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Wolf P. Wolfensberger
Syracuse University

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TIPS

Editor / Publisher

Wolf Wolfensberger
Professor
Division of Special Education
and Rehabilitation
805 South Crouse Avenue
Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York
13244-2280

Editorial Address:

Training Institute for Human Service
Planning, Leadership & Change Agency
805 South Crouse Avenue
Syracuse, New York 13244-2280
U. S. A.



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We once again got so exhausted by the fall's schedule that we combine our October issue into the December theme. As usual, major themes for December are the poor, the homeless, the imprisoned, peace and nonpeace, religion in society, and the interface of human service with religion

Imprisonment and Incarceration

*We have mentioned before the explosive growth of prison systems in the US and certain other countries. The US now has one of the highest imprisonment rates per capita in the world, ranking third in the world, surpassed only by South Africa (#1) and Russia. However, some of the US jurisdictions, including Georgia and DC, have a higher imprisonment rate even than South Africa. Counting people in all of the penitentiaries, jails, prisons, and juvenile detention facilities in the US, almost a million people are in some form of prison, which is more than one person per 200 in the middle age ranges, and of course a vastly greater rate in certain population groups. Counting prisons, jails, reform schools, and parole or probation, this amounts to an astonishing 2% of the population, i.e., 1 person out of 50. Even at that, the chances of a person being imprisoned after having committed a crime which would ordinarily result in a prison sentence is only 10%.

*What we have not yet emphasized is that the US imprisonment rate can be expected to continue to grow. In less than 10 years, the US prison population will probably double once again (NCR, 9 Dec. 88). However, all plans to expand the prison system fall against the projections that the over-crowding will vastly outstrip any conceivable prison expansion.

*In the US, nearly 2/3 of people convicted of crimes are rearrested within 3 years of their prison release.

*We have reported before that the federal government has, for some years now, begun to transfer prisoners abruptly, often in the middle of the night, from one part of the country to another, almost invariably in order to break their spirits and separate them from their support systems. Some people have begun to call this "diesel therapy" (Plough, Spring 89). According to reports coming in (e.g., Trumpet, 6/89), prisoners are very apt to be abused and brutalized by their accompanying guards during transit. For whatever reason, guards and US marshalls exhibit an extreme attitude of hostility toward prisoners during transit, perhaps because, in addition to everything else, they themselves find the transfer very stressful.

Prisoners will leave one prison intact, and arrive at the next one in very damaged condition, from which they may even die. This is all the more ironic considering that a good proportion of these prisoners are prisoners of conscience who are not violent.

Some prisoners are sent from one prison to another every night, night after night. Sometimes, prisoners are transferred by water (boats, etc.), in which case they may not be provided with life jackets even though they are chained and shackled. When transported by plane, prisoners may be so shackled that should an oxygen mask be required, they will not be able to grasp it and put it on, nor would there be any way to escape in case of an accident. In one case, a plane did have to make an emergency landing, upon which the marshalls ran out of the plane as soon as possible, leaving the inmates shackled on board. Prisoners may be denied the opportunity to relieve themselves, or to get food or liquids, even as their guards eat and drink before them and use toilets. Women are often subjected to sexual harassment by male guards. The women may also be deprived of sanitary napkins when they need them. Among prisoners thusly transferred are elderly ones in very ill health. During such transits, they may not receive proper food and their medication may not follow them. In defense of all this, the US marshall service says it is all consistent with FAA regulations.

*Washington, DC, sends some of its prisoners all over the country, even as far away as Washington state (Newsweek, 13/3/89).

*The "Max Headroom" TV series was not far off when it sketched a future in which credit card fraud was the most heinous of crimes. There are now people in US prisons serving 40 year sentences for credit card frauds--more than probably the majority of people who have killed somebody and been sent to prison for it (Time, 9 Jan. 89).

*According to a report on the state of Australian prisons (Anglican General Synod Social Responsibilities Commission et al., 1988), one-third of the people put into prison in Australia are there simply because they could not pay a fine. Women are more likely than men to be held in jail while awaiting trial, usually because they could not afford bail; they are more likely to be imprisoned for a simple drug charge than men; they receive harsher sentences for killing their husbands than men do for killing their wives; and they are more likely to be imprisoned for first offences, and less likely to be included in programs that are alternatives to prison than men. Mentally retarded prisoners (10%) are more likely than other prisoners to be victimized, exploited, and sexually assaulted. In fact, they are more apt to be incarcerated than a non-retarded person would be for committing the same crime (p. 16). All of this underlines that already marginal or devalued people are more likely to be wounded, and brutally so, than are others.

The Australians imprison their Aboriginal peoples at more than 16 times the rate of imprisonment for the population as a whole.

How culturally non-normative the routines of human services for devalued people can be is illustrated by the schedule for prisoners awaiting trial at one prison in Victoria, Australia. At 7:45 a.m., breakfast is served; lunch is served at 11:00 a.m., and the evening meal at 3:15 p.m., i.e., 3 meals in 7 hours. The prisoners are locked back in their cells for the night at 4:00 p.m.

*It has turned out that 10% of the prison officers in the Australian state of Queensland have criminal records. There have been some mass breakouts, and apparently the crooked officers had been conspiring with the prisoners (Age, 16/3/89; source item from Michael Steer).

*An inmate at the Auburn prison in New York "died" during a 1986 heart operation, but doctors were able to revive him. He has since filed a suit to the effect that he should be considered legally dead, released from prison, and allowed to collect his life insurance (PN, 12/88).

*The medieval fortress of Hohenasperg not far from Stuttgart has served as a prison for 600 years, and must thus have been one of the oldest more or less continuously used prisons in the world before recently being handed over for other purposes.

*A critic of the prison scene recently observed (Hospitality, early 1989) that "In our day prisons are rarely called prisons any more. We have 'correctional institutions,' 'Diagnostic and Classification Centers,' 'Youth Development Centers,' etc. Wardens have become 'Superintendents,' guards have become 'Correctional Officers,' prisoners have become 'inmates.' Solitary confinement, or the 'hole,' has become the 'Adjustment Center.'"

Judicial Killing

*Michigan was the first jurisdiction in the world to abolish the death penalty on an ongoing basis in 1846. Venezuela became the first country to do so in 1863. But more than half the countries of the world currently have death penalties, and on an average day, 25 people are executed by judicial order (SHJ, 2 May 89). Strangely enough, while the US has been steadily moving back to capital punishment, Russia has been moving away from it, and we may soon see a complete reversal of their relative patterns.

*Louisiana is in the forefront of states that now carry out the death penalty again. Every time someone is put to death, there by the prison gates, among the large crowd of revelers eagerly awaiting the execution in a carnival atmosphere, and then celebrating it, is a family: father, mother, and teenage daughter. They have taken up this practice ever since their other teenage daughter was raped and murdered. Sometimes, after an execution, they break out a bottle of bourbon and dance, but they are not entirely happy with the executions because they are "too quick."

Other people drive hundreds of miles to join such joyful execution vigils (CA, 1/89; source item from Peter King).

*We have commented before on the ridiculous explosion of so-called "support groups" for just about any trivial or esoteric purpose. The latest one we have heard of is a capital punishment support group in the Rochester, NY, area, formed by three men whose brother was shot to death by a robber. Presumably, the members of this group are grieving the fact that the killer (who has been apprehended) cannot be put to death under current state law, and they will need the support group until a capital punishment law is reinstated (Schenectady Gazette, 23/1/89; source item from Betty Pieper).

*In Kentucky, a prisoner had been on death row for 29 years, for shooting a physician who diagnosed him as mentally ill. In 1989, at age 74, the state paid to have heart bypass surgery done on him. We have mixed feelings about this, because it reminds us of the western legal principle of trying to do everything to be sure that a person to be killed is competent to be killed, not to mention that this kind of operation has been found to be rarely more successful than drugs (Oregonian, 19/4/89; source item from Paul deParrie).

Homelessness, Abject Poverty, Population Displacement, and the Welfare Helter Skelter Shelter System

*Figures such as 90,000 homeless people in New York City numb us, though about New York, one is inclined to believe anything. However, one may be amazed to discover that cities like Oklahoma City have as many as 17,000 homeless (AP in SHJ, 22/12/88).

*A 1988 survey of the homeless in Chicago found that 64% had been evicted, 50% were homeless for the first time, 53% had been in jail, and 11% in prison. Only 45% were receiving public assistance--a common phenomenon with street people who either cannot deal with the bureaucracy or prefer to retain an anonymous form of liberty by not doing so. (Source clipping from Sandra Meucci.)

*It is almost unbelievable that for years, paraplegic people living out of wheelchairs have been among the homeless in the US. Their lives defy imagination. In New York City, some of them have been known to be out on the streets in the worst of snow storms. In Los Angeles, a homeless paraplegic man who claimed to be a veteran wheeled himself to a parking lot in order to sleep a bit in peace, but when he woke up, his wheelchair had been stolen. When police got to him, they tried

to find him a shelter with the Veteran's Administration, the county social service department and a detoxification center, but none would take the man because he hadn't been drinking, wasn't injured or sick, was not ambulatory, or simply because they claimed to have no space (AP, in SHJ, 9 March 89).

*An estimated 50,000 people in America are hospitalized each year for hypothermia, in many cases because they live in poverty (Smithsonian, 12/88).

*Fun and games. In Tompkins Square Park in NYC, between 100-200 homeless people had erected some pitiful shelters against the elements, using scrap boards, cardboard sheets, pieces of plastic, mattresses, etc. On the evening of 5 July 1989, several hundred police officers suddenly surrounded the park, and prevented onlookers from witnessing too closely what was about to occur. Namely, the city's Department of Parks and Recreation workers demolished the shanties. Any residents who were not present lost whatever meager possessions they might have kept in their shanties, and even those who were there could only carry off whatever little they managed to carry, not to mention that they had no place to carry them to. The police carried guns and riot clubs, while the homeless were either disoriented, tired, scared or preoccupied with saving possessions to offer any resistance. Most of the neighbors sympathized with the homeless, and one police officer even admitted that he disliked "this paramilitary stuff" and would get out of the police force as soon as he could afford it. Many other police officers seemed quite embarrassed and uncomfortable. Because of the timing of this attack to take place at nightfall and by surprise, and by cordoning out witnesses, there was not much opportunity to visually document the proceedings, nor was the event covered well in the media afterwards (CW, 9/89).

*At least as of early 1989, the city of St. Petersburg, Fla., has an ordinance that allows the arrest of anyone who lies down to sleep in public after 11 p.m. (Source item from Peter King). It sounds to us as if St. Petersburg needs a public sleep-in.

*In Atlanta, federal monies supposed to be expended on poverty programs were used to convert a downtown park that was once a major refuge for homeless people, with toilets and drinking fountains available to them, into a sanitized plaza for the privileged population. Toilets, drinking fountains and the poor were abolished and banished--and not surprisingly, clowns started cavorting on the plaza (Hospitality, 7/89).

On this plaza, by a fountain, sits a statue of what looks like a street person feeding the pigeons. However, real live homeless men are not allowed to sit down there (Hospitality, 7/89).

*No wonder they got an earthquake. At the Golden Gate park in San Francisco, police in riot gear arrested 29 people who were serving free food to the homeless, for violating the park and health codes (AP in SHJ, 30/8/88).

*New York earthquake imminent. A dozen volunteers from the Homeless Coalition were about to distribute meals to 200 homeless people at Grand Central Station in New York on Christmas Eve when the police stopped them and arrested their leader for "disorderly conduct." One of the arresting officers actually wrote down "feeding the homeless" as the charge (News Tribune (Denver), 25/12/88).

*The suburban areas of New York City sometimes send their homeless people as far away as the Albany region, which is about 100 miles (Syracuse Herald Journal, 8 May 89).

*Today, school districts often treat homeless children the way communities used to treat the poor. Once children become homeless, neither their original schools nor the schools nearest to whatever shelter they may be put in may accept them, arguing that they are only obliged to take "permanent residents." In New York State, up to 25,000 children at a time have had such problems in finding a school to accept them (Syracuse Herald Journal 8 May 89).

*An Australian human rights report in early 1989 claimed that there were 20,000-25,000 homeless children in Australia (with a population about 7% that of the US), strangely enough many of these being state wards. However, private consultants said that the number might even be as high as 70,000 (Age, 7 March 89). In Australia, an elderly mother with a mature retarded son said, "What chance of a decent, safe life have severely intellectually disabled people if...even normal children can scarcely survive?" (Age, 7 March 89).

*A whole new large class of the homeless in Britain are adolescents. Many of them have come from very bizarre dysfunctional families and have no abode with them for various reasons. At the same time, in a post-primary production economy, there are no jobs for them, and the few jobs there are they do not want because they are not willing to work, or have an entitlement attitude and will not work for low pay, and often they really do not know how to work even if they wanted to. Also, they are commonly too dysfunctional to enter apprenticeships for skilled and manual trades. During 1988-89, the government dramatically cut back its aid provisions for such people. As a result, aside from being homeless in vast numbers, they are drifting into drugs and crime.

*An ad in the Guardian (23/11/88; source item from Ruth Abrahams) disclosed that just one London borough (Newham) has at least 11 job titles for people who work with the homeless, including "homeless officer," "principal homelessness officer" and "homelessness resources officer." Homelessness officers supervised the homeless officer, all of which are part of the homelessness team and of a "unit management team which is committed to improving standards of service delivery."

*One of Britain's most prominent newspapers, The Guardian (28/11/88), reported that the government's new social security system was "causing poverty among the homeless." (Source item from Ruth Abrahams).

*Two people from MIT have invented yet another bizarre form of shelter for homeless people. It looks a little bit like an 8-foot long rocket laying flat on something resembling a hospital gurney. A homeless person can crawl into this cylinder to sleep, and during the day push it around on its wheels, and partially take it apart to make places for sitting, washing, etc. (Harpers Magazine, 5/89; source item from Zana Lutfiyya).

*A rather peculiar development is the formation of a softball team made up of homeless men in New Haven, Conn., named "The Soupers." If they win their game, opponents must make a donation to the soup kitchen in the area (SHA, 21/5/89).

*People who are uprooted and made refugees by warfare and related violence these days rarely ever get permanently resettled in a normal fashion. The vast majority of them will spend the rest of their lives in makeshift camps and similar arrangements, and usually close to the edge of starvation and survival (US News & World Report, 23/10/89).

