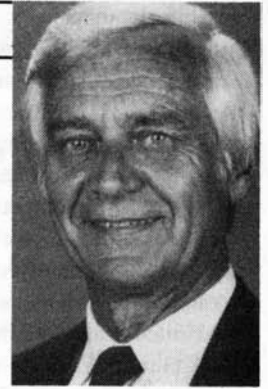


Interview: Admiral Daniel Murphy



Former NNBIS head calls for all-out war on drugs

On Sept. 7, EIR counterintelligence editor Jeffrey Steinberg and staff writer Scott Thompson interviewed Adm. Daniel Murphy, USN (ret.) at his Washington, D.C. offices. Admiral Murphy headed the Reagan administration's National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) from 1982-85. Prior to and during his tenure 1981-85 at NNBIS, he was chief of staff to Vice President George Bush. Admiral Murphy earlier served as Deputy Director of the CIA (1976-77) and as Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (1977-81) following a lengthy career in the U.S. Navy.

EIR: You testified recently before a House Foreign Relations subcommittee that you would bring the military into a much more ambitious war on drugs, advocating, among other things, the bombing of drug fields, laboratories, and airfields servicing the drug cartel. Would you elaborate on your proposals for a comprehensive war on drugs?

Murphy: It's a four-pronged program. We have to look at the source, and see what you can do to eradicate it there. Nothing's ever going to be 100% perfect. So some of the drugs get out anyway, and then you go to interdiction and try to pick it up from the high seas or in the air. And that's not 100%. Then you go to your in-country law enforcement, where you take down the infrastructure. We're doing that pretty well today, but the 13 Organized Crime Task Forces that the Justice Department has in the country, that's where we may need some beefing up. Finally, and perhaps more importantly—it probably should have been number one—this is a social problem in the United States that could be solved if everybody decided they wouldn't take drugs. So you have to educate the people, you have to rehabilitate them, and you also have to look for a way to get into the cities. These are kids who are dropouts who are pushing the stuff right here in Washington, so your nice educational program out in Montgomery County [suburban Maryland] isn't going to effect them one bit. You've got to come up with some plan to do something about this for those kids (nine year olds) in the street. You have to do all four of these things. If you just concentrate on the one or part of one, you're never going to

get the problem solved.

Now, Bush has decided to make [Senator] Quayle his drug czar responsible for all four prongs. We haven't had that up to now. And, I got beat around the head and shoulders, why didn't you do it, if you think it's so brilliant. Well, I think it's brilliant today. In hindsight, you're always smarter and you're still not too late to do something about it.

I view the war on drugs as a war that we have not been winning. But if we hadn't fought it at all, we'd probably be a lot worse off. I compared it in my congressional testimony to World War II in the Pacific. We'd got our heads handed to us in the beginning, but we regrouped, got more equipment out there, and we finally turned it around and beat the hell out of them. But, we didn't stand still. We had to accept the fact that we were not winning and do something more about it. Well, that's where we are today.

EIR: In the past, you served George Bush as one of his chief advisers on the war on drugs. Do you believe that the Vice President agrees with the approach that you have just outlined, and how vigorously will he pursue the war on drugs if he is elected in November?

Murphy: I think Bush, as Commander-in-Chief, sees it that way and has plans for each of those areas. Go back to the source. He's willing to help any sovereign leader who wants the help. He's also willing to try to persuade them they need the help. 1988 is much different than 1982. In '82 the response you got was awful: "That's your damn problem. You stop using the stuff and my problem will go away." You don't get that response anymore among Latin American leaders, because they're having their people killed, their governments destabilized, their own people starting to use drugs. So it's starting to be more of a problem that concerns them internally; therefore, they're more inclined to listen to offers of help from outside.

I realize that running air strikes on the drug barons sounds extreme, but to me that's a lot safer than sending men in there in helicopters and trying to have them land in the salt. And, when you're out there in the badlands, the central govern-

ments don't even have any control. They can't even go in there themselves. So why not send an A-6 in there with a smart bomb and put it right through his bedroom window. That's the way I look at it, if the sovereign country is willing to do it. At least you give them the option, and they might say: "Well, fine, if I can't get in there anyway. Take out their labs. Take out their runway. Take out their mansions." And you do it with a simple air strike with U.S. military forces. We've got the smart weapons. Some people say: "Well, I might like that if you could turn it over to the Colombian Air Force." Well, that's a big training program: getting the right aircraft that can handle the weapons systems, the fire control systems that go with it, and the training of the pilot and all. We have the capability in hand right now, sitting around waiting for World War III or the next mini-crisis.

