

## EIR Feature

# The West can stop Russia's opium war now

by Jeffrey Steinberg

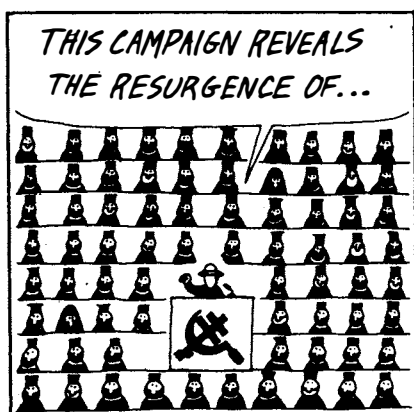
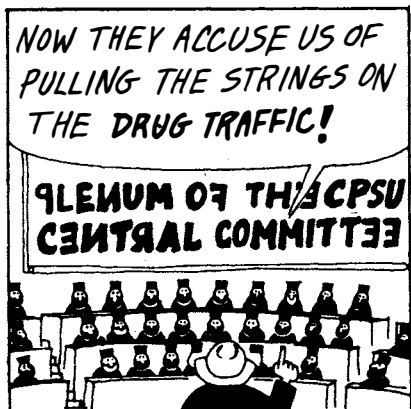
If 1986 began with the Reagan administration placing the war against the growing menace of narco-terrorism near the top of its strategic agenda, the year ended on a far more ambiguous note. While a series of impressively documented articles shedding the cloak of secrecy surrounding the Soviets' longtime role in the international drug trade appeared in recent weeks in prestigious publications in the United States and Western Europe, signs also began surfacing at year's end that a "Contra connection" to the lucrative Colombian cocaine trade will be a visible feature of the congressional and special prosecutor's probes of "Irangate."

On Dec. 31, New York *Daily News* Washington, D.C. correspondent Joseph Volz broke the story that a House crime subcommittee is quietly investigating allegations that some Contra arms purchases were financed by the smuggling of tons of cocaine into the United States, cocaine provided by indicted Colombian dope kingpin Pablo Escobar Gaviria. Those charges, originally presented in a federal civil suit filed by the Washington, D.C.-based Christic Institute, have been under investigation by a Miami criminal grand jury and are apparently now to be taken up by Special Prosecutor Lawrence Walsh as part of his probe into Southern Air Transport, the airline which illegally shipped arms to the Contras.

Curiously, the same Escobar stands accused, in a Miami federal indictment handed down in August, of shipping tons of cocaine into the United States in partnership with top officials of the Nicaraguan Sandinista government, including a former top aide to Interior Minister Tomas Borges.

And, as *EIR* goes to press, President Reagan is returning to Washington after caucusing with his closest California and D.C. advisers at the western White House. Those New Year's meetings are said to traditionally shape administration policy over the next 12-month period. Before the President returned to the nation's capital and to the maelstrom of Irangate, he probably decided the fate of White House Chief of Staff Donald T. Regan. If Mr. Reagan ignores the the growing chorus of friends

the former Merrill Lynch boss to stay on at the White House—even for a few months—1987 may very well go down as the year in which the United States



*Yuri Andropov denies Soviet drugrunning, in a 1983 political cartoon by Italian artist Claudio Celani.*

unconditionally surrendered to the international drug cartel . . . by default.

From his defense of Wall Street's most corrupt and powerful institutions, to his patronage of a crew at the Department of Justice who earned their career stripes by whitewashing the international dirty-money infrastructure, Don Regan has emerged as the personification of that wing of the Reagan establishment out to subvert the President's Campaign '86 commitment to add teeth to the War on Drugs.

On the positive side of the equation, the ongoing clean-out of the Israeli Mossad and Kissingerian elements based at the National Security Council, has the potential to paralyze those forces who have persistently subverted the War on Drugs. The very same Mossad-run networks which the NSC relied on to traffic arms to both the Iranians and the Contras have been at the center of the Caribbean-based arms-for-drugs trade, as the Irangate scandal threatens now to expose. Far from taking sides in the Sandinista-Contra wars, these corrupt Israeli intelligence networks linked to Ariel Sharon, and their U.S. counterparts, have made fistfuls of money profiteering off the arms-for-dope market that flourished as Central America was transformed into a war zone trampled by mercenary armies.

In line with the current attack against the black-market

arms dealers who enjoyed the protection of the Kissingerians and dupes at the NSC, evidence that the Pentagon is giving new emphasis to the doctrine of low-intensity warfare, means that the United States is committed to developing and potentially deploying a military force specially suited to an all-out war on the narco-terrorist infrastructure. President Reagan's March 1986 directive on narco-terrorism mandated an increased U.S. military role in the war on drugs. As one article in this *Feature* will detail, the Bolivia "experiment" of last year has now laid the basis for a sustained government crack-down on the cocaine barons, even following the withdrawal of direct, visible U.S. military presence.

In short, 1987 will determine whether or not that directive translates into a shooting war on a sufficiently large and integrated scale to achieve a military victory over Dope, Inc.

