

LETHAL DRUGS

V. Silantyev, Izvestia's own correspondent

Mexico City. A Western Hemisphere justice ministers and prosecutors general meeting, held in the Mexican health resort of Puerto Vallarta, discussed how to combat narcotics production and contraband. The United States of America, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Bolivia and other Latin American nations - 13 states in all - took part.

The meeting was convened at the insistence of the US administration, which in recent months has been demonstrating its concern over the problem of narcotics. At first President Ronald Reagan personally had called for display of resolve to end this mass affliction in the USA, and then Congress had started discussing bills on this account.

Spokesmen for Latin American nations said in Puerto Vallarta that their governments are waging a struggle against "white death." Thus, Mexico had prepared a report telling in dry-figures language about the measures being taken against narcotics contraband. No fewer than 9,525 criminals with the prohibited cargo were detained last year; six tons of pure cocaine alone was confiscated. In 9 months of this year, 8,000 contrabandists were already arrested. The police are intercepting bandits on the highways and at sea, and catching them red-handed on secret airfields. As a result, during the past year the federal police have confiscated 17 planes, 16 sea motor boats, 1,474 submachine guns and rifles, 28,000 cartridges; they have destroyed 13 clandestine laboratories that had been processing narcotics basic stock.

Mexican television also has often given impressive accounts of how a company of Mexican soldiers mows up the fields sown with marijuana which is then gathered into stacks, poured over with petrol and ignited. Not only the army and

police, but also the navy and air force are currently participating in the struggle against narcotics. It sometimes takes large-scale operations involving whole army units to capture the fortified residences of contrabandists. Such was the case, for example, a year ago when the strongly fortified villa of the mafia chief nicknamed Don Neto was stormed in Puerto Villarta.

Most Latin American participants at the meeting could have presented similar kinds of evidence.

For some reason, the US delegation failed to submit a report on its contribution to the anti-narcotics drive. However, Washington's position on this question is no secret. Essentially, the US administration thinks that Mexico and other nations of the continent have been fighting narcotics contraband too passively and do not counter the spread of the evil as they should.

With the plea of combating the spread of narcotics, the USA actually is grossly interfering in the domestic affairs of Latin American states. Not limiting itself to the fact that agents of the US drug control agency are permanently stationed in most of them, Washington has of late begun sending its troops there, as was the case recently in Bolivia.

The action caused a storm of anger among the Bolivian public, which demanded an immediate removal of the US soldiers. At a press conference in Puerto Villarta the interior minister of Bolivia, Fernando Barteleme, called the sending of US troops into his country a "mistake." In turn, Peru's minister of justice Carlos Blancas Bustamante compared the presence of US soldiers in Bolivia with intervention. Let the American soldiers, he said, fight at home against their own drug addicts. Peru never will ask for help and will not allow foreign troops in for these purposes. The minister stressed that the root of evil is the growing demand on the

narcotics market, and this market lies mainly in the United States.

There currently are over 30 million drug addicts in the United States. The persistent disease is stimulated by the law of commerce: demand gives rise to supply. But American criminals no longer restrict themselves to the import of narcotics from Latin America: they have established their production in their own country. According to NBC data, 3,000 clandestine laboratories for the production of synthetic narcotics acting like cocaine, but dozens of times cheaper than it have been discovered in the state of California alone. A home-grown marijuana business is flourishing in California, Oregon and a number of other states. As the High Times magazine writes, marijuana is being grown outdoors in climatically favourable US areas, and also under the "home" roof using special lamps, of which over 3 million were produced in 1984 alone.

Latin American governments are spending enormous sums on the struggle against narcotics contraband which they so badly need for other purposes. Yet the effect is small. The incidence of drug addiction in the USA has not been reduced. Moreover, it, like a contagious disease, is penetrating and infecting ever more people in Latin America itself. This is why Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid stressed at the Puerto Villarta meeting that drug addiction is becoming an international problem and that urgent solutions should be found to protect millions of people from it.

(Izvestia, December 29. Abridged.)

Friday, December 19, 1986

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IN THE MAIN BOARD OF STATE CUSTOM CONTROL
OF THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

In November 1986 agencies of state custom control foiled an attempt at illegal conveyance of over 1.2 tons of a narcotic across the Soviet Union in a transit cargo.

The authorities are conducting an investigation.

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More than a ton of hashish was hidden in a raisin-laden container belonging to the US firm Specific International. Documents accompanying the cargo list the container's European destination as the firm Nostrak GmbH Co KG with the following address: Vorsetzen 39, 2 Hamburg 11, West Germany.

As first deputy head of the Main Board of State Custom Control of the USSR Council of Ministers V. Boyarov told a TASS correspondent, the Soviet side is taking all the necessary steps to cut short the use of transit across the USSR by the "opium mafia" in the interests of the narcotics business. The computer processing of initial data on cargoes, the use of the latest equipment and other "secrets" of the Soviet customs service permit effectively picking out of the huge flow of containers those suspected of having a contraband enclosure of narcotics.

