
Congress

Peru's actions call question on drugs

by Susan Kokinda

Peruvian President Alan García's military crackdown on the cocaine mob promises to call the question on the commitment of the U.S. Congress to fight drugs. While anti-drug legislation—relating to law enforcement, money laundering, and the role of the military—has been on the congressional agenda this year, little of positive substance has been acted on. Indeed, some legislation, cutting off aid to countries like Bolivia and Peru in the alleged absence of progress in combatting drugs, has been downright destructive.

No one in Congress wants to be identified as soft on dope trafficking. But, with the exception of isolated efforts by some senators and congressmen to add funding for existing international and domestic drug enforcement programs, the "anti-drug" activities of the Congress have consisted mostly of headlines.

Now, Congress will have to put up or shut up. Back from a multi-nation trip to Ibero-America, which included Peru, members of the House Select Committee on Narcotics gave strong verbal support to the efforts of García. Committee Chairman Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.)

Operation Condor as evidence of a determined crackdown on drugs. More importantly, committee member Norman Lent (R-N.Y.)

that "the drug problem is far more serious than many of us in Congress realized. These countries . . . are plagued by the fact that they are all obligated by large external debts. These countries need lots of expensive equipment—helicopters, guns. . . . They're going to need a great deal of support from this nation."

Committee members hope to meet with Attorney General Edwin Meese upon their return to Washington in September to discuss ways to assist Peru and the new government in Bolivia. If Congress is serious, there should be no impediment to a serious and all-out prosecution of the battle, since Meese himself has taken command of a serious administration's war on drugs.

The new attorney-general has significantly reversed the lackluster performance of his predecessor William French Smith and the outright sabotage of ex-Treasury Secretary

Donald Regan, as indicated by Mexican Foreign Minister Bernard Sepúlveda's remarks (page 9) praising the shift away from the previous antagonism expressed toward Mexico by many U.S. anti-drug officials.

However, in Congress, about the only legislative successes this year, have come from the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Treasury, headed by James Abdnor (R-S.D.)

the senators were able to add over \$120 million for anti-drug activities to the FY 1985 Supplemental Appropriations bill. DeConcini also won Senate passage of bills making available men and equipment from the Air National Guard and the Air Reserves, for certain assistance in drug interdiction.

Some very bad legislation

On the negative side, stand the dangerous and self-serving amendments to the Foreign Aid bill which "punish" those countries Congress deems soft on narcotics enforcement. Senators Paula Hawkins (R-Fla.),

Sam Nunn (D-Ga.),

Affairs Committee Chairman Dante Fascell (D-Fla.)

introduced bills and amendments which cut off aid to Ibero-American nations who do not live up to certain Congress-sanctioned goals. Bolivia has had aid cut, and Peru and Brazil are threatened.

As Rangel and Lent commented above, narcotics trafficking is itself a threat to the "fragile democracies" of some nations, who have already been burdened by large external debts. To state the point more fully, unless a nation takes on the international bankers and citizens above suspicion, who have facilitated and participated in drug production and trafficking, as Peru has now done, its law enforcement efforts against drugs will be largely futile. Most of the congressmen and senators lashing Peru or Bolivia kowtow to the International Monetary Fund. Even worse, some such as Dante Fascell, are vocal supporters of the State Department's Project Democracy apparatus, which has gone so far as to praise the "informal economy" of Peru!

The majority of anti-drug bills are either unenacted or largely irrelevant. The administration's major initiative, against banks and individuals who engage in money laundering, announced by Attorney General Meese on June 13, is sitting in both the House and the Senate committees. S. 1335, introduced by Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.),

Judiciary Committee member, Bill McCollum (R-Fla.), not had hearings in either the Judiciary or the Banking committees, and, at present, do not have hearings scheduled. Congress engaged in a brief headline-grabbing flurry of hearings and bill-introductions during the late winter publicity about the Bank of Boston violations, but nothing substantive has begun to move through the legislative process on either side.

pledged

A piece of unenacted legislation, which is likely to generate headlines and committee hearings this fall, is Rep. Rangel's H.R. 526, "The State and Local Narcotics Control Assistance Act of 1985." The Rangel legislation, which has over 100 House sponsors, and Senators Al D'Amato (R-N.Y.) and Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.) as Senate sponsors, tries to throw some money in the direction of state and local authorities, to help those who have been "overwhelmed" by the investigative, enforcement and prosecutorial costs of narcotics enforcement.

Any legislation which has as supporters, Moynihan, one of the international financiers' most faithful spokesmen, and Rep. Mickey Leland (D-Tex.), a towel boy for Dope, Inc.'s de Menil family, to name a few less-than-clean co-sponsors, can't be taken very seriously.

However, H.R. 526, is likely to be the anti-drug show-piece of the fall session of Congress.

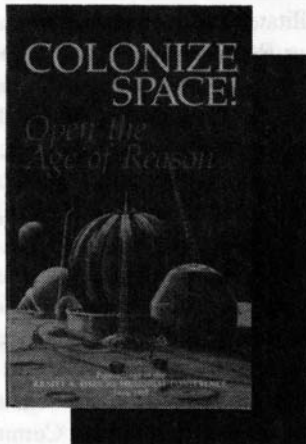
Local law enforcement does need help, but if Congress is going to do more than generate publicity for itself, it must take on drug enforcement as President Alan García has—as a military deployment against the producers, the processors, the traffickers, the bankers and the political protectors.

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Those who destroyed now vying to become

by Mel Klenetsky

The current New York City mayoralty race raises afresh the spectre of the collapse of America's greatest city. Will the city survive another four years of incumbent Ed Koch, or challengers Carol Bellamy and Denny Farrell, the so-called front-runners in the race?

If you say yes, then you've become callous and blinded to things that denizens of this metropolis, who lived in the city through the sixties and even John Lindsay's era, would never have tolerated. Eleven years have passed, including two Koch administrations, and the West Side Highway, one of the major urban vehicular arteries in the world, still remains barely passable, and for all intents and purposes closed as a major artery for Manhattan's North-South traffic.

Whole sections of the city are "bombed out" and abandoned, a Paradiso for the rodent community. The subways are something out of the Wild West, where lawlessness prevails, to such an extent that Bernie Goetz, a man with obvious problems, became the Charles Bronson Hollywood vigilante figure come true, with much of the city cheering Goetz's murderous actions.

From the bag-ladies on Union Square to the urine-smelling, graffiti-ridden subways, New York City is something out of the lower rungs of Dante's *Inferno*. This great city, whose harbors were once teeming with ships, whose Ellis Island and Statue of Liberty embraced newly arrived immigrants and gave them the opportunity to partake in the American Dream, more and more looks like some kind of a Turkish bazaar, straight out of Fellini's *Satyricon*, and presided over by the Caliph of Gracie Mansion, Mayor Edward Koch.

Koch rolls with the punches. Today, the mayor is viewed by the middle class of the city as the bastion of traditional values. Since Koch and his ilk are responsible, in a very direct way, for the AIDS epidemic ravaging the city, his adoption by New York City's middle class, as their champion, shows a combination of ignorance and desperation among the constituency.

The AIDS epidemic of today not only affects homosexuals and other specific "high risk" communities, but is beginning to reach into the general population in a devastating way. AIDS is the great leveler, bursting the myths that our cities have rebounded from the financial crises of the seventies, that our economy has undergone a miraculous "econom-