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, KHIV, TBIO, SOCI, OPDC, SF
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AIDS ACTIVISTS CONFRONT HEALTH MINISTER

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THE USE OF ANTIRETROVIRALS AND IGNORED OTHER FACTORS SUCH AS POVERTY.

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5. (U) THIS CABLE WAS DRAFTED BY THE EMBASSY'S POLITICAL SECTION.

NOLAN

Keenan, Josefine (Chris) (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2000 11:14 AM
To: Babbitt, James F. (VP); Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH); Byrne, Catherine E. (AF); Cables; Harris, Grant T. (AF); Smith, Gayle E. (AF)
Subject: PRESIDENT MBEKI EXPANDS ON HIS VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS

ActionAddres: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6744
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
DateTime: 211506Z SEP 00
Distribution: SIT: BABBITT Bernard BYRNE NSC HARRISG SMITH
PRT: thurman
Identifier: M4638923
InfoAddres: RUEADWW/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUCPDC/USDOC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
Line1: OAAUZYUW RUEHTNA1580 2651506-UUUU--RHEHAAA.
Line2: ZNR UUUUU ZZH
Line3: O 211506Z SEP 00
Line4: FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
Originator: AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
Precedence: IMMEDIATE
Profiles: BABBITTJ
BERNARDK
BYRNEC
CABLES
HARRISG
SMITHG
StationRoutingIndicator: RUEHTN
StationSerialNumber: 1580
TimeOfReceipt: 09/21/2000 11:13:07 ET

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CAPE TOWN 001580

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN
AF/S FOR A. RENDER
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER
IO/T FOR A. BLACKWOOD
WHITE HOUSE ONAP FOR DIRECTOR S. THURMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, KHIV, TBIO, SOCI, OPDC, SF
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MBEKI EXPANDS ON HIS VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS

REF: (A) CAPE TOWN 1553, (B) PRETORIA 7304

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY.
NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: DISCUSSING HIS VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS AT PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION TIME ON SEPTEMBER 20, PRESIDENT MBEKI CONFIRMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON HIV/AIDS IS PREDICATED ON THE VIEW THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS. ASKED TO CLARIFY WHETHER HE HIMSELF BELIEVES THIS IS THE CASE, HE EXPOUNDED AT LENGTH ON HIS BELIEF THAT A VIRUS CANNOT CAUSE A SYNDROME. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT THE REPORT OF

A GOVERNMENT PANEL WILL LEND CLARITY TO THE ISSUE OF WHETHER OTHER FACTORS THAN THE VIRUS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO AN HIV-POSITIVE STATUS. ASKED WHETHER PRESIDENT CLINTON HAD RESPONDED TO HIS LETTER EARLIER THIS YEAR ON HIV/AIDS, MBEKI RESPONDED THAT HE HAD, BUT DECLINED TO REVEAL THE CONTENTS OF THE REPLY; HE NOTED THAT THE USG HAD ASKED TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF THE SAG'S DELIBERATIONS ON HIV/AIDS. THIS IS THE CLEAREST STATEMENT THUS FAR OF MBEKI'S VIEWS ON HIV/AIDS. EMBASSY WILL PROVIDE FURTHER ANALYSIS OF MBEKI'S STATEMENT AND LOCAL REACTION IN SEPTTEL. END SUMMARY.

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AF FOR A/S RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, KHIV, TBIO, SOCI, OPDC, SF

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5. (U) THIS CABLE WAS DRAFTED BY THE EMBASSY'S POLITICAL SECTION.

NOLAN

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
004. cable	Re: VP Correspondence for President Mbeki (2 pages)	08/28/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
005. cable	Re: Letter from President Mbeki to Vice President Gore on HIV/AIDS (8 pages)	07/27/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

RESTRICTION CODES

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*Submitted
400 20/may*

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
NEAL LANE

SUBJECT: President Mbeki's Controversial Views on AIDS

You will receive a separate memo for the Mbeki State Visit. We do not believe it would be productive at this time to debate Mbeki on the science of AIDS, and prefer to engage him on what South Africa and the United States can do now to combat the disease. However, and because he may raise some of his scientific concerns, we are providing additional information on the controversies surrounding his views on the scientific dimensions of AIDS prevention and treatment.

Background:

President Mbeki sparked a major scientific and political furor by questioning the link between HIV and AIDS and the safety of the anti-AIDS drug, AZT. Mbeki's views - which are not shared by most of his own health and scientific advisors - could potentially undermine South Africa's otherwise constructive anti-AIDS campaign. His views on the safety of AZT could have a deadly impact, in part because they have prevented government clinics from using AZT to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

Mbeki's positions are based on a complex mix of realistic concern about the impact and cost of AIDS in Africa, a questioning mind, a basic distrust of the Western pharmaceutical industry, and poor advice. In the search for answers to his questions, he convened an international advisory panel on AIDS research in Pretoria two weeks ago. Unfortunately, the panel included almost equal numbers of reputable virologists and so-called "dissidents" who question the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS. Mbeki is unlikely to resolve his concerns until he receives the panel's report next month, but the report is not expected to reflect a consensus.

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

The Scientific Facts:

1) HIV causes AIDS. Concerns about the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS have been evaluated over the past 15 years, and the result is clear. Dissident views have not been suppressed - they have simply not convinced the scientific community. Key scientific findings are:

- HIV infection and AIDS are invariably linked in time, place, and population group;
- HIV can be found in virtually all those with AIDS, and HIV infection almost invariably leads to AIDS;
- The characteristic immune system deficiency typical of AIDS is extraordinarily rare in the absence of HIV infection.

2) Two simple treatments - AZT and Nevirapine - can help prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and are safe and effective in Africans.

- AZT. Studies in rural Thailand and Africa show that taking AZT twice per day during the last month of pregnancy can reduce transmission by up to 40%. Side effects occur but are minimal and reversible at these limited doses. Contrary to Mbeki's assertions, an AZT regimen does not require daily supervision and can be carried out safely in rural areas.
- Nevirapine. A single dose of Nevirapine for the mother during labor and for the infant within 48 hours of birth reduces mother-to-child-transmission by 40%, according to a major study in Uganda. Nevirapine's simplicity and low cost - \$4 per birth - makes it a critical weapon against AIDS in developing countries. (Note: Several adults on three anti-AIDS drugs, including Nevirapine, have died, but no such problems have been seen in infants or mothers.)

3) AIDS is not fundamentally different in Africa. Distinct strains of HIV are found in different regions of the world. Strain B is most common in the U.S. and Western Europe, while strain C is most common in Africa and India. However, the difference in strains does not cause differences in the actual manifestations of the disease, its modes of transmission, or the impact of drug treatment:

- All strains, not just those found in Africa, can be spread through heterosexual contact;

- All strains are found to be equally susceptible to anti-AIDS drugs like AZT.
- In the U.S., as in Africa, AIDS is now spreading most rapidly among heterosexuals;
- AIDS spreads particularly rapidly in Africa through heterosexual contact because of factors such as the high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases;
- In the context of poverty and poor health services, the disease may have a more severe impact. For example, Africans with AIDS are more likely to die of other deadly diseases, which go undiagnosed and untreated, such as TB.