First, George Bush, when he gets in, is going to have a summit of all the regional Presidents. I guess very similar to what they have just done with these 30 nations. I don't think it should just be limited to Latin America. European nations are facing the same drug problems, and they ought to contribute, too. The summit, in my mind, would be Latin American nations plus the top European nations that have the problem and maybe even Japan. And, lay all of this out on the table: Here's our capability, here's your problem, here's how we can do it, and offer them that kind of help. In helping them take down the drug lords, we might issue them extra equipment and eradicate the crop. We've just developed a new defoliant here that will knock out cocaine. We never had one before. They may need more equipment—helicopters and jeeps and trucks—which we can provide. So, the source country has the help it needs to try to take down the kingpins and also eradicate the crop.

It would be better to have the United States military, who know how to fight these kind of wars, who have the equipment, who have the trained men and the leadership to do it, play a pivotal role in the war on drugs, and let everybody else help the military play their appointed role instead of nickle-and-diming them to death. The common experience today is to have some other federal agency come to the Pentagon asking, "Could you loan me an AWACS next week?" The military don't like that, and I wouldn't have liked it either.

EIR: Is that the basis for the resistance within the military to their inclusion within the War on Drugs? I know that you had tried to bring both the military and the intelligence community into closer coordination. It seemed like there were some people who were resisting it, but the issue was never clear.

Murphy: Well, there are two issues for the military. One is that they are already committed. The forces that they have—the forces that Congress has appropriated the money for—were justified under very specific commitments. Now, if you take this destroyer that you said you needed for the Sixth Fleet, and then you go down and let them play drug war for

three or four months, the next time you come up for appropriations before Congress, the Armed Forces Committee will say, "Hey, that destroyer was never used for what we appropriated the money, and therefore I don't think you need that." We've lived all our lives under those conditions. You have to stick by the justification that you presented to Congress, or you lose it. The next time you don't have that destroyer. And, the truth is that they are committed. They aren't lying. I went out to SAC and went over the mission on every AWACS that they owned and I did the same with the E2-Cs, and I know that they don't have planes sitting around to do this kind of a job.

So, the answer is that the Commander-in-Chief says to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs: Well, let's relax your requirements in some areas for a certain period of time. You come back and tell me. You figure out how to solve the drug problem, what forces it would take. You go look and you see where they are. You come back and tell me what kind of commitments you have to relax and for how long, so you can take those forces and carry out the plan that you've just designed. You're giving responsibility to the military, not the other way around, where you say, "Gee, I want to borrow two E2-Cs for a week." It's not the military's responsibility to fight the drug war by this nickle-diming, persuading, and pleading. They would like to be able to help knock out the drugs, but they do have responsibilities that we as American citizens have given them, that Congress has appropriated money for them to do. They can't do both. So, I think Carlucci's absolutely right, because they don't have the forces to do that and everything else you told them to do. So, the Commander-in-Chief has to decide what they can do.

The second thing they object to is the *posse comitatus*. Historically, our country has never used the military for law enforcement. We think that's probably the right approach. I certainly agree with them on that, but you don't have to, in my mind, even change *posse comitatus*. What you do is take the existing law enforcement people that you have, and you spread them around. You distribute them among the military units that you have, that are going to be coming in direct contact with the drug people, and the military just holds the gun on them. The law enforcement officer comes in and does the arrest and all the hands-on relationship with the criminal. And, you still keep the military—even though they are on the scene—you keep them isolated from the bad guy. Now, you could do that today without changing *posse comitatus*.

Now, let's give an example in Colombia. Colombia must have a hundred illegal and legal air strips, and these guys—the bad guys and the good guys—are free to take off from there and head up to the Bahamas. So, the first thing you do through this summit meeting is decide that no aircraft are allowed on an international flight unless they depart from Airports A and B. Have a court decide whether that's feasible or not, but I think that it probably is. So, some guy takes off from some mountain strip up there in cocaine country and

flies directly out. And, you're out there with your radar on a big carrier with Aegis that can track everything that moves. You'll see it coming out. If he doesn't land at Airport A for his clearance and a shakedown, go after him.

