Bush Aids tsar picks up Africa gauntlet Friday, 4 July, 2003

Mr Bush says his nominee is a fine businessman

Randall "Randy" Tobias has critics on both sides of the Aids debate.

But President George Bush insists his new Aids tsar is the best man there is, well placed to run his $15bn programme to combat the epidemic in the Caribbean, and, importantly, in Africa, home to nearly 70% of the world's HIV carriers.

He may not have much knowledge of the spread of Aids in developing countries, but he is able to draw on a raft of experience gained as the chief executive of a top US pharmaceutical company, his supporters argue.

However, it is exactly his proximity to the drugs industry and - as a major Republican Party donor - his closeness to President Bush, which has some Aids activists worried.

Drug ties

The principal point of contention among his detractors is an alleged conflict of interest for a man who was the chief executive of American drugs giant Eli Lilly and who is now to make decisions regarding which Aids drugs should be offered to Africa.

Mr Tobias was drafted into the pharmaceutical company in 1993. As a telecoms executive, he was a surprise choice, but he was quickly credited with turning the company around, displaying the kind of acumen which many believe will come in useful during his Aids assignment.

He went down well with working mothers, having been an aggressive
advocate of work-life balance. His company's childcare policy won him the title of CEO of the year from Working Mother magazine in 1996.

"We are concerned that Mr Tobias does not have a proven track record of supporting the effective strategies to combat Aids"  
Connie Mackey  
Family Research Council

Such credentials are of little interest, however, to Aids campaigners, some of whom argue that his appointment shows less about President Bush's commitment to Aids, and more about his commitment to the drug industry.

"We are gravely concerned about his appointment, which represents a clear conflict of interests," says Paul Zeitz, head of Global Aids Alliance.

"He will be making US policy, procuring drugs, and our big fear is that he will block access to the cheapest, generic drugs, for the sake of the big pharmaceutical companies," he told BBC News Online.

In December, Washington blocked plans by the World Trade Organisation to allow developing countries to buy cheap drugs, saying such a deal would allow too many patents to be ignored.

Abstinence

But as left-wingers bemoan Mr Randall's proximity to industry, conservative groups fear he is not right-wing enough.

Although the majority of the $15bn promised will go to treatment programmes, a third of the money has been set aside for education.

Under the legislation approved by Mr Bush, these projects must promote abstinence rather than safer sex - a clause which family planning agencies have denounced as singularly unhelpful.

"We are gravely concerned about his appointment, which represents a clear conflict of interests"  
Paul Zeitz  
Global Aids Alliance

But the conservative lobby says they fear Mr Tobias is not wholly committed to its so-called "A-B-C" message - which promotes abstinence above every other method of disease control.

"We are concerned that Mr Tobias does not have a proven track record of supporting the effective strategies to combat Aids that are outlined
"in the legislation," says Connie Mackey of the right-wing Family Research Council.

"The White House must ensure that Mr Tobias follows the A-B-C model to combatting Aids."

No altruist

Some observers note that if Mr Tobias is upsetting both sides of the political divide, he may not be such a bad choice.

When Mr Tobias won the Working Mother's accolade, he admitted that he had implemented family-friendly policies as much out of self-interest as anything else.

"This is not something we do as an extra perk. The policies are predicated on what I genuinely believe is best for the company," he said at the time.

A man who concedes he is not an altruist perhaps fits in well with the Bush Aids programme, which analysts say is as much about protecting the US as it is a philanthropic gesture.

It is widely believed that an Aids epidemic in Africa which is left unchecked will ripple out and have an impact on Western economies before long, and that would be bad news for America.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3044624.stm
By Clar Ni Chonghaile

GOREE ISLAND, Senegal (Reuters) - President Bush made an eloquent speech but did not win many friends during his brief visit to Goree Island off Senegal on Tuesday.

"We are very angry. We didn't even see him," said Fatou N'diaye, a necklace seller watching dignitaries file past to return to the mainland at the end of Bush's tour.

N'diaye and other residents of Goree, site of a famous slave trading station, said they had been taken to a football ground on the other side of the quaint island at 6 a.m. and told to wait there until Bush had departed, around midday.

Bush came to Goree to tour the red-brick Slave House, where Africans were kept in shackles before being shipped across a perilous sea to a lifetime of servitude.

He then gave an eloquent speech about the horrors of slavery, standing at a podium under a sizzling sun near a red-stone museum, topped by cannon pointing out to the sea.

The cooped-up residents were not impressed.

"It's slavery all over again," fumed one father-of-four, who did not want to give his name. "It's humiliating. The island was deserted."
White House officials said the decision to remove the locals was taken by Senegalese authorities. But there was no doubt who the residents blamed.

"We never want to see him come here again," said N'diaye, hiking her loose gown onto her shoulders with a frown.

As the sun rose over Goree before Bush's arrival, the only people to be seen on the main beach were U.S. officials and secret service agents. Frogmen swam through the shallows and hoisted themselves up to peer into brightly painted pirogues.

Normally, the island teems with tourists, Senegal's ubiquitous traders, hawkers of cheap African art, photographers offering to take pictures and all the expected trappings of a tourist hot-spot in one of the world's poorest countries.

On Tuesday, shutters on the yellow and red colonial-style houses remained shut. The cafes were closed and the narrow pier deserted, apart from security agents manning a metal detector, near the sandy beach. A gunship patrolled offshore.

"We understand that you have to have security measures, since September 11, but to dump us in another place...? We had to leave at 6 a.m. I didn't have time to bathe, and the bread did not arrive," the father-of-four said.

"We were shut up like sheep," said 15-year-old Mamadou.

Many residents compared Bush's hour-long visit unfavorably to the island tour by former President Bill Clinton in 1998.

"When Clinton came, he shook hands, people danced," said former Mayor Urbain Alexandre Diagne.

