

THE NETSTRIKE, A WEAPON FOR AIDS ACTIVISM

WHAT IS A NETSTRIKE ?

THE GOAL OF A NETSTRIKE IS TO SLOW DOWN OR BLOCK A WEBSITE DURING A LIMITED TIME. HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF ACTIVISTS REQUESTING THE URL ADDRESS OF THE WEBSITE, OR THEY DOWNLOAD A SOFTWARE THAT DO THE SAME EVERY FIVE SECONDS, AUTOMATICALLY.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF A NETSTRIKE ?

- (1) DAMAGING THE IMAGE OF THE TARGET : INTERNET IS MORE AND MORE USED FOR THE COMMUNICATION POLICY OF THE PHARMA INDUSTRIES OR OF POLITICIANS THE ACTIVISTS WANT TO ADVOCATE. SLOWING DOWN OR BLOCKING A WEB SITE SHOWS THE VANITY OF THE MEANS DEDICATED TO MEANINGLESS COMMUNICATION BY THE TARGET COMPARED TO THE ANGER OF THE PLWAS REGARDING THEIR REAL POLICY.
- (2) MOBILIZING ACTIVISTS ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR A SINGLE ACTION, SHOWING THE FORCE AND THE UNITY OF THE PLWAS.

WHAT ARE THE LIMITS ?

- (1) DIFFICULT ACCESS TO INTERNET ARE LIMITS TO THE CONCRETISATION OF AN EFFECTIVELY INTERNATIONAL ACTION.
- (2) THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF DATA BASES AND WEBSITES MAY ALLOW OUR TARGETS TO PROSECUTE THE ACTIVISTS, AND TO REPRESS THIS NEW FORM OF PEACEFUL ACTION.

IN OUR CASE, ABBOTT'S SUE HURTS ONLY... ABBOTT ITSELF !



ACT UP-PARIS' NETSTRIKE A REACTION AGAINST ABBOTT'S CRIMINAL DECISION TOWARDS THE PLWA IN THAILAND

DECEMBER 2007, THAILAND ISSUED COMPULSORY LICENSES ON SEVERAL DRUGS, ONE OF THEM PATENTED BY ABBOTT. EVEN THOUGH THE THAI GOVERNMENT'S DECISION EXPLICITLY RESPECTS INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, ABBOTT DECIDED TO RETALIATE IN A BRAND NEW WAY: BY REFUSING TO REGISTER ITS NEW DRUGS-INCLUDING THE HEAT-STABLE KALETRA, A SECOND LINE DRUG, NEEDED BY PLWAS IN THE CASE OF THERAPEUTIC FAILURE. ABBOTT IS EFFECTIVELY SENTENCING THAI AIDS PATIENTS TO DEATH.

NO POSSIBLE APPEAL

ABBOTT'S DECISION WENT AGAINST INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (TRIPS) SIGNED BY THE GOVERNMENT MEMBERS OF THE WTO. BUT THE VERY SAME AGREEMENTS DON'T PROVIDE AN APPEAL PROCESS TO THE WTO IN THE CASE THAT A PRIVATE INDUSTRIAL GROUP DECIDES TO IGNORE THEM. ONLY GOVERNMENTS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE WTO. THOUGH ILLEGITIMATE AND CRIMINAL, ABBOTT'S DECISION IS NOT LEGALLY QUESTIONABLE.

PUBLIC CHALLENGE, THE LAST WEAPON ABBOTT WANTS TO DEPRIVE US OF.

TO DEFEND THEIR LIVES, THE ONLY OPTION FOR PLWAS WAS TO PUBLICLY CHALLENGE THE COMPANY. ON APRIL 26, THE DAY BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ABBOTT'S SHAREHOLDERS, A NETWORK OF THAI PLWAS CALLED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION, SUPPORTED BY NGOS AROUND THE WORLD.

ACT UP-PARIS CALLED UPON ACTIVISTS ALL OVER THE WORLD TO PARTICIPATE IN A NETSTRIKE. HUNDREDS, EVEN THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE IN FRANCE, THAILAND, THE U.S. AND ELSEWHERE, REPEATEDLY VISITED ABBOTT'S WEBSITE IN ORDER TO FORCE A SLOWING DOWN OF ITS SERVERS. THE ACTION WORKED.

THREE WEEKS LATER, ABBOTT FILED A COMPLAINT AGAINST ACT UP-PARIS. THE LABORATORY WANTS US TO BE CONDEMNED FOR "SERVICE DENIAL." SHOULD THIS BE ACCEPTED BY THE COURT, WE COULD HAVE BEEN SENTENCED TO VERY HIGH PENALTIES. THE FINE COULD REACH \$50,000, NOT INCLUDING LIABILITIES, A COMMUNIQUE RELEASE OF THE VERDICT (PAID COMMUNICATION) AND LEGAL EXPENSES. THESE EXPENSES WOULD BE INCREDIBLY DAMAGING TO OUR ORGANIZATION AND ARE A DROP IN THE BUCKET COMPARED TO ABBOTT'S PROFITS. THIS LEGAL ACTION IS CLEARLY AN ATTEMPT BY THE LABORATORY TO SILENCE ACT UP-PARIS.

