

"We want to challenge the entire inequality of the military's policy that treats gays and straights differently." The LA Times explained: "Broader challenges to the policy are pending before the US Circuit Court of Appeals in New York. Lawyers in both cases say they expect one of those to reach the high court within a year."

Starr Cites Complications In Delay Report On Foster Death.

USA (10/22, A7, Squitieri) said "a report on the apparent suicide of White House Deputy Counsel Vince Foster has been delayed by Whitewater Special Counsel Kenneth Starr because of 'several unforeseen complications.'" According to USA, Starr's response on the progress of the investigation "was unusual in both its timing, two weeks before the presidential election, and its bluntness. Starr had promised not to take any actions or make statements that could be considered politically motivated. His comment came in response to an Associated Press question about the probe." The White House, "which last week renewed complaints that Starr is conducting a political vendetta against President Clinton, declined comment." USA continued: "Three out of the four forensic pathologists who reviewed" the investigation by the original Whitewater independent counsel, Robert Fiske, "told USA Today no new facts have emerged to shake their conclusion that Foster killed himself."

Reich Cites Reduction In Child Labor Overseas.

The AP (10/22) reported Labor Secretary Robert Reich announced yesterday that "US clothing companies are responding to pressure to reduce child labor in foreign plants, but need to enforce their requirements more strictly." A Labor Department survey "found child labor remains pervasive, particularly in Asia, but is 'not now prevalent' in the Latin American countries checked." Reich said that "more than 200 million children are being exploited," adding: "We can keep the pressure on in a variety of ways, and simply alerting the public to steps they are taking is important. The good news is that companies are responding."

The W. Post (10/22, A4, Swoboda) said the Labor Department report is "part of a series mandated by Congress," and it concluded that "fewer children may be working on garment exports for the US markets -- at least in some countries -- in 1996 than in 1994." However, "the department said its conclusions were 'based mainly on anecdotal evidence' gathered in six countries visited in June by its investigators."

Justice Department Seeks Dismissal Of Immigration Suits; Wilson Criticizes INS Policies.

The NYT (10/22, A20, Johnston) reported the Justice Department "has gone to Federal court to seek the dismissal of four out of five class-action lawsuits filed on behalf of hundreds of thousands of aliens who say the immigration service unfairly

denied them eligibility for legal residence." The Justice Department's action "demonstrates how the government is vigorously trying to use the new law, the Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act of 1996, to severely restrict, and in some cases eliminate, the authority of Federal courts to review decisions" made by the INS "in deportation and legalization cases. In effect, it strips non-citizens of the right to take complaints against the agency to court."

Meanwhile, the W. Times (10/22, A6, Larson) reported California's GOP Gov. Pete Wilson yesterday "blasted the Immigration and Naturalization Service's lax screening process for allowing thousands of violent criminals to become citizens." At a press conference in Los Angeles, Wilson said: "Dangerous criminal aliens should be deported. Instead, it appears the Clinton Administration is welcoming them with open arms by granting them citizenship." Wilson also wrote a letter to Attorney General Janet Reno, saying: "The American people have a right to know exactly how many violent criminals have been naturalized by the Clinton Administration." The W. Times added: "INS officials have acknowledged that a small percentage of felons may have slipped through, but say they are taking steps to revoke their citizenship. The INS also said that an estimated 12,279 criminal aliens were deported from California last month, and that criminal deportations overall have risen 13 percent this year."

White House Reportedly Changing HIV Immigration Policy.

The W. Times (10/22, A1, Larson) reported the White House "is disavowing its policy favoring the granting of asylum to immigrants infected with the AIDS virus." An anonymous official in the White House Office of National AIDS Policy said: "We're not changing policy at all. We have a strict policy that's been enforced since 1993 that does not allow anyone with HIV to enter the country." However, the Immigration and Naturalization Service said "this month that it had added" HIV "to the list of considerations for asylum candidates because the White House instructed it to." INS spokesperson Brian Jordan said "The White House has the last say. The INS helps all parties involved reach an informed decision, but if the White House desires it, naturally we assent to what they say." The W. Times added: "Critics say the White House is backtracking on a controversial initiative that has been exposed just before the election." House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) "said the policy could lead to a surge in illegal immigrants infected with the AIDS virus."