As the Bush roadtrip moved on, Goree was returning to normal with children once again diving into the shallows and clambering over the now inoffensive pirogues.

Tuesday, 8 July, 2003, 21:04 GMT 22:04 UK

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3055924.stm

Congress set to slash Africa aid

By Steve Schifferes
BBC News Online, Washington

AS US President George W Bush proclaims his commitment to Africa during this week's five-day trip, his Republicans in Congress are planning on cutting back the money allocated to his much-vaunted plans to tackle HIV/Aids and encourage development.
At the heart of the president's new focus on Africa are two initiatives for which the administration has promised a significant increase in funding.

Mr Bush has pledged $15bn to fight HIV/AIDS, primarily in Africa, over the next five years, and an additional $10bn in additional foreign aid over the next three years in a new Millennium Challenge Account.

But the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee - which determines how much money will actually be spent in next year's budget - looks set to cut back that request when it meets on Thursday.

Representative Jim Kolbe, chairman of the subcommittee on foreign operations, said that in his view Congress would be unlikely to allocate the full amount because neither initiative will be fully operational by the time the fiscal year begins.

The amounts "assume you have full-blown programmes up and running on October 1, and that's not the case," he said.

Mr Bush has just recently appointed his Global Aids administrator, a former pharmaceutical executive, Randall Tobias.

In all the Bush administration has requested $18.9bn in foreign aid for the next fiscal year, but the House appropriations committee has said it plans to allocate only $17.1bn - a reduction of $1.8bn.

Aid agencies worried

Jamie Drummond, executive director of Data, a pressure group set up to campaign for debt relief and African aid, said that the two new
programmes together could represent a massive change in America's commitment to Africa, increasing US aid spending to that region from $1bn now to $5bn in 2006.

But he warned that the trip "was set up in quite a dramatic way to see if the president will see through on his promises".

Mr Drummond said it would be ironic that, while Mr Bush was in Africa, "the House foreign operations subcommittee was actually deciding to slash those promises, to break them if you like".

And he warned that there should be no cutbacks in other programmes to fund these new initiatives, nor restrictions on contributions from other nations.

Aid experts say that it may be difficult for many African countries to meet the strict conditions that the US has set for receiving funds from the new Millennium Challenge Account, which requires nations to adhere to strict standards of openness and democracy.

It may be that as few as four or five African nations would qualify for the first wave of assistance under this programme.

There are also significant problems of health care delivery in relation to HIV/Aids, with many African nations lacking the basic public health infrastructure to deliver improved care.

Trade talks

Meanwhile, experts are concerned about the lack of progress in negotiations over trade in agricultural products, which could offer more real benefits to African economies than any aid programme.

Robert Shapiro of the Brookings Institution points out that while many African countries have a per capita income of $1 per day, in Europe the agricultural subsidy per cow is $2 per day.

Overall, subsidies by rich countries for agricultural amount to $300bn, compared to $50bn in foreign aid.

Mr Shapiro said that African income from exports of agricultural products could triple from $10bn to $30bn if subsidies were reduced.

But with trade talks between the US and the EU over agriculture
deadlocked in the run-up to the crucial Cancun summit in September, there is little hope that Africa can develop its natural advantage in the near future.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3052186.stm

Africa's mixed feelings on Bush

By Barnaby Phillips
BBC Southern Africa correspondent

President Bush is not a popular man in Africa.

His invasion of Iraq provoked anger, scorn and incomprehension across the continent.

A number of issues have aroused African anger

Nelson Mandela described Mr Bush as a man "who can't think properly".

But Mr Bush is coming to Africa, and Africa cannot afford to give him the cold shoulder.

There are a number of reasons why Africa matters to the United States.

Oil

One of them is oil.

The Americans already import about 15% of their crude oil from West Africa; that figure is projected to rise to 25% in the next 10 years.
A series of spectacular discoveries off the coasts of Angola, Sao Tome, Gabon and Nigeria have confirmed the Gulf of Guinea as one of the most strategic regions in the world.

And in the aftermath of 11 September 2001, America is looking to reduce its dependence on the Middle East.

**Terror**

That ties in with the terrorism threat.

Many African countries opposed the US-led war against Iraq. American officials worry that Africa is the "soft under-belly" in the so-called war on terror.

Al-Qaeda has already launched attacks in Kenya and Tanzania.

Last month the Americans whisked five al-Qaeda suspects out of Malawi, and took them to an undisclosed location.

On this trip, President Bush will be looking for co-operation on intelligence gathering, as well as discussing arrangements for aircraft refuelling and access to military bases in countries across the continent.

**Democracy**

But the Americans have also learnt that weak governments and civil conflict create the circumstances under which terrorist groups can organise and flourish.

Promoting prosperity and democracy in Africa is not just altruistic - it also serves America's interests.
Fuel strikes could overshadow Bush's visit to Nigeria

That is one of the reasons why Mr Bush has chosen to visit five countries - Senegal, South Africa, Botswana, Uganda and Nigeria - which are all, in their own imperfect ways, relatively successful.

But he will also argue that those African countries which do embrace good governance and democratic values will be rewarded by the United States.

He will draw attention to the African Growth and Opportunity Act, or Agoa - legislation designed to allow African products duty-free access to American markets.

And he will highlight America's commitment to fighting HIV/Aids.

**Low expectations**

Many Africans will be sceptical. They will argue that American agricultural subsidies undermine Mr Bush's professed commitment to free-trade, and destroy the livelihoods of African farmers.

And already there is considerable doubt as to whether Mr Bush will be able to raise the $15bn he says he needs to fight Aids in Africa.

Mr Bush will never be loved on this continent the way his predecessor was.

When Bill Clinton met the crowds in Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria, the mutual affection was tangible.

His easy, warm style charmed Africans. Even his sexual foibles won him respect.
But, with the benefit of hindsight, many Africans argue that Mr Clinton did not deliver much, despite the hype and excitement that surrounded his visits to Africa.

