

Bush administration stopped drug probe, says Kerry

by Edward Spannaus

In an interview with the Boston *Herald*, Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) has identified the 1988 election of George Bush as President as a critical factor in shutting down the Senate investigation of U.S. government complicity in drug-trafficking.

Herald columnist Leonard Greene wrote on Oct. 2, that nearly a decade ago, Kerry had concluded, after an exhaustive investigation, "that federal law enforcement officials knew drugs were being sold in America to raise money for an illegal war against communism in Nicaragua." But, a year after Senator Kerry's investigation, Bush defeated Michael Dukakis in the Presidential elections. Greene continues: "This is important, Kerry says, because for the next several years, despite reams of evidence, neither the White House nor the Justice Department did anything significant with the drug allegations."

"Had we [the Democrats] won the White House in '88, we would have been able to get to this," Kerry said. "It was during this period that it became clear to me that these guys were just stonewalling."

Segments of an interview with Kerry were run on NBC Nightly News on Sept. 27, in a feature which emphasized that the drug trail leads to the White House and Oliver North (although it doesn't end there). Kerry was quoted as saying, "Same pilots, same airstrips, same airplanes, carry guns and drugs at the same time. And people *knew* it." When Kerry was asked if the State Department and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) had looked the other way, Kerry said they had, and then he added: "The Justice Department clearly knew about it, because we delivered the information to them, and asked them to investigate."

The now-famous Aug. 18-20 *San Jose Mercury News* series on the Contras and crack cocaine, quoted Jack Blum, the former chief counsel to the Kerry subcommittee of the

Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which conducted an investigation of the relationship between the Contras and drugs from 1986 to 1988. "The Justice Department flipped out to prevent us from getting access to people, records—finding anything out about it," Blum said. "It was one of the most frustrating exercises that I can ever recall."

Kerry has a ready target at hand if he wants to pursue the Bush-Contra-drug story. His challenger for the U.S. Senate seat is Bush-ally William Weld, who headed the Justice Department's Criminal Division in 1986-88, and who played a major role in obstructing Congressional investigations into the Contras and drug-trafficking. For this reason, Weld is named as a defendant and co-conspirator in *EIR*'s model drug-kingpin indictment of George Bush and others.

It's not just the CIA

Kerry's statements—even though he is still pulling his punches—reflect a rapidly changing environment around the "CIA crack cocaine" story, which is making it more and more difficult to limit the story to the CIA. This climate is being shaped significantly by the circulation of *EIR*'s *Special Report*, "Would a President Bob Dole Prosecute Drug Super-Kingpin George Bush?" which was released at a press conference in Washington on Sept. 18.

The report documents, in meticulous detail, that it was Vice President George Bush, and not the CIA, who was in charge of intelligence and covert operations during the Reagan administration. A series of Executive Orders, National Security Decision Directives, and outright power plays by Bush from 1981 to 1986, gave Bush executive control over a secret government apparatus which drew upon resources and personnel from the Defense Department, the CIA, and other agencies. *EIR*'s repeated point of emphasis has been

that it is a dead end to focus demands for investigation on the CIA, because the CIA was not running the operation. (See *EIR*, Sept. 27, p. 58, and Oct. 4, p. 62.)

Within 24 hours of our Sept. 18 press conference, major newspapers in Ibero-America began to sport headlines naming Bush as the drug kingpin. In the United States, the process is much slower, but has been reflected by increasing attention to the role of the White House and Oliver North in the Contra-support program in the mid-1980s, and to North's explicit references to drug trafficking in his notebooks from that period.

The big fear—in the news media and among activists—is to name the real kingpin: George Bush. As Lyndon LaRouche has been stressing, the CIA doesn't shoot back—at least not any more—but George Bush and his dirty networks *do*.

