

Crack cocaine probe zeroes in on George Bush, E.O. 12333

by Edward Spannaus

At a raucous town meeting in South-Central Los Angeles on Nov. 15, Director of Central Intelligence John Deutch promised that he would investigate allegations that George Bush ran privatized intelligence operations under the authority of Executive Order 12333, as part of the CIA's investigation into Contra drug-running into the United States in the 1980s. However, a few days later in San Diego, federal prosecutors succeeded in suppressing evidence relating to government-sponsored, privatized covert operations, in the sentencing proceeding involving convicted drug dealer Ricky Ross.

Although the Justice Department may believe that getting Ross's sentencing out of the way eliminates one vulnerable flank with respect to the allegation of U.S. government involvement in the spread of illegal drugs in the 1980s, there is no sign of any let-up in the ferment that has grown up in the wake of the *San Jose Mercury News* series in August; in fact, Deutch's appearance in Los Angeles seems only to have intensified the anger in the black community over government stonewalling on the drug issue. At the same time, the issue of George Bush's overall culpability is assuming more and more prominence.

Deutch goes to Watts

Deutch appeared before a town meeting of over 600 people in the Watts area of Los Angeles, which was organized by Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald, to respond to allegations of CIA involvement in sparking the crack cocaine epidemic. In his opening statement, Deutch portrayed the CIA as being in the forefront of the fight against drugs. "No one who runs a government agency can allow such an allegation [that the CIA ran drugs] to stand," he said. "I will get to the bottom of it."

After Deutch's opening statement, the floor was opened for questions, which ranged from thoughtful questions and

statements about the government role in drug-trafficking, and the inadequacy of the CIA's internal investigation, to attempts by aging leftists to incite the crowd to violence in classic police-agent fashion.

The most significant exchange took place when Peter Chaitkin, a representative of the LaRouche movement, elicited an assurance that Deutch would order an investigation of Bush's role.

"Director Deutch," Chaitkin said, "I have a very simple way that you can prove to us that you intend to get to the bottom of these allegations, and that is: The CIA in 1981 was overridden under the Reagan administration, when President Ronald Reagan signed Executive Order 12333. He set up a parallel government, headed up by George Bush, for which Ollie North also worked, and they privatized U.S. intelligence. For example . . . Scott Weekly, who was said by the government not to be involved with the government: It turns out he was involved in a private operation, as part of what is called the Bush 'asteroids.'

"But you have a private network run by George Bush and Ollie North, not the CIA. You won't find the records in the CIA. They're not there! They're in these privatized intelligence agencies. Will you pursue that? Will you pursue Ollie North and George Bush, and the massive documentation?"

When Chaitkin concluded by declaring that "Ricky Ross is doing George Bush's time," audience members exploded into cheers and applause. When Representative McDonald then tried to move ahead without having Deutch respond, members of the audience shouted: "Answer the question!"

Deutch finally responded by saying, "I will instruct our Inspector General to investigate any allegation in this matter that is brought forward. If you bring forward an allegation to me, I will see that it is investigated."

Chaitkin rose, announcing, "I have it right here," and

handed up the documentation; again the room rang with shouts of approval and applause. The material included *EIR*'s *Special Report* on drug kingpin George Bush.

The extent to which *EIR*'s charge that Bush was the 1980s drug super-kingpin has taken hold, was also underscored on ABC's "Nightline" that evening. Host Ted Koppel had invited participants at the town meeting to stay and engage in discussion after Deutch left. When Koppel asked Marcine Shaw, mayor *pro tem* of nearby Compton, if she believed the CIA were responsible for the flood of cocaine, she pointed to Bush.

"Not this particular CIA, under Mr. Deutch. . . . It goes further than that," she said. "Mr. Bush, as the vice president, set up two committees, one of them headed by Ollie North, way back, that really got all this started. Yes, in my mind, and from information I've seen from people I've talked to, yes, it did happen, sir."

Bush's name had also been raised in one of the first questions to Deutch, in which the questioner noted that Reagan had "put Bush over the CIA," and he asked if there were a connection with the firing of the striking air flight controllers, which, the questioner suggested, permitted drug flights to come back into the United States from Central America more easily. "We're stopping at the CIA," he said, "but it looks like Reagan and Bush had something to do with it."