Now, you've got a tough call. First of all, we have high-performance aircraft. It's not too easy to actually track and intercept these slow-flying DC-6s, but that's something they'll have to work out. They've got other aircraft if necessary. For this aircraft carrier, you load it up with the best aircraft that are available for that kind of work. Now, you can shoot it down. My good friend in Customs would say you should do that. Or, you give them a shot across the bow and give them the international signal to turn back. Or, you try to track them and have forces up the Caribbean to pick them up. I mean a plane from Customs might come out and just trade off and stay with them until he lands. Now, you hope that the country in which he lands is going to cooperate with us as much as the Colombians are cooperating, and then you've got the guy. But, you will sort out the traffic very quickly.

And, you do the same thing in Mexico. And, you require that aircraft coming out of Mexico have to come out of designated airfields. And, then you do the same thing with your backup interceptors along the U.S. border.

Shoot them down, as [U.S. Customs chief] Von Raab would do? It's a tough call. These are more political than they are tactical. Or, you go through the same routine. And, if you have enough forces, I think in very short order you've shut those corridors down. Next, they are going to go through the Pacific. So you have to do the same thing there. When you shut it all down, they are going to go through Brazil. The drug traffickers are not going to quit on you.

EIR: How do you see the role of traditional law enforcement in the war on drugs?

Murphy: Law enforcement, I think, involves an increased penalty for both users and pushers. I'm in favor of the death penalty for the kingpin: tough to define, but I think the courts can define that. The President of the United States doesn't have to define "kingpin." You have to standardize to a much greater degree, throughout our country, sentencing by our judges. You certainly have to standardize and be tougher on the parole side. And, there are probably other law enforcement issues. Maybe we could use more of the Organized Crime Task Forces, who have been very successful in bringing down the infrastructure. I think they also need a backup, because they always have this funnel effect where they get overloaded. There are lesser crimes that are not going to make it all the way through the Organized Crime Task Force, but you can have subgroups of those that can handle the less important cases and not let them get away with it.

Then, the big thing in Bush's thinking is targeting the user. We have to admit that we have let the user off the hook in this country. We never have really gone after the user. And the reason was not that we were trying to be easy on

users, but that we could not handle the load. Some guy comes through Kennedy Airport, and he has one marijuana cigarette. They take it away from him and let him go. They just can't take the time. The guy coming behind him may be coming with a thousand pounds of cocaine. And, so, it was a sort of a practical type of approach, which, again in hindsight, I wouldn't say was wrong. But, it hasn't done much to stop the use of drugs. So, there are lots of things you can do. You can confiscate their property, which New York is already doing. You can do more in the way of publicizing drug users that you pick up. It's been used with prostitution. You have some young, successful lawyer in town, who goes down and buys cocaine and gets nailed and gets his picture in the *Washington Post* the next morning. I'd say he's in a lot of trouble business-wise. And you have to hold them accountable. Here again, confiscation of property and sentencing.

Well, each problem leads to another problem. Where are the judges, the prosecutors, the jails to take care of that? We ran into that dilemma in Florida. The same problem. So, Vice President Bush went to the Chief Justice and got more federal judges for South Florida. And, he increased the number of prosecutors. And, we got good prosecutors. We didn't get kids out of law school. We went around the country and begged, borrowed, and stole top-notch prosecutors—already trained. You can't always do that, but you do the best you can.

So, jails. It looks like we can—with the cooperation of all hands—use military bases that are not needed anymore and convert them into jail space. I've even thought of decommissioned ships, which we've got thousands of. I don't know how much that would cost; it would be expensive. But, you could do that. Just anchor them out someplace. Put drug pushers in those kinds of quarters. You could solve the jail shortage without having to simply build brand new jails.

So, that's the law enforcement part of it. Judges: There are judges that are retired that could probably help. Prosecutors: There definitely is a problem, because I saw it happen in Florida where the civil cases stood around waiting and waiting and waiting, because we had so many criminal cases that were taking priority.

And, then, the final challenge: trying to do something about the usage of drugs. We need more education in schools. The disadvantaged children in the inner cities need help. They are getting \$2,500 a day. It's kind of hard to convince a nine-year-old that there's something bad about what he's doing. He doesn't see the bad part of it until he gets killed. So that has to be attacked. It would be nice if there were some way to take those youngsters and in a voluntary way put them in a re-training area where they have to go back to school, give them an education on why this is all bad, and, at the same time, see if you can't turn them back out as decent citizens. Now, that probably sounds unworkable, because, if a kid is making \$2,500 a day, he's going to go over the fence the first day he's there. But then you get hard-nosed. You

say, okay, look, we have a program here that is compassionate and maybe it will work, but if you go back over the fence, the next time you go back to reform school. So, it's training, rehabilitation, but it has to have sanction.

