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AIDS slows rise in population

Africa's numbers expected to double

By Geoffrey Smith
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The bulk of world population growth in the 21st century will come from the developing world despite ballooning mortality rates caused by AIDS, experts said at a Washington forum yesterday.

Africa's population tripled between 1950 and 2000 and can be expected to double again in this century regardless of the AIDS crisis that plagues the continent, according to Joseph Chamie, director of the United Nations' population division.

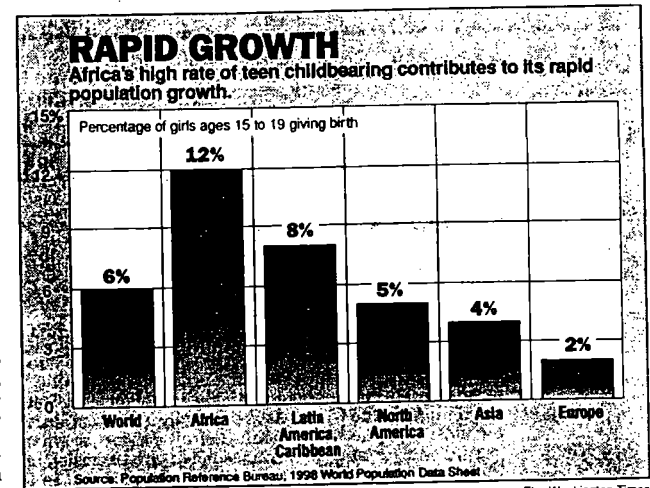
Karen Stanecki of the U.S. Census Bureau explained that though AIDS is having a devastating effect on Africa's population, fertility rates on the continent will hold at such robust levels in the next century that the population will continue to grow at a rapid rate.

But there is good news in the fight against AIDS in Africa, Ms. Stanecki said during the forum sponsored by the Population Reference Bureau, a nonprofit institution founded in 1929. Uganda, in particular, has seen declines in HIV infection recently, owing to greater education and "involvement at all levels of society."

She said a willingness by President Yoweri Museveni to openly acknowledge the problem has also been an essential element in bringing the dangers of AIDS to the public's attention.

The success in Uganda could serve as an example for other African countries, Ms. Stanecki said, but only if those societies are willing to address the AIDS problem.

"It's certainly possible," she said. "But it can't just come from



The Washington Times

the top or the bottom."

She said top government officials, nongovernmental organizations and local communities must also work to stem the spread of AIDS in Africa.

Karl Haub, a demographer with the Population Reference Bureau and moderator for yesterday's forum, pointed out that, in Africa, "entire families have been wiped out by AIDS."

Other countries may be getting the message, Mr. Haub said. Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, who initially opposed condom use, now endorses the use of condoms.

"That's a hopeful sign. It really is," Mr. Haub said. "It doesn't take that much money and you can get some immediate results. Uganda is an example of that."

If mortality rates are reduced in much of Africa, there will be an even greater danger of returning to through-the-roof birthrates. But Mr. Haub hopes the greater awareness about contraceptive use that

has reduced AIDS in Uganda will also help to keep fertility rates down.

Whatever happens in Africa, the world population will undoubtedly continue to grow at a rapid rate, the experts said.

Mr. Chamie of the U.N. population division is so confident that the world's population will continue to skyrocket in the next century that he challenged the audience to a bet: he would pay a penny for each day that the world's population does not increase.

He estimated that the world's population would reach 9 billion by 2050, up from its current mark of 6.1 billion.

Mr. Chamie said the 20th century experienced explosive population growth, hitting record levels in the late 1980s with a rate of 86 million people per year.

"We're going to have a much bigger world than we have today, and there's no doubt about it," he said.

Gore calls AIDS a security threat

Will seek \$150 million for African programs

By Betsy Pisik
THE WASHINGTON TIMES JAN 11, 2000

NEW YORK — In the first appearance ever by an American vice president before the U.N. Security Council, Al Gore yesterday said AIDS must be redefined as a threat to human security.

"We tend to think of a threat to security in terms of war and peace. Yet no one can doubt that the havoc wreaked and the toll exacted by HIV [and] AIDS do threaten our security," he said.