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
NEAL LANE

SUBJECT: President Mbeki's Controversial Views on AIDS

You will receive a separate memo for the Mbeki State Visit. ~~we~~ *How me*
~~I thought it would be useful, however, to provide additional~~
information on the controversies surrounding President Mbeki's
views on the scientific dimensions of AIDS prevention and
treatment.

Background:

President Mbeki sparked a major scientific and political furor
by questioning the link between HIV and AIDS, and the safety of
the anti-AIDS drug, AZT. Mbeki's views - which are not shared
by most of his own health and scientific advisors - could
~~potentially~~ *potentially* undermine South Africa's otherwise constructive
anti-AIDS campaign. His views on the safety of AZT could have a
deadly impact, in part because they have prevented government
~~health~~ *health* clinics from using it to prevent mother-to-child
transmission.

Mbeki's positions are based on a complex mix of realistic
concern about the impact and cost of AIDS in Africa ~~(as compared~~
~~to the developed world)~~, a questioning mind, poor advice, and a
basic distrust of the Western pharmaceutical industry. *To resolve his*
~~He has~~ *questas,*
~~sought to resolve his questions by convening an international~~
advisory panel ~~(on AIDS research)~~, which met in Pretoria two weeks
ago. Mbeki is unlikely to decide on these issues until he
receives the panel's report next month. *Commonell*
Unfortunately, the
panel included almost equal numbers of reputable virologists and
so-called "dissidents" who question the causal relationship
between HIV and AIDS. ~~As a result, the meeting was contentious,~~
~~and the final report is not expected to reflect a consensus~~
~~view.~~ *and* *come to*

but the panel

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

The Scientific Facts:

HIV causes AIDS.

Dissident views have not been suppressed

1) There is no scientific doubt about the relationship between HIV and AIDS. Concerns about the causal relationship have been evaluated over the past 15 years, and the clear determination is that HIV causes AIDS. ~~There has been no attempt to suppress dissident views; these views have simply not matched reality and have been dismissed by the scientific community.~~ Key scientific findings are:

*Proven
conway to
the*

- HIV infection and AIDS are invariably linked in time, place, and population group;
- HIV can be found in virtually all those with AIDS, and HIV infection almost invariably leads to AIDS;
- The characteristic ~~deficiency of the immune system~~ *deficiency* typical of AIDS is extraordinarily rare ~~in the absence of~~ *absent* HIV infection.

2) Two simple treatments - AZT and Nevirapine - can help prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and are safe and effective in Africans.

AZT. Studies in rural Thailand and Africa show that taking AZT twice per day during the last month of pregnancy can reduce transmission by up to 40%. Side effects occur but are minimal and reversible at these limited doses. Contrary to Mbeki's arguments, an AZT regimen does not require daily supervision and can be carried out safely in rural areas.

A major study in Uganda shows that

Nevirapine. A single dose of Nevirapine for the mother during labor and for the infant within 48 hours of birth reduces ~~MTC~~ *MTCT-transmission* by 40%, according to a major study in Uganda. Nevirapine's simplicity and low cost - \$8 per birth - makes it a critical weapon against AIDS in developing countries.

3) AIDS is not fundamentally different in Africa. Distinct strains of HIV are found in different geographic regions of the world. Strain B is most common in the U.S. and Western Europe, while strain C is most common in Africa and India. However, these difference-in-strains does not cause differences in the actual manifestations of the disease, its modes of transmission, or the impact of drug treatment:

- All strains, ~~[not just those found in Africa]~~ can be spread through heterosexual contact;

strains all share the same disease manifestation, transmission mode, and

*imply
drug sensitivity*

drug sensitivity

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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
NEAL LANE

SUBJECT: President Mbeki's Controversial Views on AIDS

You will receive a separate memo for the Mbeki State Visit. Here we provide additional information on the controversies surrounding President Mbeki's views on the scientific dimensions of AIDS prevention and treatment.

Background:

President Mbeki sparked a major scientific and political furor by questioning the link between HIV and AIDS and the safety of the anti-AIDS drug, AZT. Mbeki's views - which are not shared by most of his own health and scientific advisors - could potentially undermine South Africa's otherwise constructive anti-AIDS campaign. His views on the safety of AZT could have a deadly impact, in part because they have prevented government clinics from using AZT to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

Mbeki's positions are based on a complex mix of realistic concern about the impact and cost of AIDS in Africa, a questioning mind, a basic distrust of the Western pharmaceutical industry, ~~and poor advice~~. To resolve his questions he has convened an international advisory panel on AIDS research, which met in Pretoria two weeks ago. Unfortunately, the panel included almost equal numbers of reputable virologists and so-called "dissidents" who question the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS. ~~Mbeki is unlikely to resolve his concerns until he receives the panel's report next month, but the report is not expected to reflect a consensus.~~

The Scientific Facts:

1) HIV causes AIDS. ~~Concerns about the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS have been evaluated over the past 15 years, and the result is clear.~~ Dissident views have not been

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

*on this a suggested
positive approach
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is a scientific
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raised by
President
Mbeki.*

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begun to reflect his "questioning" - seems
to be many
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area*

suppressed, they have simply not convinced the scientific community. Key scientific findings are:

- HIV infection and AIDS are invariably linked in time, place, and population group;
- HIV can be found in virtually all those with AIDS, and HIV infection almost invariably leads to AIDS;
- The characteristic immune system deficiency typical of AIDS is extraordinarily rare in the absence of HIV infection.

2) Two simple treatments - AZT and Nevirapine - can help prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and are safe and effective in Africans.

- AZT. Studies in rural Thailand and Africa show that taking AZT twice per day during the last month of pregnancy can reduce transmission by up to 40%. Side effects occur but are minimal and reversible at these limited doses. Contrary to Mbeki's arguments, an AZT regimen does not require daily supervision and can be carried out safely in rural areas.
- Nevirapine. A single dose of Nevirapine for the mother during labor and for the infant within 48 hours of birth reduces MTCT by 40% according to a major study in Uganda. Nevirapine's simplicity and low cost - \$8 per birth - makes it a critical weapon against AIDS in developing countries.

3) AIDS is not fundamentally different in Africa. Distinct strains of HIV are found in different regions of the world. Strain B is most common in the U.S. and Western Europe, while strain C is most common in Africa and India. However, the difference in strains does not cause differences in the actual manifestations of the disease, its modes of transmission, or the impact of drug treatment:

- All strains, not just those found in Africa, can be spread through heterosexual contact;
- All strains are found to be equally susceptible to anti-AIDS drugs like AZT.
- In the U.S., as in Africa, AIDS is now spreading most rapidly among heterosexuals;
- AIDS spreads particularly rapidly in Africa through heterosexual contact because of factors such as the high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases;

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
NEAL LANE

SUBJECT: President Mbeki's Controversial Views on AIDS

You will receive a separate memo for the Mbeki State Visit. Although we do not believe it would be useful to have a debate with him on the science of AIDS, we are providing additional information on the controversies surrounding President Mbeki's views on the scientific dimensions of AIDS prevention and treatment.