Mr Bush will be travelling with lower expectations; yet his journey could turn out to be the more significant.

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**Bush Pushes South African in Fighting AIDS**

*By RICHARD W. STEVENSON*  
*New York Times July 9, 2003*

PRETORIA, South Africa, July 9 — President Bush today brought the promise of more money for fighting AIDS to South Africa, which has been slow to attack the disease, and he pressed President Thabo Mbeki to deal with the epidemic more effectively.

On the second day of his five-day trip to Africa, Mr. Bush urged the South African leader, who has expressed doubt about the link between HIV and AIDS and raised questions about the effectiveness of the drug treatment that has become standard, to come up with a plan that includes both the drug regimen and prevention efforts.

AIDS was one of two issues in which the two leaders stepped gingerly around each other during a morning of meetings here. The other was the future of Zimbabwe, which is becoming unstable under President Robert Mugabe.

South Africa has 4.7 million people with H.I.V., one of the largest infected populations in the world, but Mr. Mbeki's government has not yet made life-prolonging antiretroviral drugs widely available. Advocacy groups have long
demanded that Mr. Mbeki drop what they consider to be his incomprehensible reluctance to deal aggressively with the problem.

White House officials played down the differences between Mr. Bush and Mr. Mbeki on AIDS. But they made clear that the United States would use the leverage of its offer to include South Africa in the first round of countries to benefit from the $15 billion AIDS-fighting package Mr. Bush proposed in January to prod Mr. Mbeki to move faster to bring all available weapons to bear.

"We need a common-sense strategy to make sure that the money is well spent," Mr. Bush said at a news conference with Mr. Mbeki. "And the definition of well spent means lives are saved, which means good treatment programs, good prevention programs, good programs to develop health infrastructures in remote parts of different countries so that we can actually get antiretroviral drugs to those who need help."

On Zimbabwe, the Bush administration has called for a change of government, and with Mr. Mugabe turning increasingly autocratic, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell urged South Africa last month to use its influence to bring about a resolution of the issue. But Mr. Mbeki, who has longstanding ties to Mr. Mugabe, and like him fought for years against white rule, has stuck to his position that the best approach is quiet, gradual diplomacy, and has expressed annoyance at Mr. Powell for pressuring him.

At their news conference today, Mr. Bush and Mr. Mbeki said they shared the same aim of restoring stability to Zimbabwe. "President Bush and myself are absolutely of one mind about the urgent need to address the political and economic challenges of Zimbabwe," Mr. Mbeki said. "It's necessary to resolve this matter as quickly as possible."

Mr. Bush said he did not have "any intention of second-guessing" Mr. Mbeki's approach, but he also signaled that the United States would continue to use diplomatic pressure to keep Zimbabwe from an economic collapse or civil war.

"I think it's important for the United States, whether it be me or my secretary of state, to speak out when we see a situation where somebody's freedoms have been taken away from them and they're suffering," Mr. Bush said. "And that's what we're going to continue to do."

A senior administration official later told reporters that "what the presidents talked about is how their two approaches can be complementary."

The official added, "We think everyone needs to do more."
Mr. Bush briefed Mr. Mbeki on his plans for the United States to play a role in efforts to bring peace to Liberia, but again stressed that he had made no decision to commit American troops to any peacekeeping force.

In a signal that he expects West African nations to take the lead in sending peacekeepers to Liberia, and that the United States might prefer to limit its involvement to technical and training support, Mr. Bush said he would "reinvigorate the strategy of helping people help themselves by providing training opportunities."

He said the United States had already trained peacekeeping forces from Nigeria and Senegal. This evening, officials from the Economic Community of West African States, the umbrella group for governments in the region, said they would send 1,000 troops to Liberia.

Mr. Bush also visited a Ford Motor Company factory and had dinner at the residence of the United States Ambassador, Cameron Hume. In both events, he promoted closer economic ties between the United States and Africa, especially through trade.

Mr. Mbeki and Mr. Bush said they welcomed the deepening ties between their countries since the end of apartheid nearly a decade ago, and Mr. Bush stayed at lunch with his host for 50 minutes beyond the scheduled time, a rarity for the ever-punctual president.

But there have been strains between the countries beyond the issues of AIDS and Zimbabwe, most notably over South Africa's opposition to Mr. Bush's decision to go to war with Iraq without the backing of the United Nations. Mr. Mbeki's predecessor, Nelson Mandela, a harsh critic of the war, is out of the country and will not be meeting with Mr. Bush.

Although they were kept far from Mr. Bush, about 1,000 people gathered in a park near the United States embassy here to protest the president's visit, chanting, "Down Bush!" and "Africa is not for sale!"

"We don't want George Bush here," said Liza Xhosa, who is 35 and lives in an informal settlement in Soweto with no electricity or running water. She marched under the banner of the Landless People's Movement, which advocates for the distribution of land to poor people. "Mbeki should not see Bush. Mandela does not like Bush, so why does Mbeki invite him? He should give us land and jobs instead of meeting with imperialists."

Mr. Bush's lone opportunity to meet with South Africans outside of government officials and invited dignitaries was his trip to the Ford plant, where he told workers that he wanted to hear more about how Ford is encouraging efforts to fight AIDS.
He talked about his AIDS proposal, but did not mention that a House subcommittee is likely to cut funds for the first year of the $15 billion, three-year program below the $3 billion sought by legislation Mr. Bush signed this spring. The program would provide help to 14 countries, 12 of them in Africa.

Administration officials said they were optimistic about progress on AIDS in South Africa.

"What we believe is that the South African government, under the leadership of President Mbeki, clearly understands the needs for ARV's," said a senior administration official traveling with Mr. Bush, using an acronym to refer to antiretroviral drugs.

