

# AIDS

by Desmond Ford

*... over a year ago or*  
Early in June came the latest international Aids conference, <sup>was</sup> this time held in Berlin. The mood there was somber and in the report given in the McNeill-Lehrer hour we were told why.

First of all, there were no real "breakthroughs". Second, the chief progress registered had to do with new knowledge about what did NOT work for Aids patients. AZT is now seen as at the best a very temporary help. AZT and other drugs used to palliate the disease have failed, indeed its possible that they have done more harm than good, except for the drug manufacturers.

We quote:

It's been a very sober meeting, a very depressing meeting frankly, I think, particularly for people who treat people for the virus and people who are infected with the virus .... Physicians are looking at this meeting and realizing that all these simple front-line drugs that everyone has been counting on like AZT DDI DDC, you know, an alphabet soup of drugs. but they were drugs that were approved, that were available, could be used. <sup>n</sup> Now it's turning out that they don't work anywhere near as well as people thought, they may not work at all in some cases. If AZT in particular, which is the number one front-line drug treatment works, it works in this very narrow time period, it maybe a few weeks, a few months—its not clear. The way in which we in the united States test drugs to decide whether or not they are going to be used for people with HIV disease are not very reliable

Among the 9000 people jammed like sardines into the Berlin hall were people with cellular phones calling their stockbrokers straight from the hall. Observe the inextricable mingling of money and medicine, as with money and religion, money and politics, money and sport, etc.

*Surely it is with AIDS as with most other diseases of life — prevention is better than cure, especially better. Why? Because some diseases have no cure.*

