

Battalion Classifieds

World and Nation

Researcher: Sex experts 'irresponsible' for claim

LONDON (AP) — The World Health Organization's chief AIDS investigator said Tuesday that sex experts William Masters and Virginia Johnson were "irresponsible" for suggesting AIDS can be transmitted by casual social contact.

Dr. Jonathan Mann, the American director of WHO's Global Program on AIDS, challenged the noted sex researchers to produce scientific evidence or admit they were indulging in "idle speculation."

"If it's just theorizing, then I think they have done us all a grave disservice," Mann told reporters at the First International Conference on the Global Impact of AIDS.

About 1,100 specialists from 20 countries attended the start of the three-day meeting at London's Barbican Center.

In a new book, Masters and Johnson claim U.S. health officials have understated the extent of AIDS among heterosexuals to avoid public panic. They also say that AIDS might be transmitted by casual contact such as from a toilet seat or a waiter's bleeding finger.

same question, said "I'm not sure we chose the word 'rampant' ourselves."

Mann suggested the authors' assertion that AIDS might be more prevalent among heterosexuals than health officials believe was a matter for debate and might be useful if it strengthened awareness that the disease can be transmitted both heterosexually and homosexually.

"But if they're talking about putting their prestige behind the idea that you can catch this from a toilet seat, I think that's irresponsible unless there are data," Mann said.

Mann said he strongly objected to the authors' implication "without data, without information, that the virus spreads in other ways than we know it spreads."

Mann said he also expressed doubt about the authors' scientific qualifications regarding AIDS.

"They know a lot about sex. I

don't know how much they know about AIDS," said Mann, who said that he had not read the book, was responding to news reports about its content.

During the AIDS conference, Gary Noble, deputy director of Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta and head of the federal agency's AIDS program, also refused Masters and Johnson study by mentioning it by name.

He said separate U.S. studies confirmed that AIDS is not spread through casual social contact, study showed that infected people did not pass AIDS to members of their family except through sexual contact. Another study showed insects cannot transmit the virus.

Noble said that the incidence of AIDS among heterosexuals in the United States had increased to 1.1 percent of all cases in 1987, percent in 1986. He said health officials expected that proportion to increase to 4 to 5 percent by 1991.

As of Feb. 29, the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta had received reports of 54,723 Americans with AIDS, 30,715 of whom had died.

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome cripples the body's immune system, making it vulnerable to a variety of infections and cancers.

They wrote in their book: "The AIDS virus is now running rampant in the heterosexual community." When that assertion came under fire at a news conference in New York on Monday, Masters said, "I simply believe this." Johnson, asked the

Arabs put corpse of murdered man by mother's door

MAZRAA SHARQIYA, Occupied West Bank (AP) — Arabs stabbed a man accused of aiding Israel and dumped the corpse at his mother's door, and Israeli gunfire killed another Palestinian on Tuesday, hospitals and witnesses reported.

Hundreds of Arab women held street protests in the occupied territories on a "Women's Day" called by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Hospital officials in Nablus said three Arab protesters were wounded by Israeli gunfire, but the army said a Jewish settler shot one of them after the settler's car was stoned in the Balata refugee camp.

Residents of Mazraa Sharqiya said a settler shot Khader Mohammed Hamideh, a 42-year-old businessman with seven children, outside his home. The army confirmed Hamideh's death but said it was investigating the circumstances.

According to U.N. figures, at least 83 Palestinians have been killed by Israelis since Arab riots began Dec. 8 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which Israel captured from Jordan and Egypt in the 1967 Middle East war.

Meanwhile, four army officers were sentenced to 35 days in jail each for not being armed when three guerrillas commandeered their car before hijacking a bus Monday, the military command said.

The officers were on their way to army sporting event in track suits and fled when the guerrillas opened fire, the army said.

Three Israeli hostages and the guerrillas were killed during the hijacking and later storming of the bus. The PLO claimed responsibility for the hijacking.

More than 5,000 mourners attended the funerals of the slain Israeli Tuesday at Beersheba in southern Israel.