Oppression, and the Widening Material and Mental Gulf Between Rich and Poor

*In 1976, 1% of the US population owned 19% of the wealth; by 1988, 1% owned 36% of the wealth (Greenpeace, 1 & 2/1989). Because of this, the US ranks highest among all industrialized nations in terms of disparity of income. The rising gap between US rich and poor is also brought out by the fact that the median family income in the US rose 1% in constant dollars in 1987, while the proportion of the poor remained unchanged (AP, in SHJ 31/8/88).

*The US tax people have finally been forced to admit that the "tax simplification law" made it harder and longer to figure out one's tax returns. An independent study which the IRS tried to suppress found that it takes 9 hours to fill out the "simple" 1040 form, and 15 for itemized returns. A law required the IRS to reveal this information on its 1988 tax forms. Also, far from equalizing the tax burden, it has shifted it away from the wealthiest sectors, and toward the middle and lower-middle classes, more of whom may thereby be pushed toward poverty. For instance, some decades ago, some of the wealthiest earners in the US paid 90% of their income

in taxes, but under new US legislation, elderly people who work have become the proportionately highest taxed group. So today, some elderly people will actually make less money working than not working, because of the penalties that they incur from a combination of taxes and loss of benefits (UP, in SHJ, 18/3/89). We call these sorts of things disincentives; and in this case, this is aimed at squeezing elderly people out of the job market and into social marginalization.

*Of the 250 largest profitable corporations in the US, 16 still paid no federal income tax in 1987 despite tax reforms that were supposed to close such loopholes. One is amazed to learn that those that needed to pay no taxes included General Motors, IBM, Aetna, Corning, and Hewlett-Packard (AP, in SHJ 22/9/88).

*Recent surveys found that nearly half of all older people in the US eligible for Supplemental Security Income (a form of government pension) were not receiving it (AARP News Bulletin, 4/89).

*Mothers who are poor are much less likely than middle and upper income women to breast-feed their infants. Apparently major reasons are that poorer women get less instruction on breast-feeding, are more likely to be discouraged from breast-feeding by medical maternity personnel, and are more apt to have to think about working and not being able to be available to their baby (NCR, 28/7/89).

*Let the babies drink legal services! A writer in The New England Journal of Human Services (8, 4) claims that to an increasing degree, money has been allocated for "legal services" for the poor in lieu of other things, including medical care. He characterized other kinds of contemporary services to be "stranger-helpers helping stranger-clients in strange circumstances" for short periods of time.

*At the same time, low and moderate-income Americans give much more generously to all kinds of good causes than wealthy ones, with church-goers, rural residents and midwesterners making the relatively largest contributions (AP, in SHJ, 19/10/88). Those who give the least are single city-dwelling high-income adults who are not church-goers (Sojourners, 1/89).

*A federal court ruled in 5/89 that the top management of giant Continental Can Company had "systematically" cheated its employees out of their pension benefits, and penalized it \$500 million (AP in SHJ, 11 May 89). This is yet another example of how elderly people are systematically oppressed. We may hear of spectacular instances of such criminality being detected, punished and rectified, but for every such case, there probably are numerous other ones that are not.

#13

PERVERSION ALERT -- All the indices point to the high likelihood that in the years to come, we will learn of more major de facto theft of private pensions of elderly people by private (mostly smaller) pension funds, similar to the pension fund scams that we have already read about for several decades now perpetrated by crooked unions. Once again, such scams will constitute a transfer of wealth from older to younger, and from poorer to wealthier people. There are many ways in which the elderly are being defrauded, or will be. For instance, since the pensions of pensioners are commonly linked to the value of a pension fund, the loss of such value through whatever means will eventually mean lower pensions for elderly and retired people. All over the US, year after year, one hears not only of thefts from pension funds (as has commonly been the case in unions, such as the Teamsters), but also of irresponsible investment of such funds by the people who administer them and who either don't care, or who get commissions for churning the funds, regardless of the losses that may be incurred. For instance, it was discovered not long ago that \$280 million were lost in state pension funds in West Virginia alone, a state already known for its widespread poverty (Time, 22/5/89). Sometimes, those in charge of pension funds loan out money from the funds (e.g., to cronies) that they know will be defaulted. One also hears horror stories all the time about attritions in private pension funds set up by large firms.

*An estimated 20,000 workers are believed to have died in job-related accidents each year in the mid-1980s. Yet no corporate official has ever served a jail sentence for breaking federal work place safety laws, and only 6 persons have served any time for state violations. In all but 4 of the US states, workers' compensation laws can prevent survivors from suing negligent employers (Health Letter, 9/89).

*It used to be that societally devalued people were particularly apt to be abused, institutionalized, even made dead, if they came from a background of poverty. But an interesting phenomenon of our day is that often, not even affluence can save a societally devalued person from all sorts of abuse and deathmaking. One example from our acquaintanceship is an old woman who is actually a millionaire, but who is in a nursing home and would have died scores of times from all sorts of things, including dehydration, constipation and even malnutrition, if it were not for the presence of a vigilant advocate.

Another case was documented in a 6/89 monograph (In the Matter of Francis Helms) by the NY State Commission on Quality of Care. Helms (a pseudonym) was a mentally retarded man in his middle years when he died in 1987. Early in his life, an \$85,000 trust fund had been set up for him by the parents who dumped him, and an investment firm was charged with its conservatorship. Helms was eventually put into a so-called adult home which was pretty crummy, and later transferred into the private Long Island home of a former employee of this facility who took in several such boarders. In these facilities, he was kept on sedatives in order to keep him compliant. As the woman in charge of his boarding home became frail and aged, Helms was made to spend much of his days locked up in a small and filthy barren room, and much of this sitting on a commode--for 8 years. Finally, in 1987, he was admitted to a hospital suffering from malnutrition, dehydration, gangrenous bed sores and pneumonia, and died within 5 days. Two facts emerged from the subsequent inquiry. (a) While Helms had been languishing in his deathmaking bondage, his investment firm had busily increased the value of his assets to \$200,000, despite the expenses of his care. (b) In the years prior to his death, his plight had come to the attention of scores of human service workers, including adult protective case-workers, many of whom had visited him regularly. However, while all these people expended at least tens of thousands of dollars worth on bureaucratic processes, such as writing reports, staffings, making referrals, and so on, no incisive action was ever taken. This of course is yet another example of post-primary production economic realities where many people make a living off the bondage and ultimate deathmaking of afflicted and dependent people.

*How little people understand the systematicness of disfunctionalities, frauds and social offences was dramatically illustrated when a judge said in New York in 3/89 that a doctor whom he sentenced had perpetrated "the largest and most nefarious fraud ever on this country's health care system." Yet all the man had done was buy blood from people who were poor and/or on drugs, and then charged Medicaid for \$3.6 million in unnecessary lab tests. Compared to the systemic and legitimate crimes in health care, this is next to nothing (AP, in SHJ, 14/3/89).

*Many "charitable" organizations plead for donations of old clothes and other goods. A study (Changing Times, 3/89; source item from Ed Cohle) found that many of these organizations sell the donated goods to thrift shops that are privately owned, with the proceeds being kept by the owners, and with the charitable organization sometimes getting as little as 1% of the value of the goods donated.

*A news item about a "charity ball" brought acutely to our attention how obscene such events can be. Many hundreds of people in the most elegant ballroom attire attend such balls, eat and drink well, and have a good time, and quite a bit of money may be raised on behalf of the "charity" at issue--while, at the same time hardly any of these people, or the ones who spend a great deal of time a good part of the year planning all of this, have any contact with the kinds of people who are presumably being benefited, or perhaps with any others from among the least in their society.

*Party with abandon for the abandoned. A Yuppie (or even higher) fund-raising event by the Philadelphia Committee for the Homeless sent out an invitation calling for participants to be "spontaneous, impulsive, impetuous and utterly abandoned." The invitation inexplicably had a headline, "Why Do Fools Fall in Love?," and promised an impressive menu of gourmet foods and drinks, plus dancing. (Source item from Margaret Wolfensberger)

*Considering how many retarded people end up on the streets these days, it was probably very prescient for the North Worcester County Association for Retarded Citizens in Fitchburg, MA, to select as the theme for its annual dance a "Holiday for Hobos (Tramps)," serving a "box car special," and awarding prizes for the best hobo costumes. (Source item from Jan Doodly.)

*It is estimated that about \$60 billion in wealth a year is being transferred from the poor countries to the rich countries (CW, 6 & 7/89).

*Poor Turkish peasants have been paid to go to cities such as London to sell some of their body organs there, such as kidneys. \$4400 is a typical price. A guest essay in Time (13/3/89) promoted the idea of such a free market in body organs.

*Joe Osburn informs us that there is a Yiddish proverb, "If the rich could hire other people to die for them, the poor could make a wonderful living."

Religion in Today's Society

*One way in which the materialization of Christianity expressed itself is in the idea that there were all sorts of ways of "making religion efficient" (e.g., Heidebrecht, 1988), which became a particularly popular goal among American Christian businessmen in the late 19th and early 20th century. For instance, a "Gospel of efficiency" was developed, which attempted to improve the church by applying to it principles of business management. After all, it was about this time that Christian leaders were beginning to talk about how much it cost to save a soul. For instance, the prominent American evangelist Billy Sunday estimated in 1918 that it cost \$3.95 to save a soul in Chicago (Heidebrecht, 1988).

*Another interesting expression of the Enlightenment's, and thus modernism's, idolatrous faith in human reason, science, and technology is the formulation and presentation of what are essentially religions as if they were really science, or at least scientific. For example, shortly after the French revolution, there were proposals that physicians should replace priests (becoming "priests of the body"), that Sunday sermons be replaced by lectures on health, and even that physicians should run the government (Foucault, 1973). This amounted to a scientified form of religion. Another example of this expression is the sect that is commonly known as Christian Science, though its official name is Church of Christ, Scientist. The very word "science" or "scientist" in the name either suggests that there is something scientific about this faith, or that Christ Himself is a scientist--and to so many modernistic people reared on Enlightenment ideology, a belief is not acceptable or justifiable unless it has purportedly scientific rationales.

Since ca. 1960, there have emerged hundreds of psycho-pop cults that involve a great deal of mythology and mysticism, that amount to religions, and that place their faith in human potential, human reason, human relationships, even the power of rocks and pyramids to heal, but which are dressed up as being scientific. One such cult is even dressed up as a "cognitive psychology curriculum" (Insight, 11 July 1988). Many of these religions fall into the category commonly called "new age" philosophies or religions.

*In 1989, we first ran across "agapé therapy" being offered through the medium of a Christian four-day retreat. Agapé is a Greek word for a higher form of love.

*Reportedly, in his farewell address as president of the US on 18 January 1989, Reagan compared the US to the "city on the hill" (i.e., Jerusalem) of Matthew 5:14, and a "light to the nations" (Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47), Biblical metaphors for God's chosen. These same metaphors were originally used by the European settlers of America and the "founding fathers." While such claims were idolatrous even then, in equating a humanly-created political entity and structure with God's, such equations are even more scandalous coming from Reagan, whose administration saw so much scandal and corruption, and so much oppression of the poor.

*We were amused to discover that in 1964, the smart people of Yale University Press published a book entitled The Problem of God. We can now imagine God writing a rejoinder, entitled The Problem of Humans, and Especially Those Who Find God a Problem.

*An illustration of the depth of divisioning that radical feminism is perpetrating is a point made by some contemporary feminist theologians who criticize Christianity on the basis that it is hardly creditable that a woman could be saved by a male savior (Newsweek, 13/2/89). Since the other side of the coin would be that men could not be saved by a female savior, there would have to be a need for two different saviors, or perhaps for a hermaphrodite savior. Thank goodness that the issue is not further complicated by the existence of hismaphrodites.

*It is hard to believe that a de facto idolatry guide by Shirley MacLaine, entitled Going Within: A Guide for Intra-Transformation, has actually achieved best-seller status. The author claims that in a former life, the book was a papal encyclical (NCR, 5/5/89).

*Yet another new religion for our times. In 1987, one of the most senior American psychologists, Raymond B. Cattell, published a book, entitled Beyondism: Religion from Science, in which he asserted that traditional religions prescribe an ethic that is enmeshed in myths and illusions, and offered the world a new religion of his own, which he called "Beyondism," as a new, puritanically austere ethics based--on the human sciences. He built this religion on two major axioms: "the universe exists," and "evolution exists as a paramount fact within this universe." Whether there is a creator of the universe is to be "put on the shelf" until the human mind has biologically advanced enough to address such questions. Anticipating the necessity of "warding off heresies," he constructed a catechism while promising spiritual uplift to the disciples of Beyondism. He envisioned an international federation of national multi-disciplinary research institutes as a form of world church.

One of the ultimate values of Beyondism is the survival of the group, which requires that survival chances are increased through the practice of eugenics. But in order to avoid the excesses of the eugenic era, Cattell proposed a tax scheme that would provide incentives for people of higher intelligence and higher income to have more children, and vice versa, which sounds to us like oppression of the poor--which, of course, should not surprise us. Cattell also proposed the administration of an "anti-aphrodisiac" to the poor. One implication seems to be that smart people are more moral, which history has of course disproven. Cattell condoned wars if they are fought to maintain national gene pools and culture. There are shades of Nietzsche when he makes the point that the survival of the weak has been supported at the expense of the strong through misplaced humanitarian measures. Accordingly, famine relief and aid to developing countries is to be abolished. Capital punishment is supported as cost-effective, and voting would be restricted to the upper 75% of the IQ range. He even advocates the dissolution of homo sapiens into several non-interbreeding species, which reminds one of the efforts of the South African regime.

Strangely enough, while Cattell claims that his religion is scientific, the fact is that it is not falsifiable through research, and is thus not just a scientific system but a real religion, though Cattell fails to admit this.

In our opinion, Cattell is one of many people who grew up brainwashed into social Darwinism, and who have resurfaced after safe intervals since the horrors of Nazism to promote a new form of social Darwinism that would appeal to contemporary values without appearing to be what it is. The important point to remember is just what kind of science one can expect from scientists with such twisted world views (WW at least always thought that Cattell's work was screwy), particularly since the myth that people can separate their science from world views and values has definitively been laid to rest.

*During the 1988 Christmas season, a woman was teaching a Sunday school class to children of a ghetto church, and one of the children wanted to know how Mary became pregnant. In explaining the virgin birth, the teacher also mentioned that it was Christian teaching that a woman should be a virgin when she got married. The child told the story at home, and her mother had apoplexy; she brought the teacher up before the elders of the church on charges of teaching sex education instead of sticking with Sunday school lessons. It required the pastor's intervention to vindicate the teacher.