Groups advocating more effort to tackle AIDS said they welcomed Mr. Bush's attempt to engage Mr. Mbeki in the program. But they said Mr. Bush had missed an opportunity by not making a more direct public statement of the need for Mr. Mbeki to change his approach.

"There's no evidence that President Bush's visit advanced the South African government's thinking," said Mark Heywood, national secretary of the Treatment Action Campaign, a group pushing Mr. Mbeki to do more to battle AIDS. "We're still stuck with a government policy that is at odds with medical thinking universally."

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**Bush Discusses $15 Billion AIDS Program**

*NYTimes*

*By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS*

*July 11, 2003*

*Filed at 10:24 a.m. ET*

**ENTEBBE, Uganda (AP) -- President Bush and his wife Laura praised Uganda's aggressive prevention and treatment programs to combat HIV on Friday, declaring at an AIDS clinic, "You're leading the way."**

It is one thing to talk about the scourge of AIDS, and quite another to see it up close in the face of victims, as he and the first lady had done, Bush said.

"I've met generals in the worldwide army of compassion," Bush said in a speech after visiting the clinic.

Earlier, the president met with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and
heaped praise on him at a picture-taking session. "You have shown the world what is possible in terms of reducing infection rates," Bush said.

Uganda, an Oregon-sized nation in east-central Africa, is a model for stemming its once-spiraling rate of HIV infection. It stands in sharp contrast to Botswana -- another stop on Bush's African journey -- which is struggling with the world's highest HIV infection rate.

Bush's own five-year, $15 billion AIDS plan is modeled after a program in Uganda, which stresses abstinence, monogamy and condom use.

Bush also praised Museveni as "a strong advocate of free trade" and a force for peace in Central Africa.

He steered clear of Uganda's involvement in the 5-year civil war in neighboring Congo.

Uganda sent troops into Congo to back rebels seeking to oust then-President Laurent Kabila when the war there erupted in August 1998. Uganda withdrew its troops in May, but human rights groups accuse Uganda of continuing to fuel the fighting in eastern and northeastern Congo -- where thousands have been killed -- by arming Congolese factions in the region.

Amnesty International urged Bush to press the Ugandan government to end all military support to the groups. In a statement, the human rights group also called on Bush to back calls for a "truly robust international military force capable of protecting civilians" in Congo.

U.N. troops deployed in Congo can only fire in self-defense and have not attempted to stem the violence.

Uganda was one of four African countries that openly supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Museveni seized power in 1986.

From his meeting with Museveni, Bush and his wife went on their tour of an AIDS clinic in Uganda, his fourth stop during a five-nation African tour. After the speech, Bush flew to Nigeria, where he had no public events scheduled Friday.

In his speech in the clinic, Bush mentioned his $15-billion program, without mentioning that the Republican-controlled House has not provided all the money he seeks. "You are not alone in this fight. America has decided to act," he said. "We want to be on your side in a big way."

Bush spoke outdoors in a small courtyard outside the clinic. His audience of about 60 people was made up of mostly men, many in business suits but
others in colorful traditional African clothing. A Ugandan children's choir sang "America the Beautiful" and signs proclaimed: "Living Positively with AIDS" and "United Against AIDS." The president took his picture with the children, then embraced them in a group hug.

The clinic Bush visited saw 4,787 patients in 1997, and 28,776 last year. The AIDS Support Organization clinic, founded in 1987, was the first and largest indigenous HIV-services organization in Africa. Most founders of the TASO clinic network have already died of AIDS.

Bush spoke in a small courtyard outside the AIDS clinic, filled with about 50 people, mostly men, dressed in business suits and traditional African garb and shielding themselves from the hot sun with rainbow-colored umbrellas.

Uganda has managed to put the brakes on a rising HIV infection rate that had devastated the country in the 1980s and 1990s. But the disease is still taking a heavy toll, with about 1 million Ugandans infected out of a total population of 24 million.

A massive public education campaign helped drop the infection rate to about 5 percent. Condom use is widespread, the average age of first sexual contact has been raised and the average number of sexual partners has been reduced.

The government's latest awareness campaign promotes the "A,B,C,D" of HIV -- "abstain," change "behavior," use "condoms," or "die."

"We made it our highest priority to convince our people to return to their traditional values of chastity and faithfulness or, failing that, to use condoms," Museveni told drug company executives in Washington last month. "The alternative was decimation."

Prevention is affordable but drugs to treat the infected are not. They cost about $26 a month, while Uganda spends about $3.50 on health care per citizen annually.

Bush's $15 billion AIDS plan would target prevention and treatment assistance to a total of 14 hard-hit countries -- two in the Caribbean and a dozen in Africa. In Washington, a House panel approved only two-thirds of the $3 billion it had authorized for the first year of Bush's battle plan for global AIDS.
Bush Promotes His Plans to Help Africa
By RICHARD W. STEVENSON

ABORONE, Botswana, July 10 — President Bush visited Botswana today to promote his proposals to help Africa fight AIDS and overcome poverty, saying he wants the world to know "that we're not only a powerful nation, we're also a compassionate nation."

But his visit coincided with action by Congress to trim the budgets for the two main proposals he highlighted here, a plan to increase aid to countries that make demonstrable progress toward democracy and free markets and a program to send $15 billion to some of the world's poorest nations over the next five years to combat AIDS.

In choosing to come to Botswana on the third day of his swing through Africa, Mr. Bush put a spotlight on a nation that embodies much of the promise of Africa, having posted a solid record of economic growth that has
enabled it to build a middle class and considerable political stability.

But Botswana also suffers from one of the world's highest rates of H.I.V., with 39 percent of adults infected, making it not only home to an enormous human tragedy but also a laboratory for initiatives to bring the pandemic under control.

Mr. Bush spent his day meeting with Botswana's leaders, stopping by a trade fair that exhibited handmade goods for export and touring a game park, where the animals he encountered included, to his obvious amusement, a pair of mating elephants.