Background:

President Mbeki sparked a major scientific and political furor by questioning the link between HIV and AIDS and the safety of the anti-AIDS drug, AZT. Mbeki's views - which are not shared by most of his own health and scientific advisors - could potentially undermine South Africa's otherwise constructive anti-AIDS campaign. His views on the safety of AZT could have a deadly impact, in part because they have prevented government clinics from using AZT to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

Mbeki's positions are based on a complex mix of realistic concern about the impact and cost of AIDS in Africa, a questioning mind, a basic distrust of the Western pharmaceutical industry, and poor advice. To resolve his questions he has convened an international advisory panel on AIDS research, which met in Pretoria two weeks ago. Unfortunately, the panel included almost equal numbers of reputable virologists and so-called "dissidents" who question the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS. Mbeki is unlikely to resolve his concerns until he receives the panel's report next month, but the report is not expected to reflect a consensus.

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

The Scientific Facts:

1) HIV causes AIDS. Concerns about the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS have been evaluated over the past 15 years, and the result is clear. Dissident views have not been suppressed - they have simply not convinced the scientific community. Key scientific findings are:

- HIV infection and AIDS are invariably linked in time, place, and population group;
- HIV can be found in virtually all those with AIDS, and HIV infection almost invariably leads to AIDS;
- The characteristic immune system deficiency typical of AIDS is extraordinarily rare in the absence of HIV infection.

2) Two simple treatments - AZT and Nevirapine - can help prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and are safe and effective in Africans.

- AZT. Studies in rural Thailand and Africa show that taking AZT twice per day during the last month of pregnancy can reduce transmission by up to 40%. Side effects occur but are minimal and reversible at these limited doses. Contrary to Mbeki's arguments, an AZT regimen does not require daily supervision and can be carried out safely in rural areas.
- Nevirapine. A single dose of Nevirapine for the mother during labor and for the infant within 48 hours of birth reduces MTCT by 40% according to a major study in Uganda. Nevirapine's simplicity and low cost - \$4 per birth - makes it a critical weapon against AIDS in developing countries. (Note: Several adults on three anti-AIDS drugs, including Nevirapine, have died, but no such problems have been seen in infants or mothers.)

3) AIDS is not fundamentally different in Africa. Distinct strains of HIV are found in different regions of the world. Strain B is most common in the U.S. and Western Europe, while strain C is most common in Africa and India. However, the difference in strains does not cause differences in the actual manifestations of the disease, its modes of transmission, or the impact of drug treatment:

- All strains, not just those found in Africa, can be spread through heterosexual contact;

- All strains are found to be equally susceptible to anti-AIDS drugs like AZT.
- In the U.S., as in Africa, AIDS is now spreading most rapidly among heterosexuals;
- AIDS spreads particularly rapidly in Africa through heterosexual contact because of factors such as the high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases;
- In the context of poverty and poor health services, the disease may have a more severe impact. For example, Africans with AIDS are more likely to die of other deadly diseases, which go undiagnosed and untreated, such as TB.

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
006. cable	Re: President Mbeki's HIV/AIDS Theory (3 pages)	05/19/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
007. cable	Re: The Presidential AIDS Panel and the HIV/AIDS Debate in South Africa (4 pages)	05/12/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

RESTRICTION CODES

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Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Friday, May 12, 2000 10:33 AM
To: Babbitt, James F. (VP); Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH); Byrne, Catherine E. (AF); Cables; Dempsey, Nora B. (AF); Smith, Gayle E. (AF)
Subject: HIV-POSITIVE ENLISTEE WINS SUIT AGAINST NAMIBIAN DEFENSE FORCE

ActionAddres: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1512
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
DateTime: 121328Z MAY 00
Distribution: SIT: BABBITT Bernard BYRNE NSC DEMPSEY SMITH
Identifier: M4439320
InfoAddres: RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
Line1: RAAUZYUW RUEHWD A0928 1331328-UUUU--RHEHAAX.
Line2: ZNR UUUUU ZZH
Line3: R 121328Z MAY 00
Line4: FM AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
Originator: AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
Precedence: ROUTINE
Profiles: BABBITTJ
BERNARDK
BYRNEC
CABLES
DEMPSEYN
SMITHG
StationRoutingIndicator: RUEHWD
StationSerialNumber: 0928
TimeOfReceipt: 05/12/2000 09:34:21 ET

UNCLAS WINDHOEK 000928

STATE FOR AF/S, AF/EPS, AF/RA, DRL/BA, DRL/LEA

ALSO FOR OES HIV/AIDS STAFF DIRECTOR CARTER-FOSTER

WHITE HOUSE FOR SANDRA THURMAN

JOHANNESBURG FOR LABATT KAPLAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM, ELAB, SOCI, PGOV, MARR, WA

SUBJECT: HIV-POSITIVE ENLISTEE WINS SUIT AGAINST
NAMIBIAN DEFENSE FORCE

1. (U) THE LABOR COURT RULED MAY 10 THAT THE NAMIBIAN DEFENSE FORCE (NDF) CANNOT BAR PROSPECTIVE ENLISTEES SOLELY BECAUSE THEY ARE HIV-POSITIVE. WHILE ACCEPTING NDF ARGUMENTS REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSING AN ENLISTEE'S PHYSICAL CAPACITY TO PERFORM MILITARY DUTIES, THE COURT RULED THAT AN HIV-POSITIVE BLOOD TEST WAS NOT SUFFICIENT CAUSE TO DETERMINE INCAPACITY. IN A VERY TECHNICAL DECISION, THE LABOR COURT INSTRUCTED THE NDF TO AUGMENT THE BASIC HIV BLOOD TEST WHEN NECESSARY WITH AN ASSESSMENT OF AN ENLISTEES' IMMUNE SYSTEM (CD4 CELL COUNT) AND EXTENT OF HIV INFECTION ("VIRAL LOAD") TO DETERMINE FITNESS FOR EMPLOYMENT. WITNESSES CALLED BOTH BY THE PLAINTIFF AND THE NDF AGREED IN TESTIMONY THAT SUCH A TEST REGIMEN WAS MORE ACCURATE AND JUST.

2. (U) UNLIKE IN SIMILAR CASES IN OTHER COUNTRIES, THE

NDF DID NOT ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF THE HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HIV-POSITIVE SOLDIERS IN COMBAT AND THE COURT DID NOT COMMENT DIRECTLY ON THAT ISSUE. AS IF TO PREVENT SUCH AN NDF ARGUMENT, THE PLAINTIFF'S LAWYER POINTED OUT THE NDF CURRENTLY DOES NOT TEST SOLDIERS FOR HIV/AIDS AT ANY TIME AFTER ENLISTMENT.

3. (U) COMMENT: WHILE THE LABOR COURT'S DECISION WAS MADE PRIMARILY ON PROCEDURAL GROUNDS, THE DECISION IS BEING HAILED IN THE NGO COMMUNITY AS A VICTORY FOR THE RIGHTS OF THOSE WITH HIV/AIDS. WITH ESTIMATES OF A QUARTER OF THE WORKFORCE HIV-POSITIVE, THE NAMIBIAN LEGAL SYSTEM INCREASINGLY WILL HAVE TO WRESTLE WITH HIV/AIDS AND EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ISSUES. THUS, THIS CASE IS SEEN AS PRECEDENT-SETTING. THE SUIT WAS BROUGHT BY THE LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTER'S AIDS LAW UNIT, WHICH WAS LAUNCHED IN 1999 WITH A GRANT FROM THE EMBASSY'S DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FUND.
BORDEN

Keenan, Josefine (Chris) (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2000 4:55 AM
To: Babbitt, James F. (VP); Byrne, Catherine E. (AF); Cables; Dempsey, Nora B. (AF); Smith, Gayle E. (AF)
Subject: OPPOSITION ATTACKS MBEKI'S VIEWS ON AIDS (U) SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY.