*Graceland Southern Baptist Church in New Albany, KY, has instituted a modern version of the medieval morality play. For \$2, people gain admission to a house in which they grope through a dark maze, end up in an automobile in which a car crash is simulated and in which they are pronounced dead, and then they see the morgue, their postmortem and their funeral. They then experience the divine presence at judgment time, and condemnation to hell which consists of dark smokey areas with eerie screams and futile attempts to get out. When they are finally let out, a minister is waiting for them, and about 60 people out of thousands who went through this claimed they were converted on the spot. Unfortunately, all this was done during Halloween, which certainly adds considerable confusion and model incoherency to the whole thing (Louisville Times, 29/10/86; source item from Wayne Marshall).

*Between 1968-1985, there has been a decline from 3.05 to 2.79% of after-tax income that Americans have been giving to churches. Instead, they have spent more on recreation and leisure. The decline has been most dramatic among Catholics, from 3.4 down to 1.4% (AP, in SHJ, 15/10/88).

*Twenty-four percent of Americans believe in reincarnation (Newsweek, 27/3/89).

*That feel-good religion is good enough for me. In 1989, a nationwide survey of US college students, meant to determine the relationship between their religious faith and their sexual behavior, was released. Even though 80% of the students said that religion was important in their lives, this apparently made little difference in their sexual behaviors and attitudes toward abortion, confirming what other surveys have abundantly disclosed before, namely that American religion is largely feel-good religion. Half the students had had more than one sex partner, 24% had had 5 or more, 69% said that premarital sex is not wrong, 51% approved of abortion, 9% of the women admitted having had at least one abortion, and particularly amazing was that 15% of the men who had had sex (with women) knew that at least one of their sexual partners had had an abortion (AIDS Update, 9/89).

*The Protestant auxiliary bishop of the German province of Baden retired prematurely at age 61, giving as the reason that his church was becoming so bureaucratized and legalized that everything was done according to rules and regulations; and these, plus the many committees, had made things so complex that they were no longer overseenable. He said that all of this has taken place at the cost of the diaconate and mission, and that as a consequence, the church had lost "spiritual shine." Further, he said that personnel decisions had become so formalized that spiritual considerations no longer played a role in appointments (Amerika Woche, 1 April 1989). Apparently, his resignation was in part a protest and in part a decision to no longer be a part of this way of functioning. If this is happening in churches, what chance do we have in human services, particularly in human services that are part of imperial structures?

*In 1988, a song with the refrain "don't worry, be happy," became popular. The song was actually a satire on the contemporary habits of ignoring the big problems of the world. Amazingly, by 1989, the song had been taken into church services (in at least some churches) and taken for real, which merely underlines the mental blindness of the very people satirized in the song.

*According to some scholars, numerous modern cults differ fundamentally from those of the past. In the past, new religions and cults would present their beliefs to potential converts, and appeal to them to accept these beliefs. Nowadays, many cults systematically withhold their real beliefs from potential converts, and instead first try to enmesh them in a network of relationships which the potential convert

finds attractive. Particularly at a time of considerable alienation, finding that one is treated communally can be immensely attractive to a person and engender great loyalties. Only once this bond is forged is that person then gradually informed of the full content of the belief system at issue, and is typically also required to make all sorts of concrete behavioral commitments. At that point, a convert who finds the belief system or the behavioral requirements objectionable could withdraw only at the cost of the relationships that he or she desperately needs and clings to.

*Every 5 years, the philosophers of the world come together in one big world congress of philosophy, and the 1988 one was held in Britain. However, the director of the Royal Institute of Philosophy warned the world beforehand "not to expect any philosophical breakthroughs" (source clipping from Ruth Abrahams).

*Idolatries can take innumerable--and the most peculiar--forms. One is exemplified by Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand of Austria, whose assassination in Sarajevo in 1914 touched off WWI. He worshipped the hunt, to the point that people said he was addicted to it the way others succumb to alcohol or drugs. In his 39 years, he killed 273,000 game animals (Amerika Woche, 15/7/89). In this case, the blood sacrifice was first the animals, and posthumously the scores of millions of victims of the war.

*In 1989, a real estate developer and contractor died who had built the US Pentagon. Amazingly, he had also built the national (US) Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. (Source clipping from Ann O'Connor)

*The end is near! Eternity magazine ceased publication in 1/89.

The Interface of Human Service and Religion

*We just ran across the fact that the Methodist Hymnal of 1966 contains "seven new social welfare hymns" provided by the Hymn Society of America.

*The fact that people of our age do indeed place their ultimate hopes for salvation in technology, and thus on idolatry, is illustrated yet again by two quotes from a 24/4/89 article in Newsweek on the use of technology--mostly computers--to assist so-called disabled people. The article was introduced by the text, "Thanks to computers and robots the disabled can do almost anything," and concluded with, "In the '90s, we hope that it won't be a big deal to see a quadriplegic near the top of a Fortune 500 company. And it's technology that will have made it possible." The article did not say that positive values, or a positive change in attitudes, or greater opportunities, or voluntary personal relationship commitments made by valued people to handicapped ones, or even tried-and-true age-old powerful pedagogies might make possible the valued inclusion of handicapped people into society--instead, should it happen, it would be attributed entirely to technology, and to high-tech, materialistic technology at that.

*Rainbow Acres Ranch in Arizona, a Christian human service, proudly announced in 1981 that it started five new enterprises for its mentally retarded adult clients. These included "God's Gardeners" (horticulture work), "Janitors for Jesus," "Savior's Sawdust Factory" (woodwork), "Holy Spirit Horses" (riding), and "Crafts for Jesus" (gifts and novelties, a mainstay of work at the ranch). The cover of its brochure asked, "If you were ten years old and had to earn a living, how would you do it?" The brochure then explained that while its adults ranged in age from 20 to 50, the average mental age was only ten years. Donations to help make up the difference were tax deductible. (Source materials submitted by Ed Goldman.)

*In Syracuse, Catholic Social Services in 1988-89 were 51% funded by the federal government, but when a Catholic group critical of this practice made it public, the diocesan spokesman said "The Catholic dimension comes in primarily from the gospel message that says we must reach out. We need that funding to reach out to help people in the community. Our whole basis is built on what Christ Himself did." We were amazed to learn that 51% of Christ's enterprises and healing services were funded by Rome--perhaps secretly? (SHJ, 24/3/89).

*In 50 years of Gallup polls, 96% of Americans on the average have said that they believe in God. Other surveys have shown that somewhere between 40-60% of mental health professionals believe in God. It would appear ironic that the average American who seeks or gets mental health services would have a high likelihood of being served by somebody with whom they disagree on the most fundamental worldview.

*Overeaters Anonymous is based on the Alcoholics Anonymous approach, which in turn is based on faith in God, but many non-believers have joined OA because they are desperate. Where several of the 12 steps of the "anonymous" groups say something about faith in God, the non-believers commonly substitute faith in some other entity instead. Some members place their faith in their OA group itself, some mentally substitute the good witch in the Wizard of Oz, and one member merely focuses on a door knob (Newsweek, 5 Dec. 88).

*Here is how people of the Third World see the beatitudes turned up-side-down.

I was hungry...but you fed your cattle with my grain...where rice could have grown my daily meal, tea was planted for you...you used sugarcane and grain to distill fuel for your cars...the pollution from your factories poisoned my fishing grounds...with your superior wealth you have bought up the foods that might have fed me..." (partial list from Das Band, 6/88).

Sexually Transmitted Disease, and AIDS-Related Issues

*We usually carry at least some material on deathmaking in every issue. In this issue, we treat in depth with the deathmaking associated with sexually transmitted diseases, and mostly AIDS.

Sexually-Transmitted Diseases Generally

*AIDS has so much grabbed the headlines that reporting of other sexually transmitted diseases has lost visibility, even though a number of them have also undergone dramatic increases, such as 50% for syphilis since 1980.

*The latest data suggests that Hepatitis B, as well as certain other hepatitis forms, are transmitted by heterosexual relations, and should thus be included among the sexually transmitted diseases (AIDS Update, 9/89).

*An estimated 18,000 health care workers every year become infected with Hepatitis B, and 300 die from it (AIDS Update, 18/3/88).

*Such a large proportion of the US population of child-bearing age has had a sexually transmitted disease that a New York symposium on the topic called the situation "out of control," and anticipated an "entire infertile cohort" (i.e., population segment). Numbers are increasing so rapidly that public health clinics can no longer handle them (AIDS Update, 7/89). Amazingly, one hardly ever hears one of the "experts" linking this phenomenon with the idea that we have a major problem of morality. Therefore, they promote false solutions (school sex clinics, sex education, condoms, abortion, more contraception, etc.) which of course can only make the problem worse.

*If it weren't for AIDS, the front pages of the newspapers would be filled with coverage of another venereal disease, also caused by a virus, called HPV. One of its major symptoms is warts in the genital area. Between 5-15% of people with such warts are expected to get tumors or cancer, usually also of the genital area, after a latency period of between 5-40 years. There has been a 46% increase in such warts between 1981-1986, and there are up to a million new cases in the US every year. The primary victims at this time are young women who, in addition to their sexual behavior, are often put at higher risk because they are taking birth control pills, smoke, or have other venereal diseases. One related manifestation is very young women having cancers of their genital organs, which formerly was most unusual. Even before the warts appear, people can have the virus without being aware of it, and transmit it to their partners. The condition can be quite painful and is often incurable. The infection may also still be present even if the warts disappear. Every indication is that this VD, like several other ones on the current scene, will burgeon for years to come. One wonders whether in the light of all these modern sex-related plagues, people will turn away from sex, or at least from promiscuity. Imagine what a scandal would be caused by the old-fashioned virtues having to be reaffirmed.

*Since we have covered AIDS many times before, the coverage here is not meant to be "seamless," but to fill in what we did not cover previously.

Actually, what we are talking about is HIV (the virus) which breaks into the open disease called AIDS.

AIDS: African Genesis?

*Apparently, HIV started among primates in Africa, jumped to humans, hence spread beyond Africa.

*According to one report, 20% of the unmarried women in Zaire carry the HIV virus. Two reasons many Central African countries are lying and cheating in order to hide the extent of AIDS there is wounded pride and that this might scare off tourists. Accordingly, the health minister of Zimbabwe has ordered physicians not to tell infected people of their condition. He has also narrowed the criteria for cases to be reported to world health authorities--which immediately reduced the official prevalence by about 70%. He also forbade the making of an educational film on AIDS because it might "stigmatize Africans." Authorities like him claim that the whole thing is a "racist campaign" to malign Africans (Atlanta Constitution, 23/6/88). The trouble is that these sort of shenanigans are the ones that provide fuel for racists, who may even claim that this proves that Africa needs colonial overlords because it cannot govern itself rationally.

*The 4/88 National Geographic reports that AIDS is burgeoning out of control in Central Africa. In one Uganda hospital, 40% of adult medical patients in general tested positive for HIV. In another, 1/7th of pregnant women tested positive. In one survey, 70% of prostitutes and 33% of long-distance truck drivers tested positive. The sexes are equally affected, unlike in much of the rest of the world. Even people who are aware of the modes of transmission of AIDS are reluctant to change their habits. Sexual permissiveness apparently is deeply rooted in sub-Saharan Africa, and people on the edge of existence are saying, "We cannot live without sex. What else is there...we might as well be dead."

*One possible scenario is that 70% of the population of certain Central African countries may get AIDS (AIDS Update, 19/8/88).

*Nobody knows why HIV and AIDS are more prevalent in Africa, but according to at least some authorities, negroid races are more susceptible than others. Some authorities fear that over 50% of the populations of Central African nations may die from AIDS. The socio-political upheavals that AIDS may thus cause in the world are unimaginable (AIDS Update, 13/5/88).

AIDS: The Haitian Connection

*When AIDS first hit the news, the public was told that it was found only among homosexual males, needle drug-users--and Haitians. No one could readily account for the latter, but now we may know the answer.

In Summer 1989, an hour-long TV program explored AIDS, and a Caribbean woman doctor explained that in Haiti, many women engage in anal intercourse. When asked why this was so, she gave two reasons. One was that virgins can have sex this way and still preserve their virginity for a future husband. Secondly, she said that many women in Haiti just like their sex this way.

At any rate, as of early 1989, at least 20% of the population of Haiti was HIV-infected and may die, undoubtedly after unimaginable upheavals (MAI, 3/89).

The Natural History of AIDS

*Shortly after contracting HIV infection, a person may show a peculiar acute episode that is apt to be diagnosed as something else. Then there is a dormancy period. Researchers are discovering that they have to continue to push back the time at which HIV may express itself in open chronic disease. Previous estimates had been 2-4 years, but it now appears that it may take as many as 10 (Discover, 10/89). Among other things, this means that people who test negatively on currently available tests may still harbor HIV and may pass the virus to others who assume that their partners are "clean." Homosexual men will on the average take 8 years after their infection to show the symptoms of AIDS (Science, 3/6/88).

*One problem with the drug AZT is that if it works at all, it suppresses some of the more severe complications of AIDS for a number of years, giving the HIV carriers several more years than they had before to transmit HIV to others. Furthermore, wealthier people who can afford to go on AZT treatment in a relatively private fashion are apt to be protected by their physicians and are not apt to show up on national statistics until years later. We may thus see a significant hump in HIV prevalence and AIDS several years hence when people who have been able to suppress the symptoms temporarily enter the full-blown AIDS stages (AIDS Update, 10/89).

*Little recognized is that people with AIDS catch any number of other infections, and may transmit these, rather than AIDS, to those around them. For instance, people with AIDS are more apt to catch the cytomegalic virus, and pregnant health workers around them may catch it in turn, resulting in severely damaged babies (Monthly AIDS Update, 2/89).

Also at issue are herpes, hepatitis, TB, salmonella, intestinal parasites, etc.

Thus, among prisoners in New York state, there was a 7-fold increase of TB between 1978-1988, largely in consequence of AIDS. The possibility that TB may once again assume major proportions as a consequence of AIDS even in the population without AIDS cannot be ruled out (Monthly AIDS Update, 17/2/89).

*There are now indications that when a person has AIDS, the virus actually becomes more virulent as the disease progresses. This raises the possibility that the more debilitated AIDS victims become, the more infectious they may become to others (AP in SHJ, 1 April 88).