BRINGING ABBOTT'S SUIT RATHER THAN ACT UP'S

THE LEGAL ARTICLE ABBOTT WAS USING AGAINST ACT UP-PARIS STIPULATES THAT IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LIMIT THE ACCESS TO A WEBSITE, UNLESS THE DEFENDANT ACTED UNDER A "LEGITIMATE MOTIVE". IS DEFENDING PATIENTS' LIVES AGAINST PROFIT ILLEGITIMATE? THE CALL FOR A BOYCOTT ISSUED BY THAI PATIENTS, PUBLIC DECLARATIONS MADE BY THE WHO AND OFFICIALS IN THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, AS WELL AS POLITICAL ACTIONS AROUND THE WORLD SUPPORTED THE LEGITIMACY OF OUR MOTIVE.

BY SUING US, ABBOTT HAD TO PROVE THAT THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF THAI PEOPLE IS NOT LEGITIMATE ENOUGH A MOTIVE TO CRITICIZE PUBLICLY A MEDICINE COMPANY. THE LAWSUIT THE LABORATORY WAS BRINGING AGAINST US, PATIENTS, WOULD HAVE REVEALED TO THE WORLD THE VERY OBSCENITY OF ABBOTT'S ACTIONS IN THAILAND

ABBOTT'S PUBLIC SHAME

MORE AND MORE FINANCIAL AND MASS MEDIA ARE REPORTING ON THE DISASTROUS IMPACT THAT THE ABBOTT BLOCKADE IS HAVING ON THE LIVES OF IMPOVERISHED THAIS STRUGGLING WITH THE AIDS VIRUS (SEE REUTERS STORY OF MAY 22 2007). THESE MEDIA REPORTS HAVE CAUSED ABBOTT'S BLOCKADE TO SNOWBALL INTO A PUBLIC RELATIONS CRISIS WHICH IS FURTHER STAINING THE REPUTATION OF THE ENTIRE PATENT-BASED PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY (SEE COMMENTS BY GLAXOSMITHKLINE IN WALL STREET JOURNAL OF JUNE 18). AT THE SAME TIME, NGO'S (LIKE AIDES - FRANCE - CALLING FOR A BOYCOTT OF ABBOTT'S DRUGS), SEARCHERS AND HEALTHWORKERS BLAME ABBOTT.

ON JULY 22 2007 IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, DURING THE IAS CONFERENCE AND AT THE INITIATIVE OF PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS FROM THAILAND AND FRANCE, ABBOTT CEO JEAN-YVES PAVÉE PARTICIPATED IN A MEETING MEANT TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS IN WHICH THE COMPANY HAS DUG ITSELF IN THAILAND. YET, DURING THE MEETING, ABBOTT REFUSED TO LIFT THE DEADLY BLOCKADE OF ITS LIFESAVING HIV MEDICATION ALUVIA. ABBOTT DROPPED ITS LAWSUIT.

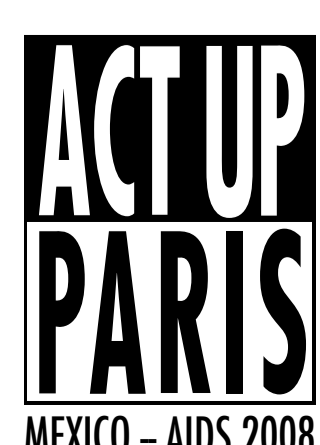


EUROPEAN PRESSURE ON THAILAND

ON JULY 18TH 2007, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER FOR TRADE WROTE A LETTER TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND TO CRITICIZE ITS ACCESS TO MEDICINES POLICY THROUGH COMPULSORY LICENSES. AFTER BEING PUT TO PRESSURE BY THE US DRUG GIANT ABBOTT LABORATORIES, THAILAND NOW HAS TO FACE THE PRESSURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION. ON FEBRUARY 21ST 2008, MANDERSON ONCE AGAIN WROTE TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND, WITH THE SAME ARGUMENTS.

THE TRADE COMMISSIONER'S LETTERS EFFECT A SHARP REWRITE OF ACTUAL INTERNATIONAL LAW PROVISIONS ON ACCESS TO GENERIC MEDICINES, AND EXPRESSES THREATS AGAINST THAILAND - ALL IN THE INTEREST OF THE PATENT-BASED PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY, AND IN COMPLETE DISREGARD FOR THE HUMAN CONSEQUENCES OF HAMPERING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE LIFE-SAVING MEDICATION.

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION MISUSES THE INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. **ITS POLICY KILLS.**



WE DEMAND THAT

- **ABBOTT DROPS ITS CURRENT DEADLY ALUVIA BLOCKADE AGAINST THAI POSITIVE PEOPLE ;**
- **THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION STOPS ITS PRESSION AGAINST THAILAND AND GOVERNMENTS WHO CHOSE THE SAVING-LIVES POLICY OF GENERICS ;**
- **FRANCE, CURRENTLY PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, PROMOTES GENERIC DRUGS AMONG THE GLOBAL SOUTH.**

WE WILL USE OTHER NETSTRIKES IF WE HAVE TO. JOIN US !

BY LICENSING PARTICULAR DRUGS, THE THAI GOVERNMENT CAN PRODUCE OR IMPORT LESS EXPENSIVE, GENERIC COPIES OF THE MEDICINES, ALLOWING THE THAI HEALTH SYSTEM TO VASTLY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS IT TREATS.