ActionAddres: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1485
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
DateTime: 210722Z APR 00
Distribution: SIT: BABBITT BYRNE NSC DEMPSEY SMITH
Identifier: M4407562
InfoAddres: RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
Line1: PAAUZYUW RUEHSAA3131 1120722-UUUU--RHEHNSC.
Line2: ZNR UUUUU ZZH
Line3: P 210722Z APR 00
Line4: FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
Originator: AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
Precedence: PRIORITY
Profiles: BABBITTJ
BYRNEC
CABLES
DEMPSEYN
SMITHG
StationRoutingIndicator: RUEHSA
StationSerialNumber: 3131
TimeOfReceipt: 04/21/2000 03:56:51 ET

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 PRETORIA 003131

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SOCI, SF
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION ATTACKS MBEKI'S VIEWS ON AIDS

(U) SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY.

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: DURING AN APRIL 19 PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON PRESIDENT MBEKI'S VIEWS ON AIDS, ALMOST ALL OPPOSITION PARTY SPEAKERS ATTACKED THE PRESIDENT'S ASSOCIATION WITH "AIDS DISSIDENTS" WHO QUESTION THAT THE HIV VIRUS CAUSES AIDS. SEVERAL MP'S SHARPLY CRITICIZED PRESIDENT MBEKI'S LETTER ON THE SUBJECT TO PRESIDENT CLINTON AND OTHER WORLD LEADERS, WHICH HAD BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE WASHINGTON POST THAT MORNING. CABINET MEMBERS, INCLUDING THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND TWO CABINET MINISTERS, LINED UP BEHIND THE PRESIDENT. THEY NOTED THAT MBEKI HAD NEVER REJECTED THE IDEA THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS (BUT, LIKE THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF, DID NOT SAY THAT HE ACCEPTED IT). THE DEBATE SHED LITTLE NEW LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT, BUT IT DID ILLUSTRATE THE GOVERNMENT'S ISOLATION ON THIS ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

ZUMA'S DEFENSE

2. (U) AT THE REQUEST OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP) MP MIKE ELLIS, PARLIAMENT HELD A SNAP DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT OF "THE PRESIDENT'S APPARENT REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THE MAINSTREAM SCIENTIFIC VIEW THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS." A HIGH-LEVEL LINEUP OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DEFENDED MBEKI, INCLUDING DEPUTY PRESIDENT "AT NO POINT HAS THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE CHALLENGES THE VIEW THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS, OR THE CONTRARY. ALL HE HAS SAID IS THAT...WE NEED TO HEAR WHAT ALL THE SCIENTISTS SAY." SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT, ZUMA SAID THAT "OUR VIEW IS THAT IT IS FUNDAMENTALLY WRONG TO ACCEPT THE NOTION THAT ESTABLISHED MAINSTREAM SCIENTIFIC TRUTHS MUST NOT BE QUESTIONED...WE SHOULD NOT, AND WE WILL NOT, LEAVE ANY STONE UNTURNED, EVEN IF THIS MEANS INCLUDING THE VIEWS OF THE SO-CALLED 'DISSIDENTS.' ZUMA SAID THAT, THROUGHOUT HISTORY, DISSIDENTS' VIEWS HAVE OFTEN PROVED TO BE RIGHT. HE CITED GALILEO'S ASSERTION THAT THE EARTH REVOLVES AROUND THE SUN. SOUTH AFRICA, ZUMA CONTINUED, "CANNOT AFFORD TO OVERLOOK THE POSSIBILITY" THAT NON-MAINSTREAM VIEWS ABOUT HIV/AIDS ARE CORRECT.

DP RESPONSE

3. (U) THE DP'S ELLIS SAID THAT PRESIDENT MBEKI'S LETTER ON AIDS TO PRESIDENT CLINTON AND OTHER WORLD LEADERS, PUBLISHED THAT MORNING IN THE WASHINGTON POST, "REVEALS THAT PRESIDENT MBEKI REMAINS STEADFAST IN HIS DEFENSE OF THE AIDS DISSIDENTS AND THEIR VIEWS. ITS TONE AND CONTENT CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS LACK OF JUDGEMENT ON THE PART OF THE PRESIDENT WHICH WILL FURTHER UNDERMINE SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION AND HARM OUR EFFORTS TO COMBAT AIDS EFFECTIVELY." HE SAID THAT A MARCH 17 E-MAIL RELEASED BY DISSIDENT AIDS RESEARCHER DAVID RASNICK MADE IT CLEAR THAT MBEKI HAD COMMUNICATED WITH HIM ABOUT HIS PLANS TO WRITE SUCH A LETTER. ELLIS ALLEGED THAT MBEKI WAS SEEKING A DEBATE ON THE ORIGIN OF AIDS IN ORDER TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S POOR PERFORMANCE IN COMBATING THE DISEASE.

4. (U) DP MP SANDY KALYAN, WHO RECENTLY TOOK OVER FROM ELLIS AS THE PARTY'S HEALTH SPOKESPERSON, DELIVERED A CRITIQUE OF THE ANC'S POLICY APPROACH TO HIV-AIDS. IN MBEKI'S LETTER TO WORLD LEADERS, KALYAN NOTED, HE MENTIONED THE FORMATION OF A NATIONAL AIDS COUNCIL. "WHAT HE DOES NOT SAY," KALYAN SAID, "IS THAT IN SOUTH AFRICA WE HAVE A BUNCH OF POLITICIANS, WHO LACK THE NECESSARY SKILL AND EXPERTISE, DIRECTING THE NATIONAL AIDS PROGRAM AND INDULGING A SERIOUS POWER PLAY AT THE EXPENSE OF HUMAN LIVES." THE COUNCIL, SHE SAID, EXCLUDES SOUTH AFRICA'S ACKNOWLEDGED EXPERTS ON HIV/AIDS. KALYAN EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT MBEKI'S SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE RELEVANCE OF USING WESTERN MEDICAL MODELS TO ADDRESS THE AIDS CATASTROPHE.

NGUBANE TOES THE LINE

5. (U) MINISTER OF ARTS, CULTURE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BEN NGUBANE, AN INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY MEMBER, ALSO DEFENDED THE PRESIDENT, SAYING THAT MBEKI

IS SIMPLY LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ON HIV/AIDS.
NGUBANE CAST DOUBT ON CRITICS' ASSERTION THAT
PROVISION TO HIV-POSITIVE PREGNANT WOMEN OF THE ANTI-
UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 PRETORIA 003131

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SOCI, SF

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION ATTACKS MBEKI'S VIEWS ON AIDS

RETROVIRAL DRUG AZT WOULD REDUCE MOTHER-TO-CHILD
TRANSMISSION, SAYING THAT MOTHERS WOULD GO ON TO
INFECT THE CHILDREN THROUGH BREAST MILK.