Yet, he noted, the confiscated record narcotic cargo for the customs, which was intended to reach West Germany, cannot but draw the attention of the world community to the danger which clandestine factories for the production of "white death" in the so called "golden crescent" zone pose for all. The briquettes of hashish discovered in the raisin were of industrial manufacture, and had reliable factory packaging, a quality symbol and a trademark - two crossed Islamic daggers.

The information that custom authorities have got hold of

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shows that Afghan dushmans and the related circles have a direct relationship to this narcotics affair. Practically all bandit formations of dushmans in the areas of Pakistan bordering on the DRA engage in the supply of narcotics to Western Europe and the USA. Laboratories for the production of "white death" have been set up in the dushmans' camps under the control of Gulbeddin Hekmatiar, with the aid of foreign specialists. It is known that Hekmatiar has had links with the US CIA since the late sixties.

This time the provocation involving narcotics had both the DRA and the Soviet Union as its target, said Boyarov. At the same time as workers of the Moscow customhouse were unloading the poisonous cargo bound for the FRG firm from the American container, some Western press media hastened to accuse the USSR of specially letting contraband narcotics pass through its territory to poison Western Europe. It is very likely that they were already waiting for the arrival in Hamburg of the very same ill-starred containers that got stuck at the customhouse in Moscow.

(TASS)

(Pravda, December 19. In full.)

PUT AN END TO DRUG ADDICTION: URGENT TASK

USSR Minister of the Interior

Answers Readers' Letters

Our daily receives many letters asking what is being done to combat drug addiction. We offer you a Pravda interview with Alexander Vlasov, USSR Minister of the Interior.

* * *

PRAVDA: The Soviet press has lately started to cover drug addiction problem. "Why has that evil stricken our country?" one of our readers asks us.

VLASOV: The problem has a fairly long standing, but we used to pass it in silence--out of disgust, maybe. Now that truthful and exhaustive information is disseminated on all aspects of Soviet life, bodies responsible for legal order can't stand aloof. We have increased our effort against crime, unearned incomes, parasitism, alcoholic abuse and drug addiction: ugly things of which our life has to be cleaned.

Our country has for a long time taken part in the international anti-drug effort. It is member of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (Vienna, 1971). The Soviet Union acts in full conformity with its international obligations. Our law envisages strict criminal and administrative responsibility for illegal procession of, trade in and abuse of narcotic drugs.

That we pay ever more attention to drug abuse does not mean it is widespread. The vice has no social basis in our country, while in capitalist states, it is rooted in social and economic relations, in exploitation, organised crime, corruption, and the young generation's despair. Ever more people are caught in the horrible trap. The United States

alone has over 30 million drug addicts, official statistics say.

In the Soviet Union, 46 thousand patients are on the books as drug addicts. But we are not after flattering comparisons. We want to root out the evil.

Drug abuse has grown these five years. Just think how many people are involved: every addict makes his near and dear unhappy, and threatens society, as drug addiction is a catchy vice.

Addicts belong to different social milieus. Some work in industry, some study, yet others sponge on society. Many have criminal records. 80 per cent drug addicts are below thirty years of age. This is predominantly a youth problem--largely because most addicts die young.

According to research data, most patients take to drugs under their friends' influence, or trying to imitate mores incompatible with the Soviet way of life. In the final analysis, drug addiction stems from lack of spirituality and culture, of genuine values and firm attitudes, sometimes from sheer inability to invent a pastime. Drug dealers, out to make fortunes, encourage their victims on the fatal path, and thus present tremendous social threat.

As the authorities and the mass media passed the problem in silence, our society did not pay due attention to it. The militia, health service, families and schools were not vigilant enough. Unhampered, the evil took root. What we need is information, however shocking it might be. We must lay bare the vile activities of pushers and big dealers, and demonstrate the plight of their victims, doomed to disease and moral degradation.

Some information that appeared previously had a negative effect. Sensation-mongers vividly described the delights of a "trip" and the ways to procure drugs. Many young people took

to drugs out of ignorance and greed for new sensations, sure that several injections or cigarettes were nothing. They had no idea that they wouldn't do without drugs in a fortnight. Special treatment is required to break the habit until it is too late: and that time soon comes. In his social degradation, an addict is capable of any crime.

Take one Lushchai, now 35 years old, resident of Mytishchi near Moscow. He took to drugs because they "cheered him up", as he later explained, and drew his wife into drug abuse. After he gave up his job, the couple made a fine living by processing and selling narcotics. Both were arrested and convicted. Their five-year-old daughter now has nobody but an aged relative to care about her. I could cite lots of similar examples.

Now take glue addiction: it's no less dangerous than other toxicomanias. They all demand urgent and concerted effort by health services, the militia, families, production and student collectives--the entire community. There are patients to be rescued, and unaffected persons on the fatal path to be warned about the danger and brought back to society. We must use every means to root out the vice that debilitates the body, corrupts the soul and kills.

PRAVDA: I. Zinoitullin of Alma Ata doubts that drug addicts can be punished what is, in fact, a disease.

