

NEA  
to see me  
F.



cebo

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SECURITY

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From the Secretary of State for Social Services

Prime Minister

The test  
looks unobjectionable?

The Rt Hon the Viscount Whitelaw CH MC  
Lord President of the Council  
Privy Council Office  
68 Whitehall  
LONDON  
SW1A 2AT

24 June 1986

N. L. W.

25.6

Dear Willie.

AIDS CAMPAIGN

You will recall that in March we launched a national advertising campaign aimed at the general public. Advertisements were placed in all national Sunday and daily newspapers on 16 and 17 March and again on 6 and 7 April. This followed H Committee consultation on the draft wording. The intention was to dispel unwarranted fears about AIDS, and to highlight how AIDS could be caught.

Evaluation of the public reaction to the advertisements has shown that it was successful in getting over a greater number of messages than are usual in advertising; that public interest in AIDS is considerable and that people generally approve and are receptive to Government action of this kind. Few appeared to find the material offensive and there was strong support for the need for explicit language so that people understood the dangers. The evaluation also suggested that further advertising would be more effective if it were shorter and the language simpler.


We have now also received detailed research reports on attitude testing on AIDS and related matters. There is a wealth of findings here that we will want to take into account in taking forward our publicity campaign over the longer term. But meanwhile I am anxious not to lose momentum in the campaign for the general public and propose that we should have a further round of national advertising as soon as possible. This should be much on the lines of the last round, but taking on board the need to have shorter text and simpler language.

E.R.

I enclose a draft on the lines we envisage. It quite deliberately does not break ground at this stage in terms of sexually explicit wording. There may be some minor adjustments to the final text and its presentation in the light of informal consultations now in hand with the Chief Medical Officer's Expert Advisory Group and the campaign agents. I will see that copies of the final text are circulated to colleagues with details of when they will appear. Meanwhile I thought you would like to have this brief report on the campaign so far and of the intention to resume advertising. At present the earliest date for placing the advertisements would be Sunday 6 July.

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I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of H Committee, and members of the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Aids, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours etc. 

NORMAN FOWLER

AIDS - NEED YOU WORRY?

WHAT IS AIDS?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It is caused by a virus that attacks the body's natural defence system. Not everyone who carries the virus develops AIDS. But anyone who has the virus can pass it on, even if they feel and look completely well. There is no cure for AIDS so it is very important not to catch the virus.

HOW IS AIDS SPREAD?

The only way someone is likely to catch the AIDS virus is for blood and semen from an infected person to get inside their body. Most people who have the AIDS virus have caught it by having sex with an infected person. Almost all the rest have caught the virus by injecting with equipment shared with an infected drug addict. It is important people know how the virus is spread, if they are to keep themselves safe from AIDS.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO WORRY ABOUT AN INFECTED PERSON GIVING YOU AIDS FROM:

Contacts such as shaking hands, touching, hugging

Swimming pools, restaurants and other public places

Coughs, sneezes or spitting

Clothing

Toilet seats, door knobs, food, glasses or cups

AND YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT

Having injections or other treatment from your doctor or dentist

Being a blood donor

Having a blood transfusion

## WHEN SHOULD PEOPLE BE WORRIED?

Any sex with infected persons is risky and they may not always know they have the virus. The more partners - especially male partners - someone has, the more likely it is they will have sex with an infected person. Sexual acts which may damage the anus, penis, mouth or vagina are particularly risky. Using a sheath can help reduce the risk of AIDS. So can cutting down on casual relationships.

For those who inject drugs and cannot give up, it is very important not to share needles or other equipment. Just once with a needle that carries the virus could mean catching AIDS. Best of all, don't inject.

Remember there is no cure, so the only way to control this disease is not to take risks. So control depends on how people behave.

## MORE INFORMATION

For a free booklet on AIDS, write to Dept A, P.O.Box 100, Milton Keynes MK1 1TX. You can also get information on the confidential Healthline telephone service on: 01 981 2717, 01 981 7222 or 0345 581151. If you are calling from outside London, use the 0345 number and you will be charged at local rates.

DON'T AID AIDS

Issued by the Department of Health and Social Security.