OTHER OPPOSITION VIEWS

6. (U) FOLLOWING ARE POINTS MADE BY OTHER OPPOSITION
PARTIES:

-- THE NEW NATIONAL PARTY'S KOBUS GOUS SAID THAT THE
CONTROVERSY OVER PRESIDENT MBEKI'S VIEWS IS
JEOPARDIZING THE INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE
SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN SOUTH AFRICA. (NOTE: RECENT
PRESS REPORTS STATED THAT SEVERAL DOCTORS WERE
CONSIDERING BOYCOTTING THE CONGRESS BECAUSE OF MBEKI'S
INVITATION TO AIDS DISSIDENTS TO ADDRESS THE CONGRESS.
END NOTE.)

-- IN ADDITION TO ASSERTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS
"AIDING AND ABETTING SEXUAL PROMISCUITY" BY
DISTRIBUTING CONDOMS, CHERYLLYN DUDLEY OF THE AFRICAN
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY CRITICIZED MBEKI FOR HIS
ASSOCIATION WITH THE AIDS DISSIDENTS.

-- PAUL DITSHETELO OF THE UNITED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC
PARTY POINT OUT THAT THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL
HAD ISSUED A LENGTHY STUDY SEVERAL YEARS AGO
DISCREDITING THE NOTION THAT HIV DOES NOT CAUSE AIDS.

-- AFTER CRITICIZING THE PRESIDENT'S ADHERENCE TO
DISCREDITED VIEWS, PATRICIA DE LILLE OF THE PAN-
AFRICANIST CONGRESS CHALLENGED SOUTH AFRICA'S TOP
LEADERS TO TAKE AN AIDS TEST AND PUBLICLY DISCLOSE THE
RESULTS IN ORDER TO SHOW THEIR COMMITMENT TO COMBATING
THE DISEASE. HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER AND INKATHA
FREEDOM PARTY LEADER MANGOSUTHU BUTHELEZI HUGGED DE
LILLE FOLLOWING HER SPEECH, AND APPARENTLY PROMISED TO
BE TESTED. (NOTE: THE PRESIDENT'S SPOKESMAN SAID THE
FOLLOWING DAY THAT MBEKI "HAS GOT MORE IMPORTANT
THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT THAN TESTING FOR HIV/AIDS.")

-- THE FREEDOM FRONT'S PIET MULDER TOOK ISSUE WITH
ZUMA FOR HIS ANALOGY ON GALILEO, POINTING OUT THAT
GALILEO WAS NOT CHALLENGED BY THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY
BUT BY THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY. THE DEBATE ON THE
CAUSES OF HIV/AIDS, HE SAID, SHOULD BE LEFT TO
SCIENTISTS.

-- CASSIE AUCAMP OF THE AFRIKANER UNITY MOVEMENT SAID
THAT IT IS NOT THE GOVERNMENT'S JOB TO GET INVOLVED IN
SCIENTIFIC QUESTIONS. HE CONTRASTED MBEKI'S
PARTICIPATION IN THIS SCIENTIFIC DEBATE WITH HIS

SILENCE ON THE OCCUPATION OF FARMS IN ZIMBABWE, AN ISSUE THAT HE SAID IS MORE RELEVANT TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT.

-- SUNKLAVATY RAJBALLY OF THE MINORITY FRONT, WHICH HAS A FORMAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP IN PARLIAMENT WITH THE ANC, DEFENDED THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON AZT, SAYING THAT THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT AFFORD TO PROVIDE IT TO PREGNANT WOMEN.

-- MOSIBUDI MANGENA OF AZAPO SAID THAT THE AIDS SKEPTICS SHOULD BE IGNORED UNLESS AND UNTIL THEY PROVIDE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR THEIR CLAIMS.

HEALTH MINISTER'S VIEWS

7. (U) HEALTH MINISTER MANTO TSHABALALA-MSIMENG SAID THAT THE DP'S ELLIS HAD MISREPRESENTED THE VIEWS OF THE WHITE HOUSE; IF THE WHITE HOUSE FELT AS ELLIS ALLEGED, PRESIDENT MBEKI WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN INVITED ON A STATE VISIT TO THE U.S. (COMMENT: SINCE ELLIS DID NOT ATTRIBUTE ANY VIEWS TO THE WHITE HOUSE, THE MINISTER WAS MOST LIKELY EXTRAPOLATING FROM ELLIS'S REMARK THAT MBEKI'S LETTER TO WORLD LEADERS WOULD MAKE SOUTH AFRICA LOOK BAD. END NOTE.) SHE RECOMMENDED THAT CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S AIDS POLICY BUY A COPY OF A BOOK ENTITLED "THE VIRUS WITHIN" BY ABC NEWS PRODUCER NICHOLAS REGUSH. TSHABALALA-MSIMENG ASSERTED THAT A WHITE HOUSE AIDS ADVISOR HAD, IN 1998, ADVOCATED HOLDING A MEETING SIMILAR TO THE MEETING MBEKI HAS CALLED FOR ON THEORIES ABOUT THE AIDS VIRUS. ELLIS, CONCLUDING THE DEBATE, CHARACTERIZED IT AS A "FRUSTRATING AND IRRITATING" DISCUSSION.

COMMENT

8. (SBU) THE DEBATE SHED LITTLE NEW LIGHT ON THE UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 PRETORIA 003131

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, SOCI, SF
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION ATTACKS MBEKI'S VIEWS ON AIDS

CONTROVERSY OVER MBEKI'S VIEWS ON AIDS. HOWEVER, THERE IS ALMOST-UNIVERSAL CONDEMNATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S VIEWS BY THE OPPOSITION (WITH THE ONE-MEMBER MINORITY FRONT AND CABINET MINISTER NGUBANE OF THE IFP PARTY AS THE SOLE DEFENDERS OF THE PRESIDENT OUTSIDE THE ANC). THE UNANIMITY OF THE CRITICISM -- AND, IN PARTICULAR, ATTACKS ON ANC POLICY BY THE PAC AND AZAPO, BOTH AFRICANIST PARTIES -- MAY MAKE IT HARDER FOR MBEKI TO CHARACTERIZE THE DEBATE AS A DISPUTE BETWEEN "AFRICAN" AND "WESTERN" VIEWPOINTS. END COMMENT.

9. (U) THIS CABLE WAS DRAFTED BY THE EMBASSY POLITICAL SECTION.

LEWIS

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 20, 2000

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

SAMUEL BERGER
NEAL LANE

SUBJECT: President Mbeki's Controversial Views on AIDS

You will receive a separate memo for the Mbeki State Visit. We do not believe it would be productive at this time to debate Mbeki on the science of AIDS, and prefer to engage him on what South Africa and the United States can do now to combat the disease. However, because he may raise some of his scientific concerns, we are providing additional information on the controversies surrounding his views on the scientific dimensions of AIDS prevention and treatment.