VLASOV: We don't punish them for their disease but for inflicting it on themselves, and because they present social danger by their conduct, illegal machinations, and by threatening their own and others' health. An addict wants ever bigger doses and stops at nothing to procure the drug. Narcomania goes hand-in-hand with crime, even more so than alcoholic abuse. Three addicts, Mironov, Yemashev and Zaporozhan robbed several dozen flats in Tashkent to regularly buy drugs from a certain Rejepov, a dealer who had no

employment and went on his ignoble business trips in a Volga car until the whole gang was caught. Abbasov, Omanov, Malik and other drug addicts committed about forty serious crimes in the Tashkent Region. 23 kilograms of narcotic drugs was requisitioned from them.

It is one of our top-priority tasks to fight drug abuse and crime closely linked with it. Law-enforcing agencies have taken measures to that end. In particular, drug squads were reinforced, and their staffs received extra training. The USSR Ministry of the Interior, republican Ministries, regional and major city and district Boards of the Interior set up coordination commissions to streamline their cooperation with other bodies.

The main thing is to stop the channels through which drugs are smuggled, and to thwart secret sowing and cropping of narcotic-bearing plants, transportation of raw narcotics and their procession. We know the sites and routes. Operation Poppy-86 alone destroyed over 3,000 secret plantations, and wild cannabis thickets on 100 thousand hectares. 300 couriers and over 4,000 drug manufacturers were arrested. Local Party and state bodies secured community activists' help in the operation, in which motorized squads took part with gauges and trained dogs. Areas like those Operation Poppy covered are excellently guarded. Drug traffickers are real hard put.

Drug dealers must be severely prosecuted. Last year alone, tens of thousands of crimes were detected, but dealers and pushers accounted for only 10 per cent of the total number of persons who went on trial. The militia is not yet up to the task, but no drug dealer shall go unpunished.

Fattakhov and Urazkulov, residents of Kokand, will soon appear in court for buying raw narcotics from secret opium poppy farmers. Such plantations are no rarity in Uzbekistan. For instance, engineer Allaniyazov of the Kegeili irrigation

board was recently sentenced to two years' imprisonment for growing opium poppy on a 0.09 hectare plot. Last summer's Operation Black Poppy detected many plots like his in collective farmers' private gardens.

PRAVDA: Narcotics from pharmacies and hospitals are sometimes blackmarketed, our readers report.

VLASOV: That's right. Some doctors ignore their duty and abuse the Hippocratic oath. Valiulin, chemist, and Chibrikov, gynaecologist of the district hospital in Apastovo, Tataria, stole 4,600 ampoules of narcotic substances during a year and a half. Mamaev, head doctor of the Isakly hospital, Kuibyshev Region, stole over 22,000 ampoules.

The USSR Ministries of Health and of Medico-Biological Industry must prevent thefts by thorough checks. Narcotic drugs must be specially registered and packed. Prescriptions can be valid only within the district where they are written. This is necessary, considering the number of forged prescriptions.

In team with narcologists, the militia is working to register all drug addicts. Many patients want to undergo treatment, but not all receive it in due time. Organisation of check-ups, hospital regime and isolation of patients still leave much to be desired. Registration rules are not exhaustive for the time being. But there are patients in need of treatment!

The militia cooperates the closest with the health service and public organisations in the individual prevention campaign. Of special importance to us are contacts with narcologists, GPs and doctors at general-educational and vocational schools.

Lieutenant P. Kirpa, divisional inspector in Donetsk, learned that K., a young factory worker resident on his precinct, had taken to drugs. The lieutenant informed his

superiors about it, and V. Kozlov, deputy head of the district Criminal Investigation Department, saw the young man and accompanied him to doctors. Friendly and sympathetic, he persuaded K. to undergo treatment. "I'd have drowned in that mire but for Kirpa and Kozlov. They were really kind to me," he says now.

Only medical help at the initial stages of the disease can save a drug addict and rule out relapses of the trouble. Every patient must be the object of concern. Registration is not enough.

According to the acting legislation, a narcomaniac who refuses to undergo treatment is, on court decision, subjected to forced hospital treatment on request by the authorities, public organisations or work collectives, provided the appropriate medical certificate is obtained. Since January 1, compulsory treatment is introduced for drug addicts under age.

As we see it, hospital treatment is an important medical and moral influence, especially if combined with patients' labour activity. The network of such institutions is growing. Physicians work to find the most effective curative methods. The medical examination procedure preceding hospitalisation also needs urgent improvement.

PRAVDA: Many letters demand closer cooperation between law-enforcing agencies with other bodies and public organisations to make the anti-drug campaign a truly national effort.

VLASOV: That's the way to pose the question! Meanwhile, things leave much to be desired. We militiamen have our drawbacks, too. We are not active enough. Many district drug squads are inefficient, largely because they are short of vehicles, trained dogs and technology, proximate analysis gadgetry, in particular.

Drug traffickers are very inventive, while the militia is

sometimes slow about detection. Divisional inspectors are not active enough, especially in detecting secret plantations, trade in raw narcotics, and cases of adolescent drug abuse.

