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Haiti's successful fight against AIDs

By DR. CÉSAR CHELALA

NEW YORK—Finally, some good news in the fight against HIV in the Americas, and most surprisingly it's coming from Haiti, one of the countries hardest hit by the epidemic.

According to UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS), about 120,000 Haitians, or 2.2 percent of the population, are suffering from HIV/AIDS. Statistics from UNAIDS also show that deaths due to AIDS have decreased in Haiti over the last few years.

The progress being made in fighting the disease has been particularly significant for a country where 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line of US\$2 per day. Only 4 of every 10 Haitians have access to potable water, and there is one doctor for every 10,000 inhabitants.

The scenario is optimistic. For example, the percentage of pregnant women who have tested HIV positive has declined by half over the last 10 years. But many challenges remain.

The majority of the Haitian population still lacks sufficient sex education. Only 15 percent of women and 28 percent of men between the ages of 15 and 24 know how to prevent HIV infection, and boys and girls are becoming sexually active at an early age, some as early as 10. In addition,

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infection rates have been falling more slowly in rural areas than in urban areas

Jean Pape, a Haitian doctor who has been fighting the epidemic for years in Haiti, told the PBS TV program "Frontline" that the high percentage of people infected with HIV "killed tourism in Haiti," which was the backbone of the Haitian economy.

In addition, he pointed out that because of import restrictions,

goods manufactured in Haiti could no longer be sold in the United States. Pape is the founder of the organization called GHE-SKIO, the Haitian Study Group on Kaposi's Sarcoma and Opportunistic Infections.

Progress in battling the epidemic in Haiti is due in large part to the work of people like Doctor Pape and Doctor Paul Farmer, a U.S. doctor who has dedicated his life to the struggle against AIDS

on this Caribbean island. Farmer created the organization Partners in Health and its HIV Equity Initiative, which is dedicated to preventing and treating AIDS in the context of primary care; improving care for tuberculosis; optimizing treatment for sexually transmitted infections; and emphasizing women's health.

So far, more than 400 workers have been trained to administer free antiretroviral drugs to AIDS patients in the community, and more than 1,500 patients are currently receiving treatment for AIDS. As Farmer explained on the PBS news show "Frontline," "I think that Haiti's lesson is ... if you can integrate prevention and care and make sure there's better supervision of patients with the help of community health workers. I think other countries with major AIDS epidemics ... are going to see good results."

Pape confirms Farmer's view. Look at Haiti," he says. "The country is in total disarray, and yet we are containing one of the most devastating diseases, which is AIDS."

Pape's optimism is remarkable, particularly when you keep in mind that his clinic, located in one of the most dangerous areas of Port-au-Prince, has been the target of violence by "unidentified" groups. But as the saying goes, "If you aren't an optimist in

Haiti, you might as well pack your bags and go somewhere else."

According to data from UNAIDS, 6.1 percent of the adult population was HIV positive in 2001, and AIDS has become the top cause of death among sexually active youth and adults. Thanks to prevention and control efforts, however, the percentage of infected persons had declined to 3.8 percent by late 2005. In addition, according to studies carried out by GHE-SKIO, the number of sexually transmitted infections—which facilitate the transmission of HIV—also decreased markedly during this same period.

Both Pape and Farmer have received numerous international awards and recognition for their work, which has been strongly supported by international organizations and governments.

The advances in fighting the epidemic in Haiti show that although much remains to be done to achieve better results, a committed leadership, good planning, parallel attention to prevention and care, and community involvement can successfully control this terrible epidemic, even under the worst of circumstances.

Dr. César Chelala, an international public health consultant, is the author of "AIDS: A Modern Epidemic," a publication of the Pan American Health Organization.

The riddle of the Chinese Regime's statistics

Mao's system of two accounting books generates confusion

By HE QINGLIAN

Recently China's official media set out to rebut an article written by Alan Wheatley of Reuters titled, "Chinese Data Generate More Heat Than Light—Again." In the article, it said, "Chinese statistics are a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." "Growth figures for the fourth quarter of 2008 were as clear as mud to most analysts," the article said, because "the headline GDP figure reveals very little resemblance to the underlying nominal growth trends."

The article's advice is "to take Chinese statistics with a pinch, if not a packet, of salt" because "the figures are prone to manipulation by a government...."