Like many of the other African nations that have succeeded in moving toward economic and political stability, Botswana and its president, Festus G. Mogae, have increasingly emphasized fighting poverty by developing industries that can export products to the rest of the world. Much of Mr. Mogae's discussion today with Mr. Bush involved pressing the United States to open its market more fully to African goods and working to end other trade practices, including heavy subsidies to American and European farmers, that make it hard for Africa to compete in world markets.

Mr. Bush said that he had heard the same message from President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa on Wednesday and that he expected to hear similar messages for the rest of his trip through Africa.

"It will come up in every country we come to, because African leaders are worried that subsidies, agricultural subsidies, are undermining their capacity to become self-sufficient in food," Mr. Bush said.

He said the United States wanted to resolve the issue through talks on a new global trade accord that would also require Europe and Japan to cut their agricultural subsidies. He repeated his message that Europe had a special responsibility to drop its ban on imports of genetically modified crops from Africa, saying that it discourages African farmers from investing in techniques that could help end hunger on the continent.

Africa's halting economic progress and the attempts by countries like Botswana to become part of the global economy have coincided with a sharp decline in trade between Africa and the rest of the world.

The World Bank has calculated that Africa's share of world exports has dropped by nearly 60 percent to 1.5 percent at end of 1990's from 3.5 percent in 1970. The bank said the drop represented a loss equivalent to 21 percent of the region's total economic output and more than five times the $13 billion in annual aid flows to Africa.
As the Bush administration was confronting pressure from Africans to do more on trade, it was faced with pressure from many Democrats in Congress to make good on its promises to help the poorest nations.

A House appropriations subcommittee took up a measure that would finance Mr. Bush's AIDS proposal at $2 billion next year, $1 billion less than called for in legislation Mr. Bush signed this spring but about the same as the administration called for at the beginning of this year. The subcommittee also moved to reduce first-year financing for Mr. Bush's economic development plan, the Millennium Challenge Account, to $800 million from the $1.3 billion the administration had requested.

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, who is traveling with the president, said he "would have preferred to see full funding" of the AIDS program.

Representative Nita M. Lowey of New York, the senior Democrat on the subcommittee, said the administration had not pushed hard enough for the money.

Mr. Bush's "public remarks would have you believe that his H.I.V./AIDS and Millennium Challenge Account initiatives will offer significant additional resources and solve the crisis," she said. "These contentions are largely a fraud."

But Representative Jim Kolbe, the Arizona Republican who heads the subcommittee, said the panel was constrained by a $17.1 billion spending cap that required reductions in other programs. He said the bill allocated 40 percent more to global AIDS programs than Congress appropriated last year, and he contended that the money was sufficient to get both the AIDS program and the Millennium Challenge Account started.

"A plane doesn't take off at 500 miles, and it doesn't take off at 30,000 feet," Mr. Kolbe said. "It takes off slower, and it climbs. And we do the same thing with programs, which is how you ramp them up."

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**Bush praises Uganda Aids fight**

President Bush meets Aids sufferers in Uganda before departing for Nigeria - the last country in his tour of Africa.
Bush is spending five days on a lightning tour of the continent

President George W. Bush has praised Ugandan attempts to tackle the Aids virus during his four-hour visit there.

Speaking before departing for Nigeria, the fifth and final nation on his tour of the continent, he also underlined his government's commitment to the battle against Aids in Africa saying: "When history called, we responded".

Uganda is the only African country which has successfully managed to reverse the tide of Aids infections and Mr Bush sees it as a model for his own $15bn Aids initiative on the continent.

During a meeting with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, the US leader said: "You have shown the world what is possible in terms of reducing infection rates".

Mr Bush also visited an Aids support organisation and met Aids sufferers who were to ask him about better access to life-saving anti-retroviral drugs.

Most of the Ugandans who need the drugs cannot afford to pay for them - even with the new generic drugs available on the market.

Uganda has successfully fought Aids with an aggressive public information campaign after the epidemic slashed life expectancy from 48 years to 38 during the 1990s.
In the early 1990s, the rate of HIV infection in some urban areas was as high as 30%, but today just 6% of the total population now carries the virus.

**Aids funds** Mr Bush again repeated in Uganda his pledge to spend $15bn on fighting Aids across Africa over the next five years.

**AFRICA AIDS CRISIS**
Facts and figures on the impact of Aids in sub-Saharan Africa

**At-A-Glance**
But back in Washington, a House of Representatives subcommittee in charge of foreign aid has allocated just $2bn to fight global Aids in the coming fiscal year instead of the expected $3bn.

Jim Kolbe, chairman of the subcommittee, predicted Congress would still live up to its promise to spend $15bn over five years.

But he said that spending $3bn in the first year, as Mr Bush had originally proposed, was unrealistic when the programme was just getting off the ground.

Officials in the US legislature point out that the $15bn figure given by Mr Bush was meant to be a ceiling or a guideline - and did not necessarily represent the total amount of allotted funds.

**Tour**

The trip is giving President Bush a close-up view of some of the continent’s protracted crises, and he has been dogged by the question of whether to send US peacekeepers to Liberia.

On Wednesday, Mr Bush suggested that US assistance to Liberia might consist mostly of advisers and trainers to avoid stretching American forces too thinly around the globe.

He said US money had helped pay for the training of seven battalions of African peacekeepers.

He said it was a "sensible policy" to help the Africans help themselves "so that we never do get overextended".

Nigerian Vice President Atiku Abubakar, however, has told the BBC's Network Africa that he expects the United States to provide forces for Liberia alongside Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria.
He said Nigeria was preparing to send two battalions of troops to Liberia within the next two weeks.

Mr Abubakar said that other issues to be discussed when Mr Bush arrives in Nigeria later on Friday would be oil and co-operation on economic and military matters.