*In the recent reporting on AIDS, it has sometimes not been emphasized that the condition also has mental effects, at least some of which are probably the result of central nervous system infection. Speech may suffer, becoming telegraphic, and language performance can become so impaired that the person may appear delirious. Altogether, the effect is one akin to dementia. The full story of what happens to the minds of children with AIDS is still emerging.

New Forms of AIDS

*As we keep emphasizing, the AIDS virus is one of the most mutagenic viruses known, and could conceivably evolve into vastly more virulent forms with additional modes of transmission. Also, the toxicity of the physical environment, as a result of pollution and artificial substances in everything, seems to be causing a lowering of immunity in the entire population--and in plants and animals. This accounts for the rise in immunity-related diseases, and greater plant susceptibility to pathogens. It also opens up the human population to other virus diseases.

*Because a second HIV has been discovered that is similar in mode of transmission and disease to the AIDS virus, and also from Africa, one now speaks of HIV-1 and HIV-2. As with HIV-1, it seems to be coming from Africa, and conceivably may become as problematic as HIV-1 (AIDS Update, 9/89), or more so, since it may be even more virulent than HIV-1.

Of HTLV (the first retrovirus found in humans), there are now 4, and counting. We may learn yet of HIV-3, 4...n. As to HTLV-II (which causes leukemia in humans), it is spreading rapidly among needle drug-users. However, it can also be spread through other means, including sex. It is not impossible that it will succeed AIDS as a horror plague (SHJ, 16/2/88).

*All in all, the dramatic increases in the variety, prevalence and spread of retroviruses and herpes in the human population in just a few years suggests strongly that other retroviruses will also make their appearance. One nasty characteristic of retroviruses is their slow and quiet growth before they explode into malignancy. We may be in for some very nasty epidemics, and not inconceivably of even more dramatic proportions than AIDS, in case such viruses should ever mutate into a form that can be spread much like virus-based colds (Discover, 10/89).

Data on HIV/AIDS Spread

*Around 1979, most people--even in the scientific community--had concluded that because of antibiotics, immunization, hygiene, and other medical advances, epidemic diseases were things of the past, at least in the developed nations. There even prevailed widespread skepticism that such things as retroviruses existed in humans. Now we have not only an AIDS epidemic, but one based on retroviruses (Discover, 10/89).

*The General Accounting Office, which is the research arm of the US Congress, analyzed 13 earlier forecasts of AIDS incidence, and concluded that every one of them had understated the extent of the epidemic (SHJ, 26/6/89).

*In just a single year, from 1987 to 1988, there was an increase from 1 to 16% of HIV infections in the population of Bangkok. Also in 1986, none of the drug-addicted people tested in Bangkok were found to carry the HIV virus; in 1988, 16% were found to carry it (Newsweek, 27/6/88). This shows how rapidly the virus can spread into new domains.

*More sensitive HIV tests have recently revealed that the tests that have been and are widely used have a very high error rate in underidentifying infected people. Two implications are that the current estimates of the infected populations might be too low, and that tests of the blood supply have not been sufficiently sensitive (AIDS Update, 6/89).

*Strangely enough, whether the overall rate of HIV transmission has plateaued in the US is highly controverted, but what is not controverted is that it continues to rise in certain high-risk groups, and especially needle drug-users.

Female Susceptibility

*Some people say that the effects of birth control pills on the cervix make women on the pill 2-3 times more likely to catch HIV than women who are not (Guide Posts, 2 March 89; source item from Ed Cohle).

*Other evidence suggests that the more sex partners a woman has had, the more likely she is to get cervical cancer. Now it appears further that the more sex partners a man has had, the more likely is it that the woman with whom he has intercourse will get cervical cancer, possibly through the transmission of a virus. Thus, cervical cancer may very well be the result of a form of venereal disease (Discover, 6/86).

Particularly once a woman had had more than 6 sexual partners, she is at dramatically higher risk (among other risk factors) of contracting infections of her reproductive system, which in turn has a high likelihood of interfering with later conception, pregnancy, or the health of the offspring (Newsweek, 15/8/88).

Since there is a correlation between having multiple sex partners and being on the pill, the relative contribution of each may be confounded. However, even though women have generally not been told this, there has been mounting evidence since 1974 that contraceptive pills lower women's immunity against all sorts of infections, including chicken pox, AIDS, and bacterial and viral infections of urinary, genital and reproductive organs (ALLAI, 10/88). Thus, both the pill and multiple partners are probably independent, but mutually reinforcing, factors.

Other AIDS Transmission Risk Factors

*In a 1-year study of children in day care centers, it was discovered that almost half of them were bitten by another child, and that in fact the bitten children were apt to be bitten three and four times (AIDS Update, 17/6/88). This not only raises questions about the poor structure of so many day care programs, but also about a child's risk of HIV infection.

*Almost 6% of all people who have AIDS work in health care. While this is approximately the same percentage as that of the working population generally (AIDS Update 18/3/88), health workers constitute a high risk to their patients.

*Researchers on AIDS concluded that, other things being equal, uncircumcised males have a 5- to 8-fold higher risk of acquiring AIDS than circumcised ones (Science 4 Aug. 89). Readers can anticipate a circumcision craze accompanying the condom craze.

*Bon appetit. Among the reasons why homosexual behavior is so unhealthy and transmits so many diseases are--in addition to anal intercourse itself--some of its other less well-known practices. These include "rimming," where a partner's anal area is licked, resulting in the ingestion of feces; "fisting," in which the partner's anal cavity is penetrated with the fist; and the "golden shower," in which a person is urinated upon, and which can involve ingestion of the AIDS virus (Interim, 10/89).

*Condoms for the shins? In early 1989, the TIPS editor learned for the first time that even soccer playing has come under the control of the AIDS scare, and that players may be fined for failing to wear shinguards to minimize the risk of HIV transmission through wounds.

*Condoms for the fists? There is now concern that the AIDS virus can be transmitted during blood sports, such as boxing. New Jersey has even started requiring that persons who assist a boxer during a fight wear plastic gloves (Healthwise, 5/88).

AIDS as the Depopulator of Unwanted Classes

*We may see a major population collapse in certain societally devalued groups, especially in the poor minority ghettos, as a result of a combination of street drugs, poverty, violence, AIDS and poor health care.

*Some people use the acronym PAIDS (Pediatric AIDS) to refer to AIDS in children. Almost 2% of all known cases of AIDS occur in children, and AIDS has become the 8th leading cause of death among children aged 1-4 (AIDS Update, 8/89)

*Most infants in New York State who have AIDS are from New York City. One out of every 60 babies born in New York City now carries the AIDS virus. Almost all of their mothers are on drugs, and very few can take care of their babies (SHA, 24/4/88).

*One of every 43 babies in the Bronx has HIV antibodies in the blood (Discover, 4/88). This is a certain sign of infection in the mother, but an uncertain sign as to what will happen with the baby. Present estimates are that 30-50% will turn out to be infected.

*It has been estimated that in NY City, between 50,000-100,000 children either have already lost one or both parents to AIDS, or soon will, with dramatic demands placed on adoptive and foster services by 1995 (AIDS Update 13/10/89).

*Until recently, it was thought that virtually all babies infected with HIV in the womb would die within a few years, but the question is now raised whether the deaths of many are as much due to their typical history of abandonment, and being raised by substitute families or in institutions. After all, it is well-known that even normal babies have a dramatically reduced survival rate without a stable home.

*AIDS is now the leading cause of death in New York City for males aged 30-59, and for females between ages 1-9 and 30-39 (OMH News, 9/89).

*The NY borough of the Bronx has 1.16 million people of whom many are enslaved to drugs, and over 40,000--mostly in the young adult age group--to needle drugs. In turn, about half of these are infected with HIV. These rates increase even more dramatically for the south Bronx because that is where needle drug use is very disproportionately concentrated (AIDS Update 13/10/89). We can see once again that what we are about to witness are major die-offs in entire marginal, devalued, and oppressed populations. One way in which these die-offs may be disguised is by permitting homelessness to continue unabated so that citizens will not be disquieted--as during the medieval plagues--by seeing vast numbers of houses depopulated or dramatically underpopulated.

*With more and more needle drug-addicted people catching AIDS, posters have appeared in many places in Harlem asking gleefully, "When will all the junkies die?" The experts say that however many "junkies" die, they will all be replaced (Science, 12 Feb. 88). We suspect they are right.

*One group that may also be soon devastated by AIDS are prostitutes, with 57% in the northeastern US testing HIV-positive. Strangely enough, they are not yet on the "official" risk list (as of early May), underlining again the deception and insanity on the AIDS scene (AIDS Update, 15/4/88). Another group that is highly at risk are people with any venereal disease. The risk for this group is high for several related reasons: they are more likely to be promiscuous, their immune system may already be compromised, and they are more apt to have lesions through which the AIDS virus can penetrate.

Efforts to Treat, or Escape From, AIDS

*According to Newsweek (9 May 88), there has been a large-scale exodus of homosexual men from some of the AIDS capitals of the US, to the towns of the Great Plains, in some cases seeking safety from AIDS, and in other cases in order to continue a promiscuous life-style at lower risk. Their often very simplistic thinking is that all they have to do to escape AIDS is to go to a place they consider safe, such as North Dakota, and thus to "travel back in time." Many of them marry as a cover, continue homosexual involvements, and never level with their wives. The response of local health authorities is to try to persuade such persons that these regions are more hazardous than they think.

*A physician who used to work in TB hospitals in the 1940s proposed that the old TB hospitals be reopened as AIDS hospitals (NYSJ Med., 9/88; source item from Kirk Mescon).

*We have reported before on proposals to establish AIDS quarantine stations, including on off-shore islands. A hospital near Trenton has sought approval from the state of New Jersey to establish a de facto AIDS colony in somewhere between 10 and 35 homes adjacent to a state mental institution that also has part of its grounds made over into a prison. So far, local citizens have arisen in protest (Philadelphia Inquirer, 4 March 88; source item from Chuck Burkhouse).

*At the 5th International Conference on AIDS in Montreal, some scientists said that a cure for AIDS was "inevitable," and one of the best-known writers on AIDS said that it would be "one of the most momentous days in science" (SHJ, 10 June 89).

*A 1988 survey of 200 leading research scientists revealed that 20% thought that by 2010, AIDS would be eliminated, and the majority predicted that both an AIDS vaccine and a cure would be available. Likely eliminations were also forecast for measles, polio, malaria and hepatitis. We consider these forecasts to be giddy-headed (International Rehab Review, 6/88).

*The hysterical insistence of modernistic minds that there simply is bound to be some kind of a drug treatment for AIDS has succeeded where everything else has failed in getting set aside the rigorous experimental screening of drugs required by the US government. It is a well-known fact that the placebo effect is probably the single most effective human service strategy, and among the most powerful placebos are putative drugs. The history of medicine is replete with new drugs that work wonderfully for short periods of time until the placebo effect wears off. AIDS advocates having succeeded in bypassing the rigorously controlled trials that are necessary to separate out either effective from ineffective drugs, or effective ones from more effective ones, we will probably see a breakdown of the entire carefully constructed edifice of controlled and sequential research that has been the most successful in the whole world in keeping out at least dangerous drugs, such as Thalidomide which did so much damage in other countries. True, the US system has had plenty of defects, but it has been more effective than any other systems. Whatever short-term benefit may be gained by trying to short-cut the drug approval process is extremely likely to be lost in multiples over the long run.

*The drug AZT is now claimed to slow down the transition from HIV infection to AIDS, but since there have been no controlled studies, we may never fully know what effect it has other than very damaging side-effects. However, what is becoming apparent is that the HIV-I, being one of the most mutagenic viruses known, has rapidly become resistant to being affected by AZT, and as a result, AIDS may now be transmitted to dramatically more people than before (e.g., Science, 24 & 31 March 89).

AIDS Expenditures

*The HIV virus is the most extensively and expensively studied virus ever; thus, claims of research foot-dragging seem deceptive (Discover, 10/89; AIDS Update, 6/88). In fact, by 1989, the US government was spending as much on AIDS research and prevention as it was on cancer and heart disease, which will kill 37 times as many people. Total US spending on all aspects of AIDS by all sources is estimated to have been \$4.4 billion in 1988, and thus almost 1% of the total \$542 billion spent on health care that year (SHJ, 15/6/89). Researchers, ever eager for more money, have said that the latest federal AIDS expenditures are in the range "they can live with" (AIDS Update, 8/89).

The Web of Systematic Deception That Has Surrounded AIDS

*AIDS is probably the most lied-about and deception-surrounded disease since the plagues, which have also had (and continue to have) a similar history of deception.

In the "good old days" of old-fashioned VDs, no one would have dreamt of claiming that promiscuity, premarital sex, extramarital sex, prostitution and homosexuality had nothing to do with the transmission of syphilis, but that it was purely due to spirochete infections that one caught. Any medical people who would have made such claims would probably have been cast out. But AIDS is so suffused by deception that this is the ideologically most prominent propaganda today.

The truth is that hedonistic, self-centered, and sexually promiscuous lifestyles are what allowed AIDS to spread, and this is what continues to be by far the predominant medium of propagation.

Modern people are individualistically self-centered, internally empty, weak, and contemptuous of external authority. Not surprisingly, they fell prey to unrestrained pursuit of sensualism, including sex (of whatever kind they please) and drugs. It was unbridled sexuality that precipitated the AIDS plague; but today, we are told that drug use (mostly via needles) is becoming the major AIDS transmitter. In a sense, it's all the same: unwillingness or inability to submit to either divine, natural or human law (in effect, any law other than one's own) underlies both transmission modes.

We want to be very sure that our readers understand that we do not believe that AIDS is a unique phenomenon, requiring a unique response. The world has always known plagues, and has probably always known sexually transmitted diseases. We consider it a certainty that neither will ever be fully abolished, but that instead, either old such diseases will reappear because of new vulnerabilities or because they have evolved more virulent strains, or altogether new ones will appear. This has been the pattern throughout human history as we know it, and must be expected to remain so despite whatever technological developments there may be. Thus, the answer to venereal diseases can never be the interposition of some technology, such as modern people have been fooled to believe. The answer is chastity, or at least the next best thing to it, namely minimal promiscuity and fornication. The answer is therefore most certainly not a promiscuous life with thousands of partners while seeking protection against disease by who knows how many and how bizarre technological means. Modernistic ethicists who make fun of a value system that promotes chastity are pied pipers, false teachers, false prophets; in the late Medieval fool literature, they would have been depicted with asses' ears, leading masses of people also costumed in asses' ears.