Illegal Alien Detained On Vice Presidential Grounds.

The W. Post (10/22, A10, Branigin) reported, "Federal agents yesterday detained two Central Americans who showed up to work on the grounds of the vice President's compound and charged one of them with being in the United States illegally." INS agents arrested Issac Belzazar Figueroa,

Wash. Times; 10-22-96 p. 1

White House waffles on HIV asylum policy

Contradicting INS, it insists ban stands

By Ruth Larson
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The White House, faced by mounting public opposition, is disavowing its policy favoring the granting of asylum to immigrants infected with the AIDS virus.

"We're not changing policy at all," said an official in the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, who spoke on the condition that he not be named. "We have a strict policy that's been enforced since 1993 that does not allow anyone with HIV to enter the country."

The Immigration and Naturalization Service told The Washing-

ton Times this month that it had added the human immunodeficiency virus, which causes AIDS, to the list of considerations for asylum candidates because the White House instructed it to.

"The White House has the last say," INS spokesman Brian Jordan said. "The INS helps all parties involved reach an informed decision. . . . But if the White House desires it, naturally we assent to what they say."

The Times reported Oct. 3 that a New York immigration judge had granted asylum to a 30-year-

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old computer engineer from the African country of Togo solely on the basis of his HIV status.

The Times' report was picked up by radio hosts such as Rush Limbaugh, G. Gordon Liddy and Mary Matalin and generated national outrage. The INS acknowledges getting numerous telephone calls with complaints about the policy from listeners of those shows.

Questioned about its role in changing asylum standards to include those who are HIV-positive, the White House has offered three explanations:

• The Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS only recommended — not directed — the policy change.

"The White House did not make them do anything," the AIDS official said. He noted that a transmittal letter accompanying the council's recommendations said, "It is the president's hope that we are as responsive as possible to these recommendations."

• The INS refused to accept the council's recommendation. "The INS said the advisory council's recommendation to create a special social class would be counter to the statute," the AIDS policy official said. "The INS was very clear that it wouldn't — it couldn't — change the class for HIV. So the INS rejected this recommendation."

But the INS general counsel felt it necessary to alert subordinate legal offices of the council's recommendation in February. "HIV shall be considered in requests for discretionary forms of relief from deportation, and claims of asylum or withholding of deportation shall be handled in accordance with the attached discussion on that subject, prepared at the request of the White House," the general counsel's memorandum said.

• Existing policy is flexible enough to handle the change. The AIDS council, a group of 33 private-sector experts, just didn't know that when it made the recommendation.

Under a 1993 law, those infected with communicable diseases, including AIDS, were barred from entering the United States. If they managed to reach this country, they were subject to deportation.

The Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS sought to

change that policy late last year. It recommended that the INS and other federal agencies grant asylum "based on the social group category of HIV-positive individuals."

The White House AIDS policy official acknowledged that the INS has, on occasion, granted waivers to allow HIV-positive people to enter the country.

"It has been used very, very rarely to allow waivers to individuals in cases where return to their country would mean they'd be in danger. They are not considered to be members of a special social group. The policy has not changed," he said.

"It most certainly does alter policy — radically," said Allen Kay, a spokesman for Rep. Lamar Smith, Texas Republican.

There is a fundamental difference between granting waivers for temporary visas and granting asylum, he said. A person granted asylum can become a permanent legal resident; those who receive temporary visas cannot.

"Congress has never given the president authorization to give HIV-positive individuals long-term status," Mr. Kay said.

Mr. Smith, who heads the House Judiciary subcommittee on immigration and claims, said, "The Clinton White House circumvented the will of Congress and ignored legitimate concerns raised by the INS about admitting foreigners because they have HIV."