### **The Russian connection**

Among the most encouraging signs that some U.S. and European intelligence circles are committed to reviving the War on Drugs, are the recently published exposés of Moscow's role in the international drug trade. The cover story of the Dec. 19, 1986 issue of the French weekly *L'Express*, an eight-page dossier by British researcher Brian Crozier, contains previously unpublished details of the Soviet top-down

role in the drug trade, dating back to the Korean War.

According to Crozier, who collaborated with American Soviet specialist Dr. Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., in the research effort, by no later than the closing days of the Korean War, the Soviets were conducting extensive studies of the impact of heroin and other drugs on American combat troops. Mao Zedong had flooded the Korean peninsula with cheap, high-grade heroin and opium as a means of subverting the morale and fighting potential of the United Nations troops, and Russian medical teams from the air force, the KGB, and the ministry of health conducted an impact study, out of secret air bases in North Korea.

By the time that Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba, Nikita Khrushchov had personally defined the drug trade as a cornerstone of Moscow's subversion of the West. According to a high-ranking Czech defector, Jan Sejna, by 1962, Khrushchov convened a secret meeting of top officials from all the Warsaw Pact countries plus Cuba, in which he spelled out an ambitious program for spreading drugs throughout the United States, Canada, France, and West Germany. Cuba was defined as a critical beachhead for this effort, in which the Czech and Bulgarian secret services would play a central role. One key component of the program was to be the gathering of blackmail files on politicians, police, and business leaders—particularly in Ibero-America—to draw those people into the running and protecting of the trade. By the mid-1960s, Moscow had targeted Colombia as a center of the Ibero-American drug traffic into the United States.

The high priority and secrecy surrounding the Soviet drug war from the time of the 1962 meeting, according to Crozier, is underscored by the fact that *Druzhiba Narodov* ("National Friendship"—Khrushchov's code name for the dope-peddling effort) was run out of the Soviet Defense Council Secretariat, the highest-ranking war council of the Soviet Union. The deputy director of the Administrative Organs Department of the CPSU, Maj.-Gen. Nikolai Savinkin, was sent in 1963 on a tour of all of the Warsaw Pact countries to assess the progress of *Druzhiba Narodov*. He was placed in charge of the overall effort. In 1964, he became director of the Administrative Organs Department, a post he retains today.

In an article published in the fall 1986 issue of the U.S. defense journal *Strategic Review*, Dr. Douglass identified the Soviet hand in the international drug trade as an integral feature of the Warsaw Pact's use of biological and chemical warfare, as not only a feature of their strategic war plan, but as a key component of their low-intensity warfare. In his article, "The Expanding Threat of Chemical-Biological Warfare: A Case of U.S. Tunnel Vision," Dr. Douglass stated:

"There is one category of chemical weapons that has received increasing attention in the United States: namely, the drug and narcotics dimension. Indeed, the 'crusade against drugs' declared by President Reagan has raised the problem into a national priority. Still, the epidemic magnitude of this problem is outpacing all efforts to combat it, and the emer-

gent 'designer drug' technology promises to endow it with further and truly explosive potential. Moreover, while the search for solutions has focused on the societal causes and manifestations of the problem, as well as on the commercial routes of the international drug traffic, little appreciation has been given to drugs and narcotics as a form of chemical warfare being waged against Western societies, with their military forces as priority targets. . . .

"Overwhelming evidence [exists] of the Soviet Bloc as a pivotal factor in the international drug traffic—in particular, of the strong role of Cuban Intelligence (DGI), which has been under direct KGB control since 1970, of Bulgaria as a major staging area for the traffic, of the participation of communist parties in Latin America, and of the numerous pro-Soviet and Cuban-sponsored terrorist forces involved in the flow. In light of this clear record, the continuing failure or refusal to recognize the traffic in drugs as a form of chemical warfare is truly startling."

### The Western side of the equation

The Douglass article, in defining the drug traffic as a form of chemical warfare against Western society, broached a critical question. Crozier raised the issue even more explicitly in his article in *L'Express*:

"For a long time, we were not lacking evidence or examples [of Soviet involvement in drug trafficking]. What was lacking was a general overview. Now it is possible to affirm that there is a Soviet strategy in matters of drugs. . . . I am not saying that the Soviet Union has a monopoly over the drug issue nor that it dominates the market. Its part of the benefit is relatively small. . . . The important point, however, is the deliberate and systematic use of the drug trade in order to undermine the Western countries."

It is precisely this issue of the Soviet strategic interface with an international drug trade that was created and is still controlled by Western-based circles—including powerful financial interests and renegade elements of the West's own intelligence services—that begins to address the true character of the international entity known as Dope, Inc.

Irangate, properly understood, has the unique potential of unearthing the full story of the East-West interface in the \$500 billion drug trade and its trillion-dollar weapons market. The case of Havana resident Robert Vesco, Vesco's involvement with Geneva banker Willard Zucker, of the CFS investment group that handled the Iran arms-sale revenues, is one point of departure for congressional and special prosecutor's investigators. When the dust finally settles on the Irangate affair, the big losers could be the scions of the multitrillion-dollar black market in arms-for-dope. If the Soviet role is not suppressed, in the interest of protecting Moscow's corrupt partners in the West, the basis may at long last be laid for a real War on Drugs—in which no one enjoys immunity and in which the executives of Dope, Inc. are put behind bars.