**Uganda's Aids approach**

United States President George W. Bush will come face-to-face with Aids sufferers during his brief visit to Uganda on Friday.

Noerine Kaleeba: Aids patients met by George Bush could soon be dead

One of the leading pioneers of HIV-Aids education and prevention in Uganda, Noerine Kaleeba, says the Aids sufferers have no access to life-saving anti-retroviral drugs.

And she hopes the American president will be spurred to take immediate action to tackle the disease.

The situation is even more urgent because many of the Aids sufferers he will meet face death in the very near future without treatment with special Aids drugs, she says.

"The young Aids sufferers who will sing and dance for him will all die in a year's time if they do not get antiretroviral medicines," says Ms Kaleeba.

**Questions**

Ms Kaleeba says Aids sufferers in Uganda were desperate to know when the $15bn Mr Bush pledged to fight Aids in Africa would be delivered.

**Uganda**

1.5m need anti-retrovirals
600,000 adults and children infected with HIV virus in 2001
Infection levels have dropped to 8% of adults from 19%
Noerine Kaleeba: Aids patients met by George Bush could soon be dead

Uganda: Country profile

"This is one of the questions that the young Aids sufferers will be directly asking President Bush".

Some 90% of the 1.5m Ugandans needing anti-retrovirals cannot afford them although prices have fallen drastically because of competition from generic versions.

Uganda has been hailed as an example of how Aids can be tackled with government backing for nationwide prevention efforts.

Ms Kaleeba says that anti-Aids campaigners in Uganda have used what she describes as the "ABC strategy".

Political commitment

AFRICA AIDS CRISIS
Facts and figures on the impact of Aids in sub-Saharan Africa

At-A-Glance

The strategy involves education on the importance of abstinence, being faithful to one's partner and the use of condoms.

Some 600,000 adults and children were infected with the HIV virus by the end of 2001, according to UN figures.

Aids infection levels have drastically fallen in the past decade, according to the Uganda Aids Commission.

International health agencies say that Uganda's success was a result
of political commitment at the highest levels of government, coupled with an openness about the disease.

How important is African oil?

Angola: sub-Saharan Africa's No 2 oil producer
President George W Bush is in Africa to launch HIV/AIDS, development and anti-terrorism initiatives.

But his visit has also highlighted the growing importance of oil imports for the United States.

The US imports two thirds of its oil needs.

About 15% of that amount comes from West Africa and that figure is projected to rise to 25% in the next 10 years.

The oil sector in Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the fastest growing in the world.

Click here to see a map of Africa's oilfields

Production has taken off in the Gulf of Guinea which includes Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Gabon, Angola and Congo.

By the end of 2003, hundreds of thousands of barrels of crude will be flowing from oil fields in Chad, through rain forests in Cameroon to tankers docked off the Atlantic coast.

Political problems are much more localised in Africa
Douglas Mason, EIU
An American company has secured a concession in the neighbouring Central African Republic.

In the aftermath of 11 September 2001, America is seen as looking to reduce its dependence on the Middle East by looking elsewhere for energy supplies.

Despite a reputation for political and economic stability, oil flows from Africa can be reliable, especially as production often takes place off-shore.

"Usually oil production takes place in enclaves, so continues regardless of what goes on around," said Douglas Mason, Africa specialist at the Economist Intelligence Unit.

"Political problems are much more localised in Africa."

**US military involvement**

America may even eventually increase its military presence in the region to secure its oil supplies.

Sao Tome - which has big oil reserves - has invited the US Navy to build a port from which to patrol the Gulf of Guinea.

But some analysts say investing in African oil reserves will not solve all America's energy problems.

"It is as well to diversify as much as possible. But no one oil source is more reliable than the other," says Robert Mabro, President of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies.

**Africa and Russia are not going to replace Saudi Arabia which has excess capacity which can stabilise the market**

Professor Paul Stevens, Dundee University

"There is a move to reduce reliance on the Middle East but Africa also has its problems. Look at the recent strikes in Nigeria."

Professor of Petroleum and Economics at Dundee University, Paul Stevens describes as "mis-informed" officials in Washington who see African oil as crucially important to the US.

They want to reduce America's reliance on Saudi Arabia's goodwill, he
"It doesn't matter where you get it from, it's how much you pay. If oil cost $60 a barrel in the Middle East, it's still going to cost $60 in Africa.

"Africa and Russia are not going to replace Saudi Arabia which has excess capacity which can stabilise the market."

Comment
http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,994216,00.html

New lords of Africa
Global protests did help poor countries over drugs and Aids. But the counterattack has begun

Saskia Sassen
Wednesday July 9, 2003
The Guardian

Warlords. They have a bad name but not all they do is bad. Their basic premise is that a good gun is better than a good law. Then there is the horsetrading: you give me oil, I will get you aid for Aids treatment; horsetrading can work when bureaucrats fail. Some warlords are grubby,
others are imperial: as in Liberia, the warlord can descend from the heavens and declare it's time for the old order to go. Then there is the domestic warlord: the cowboy or the caudillo, always riding something - a horse, a tank - to an unknown destination.

Although warlordism is not new, it has had to adjust to new settings, like international treaties and whatnot. And it has had to become far more complex and indirect in its horsetrading. Bush is becoming a warlord who can handle it all. Two cases come to mind. One is the current visit to Africa, where Bush wants access to oil and the installation of US military bases and troops to make the region secure against terrorism. The second is the Bush administration's handling of the World Trade Organisation Doha declaration giving poor countries the right to override pharmaceutical patents in public health emergencies.

At the top of the list for horsetrading in Africa are oil and military bases or, at the least, troop stations. In return, Bush is offering aid for Aids victims and enhanced access to US markets. This is horsetrading at its best. The fine print on the offer of US market access has some notable features: the benefits for African producers are actually neutralised by the distortions resulting from US government subsidies to its farmers; these subsidies are larger than many African economies, and they are three times as large as total US aid to Africa as a whole.