Another question concerned John Hull, and whether he was a CIA asset. Deutch acknowledged that Hull had been mentioned in the report issued by a Senate subcommittee chaired by Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), and that he was an American farmer with a ranch in Costa Rica, whose airstrip "was used for drug trafficking." Deutch said this will be looked into, but he added that Hull "was not a CIA asset."

Ricky Ross's brother asked Deutch how the United States can go to Kuwait or Vietnam and start a war, but "you cannot control this dope war?" Other questioners asked why the United States, the most powerful nation on earth, cannot stop a Third World country from flooding this country with illegal drugs.

The Ross case

One forum in which significant evidence of government involvement in drug-trafficking has emerged, was closed down on Nov. 19, when "Freeway Ricky" Ross was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole. In denying Ross's motion for a new trial, the judge ignored substantial evidence of government misconduct in the targeting of Ross, and ruled that growing evidence of CIA and other U.S. government involvement in the Oscar Danilo Blandón drug ring was irrelevant.

Ross was convicted last spring of conspiracy to possess cocaine; his sentencing was delayed in the wake of the *Mercury News* series. This case against Ross is not part of the 1980s drug dealing, but was the result of a Drug Enforcement Administration operation targeting Ross, using Blandón to set Ross up for arrest. Contra-backer Blandón, who has admitted selling tons of cocaine to the Crips and Bloods street gangs for a decade, was not only let out of prison after 28 months,

but has been paid more than \$166,000 in rewards and expenses since becoming a federal informant.

U.S. District Judge Marilyn Huff rejected Ross's claims that he had been entrapped. Huff said that any "innuendo or speculation" of possible CIA involvement in drug trafficking in the 1980s "does not give Mr. Ross a free pass for the rest of his life." Huff said she would not have imposed a life sentence on Ross, but, she said, Congress had decided to "take away certain discretion from the courts." This was Ross's third conviction. She did not impose a fine on Ross.

Ross's lawyer, Alan Fenster, told reporters that it was "beyond outrage" that Blandón "was living the life of Riley now, courtesy of the U.S. taxpayer, while my client is sentenced to die in prison."

During the sentencing hearing, Judge Huff told prosecutor L.J. O'Neale—the Assistant U.S. Attorney who had obtained Blandón's early release and used him to prosecute Ross—that she wanted Blandón out of the country as soon as possible. "If Mr. Blandón is of no further assistance to the government, he should be deported as an aggravated felon," Huff said. "I am recommending to the Attorney General, the Department of Justice, and the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] that he be deported forthwith."

U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) reacted angrily to Huff's request, and said she would try to stop it. "What about the damned investigations that are going on?" Waters demanded. "This is like a freedom train for him. They're trying to get him out of the country, so we won't have him here for these hearings."

In their final legal brief, federal prosecutors attacked the affidavit of this writer, which documented the use of private intelligence operations under E.O. 12333, as a matter of "Mr. Spannaus's opinions . . . predetermined to fit his own conspiratorial bent, and worthless for any proper purpose here."

The affidavit, submitted by Ross's attorney on Nov. 13 (see *EIR*, Nov. 22), showed that David Scott Weekly, linked to the Blandón drug ring, was in fact part of a private intelligence operation created by Lt. Col. James "Bo" Gritz (ret.), being run by the National Security Council and military intelligence agencies. The government's brief makes no mention whatsoever of these facts. Instead, the prosecutors accused Ross's attorney of backing down because he was attempting to broaden the issue beyond the CIA!

O'Neale argued that the evidence presented by Spannaus is "far afield from any relevant matter," contending that Bo Gritz "has long since claimed to be or have been an agent of virtually every United States intelligence service," and that Scott Weekly has also "consistently claimed to be an intelligence operative, although that has not prevented his two criminal convictions." O'Neale neglected to mention that Gritz and his associates were targeted for prosecution, only *after* Gritz refused to shut up about his findings that Bush-league U.S. officials were involved in the drug traffic in Southeast Asia. This is a matter that O'Neale knows something about: He was part of the team which prosecuted Gritz in 1987.