*It used to be that the term "promiscuous" was applied to people who had sex with more than one person, and/or more than once with someone other than one's spouse. Nowadays, a person has to have sex with scores or more people before being interpreted as promiscuous. This was exemplified in the 9/1989 issue of Good Housekeeping that told a story of a teenager "from a good family" who had sex with at least 3 boyfriends, and apparently even with more than that, but who was steadfastly

interpreted by the article and by her mother as definitely not promiscuous. Perhaps one should interpret such an attitude as bad housekeeping, especially since the girl eventually developed AIDS and may have infected one or more of her partners, and yet the thrust of the article was that AIDS can "happen to anyone." This also yet again underlines how much both AIDS and the modern sex mentality are surrounded by lies and deceptions. And the major recommendation emanating from the article was to have "safe sex" with condoms.

*In the US at least, about 73% of HIV carriers have a history of homosexuality, and 20% a history of IV drug abuse. (The latter percentage seems to be increasing rapidly.) It is fascinating to contemplate the message contained in the fact that on all TV nightly news broadcasts between June and October 1987 on American networks that covered AIDS, only 9% of the HIV carriers were identified as homosexual, and none were identified as drug-abusing. Similarly, the 10 August 87 Newsweek cover that showed photographs of 24 people with AIDS did not depict anyone with histories of homosexuality and drug abuse, but instead showed children, elderly people, mothers, athletes and service men (AAI, 4/88; AIDS Update, 13/5/88).

*Lawyer Roy Cohn, who first acquired notoriety during the 1953-54 Army-McCarthy hearings, has recently been biographized in 2 books. It is claimed that Cohn was "extravagantly promiscuous, hiring male hookers almost nightly" (Newsweek 4/4/88). Yet many of us will remember that only months before Cohn died of AIDS in 1986, he blatantly denied on the "60 Minutes" TV news program that he either had AIDS or was homosexual. There is a possibility that Cohn actually deceived himself and interpreted his prodigiously promiscuous homosexuality as being something other than what it was. However, the episode underlines again the problematic situation of AIDS, and our society's position toward it, in that a great many people who bear a great culpability in spreading it simply do not have any conscience about it. This applies as much to those who have sex with thousands of members of the same sex as those who have it with thousands of the opposite one.

*A late 1986 PBS special on AIDS interviewed all sorts of people, including many with AIDS. One young man said that he resented having to change his life-style because of AIDS because "*I like sex. I like to get drunk and smoke grass and use poppers and sleep with strangers. Call me old-fashioned, but that's what I like*"--which is a typical individualistic hedonistic stance of our age (not to mention the detoxification of calling his stance old-fashioned), and many people could be saying something like that about any number of bad things. (Source item from John Morris.)

*The decadent sex lobby commonly refers to any full interpretation of the ultimate causes of the AIDS epidemic (value deterioration and moral decay in a decadent society) as "ideological nonsense" (Newsweek).

*The schizophrenia and dishonesty prevailing about AIDS was dramatically brought out in a Time article of 30/1/89. On the one hand, it ridiculed earlier claims that AIDS was comparable to the medieval black death, and said that it "never will be"--and at the same time, it stated that about 10 million people in the world are already infected with HIV, the disease is of major proportion in Africa, and that AIDS may yet spread into the general population. No wonder the general population has never trusted either the experts or the media on this issue. It also said that no one had been found to get the virus from saliva, which is not true because nursing mothers have gotten it (apparently through skin cracks around the nipple) from their babies who got it from blood transfusions.

*In a rather peculiar and even perverse way, AIDS is "in." A whole slew of theater plays have come out in a very short period of time which all glorify people with AIDS, and all drawing very positive criticism and popular success. Either directly or indirectly, they also glamorize homosexuality, and in some instances homosexual promiscuity (Newsweek, 13/5/85).

*A porn film star who reportedly had copulated with 14,000 women died of AIDS at age 43 in 3/88 (Newsweek 28/3/88).

*Most people are not aware that in 8/87, AIDS was redefined in a fashion which threw previous statistical information and projections into chaos, providing yet another window into the pattern of deception that has been practiced and will undoubtedly continue to be practiced in this area. The new definition enlarged the number of people classified as having AIDS. Among other things, we may discover some years hence that the recent alarmist interpretation of Masters and Johnson of the "outbreak" of AIDS into the heterosexual population will prove to be much closer to the truth than the consistently under-interpreted stance that has been characteristic of the imperium ever since the discovery of AIDS.

*For years, authorities have denied that HIV can be transmitted by kissing, but as with so many other AIDS-related early imperial claims, this one too has fallen by the wayside. And the sloppier and more passionate the kiss, the higher is the risk of transmission (Health Gazette, 3/89).

*Yet another chapter in the AIDS deception is that the US Army classifies HIV carriers into 6 stages, starting with a definite HIV positive blood test without symptoms, up to the full-fledged AIDS disease stage (AIDS Update, 13/5/88). However, the first five stages are not required to be reported to the federal Centers for Disease Control--yet another version of cover-up and deception largely practiced by other health authorities as well. This general kind of cover-up has so incensed four medical groups in New York State that in 4/88, they sent an ultimatum to the state's Health Commissioner: declare AIDS a communicable and sexually transmissible disease, or they will sue. The state did refuse, and the refusal was upheld in court. The reason for this is simply another of the many deceptions that surround this disease, because once a disease is declared communicable or sexually transmitted, the law says that persons may be tested for it without their consent, and this is what the authorities are trying to avoid. Of course, there is the further irony that the same people who try to prevent the legal acknowledgment of the transmissibility of AIDS are the ones who contribute the most hysterically to the condom mania.

*A lot of people are not aware that the Chairman of the Presidential Commission on the HIV epidemic concluded that discrimination was the "single most significant obstacle to progress in controlling the epidemic" (AIDS Update, 7/88). Hardly anyone has noted how absurd this conclusion is. The single biggest obstacle is value collapse, promiscuity, and erosion of self-direction and self-control. The people who promote "just say no" to drugs should be promoting "just say no" to promiscuity.

*Stupid quote of the month. A senior member of the New York State Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse said: *"It's important to understand that AIDS really is a different issue for women than it is for men....When you're talking about women, you're talking about children and poverty and racism and sexism and inadequate health care in the first place....AIDS is real, real different for women."*

*An interesting epistemological aside. A very interesting fact to contemplate is that prior to AIDS, we did not have anything such as "body fluids."

*On seeing yet another deceptive AIDS public education spot on TV in 5/89, we had a sudden insight. The gist of the ad was that viewers should "get the facts," and that is when we suddenly realized that what the public is being given are facts (at least up to a point)--but not the truth. This demonstrates also a point that we teach at some of our workshops, namely that fact must not be equated with truth, and that sometimes, there can even be a profound conflict between fact and truth.

Deception Via Displaced Forms of Address

One way of deceiving people (and oneself) about AIDS is to respond with various forms of displaced address, i.e., to promote response strategies that are either outright invalid, or that direct attention away from what needs to be done. Most of all, as we said above, the modernistic mind will do almost anything to avoid addressing the root causes of the AIDS epidemic: In the physical world, pollution; and in the social world, moral values, and the engendering of personal disciplines to live them out.

Nothing epitomizes displaced address more than the condom craze, free drug needles, and free bleach to disinfect needles. These things are profoundly culpable deathmaking deceptions. Not far behind is the insistence that "education" is the answer, since it consists mostly of miseducation, lies, or education for de facto sexual permissiveness, including the above false solutions.

*In early 1989, the nation's top scientists, as distilled into an expert panel of the National Research Council, issued a 600-page report on HIV and AIDS which unfortunately recapitulates the same old tired and doomed prescriptions for more public and sex education in the crassest of explicit language, sex education in general, promotion of condoms, and research on sex habits. The TIPS editor believes fully that he can promise that none of this will work, and in fact is more apt to make things worse.

*Feminist leader Gloria Steinem said in Newsweek (27/6/88) that one in 61 babies born in New York City hospitals tests positive for HIV antibodies. Her answers: (a) more education, and (b) free needles; and that she calls "great commitment."

*From the beginning, we have poked fun at the hysteric--and sometimes even the religious--fervor about condoms and their euphoric promotion, and have pointed out that whatever else it was, it was a mammoth scam of deception. Data revealing the ineffectiveness of both the propaganda war and the condoms themselves to prevent AIDS are beginning to come in (ALLAI, 10/88).

*On Valentine's Day, the Student Health Center at Cornell University in New York State has been giving out condoms on key chains with the incscription "Use condom sense!" And a drug store in Ithaca (where Cornell is located) featured a counter display advertised as "Valentine's Day special sale on condoms!" This is almost enough to turn one against Valentine's Day (source material from Susan Ruff).

*A study commissioned by the Canadian Health and Welfare Department and the Canadian Medical Research Council has recommended that both provincial and federal governments should distribute free condoms and syringes, and provide free needle de-contamination (Interim, 5/88).

*Across the US, hair dressers, clothing stores and novelty shops have been selling colored "wear and share" condom earrings for \$4.50 a pair, with a designer line selling for \$10 (Newsweek, 28/3/88).

*The lies must not be condomed. One research study in Africa found that condoms reduced the likelihood of HIV infection in prostitutes by only about 30% (AIDS Update, 13/1/89).

*We must expect that when one member of a couple has AIDS, and the couple continues to have sexual relations, the other member has an almost 100% chance of acquiring AIDS eventually, regardless of whether condoms are used (Monthly AIDS Update, 17/2/89).

*In a single segment of the TV show, "Kate & Allie," there were 27 condom jokes (Time, 19/6/89).

*Brian Silberberg has submitted the following spoof on the condom craze. He imagines a plot in which a Hollywood hero convinces an evil and lecherous-looking character to use condoms in his debaucheries, followed by his own new converts successfully spreading the gospel to previously innocent young teenagers. Another plot revolves around the point that a person who uses needle drugs now leads a much happier life since starting to use bleach to sterilize the needles.

*It is ironic to contemplate that Russia has decided against emphasizing condoms for the prevention of AIDS, one of the reasons being that this would "negatively influence the moral grounding of our fellow citizens" (In These Times, 20/4/88).

*There is no such thing as "safe sex"!

*Laugh yourself to death for victims of AIDS. Students for AIDS Funding and Education at Syracuse University, together with the Gay and Lesbian Association, sponsored a "SAFE Cabaret."

*The Young Adult Institute of New York City made a 17-minute video tape to teach retarded people "safe sex." On the assumption that retarded people are extremely concrete and will not respond to spoken words, the film is apparently utterly explicit in demonstrations, which include homosexual scenes. A senior executive of the Young Adult Institute said, "We don't want to come across as crazy liberals from New York who are promoting promiscuity. But what are the alternatives?" (AP in SHJ, 6 April 88). In the unlikely case that some of them came to TI workshops, they would find out.

*Newsweek was totally explicit in claiming "the biggest obstacle is the Roman Catholic Church" in combating AIDS among Hispanics in the US, because it disapproves of condoms and of talking too much about sex. Apparently, it would never occur to the modernistic mind to say something like "the biggest obstacles are decadent modernistic hedonistic individualistic sensualistic here-and-nowistic values."

*However, even many authorities in the Catholic Church have fallen to the lies of modernism. Many bishops approved a working draft by the American bishops that included sex education with condom education craze elements, though after an uproar, the bishops rejected this part of the draft in its later revision.

*According to Interim (2/88), the Catholic archdiocese of Toronto approved the distribution of condoms by Catholic agencies, citing theologians who, in turn, cited the rationale of "the lesser of two evils." Another stated rationale was that the condoms are handed out merely for disease prevention, not for conception prevention. Accordingly, the Toronto branch of Covenant House (founded by the well-known Father Bruce Ritter in New York, and partially supported by the New York Covenant House, something like a mother house to other branches, to rescue homeless youth who often are involved in drugs and prostitution) has reportedly been handing out condoms. Even more remarkable is that some of its counselors reportedly have been referring girls for abortion.

The "lesser evil" rationale reminds us of an old joke about a teenager telling her mother, who is a bit hard of hearing, "Mom, I have decided to become a prostitute." The mother, shocked shouts: "You have decided to become a what?" "A prostitute, Mom." "Thank the Lord. For a moment, I thought you said you had decided to become a Protestant."

At any rate, in an official statement of 24/2/88, the archdiocese admitted that Covenant House was handing out condoms--yet hypocritically called the Interim claim that Covenant House referred people for abortion a "scandalous allegation" (text reprinted in Interim, 3/88). And apparently stung by the exposé of its moral surrender, in 4/88, the archdiocese issued a confidential letter instructing Covenant House of Toronto to cease the distribution of condoms. Unfortunately, this retreat from the archdiocese's previous position was diminished by a statement that "the use of the condom in homosexual relationships does not change the immorality of the act," (Interim, 5/88) which appears to be a curiously curial way of saying that condoms should be used during homosexual acts for the sake of health, or that having committed one unnatural act, one might as well commit any number if only they can all be committed together.

*No sexual discrimination at Playboy. Amazingly, Playboy employees received a memorandum from their company that jokes about AIDS or homosexuality constituted a form of sexual harassment, and that Playboy employees should abstain from such (Harper's 9/87; source item from Zana Lutfiyya). Considering that it is the Playboy mentality and culture that has contributed so much to AIDS in the first place, this is a classical example of displaced address.

*Only 15% of Californians in a recent poll said that they had changed their sexual behavior because of AIDS. Considering that California is one of the AIDS capitals of the western world, this just underlines how ineffective AIDS education efforts are (AIDS Update, 8/89). This is further underlined by the fact that despite the risk of AIDS, and despite all of the AIDS "education" propaganda, a recent survey revealed that even just since 1982, there has been a dramatic increase in premarital sexual intercourse by young single women (ALLAI, 10/88).

*The New York State Office of Mental Health has been seeking federal funds for a major study with the rationale that "we can't talk intelligently about AIDS without data" (OMH News, 9/89). By the time they get their data, they won't be able to talk intelligently anymore because they may have AIDS by then.

*A prominent Georgetown University (a Jesuit institution) ethicist (!) proposed that the way to stem the AIDS epidemic is to decriminalize drug use, prostitution and homosexual acts. People may very well become so desperate that they may be willing to try anything--perhaps even nuclear war (Science, 26/2/88).