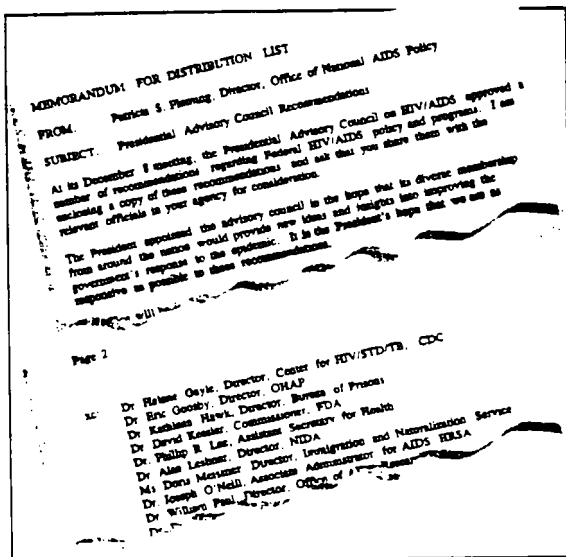
Critics say the White House is backtracking on a controversial initiative that has been exposed just before the election.

"Now the White House and the INS want to blame one another rather than be held responsible for this dangerous and misguided policy," Mr. Smith said. Shifting blame sidesteps the issue of "exposing taxpayers to the enormous costs of treating additional AIDS patients."

House Speaker Newt Gingrich said the policy could lead to a surge in illegal immigrants infected with the AIDS virus.

"Under the Clinton administration, you can come to America illegally — sneak into the country — announce that you are HIV-positive, be declared a political refugee, be eligible for \$120,000 of health benefits," he said.

In the New York asylum case, the INS argued against granting asylum, saying the man did not show that he faced persecution in his homeland. But the judge disagreed and granted him asylum.



This letter accompanied the presidential panel's proposed AIDS policy changes. The original did not have a sentence highlighted.

ASYLUM POLICY

The White House denies changing the policy on admitting immigrants infected with the AIDS virus. But a comparison of policies casts doubt on that claim.

■ **Legal grounds for asylum, according to the 1980 Refugee Act:** A person from another country is "unable or unwilling to return to . . . that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion."

■ **Excludable foreigners under the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended in 1993:** The following describes classes of excludable aliens who are ineligible to receive visas and who shall be excluded from admission into the United States:
(1) Health-related grounds: In general, any alien (1) who is determined to have a communicable disease of public health significance, which shall include infection with the etiologic agent for acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

■ **Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, December 1995:** "The Administration should direct the CDC, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and Department of State to monitor and coordinate the HIV testing of immigrants . . . and to ensure that waivers of the HIV exclusion are granted on a priority basis when permitted by statute. Also, when permitted by statute, the INS and the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) should grant stays of deportation, suspension of deportations, extended voluntary departure, deferred action, and asylum based on the social group category of HIV-positive individuals."

■ **Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, progress report, July 8, 1996:** "The Council is pleased by the Administration's clarification of INS policies regarding the granting of asylum relief from deportation to HIV-positive immigrants. This clarification allows for a more compassionate and sensible approach."

The Washington Times

Cont'd from previous page

"If we do nothing, it would be crushing to us as a business, and disastrous to the UAW as a union. We had to do something different," said Anthony J. Stasunas, the GM employee who staffs the coalition full time. "We call it enlightened self-interest."

It is also the way the country's health system could evolve.

"This is the next level. It's very exciting and terribly important," said Dr. Mary Jane England, president of Washington Business Group on Health, a health policy organization of 175 of the country's largest public and private employers. "The only way we can really continue to save money or to manage the cost of health care is to help people stay healthy."

Because of the corporation's size, experts say GM's work will exert significant national influence. GM is launching a similar effort in Anderson, Ind. Chrysler has joined with GM to do the same thing in Kokomo, Ind.

GM, Flint marriage

GM and Flint grew up with each other. The automaker was born here in the first part of the century, and by the 1950s, GM's fortunes had turned the area into a boom town.

The Rev. Albert Lee, 64, who runs an urban ministry and has lived in Flint since he was 9, remembers coming home from the Korean War in 1955 to find downtown streets crowded with shoppers and businessmen.

"It was like Dodge City," Lee said wistfully. "It was some place to live."

As the years went on, the United Auto Workers gradually secured better and better health benefits for workers. The physicians followed. All they had to do was hang a shingle, they say, and the patients came knocking.

By the late 1970s, almost 80,000 workers were drawing paychecks from GM facilities that turned out Buicks, engines and myriad parts. But in 1989, Flint was also the setting of the film "Roger and Me," a devastating look at how the community hit bottom as the number of GM jobs gradually dropped by 40 percent.

