Highly Troubling: Infecting Guatemalans with STD
By Byron A. Ellis – October 2, 2010

Professor Reverby from Wellesley College was investigating documents from the infamous Tuskegee experiment when she found that the United States had also conducted sexually transmitted diseases (STD) experiments in Guatemala without the subjects' knowledge, similar to the experiments performed on blacks in Tuskegee.

The experiments occurred during the Guatemalan government of Juan José Arévalo (1945-1951), and at least one subject died. The document also revealed the complicity of the Guatemalan government (Prensa Libre).

Dr. John C. Cutler, whose image is on the left, conducted the experiments from 1946 to 1948. Accordingly, the U.S. wanted to know if it could use penicillin to combat gonorrhea and syphilis and to understand the process of reinfection.

According to Dr. Reverby, Cutler and his medical team used about 700 hundred Guatemalans from the Guatemala National Penitentiary, Guatemalan soldiers, and women and men from a mental hospital.

The subjects were injected with syphilis bacteria or exposed through infected prostitutes; it was unclear if they received adequate treatment to counteract the infection.

The experiments remained secret until discovered by Dr. Reverby from documents found at the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Cutler also participated in contaminating blacks with syphilis in Tuskegee. The Tuskegee experiment began in 1932 and ended in 1970 when the news media revealed it.

Guatemala said it reserve the right to denounce the United States before the international organization. However, it does not believe that such an action would be necessary because both countries will cooperate in investigating the experiment.

It, however, remains very troubling when governments collaborate secretly to undermine the health of world citizens.

These revelations further diminish government credibility and lend credence to rumors and innuendos of similar experiments circulating on the Internet, such as HR 15090.