To combat the new security threat, Mr. Gore told the 15-member body the Clinton administration will seek \$150 million next year to fight AIDS in Africa and other diseases, a proposal first floated in July.

Last year's announcement came after homosexual activists from the group ACT UP disrupted nearly every campaign event attended by the Democratic presidential candidate. They said Mr. Gore was siding with pharmaceutical companies at the expense of Africans with AIDS.

In the weeks after the disturbances, Mr. Gore actively courted the homosexual vote. The vice president made a quiet visit to the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center, and his wife, Tipper, hosted what was billed as the capital's first presidential fund-raiser aimed at homosexuals, promising contributors her husband would "fight for your dreams."

Yesterday, U.S. Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke — who is assumed to aspire to the office of secretary of state in a Gore administration — rejected suggestions that Mr. Gore's appearance was political.

"None of what he's doing here today has any direct impact on the present phase of the primary season, which is intense and being

conducted in two states which are far away from here," Mr. Holbrooke said, although the site of the nation's first primary — Feb. 1 in New Hampshire — was just 150 miles away.

Mr. Gore's announcement yesterday before the international body did not placate critics. Activists from ACT UP criticized the \$150 million amount, calling it "a drop in the funding bucket."

Most Americans do not count AIDS, the United Nations or even Africa as issues of passionate concern, but the vice president's speech was targeted at black and homosexual voters, two constituencies where polls show Mr. Gore needs to improve his standing.

The appearance also provided intense media coverage, giving Mr. Gore a chance to burnish his image as a foreign-affairs expert. CNN, for one, carried his speech live on its international channel and interviewed him afterward.

The vice president took time from his campaign to guest-host yesterday's meeting, launching a four-week focus on Africa as the United States assumes the rotating Security Council presidency for the month of January.

Mr. Gore said the administration will ask Congress to approve \$100 million to combat AIDS through prevention and education, reduce transmission of the virus during childbirth and care for AIDS orphans. Another \$50 million would be used to research, develop and distribute vaccines for a variety of infectious diseases throughout the developing world, including Asia and Latin America.

"When 10 people in sub-Saharan Africa are infected every minute; when 11 million children have already become orphans; ... when a single disease threatens everything from economic strength to peacekeeping — we clearly face a security threat of the greatest magnitude," Mr. Gore said.

AIDS has decimated much of sub-Saharan Africa, claiming 14 million lives and counting — more than armed conflict in the same period. The virus is spreading with lightning speed, infecting 11,000 Africans every day, according to U.N. statistics.

Despite impassioned speeches on the issue yesterday by the head of the World Bank, the U.N. Development Program and the U.N.'s chief AIDS officer, diplomats and U.N. officials found it impossible to escape the speculation about Mr. Gore's motives.

"His presence here is healthy and will help put AIDS on the international agenda," Secretary-General Kofi Annan replied to a question.

But Mr. Annan himself appeared to endorse Mr. Gore when



Vice President Al Gore speaks next to U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan as he warns of the problems AIDS is inflicting on Africa.

AIDS FACTS

Africa has 27 of the 30 nations hardest-hit by AIDS.

■ People worldwide with HIV or AIDS	33.6 million
■ Those with HIV or AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa	23.3 million
■ AIDS-related fatalities worldwide	16.3 million
■ AIDS-related deaths in Africa:	13.7 million

* 70 percent.

Source: World Health Organization

The Washington Times

he teasingly introduced him as "Mr. President," adding after a dramatic pause, "of the U.N. Security Council." The remark elicited an embarrassed silence, followed by nervous laughter.

"I'm working on it," responded Mr. Gore.

South African Ambassador Dumsani Kumalo refused to be drawn into the fray.

"I'm not here to defend Al Gore," he said, "but it's not as bad as it looks."

The daylong session on the scope and cost of AIDS in Africa marked the first time the council has discussed a health issue, effectively expanding the reach of the council and its definition of international security.

Although many council nations applauded the effort, Russia and China agreed to let the session take place only on the condition that it not be considered a precedent.

Mr. Gore became entangled in the AIDS issue when activists charged that he was helping pharmaceutical companies thwart

South Africa's efforts to bypass U.S. patent laws so it could produce AIDS medicines at a lower cost.