The impact of *EIR* and the LaRouche movement was evident at a Sept. 28 town meeting in South Central Los Angeles, addressed by Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) and other African-American officials and activists, and attended by many thousands. As people entered, they received the issue of *EIR*'s sister publication, the *New Federalist* newspaper, which featured George Bush's kingpin role in the cocaine scandal, and they passed a banner which read "Jail George Bush, Crack Cocaine Kingpin." As the speakers each gave their renditions of who was behind the crack cocaine epidemic, there many in the audience chanted, "What about George Bush?" When Congresswoman Waters, the chief instigator of the demands for investigation of the crack scandal, concluded her speech, she too finally responded to the crowd: "This was the Reagan White House" and, as the crowd demanded, she added, "—and George Bush."

Washington Post damage control

A major effort to debunk the "CIA" crack cocaine allegations as put forward by the *San Jose Mercury News* was displayed in the Oct. 4 *Washington Post*, which devoted two full pages to a densely argued obfuscation of the *Mercury News* story. The *Post*'s pre-ordained conclusion is shown by the headline: "The CIA and Crack: Evidence Is Lacking of Alleged Plot." To further insult the African-Americans who have been especially victimized by the crack cocaine epidemic, the *Post* ran a second feature entitled: "History Lends Credence to Conspiracy Theories: Among Blacks, Allegations Can Strike a Bitter Nerve."

The point of the nit-picking *Post* articles was to show that, even though a few Contras might have been involved in running a small amount of drugs, there is no proof that the two Nicaraguan drug-runners cited in the *San Jose* series, Oscar Danilo Blandón and Norwin Meneses, sold *that* much cocaine, or that they were selling in *that* many cities, or that they had *that* much connection to the CIA. The findings of the Kerry committee and other investigations are presented in one-liners and then glossed over, to say that there is no

proof that the CIA targeted blacks in Los Angeles.

The real fear of the *Post* was indicated by its caution that the furor over the *San Jose Mercury News* stories "is also being fanned by seasoned conspiracy theorists, from political extremist Lyndon LaRouche to activist Dick Gregory."

Fed, local officials knew in 1986

Unfortunately for the *Washington Post*, the *San Jose Mercury News* had published another blockbuster article the day before, which provided devastating confirmation of the scope of the Blandón drug ring in southern California.

The *Mercury News* has now obtained a 1986 search warrant which shows that both federal and local law enforcement officials knew that a huge drug ring operated by Blandón was selling large amounts of cocaine "mainly to blacks living in the South-Central Los Angeles area" in the mid-1980s. The affidavit said that the Blandón cocaine-distributing organization consisted of over 100 people who were "either Nicaraguan and/or sympathizers to the Contra movement."

The affidavit, executed by a Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office narcotics detective in October 1986, says that Blandón is a founder of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (the main Contra organization, known as the FDN), and that: "The money and arms generated by this organization comes thru the sales of cocaine." The affidavit also states that the DEA and FBI were also conducting simultaneous investigations of the Blandón organization.

The Los Angeles Sheriff's Office had denied to the *Mercury News* that it had the affidavit, even after two pages of it surfaced during the March 1996 trial of drug trafficker Ricky Ross. The *Mercury News* has now obtained the entire affidavit, which, it says, "is the first independent confirmation that the Contra army . . . was dealing cocaine to gangs in Los Angeles' black neighborhoods."

Much of the evidence of the Blandón/Contra drug ring came to light during the Ross trial earlier this year, but the complete 1986 affidavit now provides solid evidence that U.S. and local officials were fully aware of the extent of the operation during the 1980s. It is important to note that these investigations were taking place precisely during the period when the Contra operation was no longer being run by the CIA, but was being directly run out of the White House/NSC under the control of Bush.

The *EIR Special Report* remains an indispensable sourcebook for anyone seriously examining the *San Jose Mercury News* allegations, since the *EIR* report is the only available source which pulls together the many strands of credible evidence from numerous sources—including the Kerry committee hearings and testimony, and the various "Iran-Contra" investigations—which prove beyond any reasonable doubt that the Contra drug-smuggling operation was extensive, widespread, and was simply one aspect of a pattern of unlawful activity by the secret government apparatus directed by George Bush.