

## Eye on Washington by Nicholas F. Benton

### Death penalty for money-laundering?

Commenting on the number of bills before Congress to outlaw drug money laundering, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, head of the Schiller Institute, said that one main flaw with all of the bills is that they do not include punishment appropriate to the crime. In the case where banks' presidents and directors are found guilty of laundering billions of dollars of drug money, they have, in fact, been found guilty of mass murder. That is the real effect of their crimes on thousands of youths whose minds and lives are irreversibly destroyed by drugs, even from ages seven and eight."

The only real debate on such a bill should concern whether or not the convicted criminal receives life imprisonment with hard labor, or the death penalty," she said. The death penalty could be invoked under condition that a state of war were in effect—which is exactly what the fight against the drug plague requires.

Mrs. LaRouche made her remarks in response to a day of lobbying organized by the Schiller Institute on Capitol Hill Dec. 11. Among the lobbyists were former South Carolina Congressman Jim Mann, former Manhattan Borough President Hulan Jack, and current state legislators Jim Isaacson (Washington state) and Clarence Davis (Maryland). They met with key congressmen on the money-laundering issue, and held a press confer-

ence with AP, CBS, the *Washington Financial Daily*, and the official Venezuelan state news agency.

It was Davis who broke through the nonsense about devising a bill with "appropriate wording to satisfy all parties involved," when he confronted the press with a moving personal depiction of the dozens of eight-year-old children who are used by pushers to deliver drugs and money from street corners in his district in downtown Baltimore."

The police may show up and even arrest one or two, but a half hour later everyone is back. These kids are called 'mules' by the pushers, and they often are on drugs themselves. Their lives are destroyed and they are not even ten years old yet."

When one reporter started defending the American Bankers' Association opposition to a bill against money laundering that would hold bank officials responsible for accepting drug money, Davis shot back, "We are trying to stop the destruction of our nation's youth. If you don't stop those who profit from drugs the most, you won't stop drugs. This is an effort to do that. I don't want you reporters coming into my district to do a human-interest story on some 11-year-old junkie if you won't report on this press conference and this effort to stop the drug problem."

The Schiller Institute opposed the Justice Department's bill against money-laundering, which seems deliberately designed to make it impossible to prosecute a high bank official (see page 4), although Treasury, DEA, and law-enforcement officials already know, in the Bank of Boston case, for example, that senior bank officials are involved.

The Presidents' Commission on Organized Crime had properly sought wording that would hold a bank pres-

ident or director accountable on the basis of "reason to know" that money coming into the bank is from a criminal source. According to Rep. Dan Lungren (R-Calif.), grand juries are currently convened to look into the drug money laundering evidence in the cases of banks already fined, but there are no reports of how high up the ladder of the bank command structure they are going.

A Justice Department spokesman told me the reason they "watered down" the Commission's recommended bill was that it would make "innocent bank tellers" as liable as a senior bank official for laundering—therefore, the Justice Department demanded a "greater burden of proof." However, it is just that minor change that it going to allow the senior officials to slip out of the grasp of justice.

### Water from Canada? Why not?

"We are very sensitive about any ideas of exporting our water, indeed. It is a very touchy issue up in Canada," Thomas P. d'Aquinio, president of Canada's Business Council on National Issues, told me before a speaking engagement in Washington recently. But when reminded of the great "North American Water and Power Alliance" (NAWAPA) plan of selling 85 million acre feet of water and 70 megawatts of hydroelectric power annually to the United States and Mexico, he mused, "Well, you would certainly think that the idea of selling a surplus resource, that is a renewable resource at that, would be an attractive idea."

Right now, 27% of the Earth's fresh water hits Canadian land and runs off, without being touched for any purpose.