Background

President Mbeki sparked a major scientific and political furor by questioning the link between HIV and AIDS and the safety of the anti-AIDS drug, AZT. Mbeki's views -- which are not shared by most of his own health and scientific advisors -- could potentially undermine South Africa's otherwise constructive anti-AIDS campaign. His views on the safety of AZT could have a deadly impact, in part because they have prevented government clinics from using AZT to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

Mbeki's positions are based on a complex mix of realistic concern about the impact and cost of AIDS in Africa, a questioning mind, a basic distrust of the Western pharmaceutical industry, and poor advice. In the search for answers to his questions, he convened an international advisory panel on AIDS research in Pretoria two weeks ago. Unfortunately, the panel included almost equal numbers of reputable virologists and so-called "dissidents" who question the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS. Mbeki is unlikely to resolve his concerns until he receives the panel's report next month, but the report is not expected to reflect a consensus.

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

Copied
Berger
Lane
Podesta

Justified
Bernard
for answer
P2
C

5-22-00

The Scientific Facts

HIV causes AIDS. Concerns about the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS have been evaluated over the past 15 years, and the result is clear. Dissident views have not been suppressed - they have simply not convinced the scientific community. Key scientific findings are:

- HIV infection and AIDS are invariably linked in time, place, and population group. *Handwritten: How did this one get AIDS?*
- HIV can be found in virtually all those with AIDS, and HIV infection almost invariably leads to AIDS.
- The characteristic immune system deficiency typical of AIDS is extraordinarily rare in the absence of HIV infection.

Two simple treatments -- AZT and Nevirapine -- can help prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and are safe and effective in Africans.

- AZT. Studies in rural Thailand and Africa show that taking AZT twice per day during the last month of pregnancy can reduce transmission by up to 40 percent. Side effects occur but are minimal and reversible at these limited doses. Contrary to Mbeki's assertions, an AZT regimen does not require daily supervision and can be carried out safely in rural areas.
- Nevirapine. A single dose of Nevirapine for the mother during labor and for the infant within 48 hours of birth reduces mother-to-child-transmission by 40%, according to a major study in Uganda. Nevirapine's simplicity and low cost -- \$4 per birth -- makes it a critical weapon against AIDS in developing countries. (Note: Several adults on three anti-AIDS drugs, including Nevirapine, have died, but no such problems have been seen in infants or mothers.)

AIDS is not fundamentally different in Africa. Distinct strains of HIV are found in different regions of the world. Strain B is most common in the U.S. and Western Europe, while strain C is most common in Africa and India. However, the difference in strains does not cause differences in the actual manifestations of the disease, its modes of transmission, or the impact of drug treatment:

- All strains, not just those found in Africa, can be spread through heterosexual contact.

- All strains are found to be equally susceptible to anti-AIDS drugs like AZT.
- In the U.S., as in Africa, AIDS is now spreading most rapidly among heterosexuals.
- AIDS spreads particularly rapidly in Africa through heterosexual contact because of factors such as the high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases.
- In the context of poverty and poor health services, the disease may have a more severe impact. For example, Africans with AIDS are more likely to die of other deadly diseases, which go undiagnosed and untreated, such as TB.

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Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
008. cable	Re: [The AIDS Panel] (4 pages)	05/12/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
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b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
009a. memo	Nora Dempsey to Samuel Berger, re: Letter to President Mbeki of South Africa (1 page)	05/01/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
009b. memo	Samuel Berger to the President, re: Response to President Mbeki of South Africa (2 pages)	ca. 05/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

RESTRICTION CODES

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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009c. letter	Draft letter from President Clinton to President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa (1 page)	ca. 05/2000	P1/b(1)
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
ke2039

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.



S/S 200006886

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

April 25, 2000

**Memorandum for: Mr. Robert A. Bradtke
Executive Secretary
National Security Council Staff
The White House**

Subject: Alerting NSCS on Presidential Correspondence

Enclosed is the original of a letter to President Clinton from

South African President Thabo Mbeki

**which is transmitted for your information. This correspondence was received in the
Records Management Division of the Executive Secretariat on April 25, 2000.**

A copy has been assigned to the appropriate bureau for action.

**Chief, S/S-RMD
Records Management Division
Executive Secretariat
(202) 647-0053**



BL1/USA/P/H4/04-04

The Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and has the honour to refer to the attached letter, addressed by President Thabo Mbeki to President Clinton, dated 3 April 2000.

The Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa further has the honour to request that the Embassy of the United States of America forward the aforementioned letter to President Clinton on behalf of the Government of South Africa.

The Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America the assurance of its highest consideration.



PRETORIA

04 APRIL 2000

APR 26 12:25



BL1/USA/P/H4/04-04

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04 APRIL 2000

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
009d. letter	President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa to President Clinton (5 pages)	04/03/2000	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
International Health Affairs (Bernard, Kenneth)
OA/Box Number: 3646

FOLDER TITLE:

Mbeki [of South Africa] - AIDS Controversy [1]

2007-1550-F
kc2039

RESTRICTION CODES

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
NSC/RMO PROFILE

RECORD ID: 0002373
RECEIVED: 05 APR 00 18

TO: PRESIDENT

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 13526

FROM: MBEKI, THABO

White House Guidelines, September 11, 2006
By KDE NARA, Date 05/20/2013
2007-1550-F

DOC DATE: 03 APR 00
SOURCE REF:

KEYWORDS: SOUTH AFRICA
HS

INTL HEALTH

PERSONS: ZUMA, JACOB

SUBJECT: HIV / AIDS EPIDEMIC IN SOUTH AFRICA

ACTION: PREPARE MEMO FOR BERGER

DUE DATE: 17 APR 00 STATUS: S

STAFF OFFICER: DEMPSEY

LOGREF:

FILES: PA

NSCP:

CODES:

D O C U M E N T D I S T R I B U T I O N

FOR ACTION
DEMPSEY

FOR CONCURRENCE
BERNARD
SCHWARTZ

FOR INFO
BERGER
BRADTKE
LACKEY
RUDMAN
SMITH, G
STEINBERG

COMMENTS: _____

DISPATCHED BY _____ DATE _____ BY HAND W/ATTCH

OPENED BY: NSDBG

CLOSED BY:

DOC 1 OF 1

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH)

From: WHSR
Sent: Tuesday, May 23, 2000 9:52 AM
To: Babbitt, James F. (VP); Bernard, Kenneth W. (HEALTH); Byrne, Catherine E. (AF); Cables; Dempsey, Nora B. (AF); Feldman, Daniel F. (MULTI); Mclean, Matthew K. (MULTI); Naplan, Steven J. (MULTI); Patten, Wendy L. (MULTI); Schwartz, Eric P. (MULTI); Smith, Gayle E. (AF); Smith, Peter D. R. (MULTI); Wilcox, Richard M. (MULTI)
Subject: PARLIAMENT HOLDS PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HIV/AIDS SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY. NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

ActionAddrees: RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6584
RUEADWW/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0013
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0028

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
DateTime: 231257Z MAY 00
Distribution: SIT: BABBITT Bernard BYRNE NSC DEMPSEY FELDMAN MCLEAN NAPLAN PATTEN
SCHWARTZ SMITH SMITHP WILCOX
Identifier: M4456673
InfoAddrees: ////
Line1: PAAUZYUW RUEHTNA0863 1441257-UUUU--RHEHAAA.
Line2: ZNR UUUUU ZZH
Line3: P 231257Z MAY 00
Line4: FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
Originator: AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
Precedence: PRIORITY
Profiles: BABBITTJ
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StationRoutingIndicator: RUEHTN
StationSerialNumber: 0863
TimeOfReceipt: 05/23/2000 09:51:42 ET

