

A Letter from the Publisher

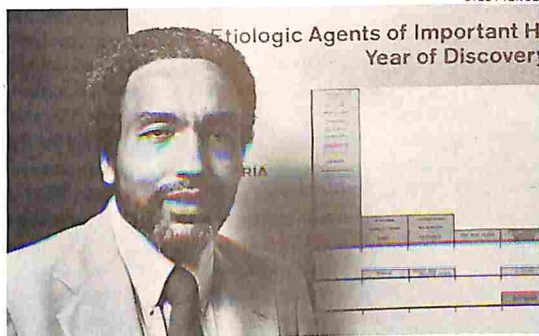
America's most unsung sleuths may well be the staff members of the Centers for Disease Control. In the opinion of Atlanta Bureau Chief Joseph Boyce, who spent more than two weeks reporting the activities of the Government's CDC for this week's cover stories, the agency is responsible for Americans' receiving the best protection in the world against such sudden and unexpected killers as toxic shock syndrome, Legionnaire's disease and swine flu. Boyce, who talked with CDC administrators, epidemic intelligence-service officers and public health officers, was doubly impressed by the agency's operations. Says he: "As a onetime premedical student who took courses in comparative anatomy, embryology and histology, I was fascinated by the scientific methods of tracing disease. And as a former policeman, I found the detective methods used to discover and contain outbreaks even more intriguing."

All of those at TIME involved in the cover stories were familiar with the problems of reporting on medical issues and their social repercussions. The main story, centered on the disease detectives' efforts to track mysterious new ailments like AIDS

(Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), was written by Associate Editor Walter Isaacson, who did a 1981 cover story on abortion. Behavior Writer John Leo, who wrote the story on the social and sexual implications of AIDS, was responsible for last year's provocative cover on the alarming spread of herpes.

Senior Correspondent Peter Stoler, formerly TIME's Medicine and Science writer and the author of a 1976 cover article on Legionnaire's disease, renewed old medical contacts last week, spending two days in Washington with experts at the National Institutes of Health. San Francisco Correspondent Dick Thompson, reporting his third TIME story on AIDS in ten months, visited bars and restaurants in the "Castro," the city's largest homosexual district, interviewing employees and customers about the life-style changes brought on by fear of AIDS. He also visited patients and staff members at San Francisco General Hospital's

AIDS clinic. Says Thompson: "For all the anguish and tragedy any new disease inflicts, there is always the possibility of remarkable strides in medicine resulting from the intense concentration of talent, effort and concern an epidemic produces."



Atlanta Bureau Chief Boyce with CDC disease chart

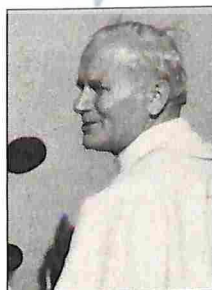
John A. Meyers

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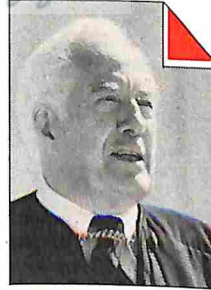
Cover: Photograph taken at the Centers for Disease Control by Bill Pierce



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Cover: They are a special breed, the medical experts who solve the riddles of mysterious illnesses and epidemics. Now America's disease detectives are seeking the cause of a baffling new affliction: AIDS. See MEDICINE.



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World: Poland's General Jaruzelski faces difficult decisions in the wake of the Pope's triumphant visit.
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► Nicaragua's Sandinistas make trouble for the U.S.-supported contras. ► Marxism, African style.



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