In 1997, South Africa passed law granting the government unspecified power to obtain cheaper AIDS drugs for the country where more than 3 million people are HIV positive and 2.5 million children are expected to be orphaned because of the virus over the next 10 years.

According to Gore aides, a misunderstanding began in February after the State Department submitted a report on U.S. efforts to get the medicines act amended. provision inserted into last year's budget required the report as a condition for releasing U.S. aid to South Africa.

Mr. Gore said in a July letter members of the Congressional Black Caucus that the Clinton administration was merely expressing concerns about the law's vagueness and asked the South African government to assure it would "not undermine legal protections" for patent holders.

The Washington Times

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Study finds rise in HIV among young gay men

August Gribbin

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Published 7/12/00

A new study reveals that the supposedly waning U.S. AIDS epidemic continues to rage and threatens to worsen.

An article appearing in today's issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association reports that researchers administered HIV-infection tests to 3,492 homosexual and bisexual men aged 15 to 22. The researchers found that, on an average, 7 percent carry the HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus — a number the report terms a "high prevalence" of the infection that produces AIDS.

The report concludes that this study, buttressed by earlier, limited surveys of young men, signals "a significant and continuing HIV epidemic among [homosexuals and bisexual males]."

"The results are alarming in light of the men's youth and compared with the HIV prevalence for samples of primarily heterosexual youth in the United States," the report states.

John Hylton of the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health says the results are "incredibly significant."

Mr. Hylton, a coordinator for the project, says the report's findings are "especially important because they clearly point to the high level of HIV among the young. They indicate the rates of infection are increasing among minority men in urban areas that aren't thought of as AIDS epicenters, the way San Francisco and New York are."

"We're talking of men who are just becoming sexually active — men who are becoming acculturated into the gay social scene," Mr. Hylton says, implying that this bodes ill for the future.

But the results also are disconcerting because the study's participants presumably have been exposed to "HIV/AIDS prevention educational initiatives while they were growing up," the study points out. The nation became aware of the spreading AIDS epidemic about 1981, and the continuing anti-AIDS campaign began in 1984 and 1985, when the oldest men in the current study were about 7 years old.

Regardless, nearly 1 in 10 (9.7 percent) of the 22-year-old participants tested positive for the virus. None of the 15-year-olds was found to be infected at the time of the testing, which extended from 1994 to 1998.

"Prevalence of HIV was higher among blacks, Hispanics, and men of mixed or other race than among whites. Among men of mixed race, HIV prevalence was higher among those who reported black backgrounds than among those who did not," the study states.

Black people in the study had an infection rate of 16.9 percent, the highest recorded. Thus, the findings "display the large racial gap in the current HIV epidemic in the United States," the report continues.

Forty-one percent of those in the overall group stated they were engaging in unprotected sex, which heightens the risk of becoming infected. Researchers called that fact "sobering," and it led the scientists to declare:

"Considering their youth, the high prevalence of recent unsafe sex, and the high HIV prevalence in [those tested], many of the HIV-negative men are likely to become HIV-infected in the near future."

The researchers said the findings underscore "the need to evaluate and intensify prevention efforts for young [homosexuals and bisexuals], particularly blacks, men of mixed race or ethnicity, Hispanics and adolescents."

A team of 14 specialists and their staffs from around the country conducted the study. It was

sponsored by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Three state health departments plus seven city and county public health services and three university medical centers participated.

Because youths in the age groups studied are hard to reach by what the report called "traditional household-oriented sampling methods," the researchers took to the streets of seven major cities — Baltimore, Dallas, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, San Francisco Bay area and Seattle. They scoured dance clubs, bars, businesses, bathhouses, health clubs, parks, beaches and social organizations for subjects, often interviewing thousands of embarrassed and sometimes hostile men before identifying homosexuals and bisexuals who fit into the age groups being studied.

They ultimately discovered that the rate of HIV-infection among Seattle's study participants was just 2.2 percent, the lowest encountered. The highest: New York City's 12.1 percent.