Here and there, the authorities make do with registering addicts. T. Didenko, a woman from Babushkin district in Dniepropetrovsk, justly criticises the local militiamen who have not taken the appropriate measures to her son and his wife, narcomaniacs who lead the life of parasites. We always give a principled appraisal of such irresponsible attitudes to cries of help.

The danger is not always treated as seriously as it deserves: especially by the law-enforcing agencies in the Tajik and Turkmen constituent republics, the Kabarda-Balkar, North Ossetian and Chechen-Ingush autonomous republics, the Altai and Primorye territories, the southern part of the Ukraine, and the Astrakhan, Jambul, Chelyabinsk and some other regions. The next Board conference of the USSR Ministry of the Interior will discuss priority measures to combat drug abuse.

If we are to be a success, the law-enforcing agencies must act in the closest possible cooperation with economic bodies, public organisations and work collectives. Take narcotic-bearing plants. It's the duty of the USSR State Agro-Industrial Committee and its local agencies, of collective and state farms to reduce sown areas, concentrate plantations in strictly appointed localities, properly guard crops and raw narcotics, and destroy stubble and wild narcotic-bearing plants.

The Kharkov Region gives an example to emulate, with plantations shrinking. The Kuibyshev Region plantations are well guarded by the militia, economic bodies and public activists working in team. The arrangement is worth implementing everywhere.

The planned amount of poppy straw and seed was cut by half

in 1986, but the sown areas were reduced by 30 per cent only. 286 collective and state farms in ten regions and territories, including the Dniepropetrovsk and several other densely-populated ones, go on cultivating poppy. Calculations show, however, that a sufficient amount of poppy and hemp can be grown in three or four regions with plantations properly guarded. There are several hemp varieties with low narcotic concentration, like the Kuban, Krasnodarskaya-60, or Dnieper Monocotyledonous--but farms are not too eager to accept them.

Wild hemp thickets have to be destroyed. Meanwhile, experts are debating at length whether quicksands of the Chu Valley in Kazakhstan will start moving once deprived of vegetation. They seem to have forgotten that hemp is not part of local flora: it has been introduced by man. The hemp-grown area grew 30 times in the Jambul Region alone in the last 35 years.

PRAVDA: If the authorities were punished more severely for inadequate protection of narcotic-bearing crops and raw substances, and when wild narcotic-bearing plants remain undestroyed at their fault, the amount of black-market drugs would shrink dramatically, many readers think.

VLASOV: A timely proposal. The Ministry has elaborated appropriate decisions, and offered them for discussion. I think it is high time to introduce state monopoly on oleiferous poppy plantations. Research institutions under the USSR Ministries of Instrument-Making Industry, Medico-Biological Industry and Health are too slow in developing detection equipment.

We largely count on parents' and teachers' help. It is high time that every family realises how serious the danger is. Attempts to conceal drug abuse bring sinister fruit. School medical check-ups are not efficient enough in detecting drug-abusing adolescents.

We must act in team with the Young Communist League. YCL branches, classmates and teachers are the first to spot addicts before the militia detects them. The law-enforcing agencies shall be promptly informed to make due steps. Drug abuse among young people can be drastically reduced if voluntary people's patrols and YCL squads in teacher-training, medical and other colleges get down to it.

Once again, I call your attention to the extreme danger of drug abuse. It depends on the efficient work by state, economic and public bodies whether the effort will be a success. All republics, regions and territories have worked out comprehensive prevention plans by now with active Party and state bodies' participation. They are to be implemented without delay.

To finish with drug abuse is an urgent, responsible and humane task. Our country has every possibility to cope with it.

(Pravda, January 6. In full.)

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NARCOBUSINESS: AN UNDERGROUND EMPIRE

From the Pages of UN and US Publications

Somoza was treated by the United States in an off-hand manner. One day, back in the 1970s, US Ambassador Crockett came to see Somoza and offered this deal: Somoza would give up one Pedro Luis Rodriguez y Paz, the head of an underground cocaine smuggling network, who had no worries living in Managua under the protection of the director of the immigration service. If Somoza handed over Rodriguez without any fuss, the United States would not bother Somoza himself. The deal was clinched. Not long after, a transport plane touched down at Miami airport, and a mail bag, with a pair of feet sticking out, was lowered onto the tarmac. The plane continued on its flight, leaving behind none other than Pedro Luis Rodriguez y Paz. He was sentenced by a US court to fifteen years in jail.

Years later, in 1979, Somoza was overthrown, and revolutionary Nicaragua was purged of the filth of the drugs traffic, a fact even CIA men now have unwillingly to admit. But the cocaine kings have continued to flourish in many other Latin American countries, while the worldwide production of narcotics and the illicit traffic in them has multiplied several times over.

That is the subject of a voluminous book by James Mills,¹ who says: "The inhabitants of the earth spend more money on illegal drugs than they spend on food. More than they spend on

housing, clothes, education, medical care, or any other product or service. The international narcotics industry is the largest growth industry in the world. Its annual revenues exceed half a trillion dollars---...more than the gross national products of all but a half dozen of the major industrialised nations" (p. 3).