US investment in oil production is being presented as a tool for development. This is not the first time this has happened, so we have some evidence on the matter. Again, the fine print does not look as good as the headlines. Oil has been a devastating fact for development in Africa: it has concentrated wealth and produced disincentives for any other type of development. Nor has it helped democracy, since entrenched elites lose much more than office if they lose control over the government. The economic shadow effect of oil is largely negative, and it all winds up creating more poverty. Oil-rich Nigeria and its 100m poor are exhibit number one.

What does the US get out of it? Today the US relies on Africa for 15% of its oil imports. The estimates are that by 2005 this will rise to between 20% and 25% of US oil imports. To this we should add the high quality of some of the African oil and the better transport distance from the Atlantic coast compared to the Middle East. Finally, if the US can also set
up military bases and station troops to make sure everything is quiet, even if not peaceful, then we have a nice military-economic linkage.

One might say that Africa is special - that is, especially vulnerable - when it is horsetrading with imperial warlords. But we see similarly crafted fine print if we go digging into some of the WTO agreements that supposedly are victories for the interests of people in the global south. It also tells us something about why aid for Aids might be the one item in the horsetrading that might actually bring benefits to Africa - and it has nothing to do with the noblesse oblige of imperial warlords.

Every time countries of the global south have politically organised to see some of their interests reflected in the WTO declarations, the work of elaborating the details takes a peculiar turn. Sheer power trumps politics. The only time that politics can trump sheer power is when larger sectors of global civil society get involved in the fray, and do so with very well-defined goals in mind. Dissecting the case of the WTO Doha declaration illuminates each of these issues.

Global south countries did organise themselves effectively at the Doha meetings to resist some of the more damaging resolutions proposed by the global north. They succeeded in introducing the notion of options to override patents on pharmaceuticals. In the context of WTO and intellectual property rights this is almost subversive of global capitalism and "morally" wrong because it will damage the public collective interest of both poor and rich in supporting costly research. This was an important victory, especially since countries such as Brazil, India and Jordan have formidable pharmaceutical capabilities and are able generically to produce many of the drugs now under patent.

There was a second victory for the global south at the meeting. The WTO recognised that some of the poorer countries lack the resources to produce these medicines. Paragraph 6 of the Doha declaration is quite clear on this. These were the headlines.

But the horsetrading started soon after. the WTO designed a list of "approved diseases" that justify overriding patents on pharmaceuticals crucial for countries lacking the capabilities for generic production. The list turns out to exclude just about all major diseases for which the global north firms have developed medicines. Left on the list are mostly
diseases for which these firms have not - one is tempted to insert "bothered to" - develop medicines or for which treatment is so old as to be off-patent. Dr Mary Moran of Médecins Sans Frontières reports that almost all of the major causes of mortality and morbidity in Africa for which patented western drugs exist have been excluded from the list of drugs poor countries can acquire outside the intellectual property rights framework.

There is one exception to these defeats: drugs for treating HIV/AIDS. There are two important political lessons to be learnt from this case. Worldwide NGO mobilisation played a crucial role in making the large pharmaceuticals desist in their efforts to prevent poor countries from importing the far cheaper generically produced HIV/AIDS drugs. What matters politically is that global protests by civil society helped poor countries get what they needed from the most powerful countries in the WTO: overriding the patents of Aids treatments held by the most powerful corporations in the world. This success is particularly significant as it is one of the few serious diseases that were not eliminated from the list.

The second lesson is that warlords will not simply leave it at this. The latest war the US is now preparing is a major attack on the WTO itself: they don't want it any more. Another attack is targeted against "progressive" NGOs and their growing influence. Two components illustrate the matter. The American Enterprise Institute, an influential thinktank closely associated with the Bush administration, launched the attack with a conference in Washington co-sponsored by the Australian rightwing thinktank, the Institute of Public Affairs. At least 42 senior representatives of the Bush administration attended. Secondly, the US Agency for International Development is now moving to grant more contracts to private firms instead of NGOs.

Warlords can go along with laws and international treaties if these do not interfere. When they do interfere, the horsetrading begins. And when this is not enough, well, there are always those guns.

Saskia Sassen is professor of sociology at the London School of Economics and the author of Guests and Aliens

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FRICA: RICH COUNTRIES STALL ON NEW AIDS FUNDING
Issue date: 2003-07-24

The U.S.$200 million Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria contribution proposed by President George W. Bush for one year amounts to little more than 32 hours of war expenses in Iraq. And at a recent meeting in Paris to consider additional funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, donors added a few additional promises and little new funding to meet an expected shortfall of $500 million to $800 million this year, with an additional $3 billion needed to cover grants in 2004. This posting from Africa Action contains a press release from the Global Fund putting as positive a spin as possible on new promises, a June 17 letter from the White House explicitly urging Congress not to provide more money than the President's request of only $200 million for the Global Fund and $2 billion total for 2004 funding, a brief note from Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS reports on the status on congressional action as of Friday, and excerpts from an opinion piece by Jeffrey Sachs commenting on the default by both Europe and the U.S.

AFRICA ACTION
Africa Policy E-Journal
July 19, 2003 (030719)

Africa: Rich Countries Stall on New AIDS Funding
(Reposted from sources cited below)

Meeting in Paris to consider additional funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, donors added a few additional promises and little new funding to meet an expected shortfall of $500 million to $800 million this year, with an additional $3 billion needed to cover grants in 2004. Meanwhile, President Bush is urging Congress to restrict U.S. grants to the Fund to only $200 million a year. European countries have yet to meet the expectation that they would pledge another $1 billion. In comparison, the cost of the war in Iraq is now estimated by the Pentagon at $3.9 billion each month, or $130 million a day. The $200 million U.S. Global Fund contribution proposed by Bush for one year thus amounts to little more than 32 hours of war expenses in Iraq.