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 CAPE TOWN 000863

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, PDAS N. POWELL
AF/S FOR A. RENDER, M. KOPLOVSKY
AF/R FOR H. SUKENI
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER, E. BARTH
NSC FOR BERNARD
WHITE HOUSE FOR ONAP S. THURMAN
DEPT PLEASE PASS NIH AND CDC
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO USAID WASHDC
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO IO COLLECTIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, PGOV, PHUM, ETRD, ELAB, SF
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT HOLDS PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HIV/AIDS

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE
ACCORDINGLY. NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S HEALTH COMMITTEE RECENTLY HELD THREE DAYS OF PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HIV/AIDS. IN ONE UNUSUALLY CONTENTIOUS SESSION, COMMITTEE MEMBERS (PARTICULARLY THE CHAIRPERSON, AN ANC MEMBER) HARSHLY CRITICIZED PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES FOR WHAT THEY SAW AS EXCESSIVELY HIGH PRICES AND IRRESPONSIBLE DRUG TESTING PRACTICES. SEVERAL AIDS SUFFERERS PROVIDED ACCOUNTS OF THEIR STRUGGLE TO DEAL WITH THE DISEASE AND THEIR PROBLEMS WITH THE MEDICAL ESTABLISHMENT. NO SO-CALLED "AIDS DISSIDENTS" APPEARED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE, AND, IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER RECENT PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS ON HIV/AIDS, THERE WAS RELATIVELY LITTLE EMPHASIS ON THE DISSIDENTS' (OR PRESIDENT MBEKI'S) VIEWS. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY'S PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH HELD THREE DAYS OF PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HIV/AIDS ON MAY 9, 10, AND 16. THOSE APPEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE INCLUDED SENIOR MINISTRY OF HEALTH OFFICIALS, MEDICAL NGO'S, HIV/AIDS ADVOCACY GROUPS, THE PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURER'S ASSOCIATION, THE PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURER GLAXO/WELLCOME, AND SEVERAL LABOR UNIONS. NO SO-CALLED "AIDS DISSIDENTS" (WHO CHALLENGE THE MEDICAL ORTHODOXY, INCLUDING THE VIEW THAT THE HIV VIRUS CAUSES AIDS) TOOK PART IN THE HEARINGS.

DISCUSSION OF "AIDS DISSIDENTS"

3. (U) THE MAY 9 SESSION OPENED WITH A PRESENTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT'S HIV/AIDS STRATEGY BY DR. NONO SIMELELA, DIRECTOR OF HIV/AIDS AND STD'S IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DIRECTOR GENERAL AYANDA NTSALUBA THEN BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE RECENT MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT'S AIDS ADVISORY PANEL. HE SAID THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL VIEWS, INCLUDING THOSE OF "AIDS DISSIDENTS," BE PRESENTED. DR. SAREL GOUS OF THE NEW NATIONAL PARTY (NNP) ASKED DR. SIMELELA AND DR. NTSALUBA FOR THEIR PERSONAL VIEWS ON THE LINK BETWEEN HIV AND AIDS. DR. NTSALUBA SAID THAT HIS OWN VIEW IS THAT HIV CAUSES AIDS; DR. SIMELELA SAID THAT SHE BELIEVES THAT AIDS IS CAUSED BY A VIRUS, ALTHOUGH ITS CHARACTERISTICS ARE NOT THE SAME IN ALL AREAS. AT SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE COURSE OF THE HEARINGS WHEN PARTICIPANTS RAISED THE SUBJECT OF AIDS DISSIDENTS, COMMITTEE CHAIR ABRAHAM NKOMO, A MEDICAL DOCTOR, NOTED POINTEDLY THAT NO DISSIDENTS WERE PARTICIPATING IN THE COMMITTEE HEARINGS.

TESTY EXCHANGE WITH PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

4. (U) PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (PMA) CHIEF EXECUTIVE MIRRYENA DEEB APPEARED ON MAY 9 WITH DR. BETH COWPER, A MEDICAL ADVISOR TO THE PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY MSD. DEEB CALLED FOR PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES AND THE

- GOVERNMENT, ASSERTING THAT THE PRICE OF HIV/AIDS DRUGS COULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED IF THE DRUGS WERE PROVIDED THROUGH A GOVERNMENT TENDER PROCESS. SHE REITERATED THE DRUG INDUSTRY'S OPPOSITION TO "QUICK-FIX SOLUTIONS SUCH AS COMPULSORY LICENSING, PARALLEL TRADE AND OTHER SHORT-TERM MEASURES THAT WOULD FATALLY RETARD R&D, THUS HALTING THE SEARCH FOR A CURE." IN RESPONSE TO THIS PRESENTATION (AND TO A SIMILAR PRESENTATION THE FOLLOWING DAY BY THE DRUG MANUFACTURER GLAXO WELLCOME, WHICH PRODUCES THE ANTI-RETROVIRAL DRUG AZT), MP'S FROM THE ANC AND THE PAN-AFRICANIST CONGRESS'S PATRICIA DE LILLE REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED THE FOLLOWING CONCERNS:

-- DRUG COMPANIES DO NOT REVEAL THEIR COST STRUCTURES, MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY ARE MAKING EXCESSIVE PROFITS ABOVE THE COST OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 CAPE TOWN 000863

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, PDAS N. POWELL
AF/S FOR A. RENDER, M. KOPLOVSKY
AF/R FOR H. SUKENI
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER, E. BARTH
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DEPT PLEASE PASS NIH AND CDC
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DEPT PLEASE PASS TO IO COLLECTIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, PGOV, PHUM, ETRD, ELAB, SF
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT HOLDS PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HIV/AIDS

-- LITIGATION BY THE DRUG COMPANIES AGAINST THE MEDICINES AND RELATED SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT OF 1997, WHICH INCLUDES A SECTION ON GENERIC DRUGS, IS IMPEDING THE PUBLIC'S ACCESS TO REASONABLY PRICED DRUGS.

-- DRUG COMPANIES EXPLOIT PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA AND OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AS LOW-COST RESEARCH SUBJECTS, BUT CHARGE THEM EXCESSIVELY HIGH PRICES.

-- DRUG COMPANIES FAIL TO ENSURE ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES AND THEIR OWN INTERNAL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING DRUG TESTING, INCLUDING INFORMED CONSENT BY PATIENTS.

-- PEOPLE SIGN UP FOR CLINICAL TRIALS OUT OF DESPERATION BECAUSE THEY CANNOT AFFORD THE DRUGS THAT ARE AVAILABLE.

-- PATIENTS WHO ARE PROVIDED WITH DRUGS DURING CLINICAL TRIALS ARE NOT GIVEN A CONTINUED SUPPLY OF THE DRUG AFTER THE TRIALS CONCLUDE.

-- DRUG TESTS ARE DONE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY ON BLACK WOMEN.

