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United Church of Christ.

The battle of a two-pound baby

is the Children's Hospital Neona-

WASHINGTON -- The scene CHILDWATCH

tal Intensive Care Ward.

In an incubator in a large, bright room filled with nurses and equipment, tiny "Jason" is fighting for his life.

Six weeks after he was born, Jason weighs two pounds, six ounces. He has come a very long way. At birth -- three months before he was due -- Jason weighed just over one pound. Jason lives because tubes connect his lungs and every available vein to the many machines that are needed to feed him and keep him warm and enable him to take his next breath.

It is quiet in Jason's corner. A baby can be heard crying across the room, but because a breathing tube runs down his throat, little Jason cannot cry. When his heart rate slows, a monitor beeps to alert the nurse.

"Minimal handling," says the sign on Jason's incubator. He is too fragile to be touched very much. He has been through

By MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

surgery to enable doctors to insert an intravenous feeding needle. He has a heart problem. And he has already suffered seizures because of damage to his nervous system. caused by bleeding into his head.

Jason will perhaps live his life with mental handicaps because of the bleeding, the nurse says.

Jason waves his tiny arms and legs. His thin hands clasp and unclasp the warmed air inside the box that has been his only home. "He's a cute little kid," the nurse remarks.

Prematurity such as Jason's can result from a number of complex medical and social problems that affect a mother's health and her pregnancy. What exactly led to Jason's premature birth will never be known. We do know, however, that unless a mother receives early and ongoing prenatal care, conditions that can lead to prematurity cannot be detected or treated.

The real tragedy of Jason the two-pound fighter is that his mother was close to five months pregnant with him before she received any prenatal care.

A growing number of black babies today face a risk of repeating Jason's tragedy because our nation is slipping backwards on providing their mothers with timely, adequate prenatal care.

According to the latest health statistics, more than one out of every 10 black births in 1986 involved a mother who got prenatal care late in her pregnancy or got no prenatal care at all.

The number of black births that occurred under these risky circumstances has gone up 20 percent since 1980. It has been the longest upturn in this negative trend since the government started keeping track of these numbers decades ago.

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We may become AIDS suckers, victims

NEW YORK -- This week in Daytona Beach, Fla., black publishers and editors will be briefed by officials from the Centers for Disease Control on AIDS and the black community.

They will be introduced to the CDC's new media campaign, designed to change the behavior of blacks and Hispanics in order to stop the spread of AIDS. The CDC wants the Afro-American press to tell its readers that Afro-Americans account for 12 percent of the popus lation, but 26 percent of the AIDS cases. Hispanics are 8 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

That leaves 58 percent of the cases for whites, who are 80 percent of the U.S. population. While blacks and Hispanics are being targeted and warned that drug usage and sex should be avoided and regulated, some whites are using those same statistics to prove the CDC's theory that AIDs in America came from Africans. Therefore, something should be done about blacks in America.

If Afro-Americans allow themselves to be identified as the AIDS problem, they will be both miseducated and eliminated, in one form or another, from American society.

This "black" number of 26 per-

increase the risk for AIDs and is no more reason for mandatory testing that being white -- unless you are white and in a high-risk group, therefore more likely to carry the virus.

Syndicated Columnist

TONY BROWN

cent of the AIDS cases includes Haitian and Central African immigrants. Both of these areas received the World Health Organization's smallpox vaccine, which the London Times said triggered the AIDS epidemic in Central Africa and Haiti.

There is no doubt that any member of any group that is seeded the world). with the AIDS virus is more likely to develop the disease. However, Americans of African descent have not been inoculated with the virus and are not at risk -- unless they are homosexual (57 percent of AIDS cases), bisexual (18.5 percent), drug users (18 percent), have sex with members of a high-risk group or are a homosexual/bisexual/drug user (6.5 percent). So being black does not Please see page A8

If mandatory testing is to be based on statistical inference, then males -- black, white, green and polka dot -- who have an exposure rate 13 times higher than females, should be singled out. Ditto for hemophiliacs, young people and people living in San Francisco and in New York (the AIDS capital of

For that reason, New York should be "destroyed for the benefit of the whole nation," wrote a man from Edmonton, Canada, in a letter to me. "Panic and fear" is not too far off, and black people, whom he holds responsible for AIDS, will get their "heads blown off or incinerated." This man is a product of the current AIDS information proComputerized Instruction

Individualized Instruction

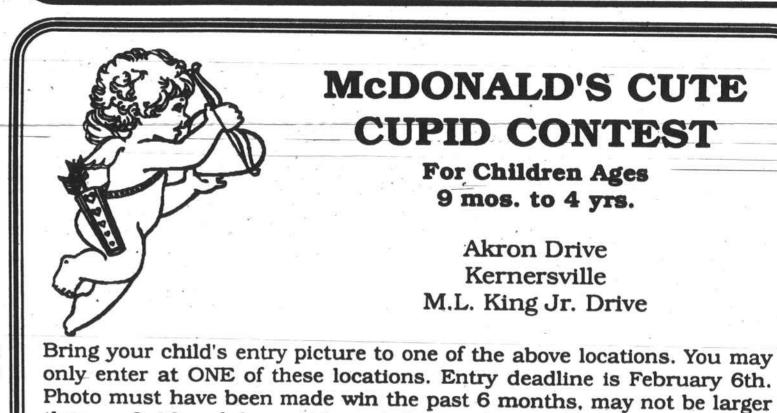
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than an 8x10 and does not have to be in color.

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There will be a reception for all contests and and their family on February 14th from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the McDonald's that your child's picture was entered.



AIDS is taking on a black face," declared editorial writer Bill Johnson in The Detroit News, a white daily. Johnson called on blacks to support mandatory AIDS testing and said the alternative may be a backlash of increased bigotry aimed at blacks.

Prizes and Pictures may be picked up at the reception.

For more information call: Karen Easter at 727-0606

McDonald's will not be responsible for Children's Pictures.