Nor is that an exaggeration or a piece of sensation-mongering. The UN International Conference on Struggle Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in Vienna last June, heard the following facts: there are now over 50 million drug addicts throughout the world, or almost 1 per cent of its population; the illicit trade in the "classical" drugs alone is estimated to be worth over \$300 billion. These figures are not all that smaller than those cited by Mills. Indeed, they are virtually of the same order. They come from a reliable source, UN statistics.

The UN-sponsored International Narcotics Control Board has some alarming passages in its latest annual report on the spread of the "white plague" epidemic: "Over the last two decades, the abuse of drugs ... has progressively spread, now affects virtually all countries, and menaces all segments of society, including your persons and even children."²

Under the 1961 and 1971 international conventions, dozens of countries have established official control over the manufacture and sale of drugs, and in most countries their illicit fabrication is prohibited. Plantations are being wiped out, measures against the smuggling and street sale of drugs are being tightened up, and anti-narcotic propaganda is being carried on,

but for the time being these measures have fallen short of reversing the trend, and many of them have proved to be less than effective. According to the most optimistic estimates, customs officials have been discovering and confiscating no more than one-tenth of the smuggled drugs.

The growth of drug addiction leads to a spread of the still incurable disease AIDS. Drugs tend to lower the general resistance of the human body, while the AIDS virus is passed on directly when drugs are taken intravenously. In Bremen (FRG), the city authorities have decided to install machines to dispense throw-away syringes in areas known to be frequented by drug addicts, in an effort to minimise the spread of AIDS.

There is no short answer to the question of why drug addiction has been spreading. The ever greater craving for drugs, mostly in the capitalist world, points to the moral crisis of the society and the social problems that have been neglected for decades. It has often been assumed that the massive spread of drug addiction in many developed and less developed countries has been caused mainly by poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and life in the slums, but it is also widespread among the educated and the relatively well-off. Young people take drugs to escape from the reality which offers no spiritual attractions. For tens and even hundreds of thousands of peasants in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, the cultivation of drug-yielding plants is the sole means of subsistence. Some less developed states carrying the heavy burden of external debt and flight of capital turn a blind eye to the export of drugs, because these are a source of additional hard-currency revenue.

Nonetheless, one chief cause stands out among the many behind the drugs calamity confronting mankind: the rapid growth of the sprawling--and often transnational--narcobusiness, which has saturated the marketing outlets, making drugs easily available, and leading to the involvement of more countries and social groups in regular drug-taking. Mills says: "The international narcotics industry is, in fact, not an industry at all, but an empire... Aggressive and violent by nature, the Underground Empire maintains its own armies, diplomats, intelligence services, banks, merchant fleets, and airlines. It seeks to extend its dominance by any means, from clandestine subversion to open warfare" (p. 3).

The official UN report is couched in equally categorical terms: "These illicit activities are financed and master-minded by criminal organizations with international links and with accomplices in financial circles. In certain regions, drug-trafficking is closely inter-connected with other major criminal activities. Such activities sometimes include trafficking in weapons and are associated with subversion and international terrorism." (p. 4).

How did the empire originate? Ninety-nine per cent of drugs traffic originates from the growing of cannabis (Indian hemp), poppies and coca plants. The leaves of cannabis are turned into hashish, and its flowers into marijuana. Various parts of poppy are used to make opium, morphine and a derivative known as heroin. The leaves of the coca plant are used to make coca paste, which is then turned into cocaine. The drugs currently abused include various synthetic and psychotropic substances

(Amphetamines and LSD), but they are sold less widely than drugs of vegetable origin.

The largest illicit plantations of the opium poppy exist on the territor^{ies} of Pakistan, Thailand, Burma and Iran. The coca plant is grown mainly in Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia. The Middle East, Southeast Asia and Central and South America are the main producers of cannabis (although plantations of it will also be found in the industrialised countries). Most of the clandestine labs for the extraction of heroin and cocaine also exist in those areas. The UN report gives the following figures: the illicit production of opium in Pakistan in 1985/1986 came to 120 tons, an almost three-fold increase on the previous year; in Thailand it was 26 tons; destroyed plantations of poppy in Burma alone totalled 13,000 hectares; in 1985, the production of coca leaf in Bolivia totalled 120,000-160,000 tons; coca plantations in Colombia are estimated at 30,000-50,000 hectares; total cocaine output in Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia in 1984 totalled 100,000-150,000 tons, as compared with 80,000 tons in 1982.

There has been a rapid growth of drug use in the main producing countries. According to a report issued by the US Agency for International Development, there are more than 2 million drug addicts in only six countries of Asia (Pakistan, Thailand, Burma, Nepal, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka). Almost 3 per cent of Malaysia's population are drug addicts, says its prime minister.