Targeting the Reuters article published on Jan. 22, Beijing started its rebuttal on Feb. 6. First Ma Jiantang, head of China's National Bureau of Statistics, said, "To modify the domestic GDP is an international customary practice. It is baseless to doubt China's statistical data. China's official statistics are truthful and believable."

On Feb. 18, the People's Daily interviewed professors Liu Wei and Cai Zhizhou from Beijing University and published the article "Are Chinese Statistics Truly a Riddle Wrapped in a Mystery Inside an Enigma?" In the arti-

cle, the authors accused the experts mentioned in the Reuters article as irresponsible for making the comment that China's figures are a "manipulation by a government."

The Chinese article claimed that those experts did not understand China's statistical indicators, methods, system, nor basic economic activities, and their misjudgments will mislead those who care about China's economy.

The Chinese article claimed that those experts did not understand China's statistical indicators, methods, system, nor basic

economic activities, and their misjudgments will mislead those who care about China's economy.

Reasons for doubt

In fact, the international economics community has never stopped doubting China's statistics. In 2002, there was a debate that lasted several months and involved a large crowd. No matter how Beijing defends itself, such doubts surrounding its official statistics reflect the government's low credibility.

China's abuse of statistics was caught twice recently. On Feb. 2, Beijing published a number saying there were 20 million migrant workers who lost their jobs and returned home.

Whoever published this number forgot to check with Premier Wen Jiabao. In Wen's interview with the Financial Times on Feb. 1, he said there were "12 million jobless migrant workers who have returned to the rural areas." There was a gap of 8 million.

Another incident happened when China claimed the number of peasants living in poverty has decreased from 250 million to 20 million in the past 30 years. However, at a meeting with the U.N. Human Rights Council on Feb. 9, Li Baodong, head of the Chinese delegation, said in the past 30 years, the number of persons in rural areas living in poverty

has fallen from 250 million to over 14 million—a difference of 6 million.

It is a challenge for any researcher—including Chinese officials and scholars—to know how to use China's statistics. On Dec. 29, 2008, in the article "True Statistics Are Needed in the Face of Crisis," published by the Liaowang Weekly, Beijing's official news magazine, it solemnly reminded everyone that "the statistics this year should be solid and can stand up to repeated examination."

Origin of faking statistics

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was born with the illness of faking statistics. It's part of the CCP—it serves the central government's attempt to "stabilize" the public and officials' need for political achievements.

The creator of this bad precedent was Mao Zedong. In January 1958, Mao presided over the release of "The Work Guidance for the 'Great Leap Forward.'" The ninth article in the guidance stated: "Make three books for the production project. Two of the books are for the central government. The first one is what can be achieved, and it will be published; the second one is what is expected to be achieved, which won't be published.

The local governments will run

two books as well. The first one is the same as the second book of the central government, which are things the local government must achieve. The second one is what is expected to be achieved by the local government. We use the central government's second book as the standard for evaluation."

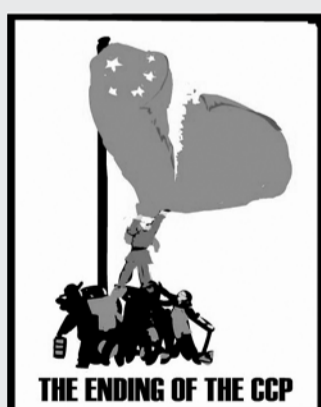
From then on, the Chinese government used the two-books system; one of them is for distracting outsiders.

China's National Bureau of Statistics inherited this glorious tradition and uses two data systems. The internal version is not for the people, but for the Party staff inside the government. The internal version also runs different editions depending on the rank of the officials. Hence, regarding statistics, Beijing has several mouths, and political necessity determines which mouth speaks.

If China wants to remove the reputation of being a "Hell for Statisticians," it needs to eliminate its undesirable political culture instead of accusing others of "malicious speculation."

Ms. He Qinglian is perhaps the most famous Chinese economic commentator. She is the author of "China's Pitfall" (an edited version was published in Beijing as "Modernization's Pitfall") and "The Fog of Censorship: Media Control by China."