The reason why the military have been successful in cleaning up drugs isn't just because of the testing. Testing alone doesn't do a damn thing. You have to have the sanction of throwing the guy out with a dishonorable discharge. That's the sanction. I've seen it work. But, testing is going to have to be used more. Certainly the federal government can show the way: at least insisting on testing in certain areas. Certainly the transportation, areas of safety, areas of national security, and also areas of federal housing (where you have some control) and have sanctions. Then, you have an education program. Major businesses that want a drug-free workplace will have to help. Maybe that could be done without passing new laws. A lot of testing is going on right now in the Fortune 500 without any laws or anything else.

So, that's a long answer to generally how you approach it. And, you put one guy in charge. And, this will be a situation of continuous adjustment, because each one of these will change right under you as you go after it, particularly going after the supply side.

EIR: When the President's Blue Ribbon Commission on Organized Crime finally sat down to writing reports, it was their view that the very first question that had to be tackled was the issue of money laundering and the presence of criminal revenues within the economy. I think probably the best estimates coming out of DEA and State Department in the last year or so indicate minimally \$300-500 billion a year in the total global network of the drug trade. Clearly much of that money in some way or other passes through the U.S. economy, both through the sales at the retail end and through the laundering. Since there are already existing laws on the books that provide for the seizures of assets from organized crime organizations, what do you think about placing a greater spotlight on the money laundering end and therefore being in a position to seize the cash assets, that might then be used to finance the additional costs of a broad, ambitious war on drugs such as you are talking about.

Murphy: We did run a lot in South Florida on money laundering, under the guidance of the IRS, and it was quite successful. We closed down some banks. As I recall seizure laws already apply to money launderers, and so, you're absolutely right. But, I think that's a subject that needs to be studied. I'm not an expert at it. There may be ways of changing banking laws relating to the electronic transfer of funds under certain circumstances which would really wipe these guys out, or make it very, very difficult for them. So, I agree it's a whole area and I think we probably need more analysis. The drug traffickers have analyzed it.

EIR: In the National Security Decision Directive defining

narco-terrorism as a prime national security threat, this was the context in which a greater role for the military was called for. The next step is to raise the issue of the actual authorship of some of the drug trade. There have been several recent books and magazine articles written, which have used documentation provided by Soviet defectors and drug enforcement personnel who investigated cases where there was Cuban and Nicaraguan involvement. From your experience at NNBS and other experiences that you may have had, do you see a link between the irregular warfare dimension of what the Soviets are doing worldwide and this increased proliferation of drug trafficking that the U.S. and our NATO allies in Europe seem to be the victims of.

Murphy: I never did see any linkage in the intelligence that I had available to me. So, I really have no views on that at all. It's not something we should be oblivious to; we should watch that.

EIR: Well, Colombia has been plunged into near civil war by narco-terrorist groups that are connected with either Cuba or the Soviet Union. Similarly, there are Soviet ties to the Shining Path in Peru. These narco-terrorist groups are either running protection for the traffickers, or else trafficking themselves to buy weapons for their terrorism.

Murphy: Well, you have to analyze the intelligence. I looked very closely at the time to the Cuban connection, and I found the evidence to be very shallow. But, somewhere in there, there is an arms and drugs linkage. And, the arms are not for any other purpose than destabilizing existing governments like the case of the [Colombian] M-19. So, if it's going on, I just never have seen what I consider to be evidence of it sufficient to take action. That doesn't mean it isn't there. They're still digging, and, maybe, since I left—it's been three years—that they may have more intelligence on it.

I find it a little bit difficult to blame an outside country for the voluntary use of drugs in our country. There are only about 20 million people involved in drugs out of 240 or 250 million people. These people, in my mind are abetting the enemy. They are using their money—perhaps a \$100 billion, or more based upon your figures—to support an enemy. So I see the culprit to be ourselves: those 20 million. And, if it's even worse, as you are implying, that other forces are involved here hoping to undermine our country, then their crime is even worse. This is what we have to convince people of. That they are—every time they spend their money—aiding and abetting an enemy that's trying to destroy us. Whether the Soviets are involved in it or Cuba's involved in it, the fact is that these drug lords are the ones who are destroying our country. We saw it way back in history with China.

EIR: You brought in the intelligence community for the first time. Did the involvement of the CIA and other agencies lead to dividends?