The United States and Western Europe are the main marketing outlets. A large part of the cannabis comes to the United States

from abroad, although cannabis plantations in the United States itself have grown. Cocaine is supplied from South America, and heroine from Mexico and Southwest and Southeast Asia. Synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances are mostly fabricated in clandestine labs on the territory of the United States.

Heroin is the most widespread drug in use in Western Europe, and there has been a steady growth in the smuggling of it mainly by air and sea routes. More than two-thirds of it is imported from the Middle East, and from South and Southeast Asia. The import of cocaine from Latin America has gone up steeply. The amount of confiscated cannabis coming in from the Middle East, South American and Africa in 1985, was 5.5 times larger than in 1975. Drugs come to Japan mainly from South Korea and Taiwan.

The links in the long and fairly intricate "technological" chain are these: peasants and big planters in the less developed countries, wholesale buyers of the vegetable raw materials, owners of chemical labs, ships, planes and trucks for transporting the drugs to the main centres of consumption, big and small warehouses along the routes, and the distributive network, together with the street peddlers.

Mills was lucky to be the only journalist to whom the ^{US} Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) ^{opened up its} files and allowed interviews with senior officers, agents and even informers. It helped him to meet some of the leaders of the underground corporations, both those behind bars and still at large. It took Mills five years to write a book running to almost 1,200 pages, and packed

with a wealth of facts about three different outfits engaged in making and marketing narcotics.

Donald Steinberg, a US citizen and a criminal business boss, whose operations ranged over four continents and yielded an income which was larger than that of the leading US steel-maker, was called the Henry Ford of the international marijuana industry (p. 129). He earned in a day more than the US president does in a four-year term. At the height of his career, Steinberg's own bulk carriers each day brought into the United States 220 tons of marijuana valued at \$100 million. He had branches in Thailand, Singapore, Hongkong, Colombia, Panama, Western Europe, and Africa.

For a long time, Steinberg wallowed in luxury in the United States and was not just elusive, but even unknown to the authorities, because of the high state of secrecy under which the boss was known only to a handful of cronies--he himself was virtually never involved in the operations of his outfit. One of his favourite methods was to buy up a block of houses on a short stretch of coast, after which the marijuana was unloaded from the ships and loaded onto trucks and trailers. When the police and the drug control officers would get wind of it and raid the place, they would find nothing but empty houses and deserted landings. Steinberg's men never went twice to the same place. Once, when they came face to face with jealous members of the Italian mafia in a deserted dock area, there was a string of abductions and killings on both sides, but Steinberg's outfit stood its ground. In its heyday, it imported one-third of the marijuana into the United States. In a conversation with Mills,

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Stenberg boasted that only a handful of drug dealers had a turnover of more than \$1 billion (see p. 1031). He was finally arrested, but sentenced only to ten years in jail.

Alberto Sicilia-Falcon was the boss of another powerful drugs business with headquarters in Mexico. His villa in Tijuana, close to the border with California, was a fortress guarded by dozens of thugs armed with submachine-guns, machine guns, and grenade-launchers. But even in that kind of situation he did not feel quite secure, and at one time even toyed with the idea of taking over a small country, say, Belize. His main line of business was the buying up of marijuana in Mexico and cocaine in neighbouring countries, and their supply to the United States. At one time, half the US customs officers at the Tijuana check point were in Falcon's pay: they took \$5,000 for every truck they let through. His main warehouses were located in Guadalajara, in central Mexico, where 95 per cent of the local officials were on his payroll (p. 328).^{see}

Falcon's outfit made inroads into the cocaine business in Colombia. The stuff was all taken to Cartagena, in the north of the country, from where it was shipped to the island of San Andres, and there customs officers allowed small jet planes to be loaded with the cocaine for the same price of \$5,000. The jets dumped their cargoes at designated spots in southern Florida and then went on to land in Miami airport without any trouble. In Colombia, Falcon operated with the Medellin cartel, named after the town which is known as the "orchid, gold and cocaine capital". That was where the coca paste was brought in from Peru and Bolivia, and where the local oligarchy had control

not only of the coca plantations, but largely also of the economy and the political power. The Paredes family in Peru alone had an income from cocaine smuggling that was higher than the value of the country's official exports: several billion dollars. Cumulatively, the turnover from the Paredes family to Falcon came to over \$50 billion a years ^{see} (p. 891).

Where do the narcodollars settle eventually? Mills says without any hesitation that they are deposited on accounts in giant and solid transnational banks, among them Morgan Guaranty Trust, Chase Manhattan, Swiss Bank Corporation and Bankers' Trust, and stockmarket corporations like Merrill Lynch and E. F. Hutton. Through these and with their help, the narcodollars are invested in legitimate enterprises in various countries. The narcobillions blend into the fortunes of the international financial oligarchy.

The Thai trader and banker Lu Hsu-shui runs another major business, which starts from poppy plantations in the "golden triangle", the Burmese-Thai border, and which are guarded by armed detachments of former Kuomintang generals, to heroin labs in Thailand and neighbouring countries. He owns banks throughout Southeast Asia, supply ships running via Hong-kong to the United States and other countries, and hotels, restaurants, bars and financial institutions on US territory, through which he has ties with retail traders. The bulk of the heroin sold in the United States goes through this outfit, whose earnings run to tens of billions of dollars. Lu Hsu-shui started his business with the services of US Air Force pilots. Many of the senior officials and police officers in Thailand get a cut from the narcobusiness profits. The boss himself is a

prominent resident of Bangkok, and wears the Order of the White Elephant.

