

Hemophiliacs questioning use of tainted blood

In France, politicians have paid the price for letting HIV-contaminated blood continue to be used for blood products used by hemophiliacs.

Hemophiliacs infected with the HIV virus demanded retribution and saw those who caused their lives to be turned upside down by the disease punished.

Hemophiliacs in Ontario are also beginning to question screening procedures used between 1979-85. In that time period, some hemophiliacs were given HIV contaminated blood. It was even discovered that tainted blood has been used in the cryoprecipitate (cryo) and concentrate used to help a hemophiliac's blood coagulate.

There is no cure for AIDS or hemophilia. A hemophiliac must endure a lifetime of visits to the hospital to receive the necessary blood products (in some cases, the products could be stored and administered at home).

With these blood products, a hemophiliac can lead a fairly normal life. But during the mid 1980's, every time a hemophiliac received cryo or concentrate, they were risking the possibility of receiving HIV. The virus is an even deadlier disease than hemophilia. It leaves the person battling for their lives. The very blood products they needed could end up killing them.

It wasn't until 1985 when the Red Cross first started to screen blood for HIV. Up until then contaminated blood products were still in use. Sixty hemophiliacs have since died while 375 others are infected with HIV.

This tragedy could have been avoided. Those blood products were known to be tainted with the HIV virus yet they were used to make the cryo and concentrate for hemophiliacs in Ontario.

The provincial government has given hemophiliacs \$120,000, or \$30,000 per year for four years in retribution, but can anyone put a price tag on human lives?

The question that remains is how could such a serious and life-threatening mistake be made. How could so many human lives be risked?

The Canadian Red Cross claims that screening procedures were not in use at the time these homophiliacs received the tainted blood. They say that technology was not available to test the blood yet the U.S. was screening their donated blood for HIV.

Questions hemophiliacs and their families are asking deserve an answer. The public deserves the right to know what happened and how this problem could have been avoided. Only by asking questions and finding the answers can society only learn from its mistakes.

Cindy Laundry

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Magazine market aimed at new target—convicts

Why doesn't somebody invent a birth control pill for magazines?

Have you been past a magazine stand lately? No wonder our forests are threatened. We've got magazines for women and magazines for men and magazines for children. We also have magazines for left-handed hunters, near sighted car mechanics, pansexual computer nerds, overweight home repair persons and club footed skateboarders whose middle initial is "W".

We have so many different magazines these days that it's a challenge to imagine a title for a new one.

An American humourist by the name of Robert Byrne gave it a shot a couple years ago. He came up with:

Gimme! The magazine of Money

Poor Housekeeping—ten times the circulation of *Good Housekeeping*.

And my favourite—*The Shining* (Formerly *Bald World*).

I guess there are a few magazine possibilities still floating around. Now that Dan Quayle's got a little more time on his hands he might go into publishing. He could sign up Millie, the ex-white House mutt as a consultant for his first magazine venture—a yearly magazine for dogs.

He could call it *Daniel's Annual Spaniel Manual*.

But kidding aside, there is a new magazine out there that not even Robert Byrne could have dreamed up.

It's called *Prison Life*.

It's strictly for folks who are involuntary guests of the U.S. penitentiary system.

Sounds like another joke, until you think about the numbers. There are more than a million convicts in state and federal prisons across America. There are another three million on probation or parole. What's more, the numbers are expanding because criminals are a growth industry. The U.S. Prison roll call jumps by about seven per cent each year.

So what kind of articles would you find in *Prison Life*? Well, what sort of things would you want to read about if you were doing seven-to-ten? There's a regular column called *The Chaplain Speaks* and another called *Ask The Law Professor*. There's even a feature entitled *In-Cell Cooking*.

Not that *Prison Life* is just a kind of *Chatelaine With Stripes*. It's first issue featured America's least-favourite Lifer on the cover under a headline that read: **CHARLIE MANSON: GET OFF HIS BACK!**

Then too, there's the *Prison Life Centrefold*—a fetching young thing in a wisp of bikini smiling back at the reader. This is the *Cellmate of the Month*—and since there are several hundred thousand women in the slammer, the *Cellmate* comes in both male and female varieties.

But the factor that makes or breaks a magazine is the advertising it can attract—and who's going to advertise in a magazine for felons?

Well, true—you won't find many Chase-Manhattan or Yale Lock ads in *Prison Life*, but you'd be surprised who has lined up to buy space. There's a full-page spread for health food supplements (a lot of cons get into weightlifting and body-building).

