

Assistant Professor of Politics and Public Affairs, Princeton University:

To legalize or not to legalize? That . . . is not really the right question. The appropriate question is much broader, and it is one that incorporates the "legalize or not" question with respect to particular psychoactive drug products. What, simply stated, are the best means to regulate the production, distribution, and consumption of the great variety of psychoactive substances available today and in the foreseeable future?

. . . There are better and worse types of drug prohibition, with the Dutch "harm reduction" approach epitomizing the former and the American "war on drugs" the latter. Indeed, for many of those characterized as advocates of drug legalization, the Dutch model offers an alternative that is preferable not only to current U.S. policies but also to the extreme liberation model.

Judge Stanley Goldstein, presiding judge, Miami Drug Court, to May 7 Drug Summit:

I do believe that legalization is a cop-out. It is based primarily on frustration, because judges are getting to the point where they don't believe in what they are doing.

I do know, from personal observation, of the people who come before me and from the study done at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, that cocaine causes blood vessels that [bring] oxygen to the brain to constrict; brain cells denied of oxygen die; cocaine causes brain damage. The longer you use it, the more you do damage to the brain. Legalizing cocaine means it would be sold or given to users who are becoming more and more brain-damaged.

How would these drugs be distributed? If the government markets the drugs and forces the users to rob and steal to get money to buy cocaine, we are simply casting the government in the role of the street dealers today who contribute to the crime problem and homelessness.

If the government distributes the cocaine free, then more and more people will become brain-damaged. They will not be able to function. They will become homeless and depend upon the government for food, housing, and hospitalization. . . .

Why should the government spend millions of dollars to create zombies who are totally dependent upon the government to spend more money when we have proved in Miami that the vast majority of these people can be saved and transformed into contributing citizens. What effect is that going to have on your brain?

The vast majority of people in this country are law-abiding. They don't experiment with cocaine, crack, heroin, and other drugs simply because it is illegal. If you make it legal, I believe you are going to triple or quadruple the number of junkies that are roaming the streets today.

Ibero-America

Drug legalization back on the agenda

by Valerie Rush

The past few months have seen a dramatic resurgence of the so-called drug legalization debate in several Ibero-American countries key to the drug-trafficking chain, among them Colombia and Mexico. In both of these countries, the debate is

EIR warned of drug legalization push in 1991

The following are excerpts from a 150-page EIR Special Report published in 1991, entitled "Bush's Surrender to Dope, Inc." In it, the story is told of how the nation of Colombia has been subverted by the combined forces of the drug cartels and pro-legalization forces inside the United States.

When George Bush toured Ibero-America at the end of 1990, he unabashedly boasted that his Andean anti-drug strategy had been one of his three major foreign policy "successes," along with Panama and Nicaragua. And when his drug czar William Bennett resigned that post one month earlier, he told an incredulous public that his work was done, and that the United States "was on the road to victory" in beating the drug plague.

Bush and Bennett lied; the reality is quite the opposite. Not only is consumption of mind-destroying drugs like marijuana and cocaine *not* declining, or even leveling off, it is skyrocketing. . . . The official U.S. government statistics that claim that drug use is declining are based on absurd polling methodology and deliberate falsifications. . . . Drug production in Third World nations is also on the rise. According to conservative calculations based mainly on official production statistics supplied by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), *EIR* has

no longer limited to an esoteric exchange of opinions among a handful of economists, professors, and radical journalists. It is now a "policy option" on the agenda of presidential candidates—and even Presidents.

On June 6, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada was elected head of state in Bolivia. A millionaire oligarch with a *gringo* accent, Sánchez's first policy statement before even taking office was to argue the futility of a war against drugs. In an interview with Spain's *Tiempo* magazine, Sánchez insisted, "Prohibition has never achieved anything. . . . It is terrible to say it, but taxes should be placed upon the drug trade."

It is no accident that Sánchez should be the first President on the continent to endorse drug legalization. He is a member of the Washington-based Inter-American Dialogue, the Establishment's premier think-tank on Ibero-American affairs which has advocated drug legalization for years. The Inter-American Dialogue has members "on loan" to several gov-

ernments in the Americas in addition to the Clinton administration, but this is the first time it has owned a President.

It is equally significant that in Peru, another major drug-producing country, drug legalization advocates have failed to get to first base, perhaps as a result of the Alberto Fujimori government's unyielding offensive against narco-terrorism.

Colombia: anti-drug resistance fades

Efforts by mafia-allied financial interests to force a debate on drug legalization back in the late 1970s in Colombia were a dismal failure. The nation still had its dignity, and citizens were outraged at the proposal. After more than a decade of targeted narco-terrorism on the one hand, and an appeasement policy "made in the U.S.A." on the other, moral resources have been significantly eroded, giving corrupted elements of the political elites their opportunity to revive an issue no longer considered taboo. Ernesto Samper Pizano,

calculated that the drug trade is growing so rapidly—over 15% a year—that it is effectively *doubling* every five years. . . .

Smelling defeatism in the air, the lobbyists for drug legalization have gone into a frenzy of activity, in the United States and abroad, to convince people that the war on drugs is unwinnable. What was once considered morally reprehensible to the majority of U.S. citizens—that our children should have access to mind-killing narcotics—is now being openly published by such prominent U.S. establishment figures as former secretaries of state George Shultz and Cyrus Vance.

The legalizers have already made significant inroads. In the name of adapting to the "new realities," free hypodermic needles are now being offered to heroin addicts in American cities. Free condoms are being distributed to school children, while Satan worship is the ever-popular theme of rock music. In this bestial "counterculture" of satanic music and sexual promiscuity, drugs are presented as just another part of the "new reality" with which Americans must learn to coexist.

The drug lobbyists in the developing sector are working hand-in-glove with their colleagues in the United States. In a major drug-producing country like Colombia, legalization advocates point to the uncontrolled drug abuse in the United States as the primary justification for legalizing the drug trade at home. "Why should we spend money we can ill afford and sacrifice our finest citizens to wage a war that is not ours?" they argued. It were better to "control" the violence through legalization. . . . And so, morality gives way to the pragmatic politics of the free market ethic, and the negotiations are launched, the deals struck. . . .

President Bush is fully complicit in the legalization strategy. He has stated that his government's official policy is to *reduce* drug consumption by 50% over the next decade—not eliminate it. The problem begins with Washington's economic policies. Virtually every U.S. administration since [after] that of John F. Kennedy has premised its economic and financial policies on strict adherence to the anti-growth dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the international banking establishment. This system has placed a premium on investment in speculative activities, and not in real production. What has happened as a result, is that the international financial system has become progressively more addicted to the flow of drug monies, to the point where today, the banking system is as hooked as a junkie on heroin. Not surprisingly, the international financial establishment is opposed to any serious war on drugs. . . .

Getting absolute control of Dope, Inc.'s billions means legalization. In practice, this has meant working with certain groups of drug runners to control or eliminate others. In the case of Colombia's drug cartels, the U.S. government has maintained a working alliance with the so-called Cali Cartel against the Medellín Cartel. . . .

The western financial Establishment's current timetable is to achieve a global legalized narcotics "industry" before the end of the 1990s. A difficult proposition? Yes, but at this point not an unlikely one, if the American people continue to tolerate discussion of legalization as a viable "option," continue to elect increasing numbers of legalizers to public office in the United States, and continue to tolerate policies which for more than 20 years have *deliberately* fomented drug use and the drug trade at home and abroad.