The "multisite, venue-based" approach used by researchers in this study sets it apart from others. But it is particularly significant because many of the earlier estimates of HIV's pervasiveness that appeared in the late 1980s were based on surveys of men 30 years old or older.

The half-dozen more limited studies of younger men that were undertaken in the 1990s also found "high prevalence of HIV and sexual risk behaviors" among homosexuals and bisexuals.

Indeed the CDC's earlier HIV studies indicate that 55 percent of those carrying the infection are homosexual or bisexual men, 24 percent are heterosexual intravenous drug addicts, 6 percent are homosexual or bisexual male intravenous drug addicts, 2 percent are those who received transfusions of infected blood, 1 percent are hemophiliacs and 7 percent are heterosexuals.

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Washington Times



JULY 12, 17:36 EDT

UNICEF Seeks Mobilization vs. AIDS

By RAVI NESSMAN
Associated Press Writer

DURBAN, South Africa (AP) — The AIDS scourge is the greatest health crisis facing the world's children today, the chief of UNICEF said Wednesday as she called for "the largest mobilization of resources in history" to combat the epidemic.

Carol Bellamy, executive director of the U.N. Children's Fund, told a news conference at the 13th International AIDS Conference in Durban: "Our only hope of stopping HIV/AIDS hinges on the willingness of nations to fight back with everything they have."



Child waits for turn at a clinic
AP/Obed Zilwa [19K]

"What is required here is the largest mobilization of resources in history," she said.

UNICEF's annual Progress of Nations report, released Wednesday, said the virus, which infects more than 10 million young people worldwide, was badly hurting even those who are not infected.

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JULY 13, 09:00 EDT

Nearly 28 Million Orphaned by AIDS

By RAVI NESSMAN
Associated Press Writer

DURBAN, South Africa (AP) — Nearly 28 million children in Africa will have lost at least one of their parents to AIDS by the year 2010, causing a social nightmare for these countries for decades, according to a report released Thursday.

“The HIV pandemic is producing orphans on a scale unrivaled in history,” said Susan Hunter, an author of the “Children on the Brink 2000” report by the U.S. Agency for International Development. A summary was released at the 13th International AIDS Conference.



Photos of African children with HIV at an exhibit in Durban, South Africa
AP/Obed Zilwa [19K]

Currently there are nearly 16 million children who have lost at least one parent to the disease. About 90 percent of these orphans are in sub-Saharan Africa.

By 2010, about one in three children in Namibia, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and South Africa will have lost a parent, most of them to AIDS.

Famine, wars and other disease outbreaks often cause a large increase in orphans, but those are short-term calamities that quickly end, Hunter said. AIDS will continue to create millions of new orphans for decades.

Throughout the developing world, at least 44 million children will have lost at least one parent, 30 million of them to AIDS, according to the report.

The estimates do not include children born with the virus that causes AIDS, since most of them will likely die before they reach age 5.

The orphans will strain the resources of families, communities and governments, said John Williamson, the report's other author.

“AIDS is changing the social landscape in the most affected countries,” he said. “It's creating an unprecedented set of child welfare problems.”

Children whose parents become ill often leave school because they are



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forced to care for them or get a job to support the family, Hunter said.

As important as the loss of education and economic security is the loss of a loving environment, where children will be cuddled and care for, said Tony Barnett, a professor at the University of East Anglia in Great Britain who has studied the social and economic impact of AIDS.

``There is a cost and we don't know how to measure it," he said.

The strain these children endure, watching their parents die and then forced to forage for themselves, could create a generation of horribly disaffected people, Williamson said.

``The potential for social unrest, social instability is pretty significant," he said. ``You have a very substantial proportion of your population that has been undereducated, malnourished, marginalized, is disaffected, not able to go to school."

The deaths of so many parents will also ``rupture the intergenerational bargain," forcing elderly Africans who had been supported by their children to not only return to work to support themselves but to adopt their now-childless grandchildren, Barnett said.

The best way to deal with the crisis is not to put the children in expensive, but often substandard, orphanages, Williamson said, but to support their extended families and communities to help them cope.

Governments also need to protect the inheritance rights of widows and orphans, he said. Those rights that are often ignored in many African communities, and a deceased man's property may end up going to his brother instead of his wife and children.

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