In Jericho, residents Aqbat Jaber said Palestinians killed an Arab policeman suspected of collaborating, wrapped the body in a Palestinian flag and dropped it at his mother's door.

The army confirmed the body of Nabil Juma Farah, 30, was found in the refugee camp Monday night and said it was investigating.

Hermit's body found eaten by animals

BOSTON (AP) — The body of Bill Britt, whose body was found in his woods shelter and partially devoured by animals, symbolized the fate of society's homeless and eccentric people, a housing court official said.

Autopsy results Tuesday showed that Britt, 52, died of pothermia and was dead two weeks before he was discovered Monday by two of his three children in his makeshift wigwag in Brookline, according to the medical examiner's report.

"Homeless people, people who want to be alone, should be protected from weather," Stanton Kessler, a senior pathologist in the medical examiner's office, said. "He had no food in him. He had no sleeping bag. This type of thing should be prevented."

Kessler said Britt was clothed and wrapped in blankets when he died. Identification was "sumptive," he said, because dentists had eaten most of his hands and fingers. His feet were intact because they had been buried into the ground and covered with dirt, for warmth, Kessler said.

Britt died in the woods of the Chestnut Hill Reservoir, had lived in the woods since 1981 and did not attract much attention until 1985, when officials began trying to move him into public or subsidized housing.

Britt's continual resistance being moved brought him national attention and his name, "the hermit of Chestnut Hill." At one point, actor Michael Rooney planned to buy the rights to his story. Last May he appeared on "Late Night with David Letterman."

Chief Housing Court Justice George Daher tried to arrange housing and medical aid for Britt despite his repeated lack of cooperation.

"He represents in a microcosm what happens to the homeless, the unfortunate, the eccentric in this cold society," Daher said Tuesday. "No one seemed to care about him. He should have been monitored. Someone should have checked in on him, rather than have him die a lonely tragic death like this."

There are more than 300 homeless people in the Boston area, according to the city Emergency Shelter Commission director, Anne Maguire. She said about 150 of them are outside the city.

A one-time insurance agent who also worked in Procter & Gamble's marketing division in New York City 30 years ago, Britt had been married with a family. Many speculated that a reportedly messy divorce in 1969 changed his lifestyle.

Both public officials and friends said he was a pariah loner who loved to chat with Boston College students who were in class just yards from his shelter. An eccentric who said he wanted to be left alone but who regaled pitched stories about himself to the media.

FAA will inspect commuter flights more frequently

WASHINGTON (AP) — Commuter airlines which carried nearly 30 million people last year are being targeted for stepped-up inspections by the Federal Aviation Administration after having fatal accidents and 56 deaths since November.

The agency announced the special inspections of the commuters, which normally fly aircraft of 30 or fewer seats, at a news conference Tuesday. It said about 20 percent of the 173 commuter carriers are expected to be singled out for particularly close scrutiny.

None of the airlines were identified and FAA officials could not say immediately how the airlines would be selected for special attention.

FAA Administrator Allan McArthur told the news conference that the agency is concerned because of the rash of commuter accidents in late 1987 and early this year, after the industry had its safest year in 1986.

ing the Ryan Air Service, killed 18 people Nov. 23 near Homer, Alaska, while the latest was the crash of an Avair commuter during a takeoff Feb. 19 near Morrisville, N.C., that killed 12 people. Between these two accidents there have been fatal commuter crashes in Nebraska, Alaska, Hawaii, Illinois and Colorado.

McArthur cited the rapid growth of the commuter industry and said measures must be taken to more closely monitor these airlines, which operate under different federal regulations than the large jet air carriers.

The "top-to-bottom" inspections, which are to begin within 60 days, are to focus on the airlines' management practices, flight crew training, record keeping and maintenance of aircraft. He said FAA officials already are reviewing information about the accidents to pinpoint possible problem areas.

The Regional Airline Association, the trade group for the commuters, said it expected the increased FAA scrutiny in light of the recent accidents.

The seven accidents over a four-month period so far appear to have nothing in common in terms of cause, McArthur said.

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