This posting contains a press release from the Global Fund putting as positive a spin as possible on new promises, a June 17 letter from the White House explicitly urging Congress not to provide more money than the President's request of only $200 million for the
Global Fund and $2 billion total for 2004 funding, a brief note from Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS reports on the status on congressional action as of Friday, and excerpts from an opinion piece by Jeffrey Sachs commenting on the default by both Europe and the U.S.

Another posting today contains several statements by African AIDS activists released during and after President Bush's Africa trip.

+++++++++++++++++end
summary/introduction+++++++++++++++++++++++

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
http://www.globalfundatm.org

For more information, contact Jon Liden at +41 79 244 6006, email jon.liden@theglobalfund.org or Robert Bourgoing at +41 22 791 1714, email robert.bourgoing@theglobalfund.org.

Presidents of the European Commission and France commit to a billion dollars from Europe for the Global Fund

Paris - At an international conference to highlight the progress of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, European Commission President Romano Prodi committed personally to fight for a one billion dollar contribution from Europe for 2004.

"I am the guarantor for the one billion," President Prodi said at the closing ceremony for the International Conference to Support the Global Fund. "But you must respect that the European Union is a democracy of 15 sovereign states, and we don't always agree on everything. Sometimes we work a little like the turtle in the fable: we may sometimes work slowly, but we can be trusted to reach our goals in the long run."

In his closing speech, French President Jacques Chirac reaffirmed his call for Europe to contribute one billion dollars each year, while calling for the United States to also allocate one billion dollars each year to the Fund.

"The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is an outstanding instrument," President Chirac said. "It was set up in record time. It is already operating on the ground, saving lives.
Naturally we will assess its efficiency very carefully. But I am convinced that this multilateral response expresses, better than any other, the ideal of solidarity and collective action that must impel us."

Earlier in the day, other leaders had also pronounced their support for the Global Fund.

"I believe in the Global Fund," said Nelson Mandela in an address to the conference. "I believe that it has shown great progress, and that we must, in turn, commit more support to its success and future."

Mr Mandela addressed 250 delegates consisting of ministers of health and foreign affairs, senior development officials, private sector executives and non-governmental organizations in a conference hosted by the French government. The conference was co-chaired by US Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson, the French Minister of Development and Francophonie, Pierre Andre Wiltzer, and the French Minister for Health, Family and Disabled Persons, Jean-Francois Mattei.

There was a unified call by the speakers for sufficient new money to ensure that the Global Fund can finance the rapidly increasing needs of programs in countries with heavy burdens of disease.

Some countries announced new pledges to the Global Fund. A number of other countries re-confirmed their support.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced that it would accelerate its payment of the remaining US$ 50 million of a previous US$ 100 million commitment in order to help increase the amount of funds available for the third round of funding coming up in October. The French-based public relations group Publicis unveiled a long-term pro bono collaboration to improve awareness of the Global Fund.

"Turning the tide of AIDS, TB and malaria is a priority second to none," said Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations in his address. "The Fund is there to fill a specific and substantial gap to scale up by providing effective funding (to fight the three diseases)."

The Global Fund is a funding mechanism for country-based programs
of proven interventions against the three diseases. Initial funding is provided for two years, with continued support dependent on program performance. In its first two rounds of grant applications, the Global Fund approved grants worth US$ 1.5 billion over two years to more than 150 programs in 92 countries. This money will provide more than 500,000 people living with HIV/AIDS with antiretroviral treatment, and medical and educational support for half a million children orphaned due to AIDS. It will also enable the detection and treatment of two million additional cases of tuberculosis, and deliver 20 million combination drug treatments for drug-resistant malaria.

Since March, the Global Fund has doubled its disbursement every month and is on track to provide US$200 million to its recipients by the end of the year. Through 2004, US$2.6 billion has been pledged to the Fund, with an additional US$2.1 billion pledged for 2005 to 2008. An additional US$3 billion is required to fund its next three rounds of approved grant applications.

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THE WHITE HOUSE,

Hon. Bill Frist,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR LEADER FRIST:

It is my understanding that an amendment regarding funding for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria may be offered today to the Department of Defense FY2004 appropriations bill currently under consideration on the Senate floor.

I want to reiterate the Administration's strong support for the FY2004 budget request of $2 billion for all international HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria activities, including $200 million for the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria. This request is a solid first step in fulfilling the President's commitment of providing $15 billion over the next five years to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, the Caribbean and around the world.
I recently finished traveling to Africa with the President where he saw first-hand the positive impact that current U.S. funding is having in caring for the sick, providing treatment for individuals living with HIV/AIDS and extending lives. He also witnessed the vast infrastructure and capacity challenges that need to be addressed in order to scale-up many of these efforts.

It is by careful design that the President's FY2004 budget request is for $2 billion. This request was based on the sound judgment that funds in excess of this amount could not be spend effectively in this first year. These funds will be spent in a focused manner, increasing each year, to efficiently and effectively create the necessary training, technology, and infrastructure based needed to ensure delivery of appropriate medical treatment protocols and the long term success of this initiative.

These funds are vital to our efforts to combat HIV/AIDS abroad, but must be spent in the right way, at the right time. Similarly, efforts to increase funding to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria are not appropriate at this time. Currently, the United States is responsible for over 40% of all contributions made to the Global Fund. We have reached a critical time in the Global Fund's development, and other nations must join the U.S. in supporting the work of the Global Fund.

For the reasons stated above, the Administration strongly opposes any efforts to increase funding beyond the $2 billion requested in the President's FY2004 budget. I appreciate your unwavering leadership on this issue and look forward to the continued strong bipartisan support of the Senate in ensuring the success of this lifesaving initiative.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joseph F. O'Neill
Director, Office of National AIDS Policy.

From the Congressional Record 17 July 2003