Deadly Deception at the Blood Bank

*We have commented before on the unconscionable position of blood banks in refusing to screen blood donors for AIDS when they could have done so. For instance, for years, the blood banks refused to as much as question a donor about habits or life-style that might be correlated with AIDS. There were two reasons blood banks refused to do what screening was doable. (a) They tried to pretend there was no problem, as imperial structures always try to do. (b) They were afraid fewer people would donate blood, thinking they might catch it from donating it.

Altogether, it was estimated that as many as 30,000 people may have caught HIV through blood transfusions, and the major portion of this during the time when everybody tried to prevent the implementation of even the most elementary safety measures that might have reduced just such a calamity (AIDS Update, 19/8/88). One tragic result of the blood banks' deception was the spread of AIDS especially among a very large proportion of children with hemophilia.

One utterly predictable result--among many--was that blood banks began to be sued for big money by people who caught AIDS from unscreened donations. And also expectably, the plaintiffs have begun to win, and some blood banks have subsequently been quietly settling out of court, but thousands of people caught AIDS this way, and the barrage of law suits, which were quite predictable beforehand, is now scaring blood banks into screaming "uncle."

Of course, one unfortunate consequence is another upsurge in insurance costs again. This falls into the category of what we have called mutual disablement: party A does dirt to party B, and party B turns around and succeeds in swatting party A, but in the long run, everybody loses (Newsweek, 23/1/89).

And the blood bank deception still continues even now! As late as 6/89, the American Association of Blood Banks downplayed the fact that people may be harboring the AIDS virus for years before this is revealed by tests. One of the inane arguments given was that if people carried the HIV virus, they would probably also have hepatitis, and would be screened out because of that (AP, in SHJ, 1 June 89). To compound this deception, until it finally came to light that people could catch AIDS from blood transfusions, the blood industry had managed to keep it very quiet that a numerically even greater risk was--in fact -- catching hepatitis from the blood supply (AIDS Update, 19/8/88).

Many people are still not aware that when one has caught HIV, one may be both infected and infectious without any of the current tests as yet identifying it, because the test identifies antibodies which take some time for the human immune system to produce. This is also one reason why the blood supply continues not being safe from HIV. In fact, HIV may exist for several years before a currently available test will identify it.

The risk of catching HIV from a blood transfusion is thus still 1:14,000 per transfusion, with of course dramatically increased risk for people who require multiple or repeated transfusions. Yet physicians are much too quick to order a transfusion when the patient could manage without it (AIDS Update, 19/8/88). They thereby participate in the deception, even if only as victims themselves.

A further ongoing element in this imperial game is that the blood banks have also been extremely reluctant to permit people to store and use their own blood, or the blood of people they knew who would donate it specifically for that person. The reason for this insane reluctance is plain and simply concern about losing

absolute and total control over decision-making, as minor as that loss would be in the latter case. The issue is as yet quite unresolved, notwithstanding sporadic reports to the contrary, and occasional exceptions. In fact, some states are proposing bills to enable the practice, since apparently it would take nothing less than a law to take a chunk of imperialism out of the blood banks.

In reaction to all this insanity, a "Christian blood bank" has been launched in Oklahoma City that will only accept blood from people who have signed a statement that they have abstained from sex, or only had sex with their spouses, since 1977. Not surprisingly, the imperial blood banks were screaming bloody murder about this incursion and the "undermining of the donor base, confusing of people, creating distrust and lack of credibility" (AP, in SHJ, 21/2/88).

Persecution and Oppression of People With AIDS

*Among the lowest of the low these days are prison inmates who are known to have AIDS. They are despised and rejected by virtually all their fellow prisoners, and in many cases abandoned by their families. Among other things, it is apparently a very common occurrence for prison personnel to brutalize prisoners who have AIDS, for the sheer fun of it (Newsweek, 13/2/89).

*In Maryland, police officers used gloves in handling a prisoner at a murder trial. An appeals court overturned the murder conviction on the grounds that the jurors may have concluded from seeing this that the defendant had AIDS and ought to be locked up, whether he was guilty of murder or not (AIDS Update, 4/89).

*A member of an AIDS group referred to teenagers who have AIDS as the "walking dead."

Persecution and Oppression of People Without AIDS by the AIDS Lobby

*There are some homosexual leaders who have called for "AIDS terrorism." Something along these lines appears to have happened in South Carolina where a person who claimed to be a hospital worker dying of AIDS claimed to have added his HIV-positive blood into the infusions or injections of 70 patients without their knowledge. The letter appeared to have been a hoax, but it cost almost a million dollars to investigate the claim. Other such events may occur in the future, and some may prove to be real. One implication of all of this is once again to avoid blood transfusions unless they are absolutely essential (AIDS Update, 6/89).

*A lot of the federal money that is going to research on AIDS is being taken away from a large number of other medical research programs, including on sickle cell anemia, VD, senility, cancer, TB, and Lyme disease, as well as research on heart, blood, and lung diseases, as well as on nutrition and hepatitis (Newsweek, 6 March 89).

*One group that is being oppressed by the AIDS lobby is health workers.

On the one hand, there has been strong denial among spokespersons of the health professions that health care workers had a serious risk of acquiring AIDS from their patients. On the other hand, at least a significant minority of health care workers have refused to work with patients with AIDS. On the third hand, there has then been considerable censure of such health care workers by the leaders, which now in turn (on the fourth hand) has been censured by an editorial in the Journal of the American Medical Association (16/12/88) that appears to be the first admission by the authorities in health care that there does indeed exist a real risk of acquiring AIDS by health care workers.

*If people were told that if they became electricians, they will be electrocuted to death only once every 200 jobs according to the prevailing probabilities, hardly anybody would choose to become an electrician. And yet, that is the HIV risk-level that has now been determined for certain health workers because all of the safeguards of both a technical and legal nature are on the side of people who do or may carry HIV. We should not be surprised to see a dramatic increase in backlash by health care workers, such as has just begun to manifest itself as exemplified by

the widely-publicized resignation from her hospital job of orthopedic surgeon Lorraine Day. She was featured on the "60 Minutes" TV show and has become a much-demanded speaker.

One horror story along these lines was published in the New England Journal of Medicine (7 Sept. 89). A hospital doctor caught HIV from his patients, but the hospital refused to acknowledge that this is how he caught it. Having no other insurance, he had to sue the hospital to obtain his employee health benefits. Thus, while health workers are sternly called to duty to risk their lives serving on people with AIDS--as is indeed a noble thing to do--they may receive very little sympathy or back-up once they do catch HIV, and it is also as yet unclear just what the status of support to workers' spouses and children may be in case these should catch HIV from the worker.

Another AIDS insanity problem that has arisen is that if a health worker has had the kind of exposure to the body fluids of a patient that could reasonably constitute a risk of catching HIV, the patient may refuse permission to be tested for HIV, as did, in fact, occur in a large percentage of such instances recently documented (AIDS Update, 10/89). This will leave the health worker in limbo for years, during which s/he has to decide whether to begin to seek treatment (as with AZT), which of course would be very dangerous, and very expensive to either the worker, the worker's employer or some insurer--and even this may of course not prevent AIDS.

*We have to be clear we understand that the laws are not one-sided in protecting patients so as to jeopardize workers. They also work the other way around whenever it is the workers who may have AIDS, and could transmit it to patients or clients. Here, it is the workers who are protected (exemplified by a US Supreme Court decision of 10/89), and the clients are the ones who would have to bear the consequences of any transmission of any HIV from the workers to them.

Thus, in health care, whoever may have AIDS is protected, and whoever might catch it is not. We call this not only irrational, but also oppressive.

Caring for People With AIDS

*Newsweek (21/7/86) carried a very long cover story on AIDS, featuring a New York physician and his team who heroically committed himself to the welfare of patients dying of AIDS. Paradoxically, the physician had swallowed the quality of life criterion, thus losing an ideological rationale for serving once he no longer perceived a patient as having that quality. Accordingly, at a certain point, a dying person becomes interpreted as a "non-person" who ceased being whoever and whatever they had been before, including parent, spouse, or whatever.

It is also remarkable that so many people who serve upon the dying may not have one word to say about faith or religion, or even about what in the Middle Ages was known as ars moriendi, i.e., the "art of dying," by which was meant a graceful and courageous way of departing life. Such servers may then only be able to offer their own inner emptiness to dying people.

*A mixture of both good and bad news is the Starcross community outside San Francisco, which consists of three adults who live a life of celibacy and poverty, and who take in abandoned babies and young children with AIDS. Not only do they care for the afflicted children, some of whom have died while with the community, but they also advocate on behalf of such children, and try to find adoptive homes for them. Somewhat problematically, they are actively seeking as adoptive parents homosexual "couples," whom they think would make especially good parents for such children. Further, they often take the children to a San Francisco church attended by a large homosexual population. All of this constitutes very negative image juxtaposition to the children, implying that they are or should be homosexual (NCR, 1/13/89).

*A baby with AIDS is not apt to have a surviving or available parent. But apparently, the social system in New York City is so decadent that the first group home for children with AIDS had to be established in Albany, about a 2½-hour drive away, even though most of its children come from New York City (SHA, 24/4/88).

*The male branch of the Missionaries of Charity, the order founded by Mother Teresa, has opened a center for people with AIDS and their families in Oakland. This is consistent with the order's tradition to be close to the dying. However, we think that it reflects very poor sense for the center to provide a massage service, or at least to make a public point of it, because this smacks too much of the homosexual massage parlors where people often caught AIDS in the first place, and raises questions whether continued sexual exploitation might not be going on by Christian servers. (Source material from Ann O'Connor.)

AIDS-Related Imagery Issues

*In evaluating claims of increased violence toward homosexual people, one must consider that there has been an increase in violence generally, as well as a multi-quantum increase in provocative public behaviors by homosexual militants. A typical example are the now almost ritualistic offensive performances of homosexual groups at public parades, such as lewd dancers, and obscene slogan-shouting. Related provocations are demands for legal sex with children, and outright threats directed at heterosexual people at homosexual rallies, mentioned previously in TIPS. In previous years, there would have been mass bloodshed in response to such behaviors--but not today.

*That there is certainly something very self-destructive in the organized homosexual movement is illustrated by Gay Scene, a national homosexual tabloid. Among other things, it called on its readers to donate blood (4 & 5/88 issue). Considering that it may take many months before an HIV infection will show up on a test, transfusions of blood from a population known probabilistically to have a high prevalence of undetected HIV infection is certainly a form of deathmaking, and is difficult to interpret as anything but a hostile--and deadly--assault on non-homosexual people. In turn, this sort of thing is apt to arouse precisely the kind of counter-hostility of which homosexual people complain.

*Sixty people, apparently from homosexual rights groups, showed up at a US Commission on Civil Rights hearing on AIDS wearing clown masks, shouting protests (Newsweek, 6/6/88). The group is apparently in the habit of bombarding its perceived opponents with condoms.

*1 December 89 marks the second "AIDS Awareness Day" designated by the World Health Organization. In the US, there is an organization called Visual AIDS which, of course, is a clang association to "visual aids." The organization promotes AIDS-related exhibitions and events that have something to do with art, and decided to participate in the AIDS Awareness Day via the theme, "A Day Without Art," calling for the closing of art galleries and artistic performances, emptying of artistic displays, etc. In turn, this was to symbolize that many artists had died of AIDS, and presumably also that one might run out of art works if this keeps up.

Some Dateline Facts About AIDS

- 1970: Retroviruses begin to be studied
- 1978: Not previously thought to infect humans, first one found that does: HTLV-I
- 6/1981: First publication related to AIDS reports otherwise non-fatal Kaposi's sarcoma and pneumocystis carinii pneumonia as linked to homosexual males, and as fatal to them due to low immunity. 6 different false hypotheses offered
- 11/1981: No. of identified cases grown from 26 to 152, and increased ever since
- 9/1982: The name AIDS is coined. Homosexuality and IV drug abuse said to be the 2 risk factors, with Haitians beginning to be implicated. First report of affected women and people with hemophilia, resulting in hypothesis of blood products transmission. The probability of virus transmission is discounted
- 1/1983: First national meeting on AIDS in the US ends in chaos. Non-profit blood banks and homosexual groups totally oppose blood testing; hemophilia organizations feel betrayed; a for-profit blood bank announces it will screen donors and eliminate high-risk groups

- After 1/1983: Increasing number of people with hemophilia, including children, get AIDS. Only because blood banks begin to fear lawsuits, they gradually institute screening
- 3/1983: Risk groups expanded to hemophiliacs, all sex partners of people with AIDS or at risk thereof, and babies of mothers with AIDS
- 4/1984: Discovery of AIDS virus announced, first called HTLV-III, and later, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- 1985: Only now does blood bank screening become mandatory in the US
- 1985: Clear evidence that AIDS can be transmitted through heterosexual relations
- ca. 1988: Needle drug-users succeed homosexual males as single-biggest AIDS risk group, especially if they shoot heroin
- 6/1988: For the first time in history, US government sends a mailing to each US household: an AIDS brochure, laced with deception
- 12/1988: First major admission of reality of health risk to health care workers, and of previous cover-up (JAMA editorial 16/12/88)
- 1989: It becomes apparent that 50% of babies born to mothers who are HIV-infected get AIDS
- 1989: The evidence suggests that nearly all spouses of people with AIDS will get AIDS if they have ongoing sexual relations, regardless of condom use
- Late 1989: Despite proof of HIV transmission through heterosexual intercourse since at least 1985, AIDS still not classified as a sexually transmitted disease in most states

The Truth About AIDS

*You won't catch it by reading TIPS!

What Happens to Handicapped People Under Extreme Societal Stresses?

*One of our former students, Sam Zamarripa, has written an account of what happened at an institution for almost 700 handicapped people during the Israeli siege and shelling of Beirut that lasted from June 11 to August 12, 1982. The institution had taken care of people of all ages (90 of them children) with a full range of impairments, including mental retardation, mental disorder, senility, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and so on. Of about 209 employees, all but about a dozen deserted during the first 2 weeks of the siege, and the remaining ones had to take care of these dependent people without reliable supplies of water, electricity, fuel, food, or anything. The remaining staff also had to cope with the fact that some of the space had become uninhabitable from the shelling and bombing, and that some of the residents had been killed and wounded. Even when the building was not being hit, warfare and shelling took place all around it, and when Israeli planes broke the sound barrier overhead, many residents would lose bowel control from fear. Naturally, there was great hysteria and confusion among the residents, some of whom ran shrieking into the streets even as these were being shelled.

