

U.S. markets being flooded with heroin

by Jeffrey Steinberg

A 25-page Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) report is circulating among U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies warning that the United States is being flooded with high-grade heroin. In an introduction to the report—which is embargoed from release to the general public—the DEA administrator Robert C. Bonner wrote that “heroin now poses a greater threat to the U.S. than at any other time in the recent past. This increased threat arises from the precipitous increase in opium production in the Golden Triangle and elsewhere, the emergence of new and aggressive heroin-trafficking organizations such as the Nigerians, as well as the alarming rise in the purity of street-level heroin in the East Coast of the United States.”

This blunt assessment by the recently appointed DEA chief underscores the fact that the White House has been lying about its “victories” in the war on drugs. In February, just one month before the DEA study on “Worldwide Heroin Situation 1990” was completed, President Bush issued the annual National Drug Control Strategy report which proclaimed that the federal anti-drug effort had surpassed all its objectives and that there had been a marked decline in drug use in America. At the time *EIR* pointed to massive increases in domestic marijuana production (generating \$50 billion in black market revenues in 1990) as just one example of the Bush administration’s “cooking” of its war on drugs statistics. Now, the heroin survey reveals the following staggering facts:

- The urban centers of the East Coast are being flooded with Golden Triangle heroin. Whereas in 1985, Golden Triangle (Southeast Asian) heroin accounted for approximately 14% of the heroin that reached U.S. streets, by 1989, that figure had jumped to 56%, where it remained in 1990. New York, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Detroit and Atlanta are dominated by the Southeast Asian product, which is readily available and sells for half the average price of the Southwest Asian (Golden Crescent) and Mexican/Guatemalan heroin.

- According to the DEA study, the Southeast Asian heroin is averaging over 40% purity at the street level. This compares to averages of 14% purity and 13% purity for the Golden Crescent and Mexican/Guatemalan heroin respectively.

- The DEA study indicates that heroin production in Mexico and Guatemala has also doubled in recent years. The Mexican/Guatemalan dope is primarily distributed in

the Southwest, including California. Golden Crescent heroin dominated the markets in Chicago and Puerto Rico, reflecting larger concentrations of South and Southwest Asian populations.

- Western and Eastern Europe have been also targeted for massive expansion. One of the most alarming new developments is the greater integration of drug-trafficking networks from different parts of the world. The DEA study indicates that large quantities of Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent heroin are being “bartered” for Colombian cartel cocaine. As the result, Medellín and Cali Cartel traffickers are now smuggling Asian heroin into the United States, while Chinese and Nigerian drug organizations are now providing Colombian cocaine to a growing continental European market.

The study draws a picture of anything but a “victory” in the war on drugs.

Kissinger’s 20-year lie

Even though the embargoed DEA study presents a far more frank assessment of the continuing growth of the international dope cartel than the flagrant lies coming out of the White House, the report also contains one outrageous piece of disinformation—which *EIR* and the authors of the book *Dope, Inc.* exposed as early as 1978.

At that time, the authors of the *Dope, Inc.* study, commissioned by Lyndon LaRouche, wrote that, as part of the Nixon administration 1972 détente with the People’s Republic of China, then-Secretary of State and National Security Adviser Henry A. Kissinger had suppressed DEA and CIA field reports which contained the original maps of the Golden Triangle opium-producing area. Those maps proved that Communist China was a major source of Southeast Asian opium and heroin—a fact that would have made it hard to square the nominally anti-drug Nixon White House’s diplomatic embrace of Beijing. Ever since 1972, official U.S. government reports have lied about the P.R.C.’s dominant role in the world heroin trade.

Clearly, that coverup has continued. According to the DEA report: “The primary opium production areas of Southeast Asia are located in the Golden Triangle region formed by the conjunction of Burma, Laos and Thailand. . . . In addition, there are countries where opium poppy cultivation is just emerging, such as China, and other locations where growing conditions are ideal, and therefore of potential concern.”

President Bush did not say a word about China’s heroin trafficking when he recently asked Congress to renew Beijing’s Most Favored Nation status for another year. Nor did President Bush condemn “coalition partner” Syria’s role as the major transshipment and processing hub for Southwest Asian heroin when he sent Secretary of State James Baker III off to Damascus for his fourth consultation in less than two months with President Hafez al-Assad.