Far from all the underground organisations are described in Mills's book, and in many cases he deals only with the tip of the iceberg, but he is confident in reaching the conclusion that the narcocorporations could not existⁿ or flourish without CIA support. He learned much from Agent 02, who has been acting as a sort of middleman between the US secret services and the "golden triangle" generals. One of them, Li Wen-huan, was paid \$100 a month by the CIA for every soldier he recruited, and was also enabled to buy weapons without hindrance. The Thai border police in the area was set up by the CIA and is under its control. Agent 02 helped Mills to meet Li Wen-huan in the very heart of Bangkok, where Li goes regularly for medical check-ups. In their conversation, the general had high praise for Washington's policy in northern Thailand, the centre of opium production.

The "drugs--arms--work for the CIA" is a trilateral connection that operates not only in Southeast Asia. The sale of drugs is a most important source of funds for paying the arms merchants for the contras in Central America, the dushman bandits in Afghanistan, and reactionary and terroristic organisations in other countries.

One of the main bases of raw opium and its processing is located close to the Afghan-Pakistani border. From there, the heroin is dispatched to the centres of consumption in various ways, including aid from the CIA, while Stinger missiles and

other weapons for the dushman bandits are loaded onto caravans on the way home. The UN report says that the quantity of opium and cannabis confiscated by the Afghan authorities in 1985 was double^d and that of heroin, ten times larger than the 1984 haul (see p. 19), an increase in one year alone! The US public organisation Christic Institute says that some of those mixed up in the Irangate scandal were long involved in the drugs and arms trade and the funding of subversive and terrorist activity from the proceeds.³ One paper reported that the Medellin cartel in Colombia gave the Nicaraguan contras \$10 million through the CIA.⁴

The drugs business has been so viable because it has worked hand-in-glove with the secret services. Despite the fact that a ^{US} secret agency^r --Central Tactical Unit (Centac)-- ^{to combat} underground corporations has resorted to extreme and often provocative methods, it has managed to excise no more than a thin layer of this malignant tumour. The narcobusiness continues to live and thrive. Mills makes no bones about exposing the largely show-case nature of the "war on drugs" declared by ^{President} Reagan: "I never encountered anyone who thought it anything other than a joke" (p. 118). He explains why: there is a shortage of funds, and operations are being hampered by other departments, mainly the US State Department and the CIA, which believe that the most important thing is to support and protect their military and diplomatic allies, even if they are connected with the drugs business. The US market is flooded with heroin from Pakistan, while Washington has issued

official statements in support of the Islamabad authorities' assurances that they can do nothing against the drugs traffickers. Even Dennis Dayle, the head of Centac, told Mills that "the United States government is a coconspirator" (p. 1159).

Some attempts were still made in 1986 and 1987 to refute such charges. A contingent of US officers and men landed in Bolivia in July 1986 to take part in an operation to wipe out the drug-producing centres. They discovered a few cocaine labs and destroyed some of the plantations. But the narcobusinessmen had been tipped off by someone and fadded away in good time from the area combed by the soldiers. By early 1987, the cocaine business in Bolivia was back on its feet and going stronger than ever before.⁵

In Colombia, the government decided to take measures against the leaders of the Medellin cartel, and arrested two of its leaders: Jorge Luis Ochoa and Pablo Escobar. However, the former was released within two months, and the latter, even earlier, after paying some hefty bribes. In what seemed to be a response to the official action, Guillermo Cano, editor-in-chief of the leading Colombian newspaper El Espectador, was killed and former minister of justice Enrique Parejo Gonzales was seriously wounded. The Colombian authorities also managed to arrest Carlos Lehder, a third leader of the cartel, and took him aboard a US plane to Florida. But the cartel itself has far from been destroyed.⁶

The narcobusiness is remarkably resourceful. When it got too hot in Colombia, the cocaine bosses transferred their labs to Brazil, where the ether and acetone used in producing the

drug are more readily available. When cocaine prices dropped in the United States, the sales were switched to Western Europe. More countries are being involved, and new outfits set up. In the spring of 1987, US officials first reported the existence of four Israeli narcocorporations operating in Asia, Europe and North America.

Drug abuse and the Illicit drug trade is a global problem, and it has not spared the socialist countries either. The Soviet press has reported on the activities of underground hashish and opium traffickers in the Ukraine, Georgia and Central Asia. The customs authorities in Eastern Europe have been combatting the illicit transit of drugs from some Asian countries to Western Europe. Socialist countries participated in the international conference in Vienna where representatives of 139 countries and of more than 150 non-governmental organisations discussed joint measures to stamp out the illicit manufacture of and traffic in narcotic substances.