Murphy: Well, I think the dividends were beginning by the time I left. I was surprised to see the testimony just before mine on the Kerry [Senate] Committee, where [DEA head] Jack Lawn said that he hadn't gotten anything from the CIA. And, I testified that I found that statement bewildering, because it's there, it's available to him. Intelligence is the heart of the whole problem: to know what the other guy is doing. Good strategic intelligence, as opposed to tactical intelligence. If you enact that plan I was just talking about, I want to know quickly how the drug cartel down there in Colombia is reacting. Are they going to continue pressing us? Are they going to fight their way through our augmented lines of defense? Are they going to divert? You want to know how the enemy is going to react to your tactics and your strategy. And, that's really strategic intelligence: the intentions. It's very tough to get, but that doesn't mean you don't go after it.

So, one is trying to help collect more intelligence and also to use all of our fantastic collection capability. Now, the problem here is that Jack Lawn, for instance take the top guy in the DEA, he doesn't have clearance for all of the stuff that I'm talking about. There's no way that he's going to know what the capability of the United States is to collect intelligence. If you don't know, you don't ask. I mean you're not going to ask for something that sounds like Buck Rogers. It never would dawn on you. It wouldn't enter your head. The guys over here know all of this stuff, but they are not very familiar with what Jack Lawn's needs are. It made sense to get these guys together. You don't have to tell Jack what your capabilities are, if you don't want him to know. But, you can certainly find out what his needs are and you then know what you can do.

I was in an interesting position, because I knew both sides. It was rather an enviable position to be in. Not that CIA was doing that, but they knew damn well that they couldn't say that they couldn't collect Elint or some imagery. So, that was a match that we tried to create and I thought we were creating it.

The third thing was that law enforcement people do not understand intelligence the way a military guy does. There's a tendency to catalogue so you can call in and you can check a license plate, you can check my name to see whether I'm on some list, you can check the number on an aircraft or a ship. It's sort of a Sears Roebuck catalogue-type thing, that you can get in the machine and get it fast. Well, that's in my mind, a small part of intelligence. So there was a sort of educational process needed here. We were using CIA people as trainers. We sent them to all these NNBS centers and to EPIC [El Paso Information Center] to try and give them a broader understanding of what intelligence really is and then, from that, a better understanding of what intelligence could do for them.

EIR: Could you summarize the future prospects of a War on Drugs if George Bush is elected President or if Michael

Dukakis is elected President? You've served in both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Murphy: Well, I hate to get to talk in terms of winning. Some wars go on a long time. Bush has been on record right since the beginning saying that there was nothing he could do overnight and he knew the enemy would be reacting and he would be counter-reacting, so that it takes a long time. I'd say the priority of getting on top of the drug problem—I'm not going to define "getting on top of"—is very, very high under Bush, and, I'd think it would just languish under Dukakis. This is just based on what I've read of his statements and the areas that Dukakis appears to be oblivious to.

Bush is already on record in his speeches. He will also call a governors' conference fast. He's going to say: "This is not just a federal problem, gentlemen. We've got to have help at the state level." And, the governors' group has a subgroup on drugs. And, I think that you'll see some fast action. A lot of the things that I just ticked off as a Bush drug plan are at the state level. I mean things like having somebody in every school trained in detecting drugs. The federal government can't be looked to to do that. You have to have these states do that. So a lot of the things I was talking about are actions to be taken by the state government. So, you hit it in a governors' conference quickly in February and the summit meeting would probably follow shortly after that. It would be very nice to tell the heads of other governments the actions that you've got under way in your own country. I think that's already in his mental schedule, if he doesn't have it written down somewhere. He's a man who knows the problem, although he will turn it over to his vice president on a day-to-day basis. Bush will be on top of that on a week-by-week basis.

EIR: So there will be a drug czar, and it will be the vice president?

Murphy: He's already announced that.

EIR: One final question. During your recent congressional testimony, you were asked about your several recent trips to Panama and your discussions with General Noriega. Can you comment on the recent drug-trafficking indictment against General Noriega and the charges that Vice President Bush sat on evidence of Noriega's drug involvement?

Murphy: I can tell you that during my entire tenure at NNBS and earlier with the South Florida Task Force, I never saw any intelligence suggesting General Noriega's involvement in the drug trade. In fact, we always held up Panama as the model in terms of cooperation with the United States on the war on drugs. Remember that a grand jury indictment in this country is not a conviction. If the case ever comes to trial, I will look at the evidence and the jury's findings, but until that happens, I have no first-hand evidence whatsoever of the general's involvement. My experience ran in the opposite direction.