An appeal was made for family members to come and take their relatives home, but only about 5% did so.

Soon malnutrition set in, in part because of food shortage, shortage of people to administer the food, and the fact that tranquilizers used to calm the residents had suppressed appetites. Supplies being sent to the institution would often be intercepted and requisitioned by some of the various militia forces, or stolen outright. Soon, because of lack of water and new clothing, and incontinence of residents, clothing became a big problem, and they often had to be burned rather than washed. It soon became apparent that it was easier to attend to the children by keeping them naked. Many residents became infested with lice, worms, and had all kinds of infections. Among their afflictions were hepatitis, eye infections, blood poisoning, not to mention severe malnutrition and dehydration, and whatever other "side effects" massive doses of tranquilizers have on vulnerable or young people.

A few weeks after the first shelling, children began to die at the rate of 2 or 3 a day. Corpses started piling up in the morgue, could not be buried fast enough, and their stench permeated the entire institution.

After a few weeks of this, one report said that there were 15 to 20 staff to look after 560 residents. In all this confusion, one of the first things to be given up, quite naturally, was record-keeping, and in retrospect it is not even clear how many residents were being cared for at any one moment by how many people. It goes without saying that these people were functioning at the very limit of human capabilities.

The shelling and warfare continued for several weeks, and the whole neighborhood of the hospital was a scene of destruction and desolation, with hardly anything left undamaged, and often not even standing.

Only after 7 weeks of the first bombing of the institution did relief of any significance arrive.

On 11 August, Mother Teresa arrived at the direction of the Pope. The situation of the institution was immediately brought to her attention, and some people believe that her arrival had much to do with the cease-fire taking place on August 12th. On August 14, another major relief operation was conducted with the participation of Mother Teresa. Some of the children were temporarily transferred into better settings through the efforts of Mother Teresa. But after a few weeks, almost all the children temporarily taken care of in other places were returned to the institution where things meantime had gotten somewhat less worse, but continued in a rather miserable condition nonetheless, with no major improvement in sight.

People interested in this story can write to Sam Zamarripa (1922 Piedmont Circle NE, Atlanta, GA 30324).

A Hobo Song

*In the December issue, we often carry a hobo song or poem. This year, we feature "Mortimer Street Catering Employment Office" from Nelson, Sternberg and Brindley.

*What do you think as you pass them by,
sleeping in boxes under the sky?
No sheltering roof or nice clean bed,
The pavement a pillow for their head.*

*Don't rush past just stand and wait,
and see what happens about half past eight.
They'll be killing each other to get a job,
For the price of a bed and a couple of bob.*

*You'll never get rich at Mortimer Street.
Ten bob an hour all day on your feet.
Curses in the kitchen, the pots and pans,
Cleaning the grates, the floors and the cans.*

*To most it's just the price of a drink,
To help forget the fleas and the stink.
And another night on weary feet
or box on the pavement outside Mortimer Street.*

An Easy Essay

*We have previously carried excerpts from the "easy essays" of Peter Maurin, the French immigrant to the US who, together with Dorothy Day, founded the Catholic Worker movement in the 1930s. Below, slightly edited, are excerpts from his 1934 "Restoring the Moral Law."

Machinery runs according to the laws of mechanics and not according to the moral law.

The main principle of mechanical invention is the elimination of waste energy.

The purpose of machinery is to reduce the cost of production — the better the machine the less the cost to run and the better designed for its purpose.

The chief cost of production is human labor.

Machinery is invented to save the cost of human labor.

Tools are not machines — a tool is a thing that helps, an extension of one's hands.

Machines do not help but displace the worker — which is their sole object.

The introduction of machinery dates from the dispossession of the workers.

It was possible to gather workers into factories only when the majority of the workers ceased to be independent craftsmen.

Only when the factory system developed did the cost of labor figure on the account books of business persons.

When labor united for increase and regulation of wages a premium was put by the masters on the invention of machinery.

They say that machinery does away with drudgery, but it was not with the idea of kindness to animals or children that machinery was introduced and developed...

The sole object of machinery is to lower the cost of production.

The cost of production is the cost of human labor.

Machinery makes human labor less necessary — if not it is no good.

Therefore, manufacturing tends to become impersonal and an affair to be conducted solely for profits.

Lack of personal control spells lack of interest in the work.

Machinery was not introduced to help the worker improve the work done or to make things at all.

Machinery exists to make the thing called profits...

Profit-making is camouflaged by the patriotism of munition workers, the zeal for spread of learning by the manufacturers of linotypes, the zeal for literacy by fountain pen makers.

If machinery were unprofitable no amount of enthusiasm on the part of inventors or on the part of philanthropists

would be sufficient to make any business person invest money in it.

Machinery runs according to the laws of mechanics.

Human beings run according to the moral law...

At present we have chosen a machine world an unhuman and inhuman world.

The moral law is in abeyance.

The worker or the "hand" is not a human being and the dregs of his humanity are a nuisance in a factory.

The whole problem is how to do away with human labor in production but increase the number of consumers and increase their purchasing power.

Morality is now for spare time, it is a hobby to be encouraged but has nothing to do with work, business or industry.

This is our world: the mechanization of industry the separation of art from utility the divorce of morals from trading the division of people into owners of the means of production and the proletarians who own nothing but their power to labor.

Capitalism means the larger organization of business, the greater development of machinery.

Capitalism therefore means lessening of personal intellectual responsibility and eventually its complete suppression by means of complex efficient machines.

Big business inevitably develops into public service.

Public service for private profit becomes obsolete.

This is hateful since it rests with private individuals whether millions shall work or starve.

In former times if a master dismissed a person the person could find another master or set up for themselves.

The artist or the responsible worker the person who makes things because he chooses and owns the things he makes is an eccentric no longer an ordinary worker.

The ordinary worker now is the impersonal tool in the service of the whole community...

Persons are persons all the time not only in their spare time.

In the Industrial State people, working people, or the majority are only fully responsible when they are not working...

Resources

*G. Allan Roeher Institute. (1988). The language of pain: Perspectives on behavior management. Toronto: Author. This is a collection of essays by 16 people--professionals, parents and siblings of handicapped people, and handicapped people themselves--on behavioral techniques and techniques that are legitimized as behavior management, and the use of such techniques with handicapped people. Several of these essays are about specific handicapped people who have been treated under some kind of behavioral regimen, including the three "living in the community" vignettes. Several of the essays also deal with the issue from a legal and rights perspective. The book takes a strong anti-behavioral stand, though it hardly offers any coherent alternative approach, particularly when the person subjected to the behavioral regimen is engaged in self-destructive behavior, or behavior that is destroying his/her social context, such as the family. The introduction to the book gives a good overview, but it is odd that the explanation of the use of the term "the language of pain," and thus the title of the whole book, is unintelligible. The book notes that the Canadian Association for Community Living is opposed to aversive techniques, but it includes under the term "aversive techniques" things such as verbal abuse, and even age-inappropriate techniques. The essay by Downer calls for defining any setting as an institution in which more than two handicapped people are served (p. 80).

People might find particular stories instructive, or sad, or uplifting, but it is difficult to draw up a clear recommendation as to how this book should be used, and by whom.

*There is now also an anti-shrinkery book from Canada, written by Canadians victimized by the mental health system, entitled Shrink Resistant (source material from Michael Kendrick).

*A lot of people emphasize that handicapped people should be "accepted the way they are." The celebrated Israeli Professor Feuerstein was the senior author of a 1988 book that took issue with this perspective by means of its title, Don't Accept Me As I Am: Helping "Retarded" People to Excel. In this book, Feuerstein explains his theory of so-called mediated learning.

Position Open

*A position is open that explicitly requires Social Role Valorization competency in supporting 20 retarded adults to live independently in a small city in Ohio. Contact Robert Weinhardt, Renaissance House, P. O. Box 250, Tiffin, Ohio, 44883, 419/447-7901.

War and Peace

*When the TIPS editor mentioned during a discussion that there were over 50 million dead in WW II, it was received with incredulity. When the TIPS editor said that this should not be so hard to believe considering that Russia alone lost about 30 million people, incredulity was heightened rather than lowered--but these are the rough facts. In WW I, there were about 10 million deaths. In WW II, Germany lost about 7.5 million people, the Asian countries in the war close to 15 million, the Russians between 20 and 30 million (depending which figures one believes), other east European countries lost about 9 million, etc., and the total added up to about 55 million (AW, 3 Dec. 88).

*Some wars of major proportion in the world go virtually unreported. For instance, there has been warfare for 15 years in the former Portuguese colony of Mozambique that has taken over 600,000 lives. In the western press at least, wars are less likely to be reported if they take place between relatively devalued people, or one's national interest is not intensively at stake.

*The world's annual military budget is now about \$900 billion (Greenpeace, 1 & 2/1989). This is all money that not only will not go to human service, but creates a lot of human service need, as by crippling people.

*The bad news: in 1987, \$35 billion worth of armaments were sold internationally, about 70% to third-world countries. The US, Russia, France, Britain, and China supplied 80% of the weaponry (AP in SHJ, 17/8/88). The good news: sales are down from previous years.

*The US Defense Department is just about one of the largest business enterprises in the world, since it spent about \$160 billion in 1988. Yet investigators of its procurement practices (called by some investigators a "joke") have said that these practices may constitute the biggest federal-white collar crime case ever considered for prosecution (Time, 27/6/88).

*One reason the Japanese can economically outperform the Americans is that they spend about 10% per person on the military what the US spends (Business Magazine, 11/88).

*The CBS investigative program "60 Minutes" revealed on 10 April 88 that the US and other western countries have been selling extremely sensitive war-making materiel to Russia--and then use the argument that they must militarily keep up or stay ahead to spend infinitely more money than they earned from these sales in the first place. Thus, it was estimated that many billions of dollars every year are spent merely in order to keep up with the armaments which were provided or facilitated by one's own sales to the Russians in the first place. All this is yet another vivid reminder of the peculiar mysteries of a PPP economy.

*If the Stealth bomber project were carried out, it would cost an estimated \$750 for every American household, since each plane costs almost \$700 million. One pilot said he wouldn't want to fly the plane because in case of an emergency, "who would want to bail out of a \$700 million plane?". At the same time, workers at the Lockheed Plant that has been working on the Stealth fighter (not the bomber) report extremely high rates of illnesses which they believe are caused by the strange materials that go into the plane (The Machinist, 2/89).

*States in the US differ widely as to the amount of federal "defense" money that is spent in them, and even more particularly is spent there per capita of state population. For instance, Delaware ranks 44th in total defense expenditures among the states, but first in per capita, with \$3883. West Virginia ranks last with a mere \$166 per inhabitant (Year One, 11/88; from Ann O'Connor).

*Many people are not aware that when scientists exploded the first atomic bomb, they did so without being quite sure that it would not destroy the world. They considered that a small but distinct possibility--but a risk worth taking, since scientists will always do whatever it is that is doable. It is also not well-known that when the first atomic bomb was exploded, the scientists thought it would produce an explosion the size of 500 tons of TNT, and the second one of 1200 tons. It turned out that they were grossly off, in that the second one had the power of 20,000 tons.

*A 1988 book, Clouds of Secrecy, documents the US government's experimentation with bacterial warfare agents on several million American citizens who were exposed without being informed, and many of them were harmed without any choice, or chance at compensation. One of the big points the book makes is that the government is simply not to be trusted, as of course we have found out in relation to any number of other weighty issues.

*Some hell of a way to missionize. In the late 1960s, evangelist Billy Graham sent a secret plan to President Nixon, entitled the "Confidential Missionary Plan for Ending the Vietnam War," which proposed switching to guerrilla war, sabotage and propaganda, much like the unconscionable US strategy against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua in recent years, which has been heavily a war against civilians (SHJ, 19/4/89).

*Paul Chilton, a professor of linguistics in England, has made the study of the language of nuclear war, which he calls Nukespeak, his specialty. One small part of his discovery was that one of the several metaphors widely used by the nuclear war community is the sexual one. There are such things as "vertical erector launchers," "penetration aids," "soft lay-downs," "thrust to weight" considerations. The French named their nuclear test craters after women, and one military mogul spoke of "releasing mega-tonnage in one orgasmic whump" (Guardian, 10/88; source item from Ruth Abrahams).

*A 1988 book, Minds at War, by Steven Kull, examined the mentality of what he calls "nuclear theologians," i.e., a small group of ideologues in think tanks, government and the military who conceive, justify and lead the implementation of US nuclear policies. His findings were so striking as to warrant citing some passages of the review of this book in Science (7 April 89).

"Once the political decision to run the arms race is made, those chosen to execute the decision will inevitably find themselves in a confusing social role--planning elaborate nuclear weapons systems and war strategies even though it is obvious that these can no longer affect usable military capabilities. People find it difficult to believe one thing and do another; hence if the policy-makers want to keep their jobs and advance their careers without undue anxiety, they must suppress their awareness of what Kull calls 'nuclear reality' during their day-to-day routine. People who are unwilling or unable to adopt such a schizoid stance simply do not become nuclear policymakers, or else they resign or get fired."

"The experts themselves more or less admitted the extraordinary irrationality of mainstream nuclear thought. Minds at War shows that simple, well-informed common sense would be a far more rational guide to nuclear policy than the convoluted, self-contradictory views of those now in authority. Kull, by the way, found similar patterns of thinking in a small group of Soviet analysts he interviewed.

After Kull induced his respondents to drop their contorted military rationales, they often argued that big new weapons like the MX missile are still required to manipulate perceptions—that is, to impress leaders in the Soviet Union and the Third World who might not recognize that new weapons are militarily irrelevant. Again, however, Kull's respondents acknowledged obvious problems with their arguments when Kull pointed them out. At that point, the nuclear experts frequently fell back to even vaguer, purely psychological rationales, such as the need to build hugely expensive weapons to demonstrate U.S. 'resolve,' to increase U.S. status and prestige, and to maintain morale at home."

"Those specialists exhibit a frightening degree of irrationality and inner confusion about nuclear weapons. The book should finally put to rest their claim that they alone command the technical knowledge and sophistication to judge nuclear weapons policy."

