

Is AEI safehousing Project Democracy?

by Kathleen Klenetsky

A prominent Washington-based think tank with close ties to the Kissinger foreign policy apparatus and the free-enterprise crowd in the Reagan administration, has launched a new foreign policy program that smells like Project Democracy, the social-democratic "parallel government" which *EIR*'s new *Special Report* identifies as the core of the Iran-Contra scandal.

The American Enterprise Institute announced the project March 13—at the same time that some U.S. media, led by *EIR*, began to expose the multiple links between Ollie North's gun-smuggling operation, known as Project Democracy, and the government-funded National Endowment for Democracy, also known as Project Democracy.

The coincidence in timing strongly suggests that AEI—which served as home base to the some of the principal architects of Project Democracy—is trying to provide a haven for parts of the operation, in hopes that the political storms surrounding it will blow over.

AEI doesn't call its new effort "Project Democracy," but the resemblance is striking. In a March 13 press release, AEI described the program in terms that echo the NED charter: "The program will focus on opportunities and obstacles to freedom in the contemporary world," said the release. "It will examine how American foreign policy might more effectively contribute to the preservation and expansion of democratic values and institutions." The program will also study "how U.S. policy can encourage the transition to democracy in non-democratic governments; the politicization of international organizations and legal institutions; and the emergence of unconventional instruments in foreign policy, such as organized terrorism, arms control, trade, and debt."

That AEI's concept of "democracy" is exactly the same as Project Democracy's, is underscored by the fact that one of the program's main objectives will be to figure out "whether recent developments in nations such as . . . the Philippines can be replicated." That refers to the criminally stupid, U.S.-backed overthrow of President Marcos, which was financially underwritten by the NED.

The press release's note that the program will focus on the debt issue is also telling. AEI has recently been taken over by political networks associated with Chase Manhattan Bank, which maintains huge holdings of Third World debt. The major concern of Chase Manhattan and other money-center banks is preventing Third World nations from rallying

behind Peru and Brazil in demanding an equitable settlement of the debt question.

AEI spokesman Pat Ford has admitted that there is a significant overlap between its program, and Project Democracy. The institute's new program "shares many of the same goals as the NED's Project Democracy," he told a journalist. The main difference, is that "they are a policy advocacy group, where what we are doing is to provide the intellectual capital." Ford emphasized that the timing of the project is such that "we will be issuing our major recommendations at the height of the 1988 presidential campaign. We certainly hope that we will have some influence on policy."

A 'Who's Who' of NED

The key people involved in the AEI program all played instrumental roles in the NED-Ollie North Project Democracy—as did AEI as an institution. These include **Jeane Kirkpatrick**, the former U.N. ambassador who cooked up the idea for the AEI's program and who will oversee its implementation. Kirkpatrick is an influential member of the network established decades ago by Communist Party member Jay Lovestone. This network, known as the "right-wing Social Democrats," is linked to Bukharinite factions in the Soviet Union, as well as to Soviet-tainted elements in Israel, and created Project Democracy as a means of further extending its political influence and control over U.S. foreign policy.

Other key participants in the AEI study include:

Richard Perle, the outgoing Defense Department official who used his "hawkish" image to subvert the SDI, and to promote the insane "zero-option" proposal which would terminate America's commitment to NATO.

Josh Muravchik, a leading member of the Lovestonite Social Democrats, U.S.A., and former executive director of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority. Muravchik was one of the major defenders of the NED-Project Democracy, when it came under congressional attack in 1984 for being a private foreign policy-making apparatus.

Constantine Menges, a former staffer at the Reagan National Security Council and an ardent backer of the Nicaraguan Contras.

Allan Gerson, former counsel to Kirkpatrick while she was at the United Nations, and more recently, counselor for national security affairs to Attorney General Ed Meese. Gerson, who attended Jerusalem's Hebrew University, reportedly has extensive ties to the Mossad.

Funding for the program is being provided by the Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based Bradley Foundation, which boasts George Stigler, the University of Chicago economist, as a board member. The Nobel Prize-winner Stigler is known as an even more extreme version of Milton Friedman, the pro-dope "free enterprise" nut, and the Bradley Foundation devotes much of its largesse to supporting programs consistent with Stigler's anti-American outlook.