

## Editorial

### *At last, a war on drugs*

In 1980 and 1981, members of *EIR*'s editorial staff closely collaborated in the creation and editing of the magazine *War on Drugs* published by the National Anti-Drug Coalition, co-founded in 1978 by Lyndon LaRouche and his associates.

The magazine argued against the specious arguments being put forward to justify decriminalizing drugs; it documented that marijuana was not benign in its effects—be they physical, psychological, or social; and it argued that the spread of drugs could only be stopped from the top down, by mounting what would be a military effort against the multinational drug cartels. Such a war would involve control of the billion-, perhaps trillion-dollar, flow of drug money laundered through the banking system, by imposing stringent banking regulations to enforce accountability.

The June 1981 issue of *War on Drugs* reported on Operation Stoppag, which was run collaboratively by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to seal off waterways in the Caribbean which stretched for more than 1,400 miles from the Yucatán peninsula to the eastern tip of Puerto Rico, and included DEA pilots as well as Coast Guard cutters. The magazine saw this as a paradigm for the kind of large-scale military effort which is required to stop the production and distribution of illegal drugs. The 45-day trial run was so successful that it seized 900,000 pounds of marijuana—at least one-third of the marijuana flow into the United States.

Unfortunately, the combined efforts of the drug legalization lobby and the Anti-Defamation League were effective in forcing the magazine to close down, and aborting efforts such as Operation Stoppag. Instead there was Nancy Reagan's well-intended but impotent campaign which encouraged young people to "just say no." One cannot but suspect that the role of Ollie North and his associates in illegal drug trafficking was one of the elements in defeating prosecution of a successful war on drugs at that time.

The massive scandal around North's involvement that surfaced worldwide in the end-phase of the Virginia senatorial race should provide an impetus for finally

facing the magnitude of the drug problem—which has corrupted major institutions of government. Major media stories released documented evidence from North's own notebooks and other source material which document that North, a national security operative, was not only fully aware of Contra drug-trafficking and never did anything about it, but allowed guns for the Contras to be shipped on airplanes piloted by known drug traffickers.

In response to attacks, North successfully solicited Elliott Abrams and Edwin Meese to testify for him. This backfired, since it underscored the involvement at the time of Abrams, as former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, and Meese as White House Chief of Staff and then Attorney General, in these same dirty operations, which were run by a task force which accountable to then Vice President Bush. It is no wonder that the Reagan and Bush administrations had such a poor record in stemming the spread of drugs in the United States.

The reemergence of the Contra scandals involving illegal trafficking in guns and drugs is not just a matter of electoral politicking, although it is outrageous that a person such as North be considered for the post of senator, much less elected to the United States Senate. Since 1980, the drug problem has, if anything, escalated. As a consequence of the failure to follow through on a serious commitment to stop drug trafficking, young children are being routinely gunned down in city streets and schoolyards.

A new study government has documented the dangerous side-effects of marijuana use especially on young girls who hope to become mothers. President Clinton referenced this in a recent visit with Massachusetts schoolchildren. He rightly said that using drugs is not only criminal, it is stupid. It is also stupid to treat drug use as a matter for children to decide. Of course they should not use drugs, or allow themselves to be employed by drug pushers; but drug traffic will never be stopped until the kind of measures which were advocated by DEA agents and the National Anti-Drug Coalition, are put into effect.