QUITTING THE CCP



THE ENDING OF THE CCP

Inspired by the 'Nine Commentaries,' as of 22:41 EST, March 11th, 2009

51,061,639

Chinese people have announced their intentions to quit the Chinese Communist Party and its affiliated organizations on a special Web site established by The Epoch Times. Many others, unable to break through the Chinese Internet blockade, have posted their withdrawal statements on poles or buildings. Others have written them on Chinese currency. Read recent statements of Chinese quitting the Party, the latest news on the "Nine Commentaries," and more at

<http://www.NineCommentaries.com>

The 'Nine Commentaries' is the book that is disintegrating the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and changing China. This award-winning Epoch Times editorial series discloses the true history and nature of the CCP. Now it is serialized here.

Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party

Commentary Six (cont.)

On how the Chinese Communist Party destroyed traditional culture

Aspects of propaganda

1. A culture of one voice

During the Cultural Revolution, China was filled with slogans such as, "Supreme instructions," or "One sentence [of Mao] carries the weight of 10 thousand sentences; each one is the truth."

All media were roused to sing the praises and collectively speak in support of the Party. When needed, leaders from every level of the Party, government, military, workers, youth league, and women's organizations would be brought out to express their support. Everyone had to go through the ordeal.

2. A culture to promote violence
Mao Zedong said, "With 800 million people, how can it work without struggle?" In the persecution of Falun Gong, Jiang Zemin

said, "There is no punishment for beating Falun Gong practitioners to death."

The CCP advocated total war and stated that "the atomic bomb is simply a paper tiger ... even if half of the population died, the remaining half would still reconstruct our homeland from the ruins."

3. A culture to incite hatred

It becomes a fundamental national policy "not to forget the suffering of the poor classes, and to firmly remember the enmity in tears and blood."

Cruelty towards class enemies was praised as a virtue. The CCP taught "Bite into your hatred, chew it, and swallow it down. Plant the hatred into your heart so that it sprouts."¹

4. A culture of deception and lies

Here are a few examples of the CCP's lies: "The yield per 'mu' is over ten thousand jin" during the Great Leap Forward (1958). "Not a single person was killed on Tiananmen Square" during the June 4th massacre in 1989. "We have controlled the SARS virus" in 2003. "It is currently the best

time for human rights in China," and the "Three Represents."²

5. A culture of brainwashing

These are a few of the slogans that the CCP made up to brainwash people: "There would be no new China without the Communist Party." "The force at the core leading our cause forward is the CCP, and the theoretical basis guiding our thinking is Marxism-Leninism."³ "Maintain maximum alignment with the Party's Central Committee." "Execute the Party's command whether or not you understand it. Even if you do not understand, carry it out anyway, and your understanding should deepen in the process of execution."⁴

6. A culture of adulation

"Heaven and the earth are great but greater still is the kindness of the Party." "We owe all our achievements to the Party." "I take the Party as my mother." "I use my own life to safeguard the Central Committee of the Party." "A great, glorious, and correct Party." "An undefeatable Party," and so on.

7. A culture of pretentiousness

The Party established models, set up examples one after another, and launched the "socialist ideological and ethical progress" and "ideological education" campaigns. In the end, people continued to do whatever they did before each campaign. All of the public lectures, study sessions, and experience sharing have become an "earnest showcase," and society's moral standard has continued to take great leaps backward.

The aspect of interpersonal relations

1. A culture of jealousy

The Party promoted absolute equalitarianism so that anyone who stands out will be the target of attack. People are jealous of those who have greater ability and those who are wealthier—the so-called "red-eye syndrome."⁵

2. A culture of people stepping over each other

The CCP promoted "struggle face-to-face and report back-to-back." Reporting on one's associates, creating written materials to frame them, fabricating

facts, and exaggerating their mistakes—these devious behaviors have been used to measure closeness to the Party and the desire to advance.

¹From the song of the modern opera "Legend of the Red Lantern," a popular official "model play" developed during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976).

²"Mu" is a unit of area used in China. One mu is 0.165 acres.

³Jiang Zemin's "Three Represents" claims that the Party must always represent the development trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people.

⁴The opening address at the First Session of the First National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China (Sept. 15, 1954).

⁵The "Red-eye syndrome" is similar in meaning to the Western expression "green-eyed." Here it is used to describe a person who feels unequal and uncomfortable when he sees other people doing better than he is, and thinks that he should be the one who is doing better.