One of the main means for limiting drug addiction is to restrict or deny all access to drugs. But if that is to be done, the clandestine outfits operating in various countries and on international scale have to be destroyed, the tentacles of corruption and terrorism must be amputated, and covert support by some secret services and governments halted. The narco-business has become transnational, and the evil can be curbed and then reduced to a minimum only by effective international cooperation together with internal measures.

✓ Professor Stanislav M. Menshikov,
Dr. Sc. (Economics)

¹ James Mills, The Underground Empire, Where Crime and Governments Embrace, Garden City, New York, Doubleday and Company, 1986, pp. 1165.

² Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1986, United Nations, New York, 1986.

³ See Time, May 4, 1987.

⁴ See Washington Post, June 30, 1987.

⁵ See International Herald Tribune, January 5, 1987.

⁶ See Time, February 16, 1987; Newsweek, February 16, 1987.

TÜRKİYE SOSYAL TARİH ARAŞTIRMA KURUMU
TÜSTAV

Tuesday, April 14, 1987

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FORMER US AMBASSADOR'S LETTER TO IZVESTIA BUREAU

V. Soldatov, Izvestia's Own
Correspondent in New York

Izvestia's bureau in New York has received a letter from Robert White, former US ambassador in El Salvador, who wrote what the United States did with the truth.

American politicians are fond of telling everyone that the United States is "a free country" and that America always gives truth the green light. If you discover any violation of law or abuse of power by an official, you should simply report it to the Justice Department or Congress and they will start an investigation and take appropriate measures. Or you may report such cases to a newspaper or to television and all established facts will be made public.

Robert White came across a different attitude to the truth. Officials and other people did everything to hush up the facts he had collected and silence him and his friends.

In the early 1980s Robert White was dismissed from the post of American ambassador to El Salvador. The Administration was angry with the man because he openly told the truth about the "death squads" which killed people on the slightest suspicion of being disloyal to the government. Fired from the State Department, White continued to study the situation in Central America and condemn US crude interference in the affairs of Central American states.

More than a year ago Robert White took an interest in the illegal activities of the US Republican Administration in support of Nicaraguan contras. He learned that

Senator John Kerry was also investigating those illegal activities which violated the neutrality act, the arms export control act and the Boland amendment. White and Kerry joined forces.

People who volunteered to help White and Kerry's men began to meet with Americans who maintained "contacts" with the contras. One of them, Jack Terrel, had participated in a number of subversive operations carried out by contras but later made a break with them. He said that contras subversives were directed by CIA agents and that the bandits continued to receive military equipment from the United States after Congress had passed a bill forbidding the Administration to give military aid to the contras. Other CIA-recruited men who, for various reasons, had broken away from the American secret services, provided more information exposing the illegal activities of the Administration.

That information showed that the illegal arms supplies to the contras were directed by National Security Council men led by Lt.-Col. Oliver North. White and Kerry had discovered that even before the reports about North's illegal activities appeared in the press.

The former ambassador and the Senator discovered another sensational fact. Aircraft of the American airline Southern Air Transport, which brought arms and other military equipment from Florida to Honduras for the contras, returned with marijuana and heroin on board. The money raised from the sales of the narcotics went to buy arms for the contras. The operation was conducted by CIA agents.

After checking and re-checking that information, which was undoubtedly of great public interest, Robert White repeatedly urged several Congress committees to begin an investigation and hold public hearings. His arguments were

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listened to politely, but his request was rejected. He was told that Congress was trying to save money and could not afford additional hearings.

Senator John Kerry asked the Attorney-General, Edward Meese, to study the information he had gathered with White, but his request went unanswered. The Senator asked the Attorney-General a second and a third time, but the result was the same.

The Attorney-General was not idle, however. He ordered the local authorities to end the investigation about the secret air flight that brought arms to the contras and returned to Florida with marijuana. Later he would say that he had halted the investigation for 30 days. White claims it had been halted for almost a year. The FBI did not investigate the case either.

White and Kerry had no other choice but to contact the press and television, but newspaper editors spoke with them through clenched teeth. Some promised them to help and check the fact and call them. No calls were made, however. Later White and Kerry learned why the editors were so uncooperative. Members of the Administration had telephoned to the newspapers and to television and "earnestly recommended" the editors to ignore the reports of the former ambassador and the Senator. Lt.-Col. Oliver North and Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams were among the officials who made the calls. They referred to national secrets and said that "false information" could negatively affect the condition of the hostages.

The operation to cover up the Administration's ties with the contras did not end there. Justice Department officials masterminded a campaign to discredit White and Kerry and their assistants and tried to intimidate or bribe witnesses. Some of the witnesses were offered well-paid jobs.

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When reports about the Irangate scandal began to leak into the press last November a group of men raided White's offices. The "unknown" raiders rummaged through all the papers, including witness reports and Southern Air Transport logs, and took many documents away. That had happened several days before Edwin Meese admitted at a press conference that the funds raised by selling American arms to Iran were funnelled to buy arms for the contras.

(Izvestia, April 13. Abridged.)

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