Now, although there are only half the number of workers compared with peak days, GM still influences what people eat, how doctors practice medicine and the health of the community. Flint has the highest number of GM workers per capita in the country.

The area's struggles are a microcosm of the tangled health issues confronting the country, and the coalition's proposed solutions go much further than smoking-cessation programs. Coalition members want to improve the quality of health care, and already are trying strategies such as tracking down thousands of people with upset stomachs who might benefit from antibiotics.

It is tricky business, and they are just beginning to confront the tough decisions. A 432-page study has turned up enough information to make everyone uncomfortable. Each stakeholder has something to lose, and someone to blame.

Long work weeks

Much of Flint's health situation is rooted in the culture that has developed around the plants.

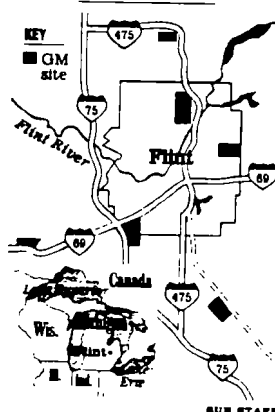
Inside these monstrous, noisy vaults, forklifts and bicycles speed by. Engines and windshields move along conveyor belts, while parts hang overhead like sky cars at an amusement park.

At one plant, Buick City, workers are cranking out 70 Buick LeSabres and Pontiac Bonnevilles an hour. Many union members have followed in their parents' careers. Those who considered trying to do something else say GM's good benefits and wages cradled them. Year after year passes, and they find themselves in the same place. The average age of employees rose to 46.

They often work overtime that adds up to 80-hour, six-day weeks. Older workers worry that exposure to chemicals in the plant before strict safety rules may have caused the high cancer rates. Heavy smoking has been commonplace. Some say it eases the boredom, others say the stress.

"Management continually wants workers to do more and more. It's like it never ends," said Tim Ringer, 39, who has worked here almost 20 years and is struggling to stop smoking. "At the end of the day, you better go home and jump in a hot bath or get on the couch, and hope you can drive in there tomorrow."

GM sites in Flint area



100 pounds of hot dogs

Outside, it's only a few blocks to Angelo's Coney Island, a homey diner some call the heart of Flint.

From CEOs to assembly line workers to men in tuxedos after a local ball, Angelo's is considered a must, the first place locals come after they've been out of town. Five cooks are working behind the grill from 5 a.m. to 3 a.m. daily, frying up "hamburgers" and Coney Islands, and dishing up french fries drenched in gravy.

Filled with red-vinyl booths and worn table tops, the restaurant is no bigger than a McDonald's, but it handles 2,000 customers and sells 100 pounds of hot dogs daily, said Angelo Popoff, 62, one of the owners. The meat sauce that covers hot dogs is sold for \$24 a gallon.

"I used to come four or five times a week, but I can't since I had the triple bypass three years ago," said Jerry Schorling, 61,

munching on french fries and a Coney Island.

Tim Leineke, 55, came for years with his uncle. "He used to come all the time, until he had an aneurysm and tipped over in that booth," Leineke said.

Matt Young, 38, who has worked for GM since he was 18, said he only comes to Angelo's to get his quota of "fat food." He said he has gradually cut back on fatty foods, and eats lots of fruits and vegetables. He still smokes, though, and confesses to drinking a six-pack of beer almost every night.

"I'm not living right. I drink and I smoke. I think about it every day," Young said, looking down at his pack of cigarettes. "But I'm buried. This is something I can't deal with right now."

Rocky start to coalition

Local health officials and others first put together a coalition in 1992, and GM and the UAW agreed to participate. But they didn't show up for the meetings. And although some work was done, with GM absent, other coalition members didn't take the effort seriously.

GM and the UAW had been working for years to change lifestyles with prevention programs. Weight rooms and physical rehabilitation clinics were located inside the plants. The automaker also used its clout to negotiate discounts from the health plans.

"It was like squeezing a balloon. When we pushed on one area, it just bulged out somewhere else," said Stasunas. "All the cost ended up back with us."

So in 1993, GM and UAW came back to the coalition.

It was reorganized and incorporated as a nonprofit organization. GM and UAW each put a staff member on the project full time, and Stasunas and his UAW counterpart, Henry Gaines, share an office.