5. (U) IN RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS, WHICH ALSO INCLUDED REQUESTS FOR

INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIFIC CLINICAL TRIALS, DR. COWPER SAID SHE WAS UNFAMILIAR WITH THE TRIALS CITED AND STRUCK BY THE COMMITTEE'S LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING CLINICAL TRIALS. COMMITTEE CHAIR NKOMO DEMANDED THAT DR. COWPER WITHDRAW THE REMARK. HE BERATED DEEB AND DR. COWPER FOR THEIR UNFAMILIARITY WITH THE SPECIFIC TRIALS THE COMMITTEE HAD ASKED ABOUT. WHEN DEEB SAID THAT SHE HAD BROUGHT DR. COWPER TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE BECAUSE SHE WAS WIDELY RESPECTED FOR HER KNOWLEDGE OF CLINICAL TRIALS, DR. NKOMO RESPONDED "NOT IN THIS COMMITTEE." HE WITHDREW THE COMMENT AT THE REQUEST OF THE NNP'S DR. GOUS.

6. (U) FOLLOWING THE PMA'S STATEMENT, HEALTH DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR GENERAL DR. NTSALUBA SAID THAT HE HAD RECOMMENDED TO HEALTH MINISTER MANTO TSHABALALA-MSIMENG THAT THE MINISTRY CONTINUE HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH PMA. HOWEVER, HE CONTINUED, GIVEN THE TONE OF THE DAY'S DISCUSSION, INCLUDING UNTRUE INSINUATIONS BY THE PMA THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS REFUSING TO TAKE PART IN A DIALOGUE WITH THE DRUG COMPANIES, "I'M NOT SURE IT'S NOT A WASTE OF TIME." DURING THE FOLLOWING DAY'S HEARING, DR. NTSALUBA SPOKE IN FAVOR OF CONTINUING WHAT HE SAID WERE ONGOING "EXPLORATORY" TALKS WITH THE DRUG INDUSTRY ON LICENSING AND PARALLEL IMPORTATION.

7. (U) AT DR. NKOMO'S REQUEST, DEEB APPEARED AGAIN BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON MAY 16. SHE DELIVERED A PRESENTATION ON STANDARDS AND PRACTICES FOR CONDUCTING DRUG TRIALS, NOTING THAT, UNLIKE IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD, WHERE PARTICIPANTS IN CLINICAL TRIALS ARE PROVIDED ONLY WITH THE MEDICINE BEING TESTED AND WITH REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES RELATED TO THE TESTS, PATIENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA RECEIVE FULL TREATMENT FOR THEIR DISEASES DURING THE COURSE OF THE TRIAL. DEEB ALSO DESCRIBED THE INITIATIVE BY SEVERAL DRUG COMPANIES, ANNOUNCED AFTER HER PREVIOUS APPEARANCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE, TO REDUCE THE PRICE OF AIDS DRUGS TO PEOPLE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THIS, SHE SAID, WOULD "TAKE AWAY THE COMMODITY NATURE OF HIV TREATMENT FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD." HOWEVER, COMPANIES WOULD HAVE TO EXERCISE CARE NOT TO ENGAGE IN COLLUSION WHEN LOWERING PRICES. DR. NKOMO EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT DEEB HAD NOT PROVIDED INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIFIC CLINICAL TRIALS, AS HE HAD REQUESTED, BUT THE SESSION WAS MUCH LESS CONTENTIOUS THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE.

ACCOUNTS OF AIDS SUFFERERS

UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 CAPE TOWN 000863

SENSITIVE

AF FOR A/S RICE, PDAS N. POWELL
AF/S FOR A. RENDER, M. KOPLOVSKY
AF/R FOR H. SUKENI
OES FOR N. CARTER-FOSTER, E. BARTH
NSC FOR BERNARD
WHITE HOUSE FOR ONAP S. THURMAN
DEPT PLEASE PASS NIH AND CDC
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO USAID WASHDC
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO IO COLLECTIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, PGOV, PHUM, ETRD, ELAB, SF

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT HOLDS PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HIV/AIDS

8. (U) DURING THE MAY 10 SESSION OF THE HEARINGS, THE COMMITTEE HEARD FIRST-PERSON ACCOUNT BY AIDS SUFFERERS AFFILIATED WITH THE NGO PEOPLE LIVING WITH AIDS. SEVERAL SAID THAT, UPON INFORMING GOVERNMENT HEALTH PRACTITIONERS THAT THEY AND/OR THEIR CHILDREN WERE HIV-POSITIVE, THEY WERE TOLD THAT THERE WAS NOTHING THAT COULD BE DONE FOR THEM AND THEY WERE SENT AWAY. ZAKIE ACHMAT, AN ARTICULATE YOUNG AIDS SUFFERER REPRESENTING THE TREATMENT ACTION CAMPAIGN, SAID THAT, UNLIKE OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN THE DEBATE OVER HIV/AIDS, AIDS SUFFERERS HAVE NO VESTED INTEREST OTHER THAN FINDING AN AFFORDABLE CURE. HE URGED THE DRUG COMPANIES TO REDUCE THE PRICE OF AIDS DRUGS, AND CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO BUY THESE DRUGS, PERHAPS THROUGH PARALLEL IMPORT. HE RECOUNTED THAT, WHEN HE WAS SUFFERING FROM THRUSH, AN AIDS-RELATED DISEASE, HE HAD TO SPEND R5,500 (APPROXIMATELY USD 850) FOR DRUGS TO TREAT THE DISEASE. WHEN HIS COUSIN, WHO ALSO HAS AIDS, GOT THRUSH, ACHMAT ILLEGALLY IMPORTED THE SAME DRUG FROM THAILAND FOR R450 (APPROXIMATELY USD 70). ACHMAT, WHO IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS AN ANC MEMBER, CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT FOR INCLUDING DISSIDENTS ON ITS AIDS ADVISORY PANEL.

9. (U) REPRESENTATIVES FROM A NUMBER OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE AIDS LAW PROJECT AND THE LABOR UNIONS COSATU AND NACTU, ALSO TESTIFIED. MANY EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT DRUG PRICING AND CLINICAL TRIALS SIMILAR TO THOSE NOTED ABOVE. THE REPRESENTATIVE OF NACTU, A LEFT-LEANING COALITION OF UNIONS, SPOKE DISMISSIVELY OF THE AIDS DISSIDENTS BUT SAID THAT ALLEGATIONS THAT THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION OR THE U.S. ARMY HAD MANUFACTURED THE HIV VIRUS WERE WORTH LOOKING INTO.

COMMENT

10. (SBU) IN CONTRAST TO OTHER RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF HIV/AIDS, THERE WAS LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE BELIEF OF AIDS DISSIDENTS THAT HIV DOES NOT CAUSE AIDS OR THAT DRUGS SUCH AS AZT ARE HARMFUL TO AIDS SUFFERERS. INSTEAD, THE AFFORDABILITY AND AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS TO TREAT HIV/AIDS DOMINATED THE DISCUSSION. THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS HAD SINCERE AND OFTEN WELL THOUGHT OUT CONCERNS ABOUT THE DRUG INDUSTRY. HOWEVER, THE HOSTILITY DISPLAYED TO THE PMA WAS UNFORTUNATE AND, IN OUR EXPERIENCE AND THAT OF A NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS PRESENT, UNPRECEDENTED. END COMMENT.

11. (U) THIS MESSAGE WAS DRAFTED BY THE EMBASSY POLITICAL SECTION.

GLASPIE

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