ber tells the story of a computer disk that arrived at GPA with a computer virus on it. The virus was quickly discovered, and a memo was prepared to warn other staff members not to use the disk. But it took so long to get the memo approved that the virus spread throughout GPA's computers.

Some outsiders are more charitable, however, seeing increased structure as a necessary step in an organization's evolution. Ronald St. John, deputy director of the National AIDS Program Office in the Department of Health and Human Services, thinks GPA had reached a stage where it needed someone with more organizational skill to take over. "It's just like someone starting up a new business," he says. "You begin to reach a different level of maturity, and a new style is called for. When you're working with 5 or 6 people in your back yard, that's one style—everybody is informal. But when you get up to 200 people, things have to get more formal and get more organized."

WHO/T. FARKAS

Dr. Michael H. Merson

But beyond the debate over management styles lie much more important questions for the fight against AIDS: What overall direction is Merson taking the program and is that a necessary new direction or a surrender to bureaucratic imperatives? On that question, there is considerable difference of opinion. Merson and his defenders argue that the program is on track, vigorously pursuing an extension of the agenda Mann set for it. But critics, including Mann, argue that Merson and WHO are trying to make AIDS into just another disease of the developing world, rather than the global problem they believe it to be.

Consider Merson's view of the spread of the virus: "One of the big changes in the pandemic that I am trying to respond to is the clear developing country predominance," he said in a recent interview in his office. Merson has been taking his message to countries where the virus has not yet taken hold. "What I am trying to get them to understand is that if they wait for [AIDS] cases, it's too darn late," he says.

Mann argues that this approach, while certainly justified by the preponderance of new cases of HIV-infection emerging from the developing world, creates a false sense of security about the pandemic. "It's another level of denial that this is a global problem," says Mann. It "put[s] the problem far away, and in a sense declares premature victory in some parts of the world, like the industrialized world."

On a different plane—that of the human rights controversies spawned by the AIDS pandemic—Mann and Merson seem at first glance to be in agreement. Mann has consistently stressed that AIDS is a disease largely brought on by human behavior, and that infected individuals were subject to discrimination for behaving "badly." As a consequence, he has argued that to combat the disease in an effective manner, human rights issues have to be a priority. Merson says that GPA still takes that approach. For example, GPA will not financially support, co-sponsor, or attend any meetings in countries that restrict the immigration of infected individuals. Merson has applied that formula to the United States, which still has such restrictions, and GPA scientists were notably absent from a meeting last week on a global vaccine strategy sponsored by the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

But one former GPA official who spoke on condition of anonymity says that the commitment to human rights has waned: "It's there in the words, but not in the gut feeling." The former staffer points out that GPA is still conducting business with Japan, a country where there have been reports of de facto discrimination even if laws may not strictly forbid infected individuals from entering the country.

Then there's the ultimate strategic question: how to identify effective approaches to slowing the spread of the virus. Gary Slutkin, acting chief, Office of Intervention, Development and Support and a holdover from the Mann era, says Merson is doing a good job of defining the interventions that will have the most impact. "The next couple of years, [GPA] will be pressing on two or three or four specific approaches," Slutkin says. He means that Merson can be expected to pursue a strategy he has used effectively in his past endeavors—heavily promoting relatively simple treatment options. For the diarrheal disease program, the oral rehydration salts package fit the bill. For the respiratory disease program, antibiotics were effective. For AIDS the answer may be a combination of encouraging condom use, targeted education programs, and greater attention to treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. But critics say that in his zeal to pursue technological fixes like condoms, Merson has given short shrift to the behavioral component to the disease. Recent budgets for behavioral research have plumetted.

Clearly, GPA has entered a new phase. The program has always had relatively meager resources—in its heyday budgets barely reached $90 million—and next year Merson is expecting to operate on $75 million. (The U.S. Agency for International Development alone will spend $70 million on its bilateral AIDS efforts this year.) But GPA is still the agency countries turn to when they need guidance in dealing with HIV infection. Mann believes WHO, with its global infrastructure, can play an incredibly effective role in combating the AIDS pandemic. "WHO has tremendous latent potential," says Mann. It will be Merson's challenge to tap that potential. ■ JOSEPH PALCA

Rockefeller's $20 Million Gift

David Baltimore, the embattled president of Rockefeller University, received a dramatic show of support last week from David Rockefeller, chairman of the executive committee of the university's board of trustees. Rockefeller donated $20 million to the university, the largest gift from a single individual in the institution's history. Rockefeller—whose grandfather, John D. Rockefeller, Sr., founded the university in 1901—subsequently told *The New York Times* that his donation should be seen as an expression of his confidence in Baltimore's leadership of the university.

The donation came at an opportune time for Baltimore. His appointment last year was opposed by some prominent Rockefeller faculty members who were upset by his handling of charges of misconduct that had been leveled against Thereza Imanishi-Kari in connection with a paper she had coauthored with Baltimore. In recent weeks, two of Baltimore's critics, aging-researcher Anthony Cermai and neurobiologist Gerald Edelman, left the university and took their research groups with them, leading to speculation that all is not well at Rockefeller University (*Science*, 11 October, p. 186).

David Rockefeller's gift may, however, help quell one major concern: that the controversy surrounding Baltimore would seriously damage fund-raising. The university announced last week that the donation capped the most successful fund-raising period in Rockefeller's history with gifts and pledges totaling $40.4 million since Baltimore took over. The goal is to raise $250 milllion in the 1990s. ■ C.N.