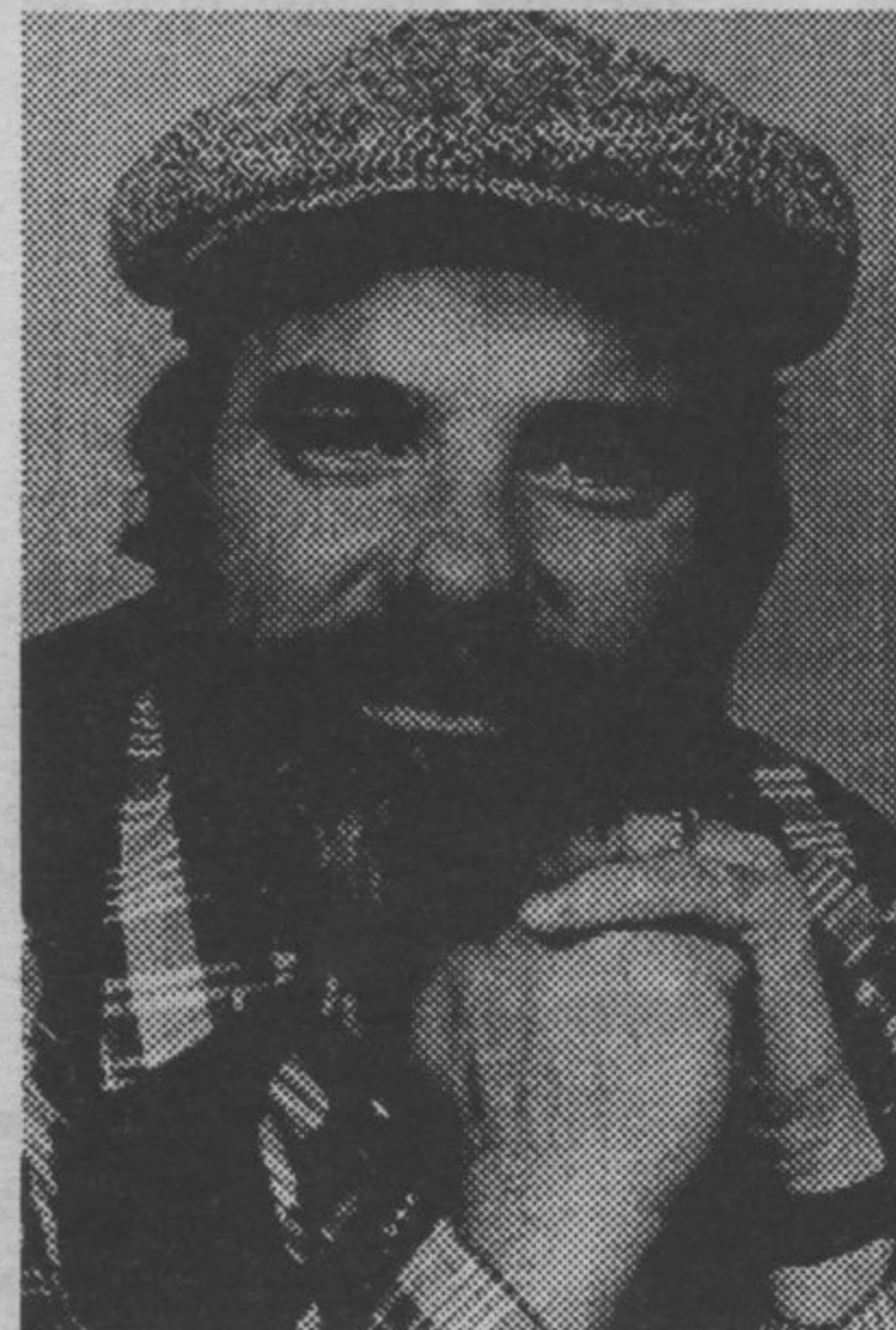
There's even an ad paid for by Island Records flogging a new Tom Waits album.

When you think of it, a magazine for convicts isn't a dumb idea at all. Prisoners just may be the last untapped consumer market on the continent.

And unlike the old days, the new cons have lots of pocket money. In the U.S. they can earn up to \$2,000 a year.

Doesn't sound like much, but don't forget—food, board and the company uniform are supplied free of charge.

Plus, inmates have one precious freedom when it comes to magazines that you and I will never know...plenty of time to read them.



Arthur Black