*A 1988 book entitled War Stars shows that the idea behind Star Wars is not new at all, but part of a long-standing American fantasy that one can invent or develop a weapon to end all war. The author traces this idea (which he calls a mechanical rabbit) through the history of the ideals of America's great inventors, American science fiction, movie plots, and so on. This just goes to prove once more that those who do not study and understand history are indeed condemned to repeat it.

**In the language of the empires of death, getting too close to a weapon of mass destruction is defined as trespassing or disorderly conduct; beating swords into plowshares is destruction of government property; and refusal to pay for war is tax evasion. "The state must adamantly suppress, dismiss, or exclude as irrelevant the reasons that have brought protesters to those actions and the language they use.... Prayers cannot be translated into 'legalese.' Pictures of victims of war, of children, of fellow human beings who are 'the enemy' have no legal status. Statements on the urgency of disarmament are outside party lines. A weapon part hammered on for peaceful purposes is evidence of a crime. Blood is not allowed to cry out in the courtroom.*

The state seeks to strip these actions of meaning, to shut them out of the public arena. In so doing, it reveals its own alienation from and hostility to public life.

The peace movement must be clear about our use and understanding of symbols and how they articulate the lawfulness of disobedience to the state. We rely upon a language of faith and politics that the state oftentimes refuses to hear. We must be most attentive to that language when the state is most fierce in imposing its own definitions of mute violence upon actions for peace and disarmament." (Meg Broadhead, in CW, 9/87)

*There is some evidence that the sale of war toys is aimed mostly at the lower income population. The upper classes start the wars, but expect the people from the lower classes to do the fighting, so this all makes sense. Thus, stores that aim at the more affluent population are apt to carry very few war toys; for these, one must go to stores patronized by the poor (CW, No. 1, 1989).

*One of the sons of Simon Bolivar fought in 32 civil wars--and lost them all. Perhaps he should have started a training institute instead (NCR, 12 May 89).

First World Congress on Citizen Advocacy

Dates: 4:00 p.m., Friday, October 5, through approximately 5:00 p.m., Sunday, October 7, 1990

Place: Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln, Nebraska

The site is fully accessible, and special room rates are available.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the first Citizen Advocacy office in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1970, a world congress on Citizen Advocacy has been planned. It is hoped that this will be the first of many such congresses to come. Representatives from Citizen Advocacy programs in many locales from all over the world will be there. The congress will include formal presentations, possibly small workshops or discussion groups on specific topics, much celebration, and much fun. It is anticipated that some of the first official citizen advocates and their protégés will be present, and will speak on their 20-year relationship. It is also hoped that many advocates and protégés will participate, as well as Citizen Advocacy office staff, board members, supporters, and friends.

Proposals are being solicited for presentations and/or small workshops/discussion groups.

For further information, contact: John Murphy, Nebraska Advocacy Services, 522 Lincoln Center Building, 215 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508; telephone 402/474-3183, or toll-free 800/422-6691.

Please spread the word.

The Good News of the Bad News

*We often hear the plaint, both from current readers and from past subscribers who couldn't take it anymore, that TIPS is depressing because it is so full of bad news. In response, we can cite the old expression, "I was sorry for myself because I had no shoes, till I met a man who had no feet." That is, readers would no longer feel bad for their own plight once they saw ours: we have vastly more material on any topic than we can manage to print, and most of it is more of the same. Thus, we read, and write up, several times as much "bad news" as ever appears in TIPS.

The awful things that occur in human services that we report in TIPS must be considered to be only the TIP of the iceberg of what really happens.

A New Human Service Personnel Discipline

*Supervisors in human services are often in a position where they have to instruct or criticize their subordinates. In some cases, they may even have to impose outright discipline or penalty on them. We propose that henceforth, particularly when subordinates have committed grave offenses, that they be sentenced to read several TIPS issues; and in the most severe offenses, short of dismissal, to read TIPS all the way from volume one on. Furthermore, much as people used to do penance for their sins, human service workers aware of past mistakes and absurdities which they now recognize as such might accept a penance of reading back issues of TIPS. Finally, we highly recommend this as a human service Lenten penance.

Human Service News--Some of it Good

*According to a report on the CBS Evening News of 20 April, 1989, the fastest growing employment sector in the US is government service--and within that, the fastest growing sector is in prisons and jails.

*The imperial style of trying to keep secret things that it cannot control was once again brought out in a 5/89 announcement that a new test may be able to screen out blood donations from people who have a form of the non-A non-B hepatitis, now called Hepatitis C. About 5% of patients who receive transfusions have been getting such tainted blood (to say nothing of other kinds of blood taints) which can cause deadly liver infections. Hepatitis C is mostly spread by sexual contact and contaminated needles, much as the HIV virus that causes AIDS, but we were hardly told anything about this in any public fashion until now that this particular mode of transmission might become eliminated.

*Recently, but particularly during the 1988 US presidential campaign, we have heard a lot of talk about "family values," a term that is usually meant to include such "old-fashioned" values as family cohesion and mutual care. However, as writer Richard Reeves has embarrassingly noted in late 1988, unlike in other societies, disruption of families has been one of the hallmarks of American society since its very beginning. First, when people emigrated to America, they almost always left at least some family behind, most likely never to be seen again. The westward migrations across the continent similarly often meant that one would never see again those one left behind in the east. These phenomena in turn contributed to a restlessness and high mobility in American society that often separated family members, and especially grandparents from their children and grandchildren. On top of this, there were the forced family separations entailed by slavery. Separation of families continues today, with the break-up of even the nuclear family fast becoming the norm as parents abandon each other and their children, and vice versa, so that more people now live alone than ever before. Thus, it is not clear that the kind of commitment and sacrifice needed to maintain a family that is implied in the term "family values" has ever been very strong in American society. (Source item from Michael Kendrick.)

*On 26/4/1989, the Syracuse CBS affiliate television station broadcast a one-hour special on values education for children. After interviews and statistics that showed how prevalent are various moral offenses among schoolchildren, it then focused on several projects around the country that are trying to teach values to children in elementary schools, secondary schools, and juvenile correction facilities. The program kept insisting that it was not religious values but "common values of decency" that are being taught by and in these projects--with apparently total lack of awareness that what people in our culture call "common decency" is usually derived precisely from a religious tradition, namely, the Judeo-Christian one. This ignorance was exemplified by the fact that the program cited the golden rule ("do unto others as you would have them do unto you") as an example of such a decency value--and of course, the golden rule comes from the Jewish scriptures (Tobit 4:15), which cast it as "do not do anything to others that you would not want done to yourself," and from the Christian gospels (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31), which cast it in its more well-known positive command.

The various projects that the program covered were reported to produce children who were more cooperative, helpful, respectful, who did better in school, had a lower rate of failure, crime, pregnancy, etc. The projects emphasized cooperation, responsibility to a community of which one is a member (be it one's family, a classroom, the school, etc.), giving the students a say in establishing rules as well as the responsibility for determining consequences for those who violated them, and to a lesser degree, engaging the children in meaningful and challenging education. The good news is that such projects exist; the bad news is that no one sees the overarching universal strategies that they have in common (such as we have just detailed above), that they are falsely interpreted to be teaching non-religious values, and that they are even needed!

*It was estimated that as of 1988, 45% of US adults volunteer their time to good causes (Sojourners, 1/89).

*So far, researchers have been much better at describing the characteristics of volunteers (in terms of age, sex, socioeconomic status, etc.) than at explaining why some people volunteer and others do not, particularly if they do not differ in other demographic and socioeconomic indicators.

A so-called "European Values Study" (New Society, 8 Nov. 1985) found that people involved in volunteer work differed significantly in a number of respects from others. Particularly prominent differentiators of those who volunteered from those who did not were the following: religious beliefs, commitments, and practices; reflectiveness and inner-directedness; less concern with money, income, possessions and housing; and expressed willingness to sacrifice one's very life for others.

However, since volunteers are more likely to come from the upper social strata, their lower materialistic concern may have something to do with the fact that they do not live as close to the edge of existence, and so far, the socioeconomic factor does not appear to have been sufficiently held constant in such research.

Further, it is quite possible that different values will be correlated with different types of volunteering. For instance, environmental activists differ from human service volunteers in their religious and political indices, and may thus reflect a different value cluster (New Society, 8 Nov. 1985).

Thus, we can easily see that research on this topic will be somewhat difficult to conduct.

*Of all the fund-raising strategies of the so-called charities, telethons return the smallest percentage (between 18-27) to the cause at issue. Sweepstakes strategies on behalf of some of the most visible charities (such as those dealing with heart and cancer) have been charged with fraudulent practices in several states. Other fund-raising organizations that did not return a great deal of money to the cause included the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Arthritis Foundation, and the Epilepsy Foundation of America. The charities are fighting tooth and claw against any kind of disclosure laws. Newsweek (19/12/88) recommends that one donate no money until a charity sends one a copy of its IRS 990 form and a statement on file in its state's bureau of charities. They will probably find that most charities would rather forego the donation than tell the truth.

*We have been told that in parts of Francophone Canada, unremunerated service is sometimes referred to as "benevol," and even paid human service workers may be challenged to put in benevol hours beyond their official job. One bilingual woman told us that "they will benevol you to death."

*Institutions are the elephants of the human service system. An old colleague of the editor once described institutions as the elephants of human service that will eat the vast majority of available hay, thus leaving all the other animals on short rations. We are all familiar with the fact that institutions that provide places for a small proportion of a needy population consume a very disproportionate amount of the available resources. As of 1988, it has been estimated that 90% of mental health expenditures in Britain go to institutions, while 90% of the people who need mental health services do not live in such places (source clippings from Don Braisby).

*A Jesuit priest (recently passed away) who was somewhat of a retreat guru, and whose tapes and books are being widely disseminated, promised "one-minute wisdom," since "wisdom can come without the slightest effort in the time that it takes to open your eyes." It is true that wise people can often have instantaneous insight into an issue, but "packages" that promise "one-minute wisdom" in the contemporary context simply play into the hands of the mentality that one is entitled to everything one wants right away and without effort, and can get it via some technology.

*One firm that is apparently in human services calls itself Omnificent System, which means as much as a system that can do anything.

*In the light of our perspective on human service technology, we have been somewhat alarmed by the passage of a federal law entitled "The Technology-Related Assistance Act for Individuals With Disabilities of 1988."

*A Minnesota man has developed a computerized telephone dialing program that will call up elderly people living alone. If there is no answer, the call will be repeated later, and if there is still no answer to the second or third call, an alert is sent to local law enforcement authorities to dispatch an officer to check up on the person. If the call is answered, the computer rather stupidly says "Good morning. Are you okay?" and waits for a reply. If it receives any reply whatever, no matter what it may be, it is assumed to be a "yes," and the computer hangs up and moves on. But if there is no reply, then again the authorities get an alert. Already, the system is being installed in communities around the country, with inquiries coming from abroad (AP, 2 April 89). There are many good features to this program, but we can easily see its drawbacks. For instance, somebody may be out visiting or shopping, and particularly if a person goes out long or often, police may be running all over town visiting old people and becoming a sort of "old people police."

#14

PERVERSION ALERT -- Most readers may already know that retarded people are increasingly apt to be defined as old or "geriatric" at a very early age--sometimes in their 40s. Programs to train retarded people to get ready for retirement (even though they may never ever have worked) may accept clients in their 40s. Plans for residences for "aging" retarded persons may set a minimum admission age of 50. These perversities are sustained by the tiniest kernel of truth, which is that a small minority of retarded people show early signs of aging. Even this may not be the result of their retardation or syndromes, as often claimed, but could be due to their earlier deleterious life experiences.

*Many happy returns of the day. The oldest prostitute in Tel Aviv in 1989 was 90 years old (news clipping from Dr. Aharoni).

*Few people seem to be aware that the legislation for day care subsidy that is being promoted in the US will amount to a federalization of day care, with the federal government regulating, inspecting and all but administering day care centers in both the public and private sector. Furthermore, new requirements will vastly increase the cost of day care, driving many existing facilities out of business. Thirdly, the provision will all but wipe out church-affiliated facilities; and finally, at least a third of all the money to be allocated will go to high-level PPP activities of overseeing the program (FI, 6/88).

*The perversion-mongers never sleep. The US Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 allegedly brings people with handicaps "under the protection of the Federal Fair Housing Law," which was meant to prohibit discrimination by sellers, agents or landlords. However, we believe that the law contains some terrible perversions. It overrides local powers in housing policies pertaining to the handicapped, and thus once more contributes to the disfunctional prevailing realities of every little tiny service corner of the country being virtually run out of Washington, which is impossible and undesirable. Also, under the pretense of outlawing discrimination, it prohibits local governments from requiring residences for the handicapped to be dispersed, surprisingly with the argument that this would combat congregation of handicapped people by "disallowing assignment to a particular area." Naturally, this opens the door to the establishment of entire ghettos of handicapped people, possibly with scores of group homes next to each other, such as already almost exist in some parts of some cities. On the face of it, the law promotes "choice," but what we will probably see is that people end up "choosing" community ghettos. (Source material from David Truran).

*The last country that still has a substantial amount of old-fashioned slavery is Mauritania in Northwestern Africa, where in a population of about 1.5 million, there are an approximate 100,000 mostly dark-skinned slaves who belong to mostly light-skinned masters, all this even though the government has repeatedly declared an end to slavery. One reason slavery continues is that not only the masters but also the slaves have been very content with the situation. Many families of masters and slaves have been together for generations, and because the country is so poverty-stricken after years of drought and warfare, slaves fear that if they were set loose, they would be homeless, destitute, and possibly perish. The last public slave market was held in 1978, but private sales reportedly continue. An adult male can be bought for as little as \$200, while a relatively young woman can command as much as \$4000 because she is considered a producer of many future slaves.

*The government in England has tried to quantify judicial penalties for physical assaults, and finally sent out its "price list": \$1428 for a broken nose, \$168 for a black eye, etc. Assailants can now carefully gauge their assaults to what they think their opponent's injury is worth to them, and what they can afford (Time, 3 Oct. 1988).

*Vacation cruises tend to be such drinking binges as to constitute a major problem for people with alcoholism problems. There are now cruises and adventure tours at which either there is no alcohol, or special structures are provided that keep people from more than modest imbibing.

*In 5/89, there was a big fire at a laboratory which breeds about 90% of the mice used in biomedical research in the US. Half a million research mice were lost, potentially affecting up to \$700 million worth of research. Many researchers who depend on mice have been so stricken with the temporary mouse shortage that they have begun to "show psychological symptoms and stress reactions" (Science, 22/9/89).