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## Interview: Malaysian Foreign Minister Ghazali Shafie

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# 'We have put drugs in the category of a security problem'

*Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin-Mohammad shocked the world after being unanimously elected to the office by his party members in July 1981 by moving quickly to take over the large, London-based rubber and palm oil plantations in Malaysia. The acquisitions were made by buying up large volumes of stocks, and the plantations put under Malay control. A year ago, in October, Dr. Mahathir further upset anglophiles the world over when he refused to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Melbourne, Australia, summarily describing the meeting as a "waste of time."*

*This new dynamism and forthrightness in the Malaysian leadership has been coupled with a strong desire to shake off the remaining vestiges of the old British colonial rule. Dr. Mahathir's administration is particularly interested in bringing the much-exploited indigenous Malay population into the mainstream of economic, political, and social activities. Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir has emphasized education and morals-building as the key to developing a new generation of capable and independent Malay citizens. His recent decision to ban video games from Malaysia is an illustration.*

*Dr. Mahathir has been particularly harsh on the traffickers of mind-destroying drugs. Only recently the Malaysian government hanged six narcotics dealers for pushing drugs among Malaysian youth. In a recent interview conducted at the United Nations with Dr. Mahathir's Foreign Minister Ghazali Shafie, EIR discussed the international drug menace. Prior to becoming Foreign Minister in 1981, Ghazali Shafie was Minister of the Interior. The following are excerpts from the interview:*

**EIR:** How have you approached the problem of drugs in Malaysia?

**Shafie:** We certainly believe that the question of drugs is not just a simple sociological or neighborhood problem. We think that this problem, if it should go out of proportion, particularly in a country like ours, would indeed pose a security problem. We regard drugs as extremely dangerous, and the problem attracts our highest attention.

Why do we say it is dangerous? In a country where 50 percent of the population is below the age of 21, and since drugs are most rampant among youth, we couldn't imagine a

future for Malaysia if out of that 50 percent even a proportion of them should be affected by drugs. Imagine a country whose leadership has been drawn from this kind of people. There is one kind of study that has not yet been done by anybody: what happens to a person who has been cured, so-called, of drug addiction? Is there brain damage, and if so, what happens if he's under stress and strain? How will he react? Supposing he's captain of a corporation or a Prime Minister, and he's under stress. We have no way of knowing how he will react. I'm not saying he will go back to drugs—that's not my point—but will he react as a rational human being, or will he react differently under stress because his brain has been damaged?

So we really have a tremendous fear of this problem of drugs—so much so that we have put drugs in the category of a security problem, and *not* a social problem. We have enacted legislation that drug distribution on a commercial scale will meet with the death penalty in our country.

We have seen that the problem of drugs consists of five different areas:

1) The first area is, of course, the source. We do not produce these drugs; the source is somewhere in the Golden Triangle [of Indochina], or wherever. It would require an international effort to resolve that problem. Now, it's not so simple as one would make it simply because to those people who grow the opium, the source of your drugs, it is the first and foremost part of their lives. . . . We know, for instance, in northern Thailand, in Laos, and so forth, no matter what the program for crop substitution, you find that they still need the opium for their own use, and secondly, the substitute cannot replace the kind of income which they get in growing opium. That's number one.

2) Second, we have the problem of preventing it from entering our country. That is really dependent on how efficient our authority, or machinery of government is to prevent it from coming in. We have experimented with a number of projects in order to do that—including dogs, and everything else. We still find that the human element is the most effective. In other words, since we know that the drugs are being brought in by syndicates and so on, the infiltration of that group by our authorities is the best way to get leads, and therefore prevent the drugs from coming in. Still, we need

international cooperation because without it we can only operate in Malaysia, and we have to operate outside, in Singapore, in Thailand, Indonesia and so on. And there must be a free exchange of intelligence.

3) The third area is rehabilitation. In other words, how do you bring those who are affected back into normal society? This again is an extremely complex problem. We have experimented with many, many methods. . . . We did find one of the things that is quite effective is to give these kids moral education, religious education so that they could find an alternative to drugs, because you know lots of people take to drugs because they lose hope. If you provide an alternative like a belief in God, you know, the belief that there is a Saviour, and if they get caught up in the idea of this kind of thing you will find that they will not go back to drugs. But the minute they lose hope, then they go back to drugs.

4) The fourth is what we regard as the education side, the conditioning of minds. And here we start right from school, right from infancy. We are trying in our country to make people *hate* drugs, not just to say drugs are dangerous, but drug-use should be hated. It should be the object of aversion. You see, we're all Muslims in our country, and Muslims are not supposed to eat pork. Now there are any number of Muslims who would *eat* pork without feeling nausea; but imagine any one of them if you just put bacon in front of them—they feel nausea. Now that is the kind of thing that we are trying to educate our young people to, that they should feel nauseated even at the thought of drugs, even at hearing of drugs. When I was Minister of Interior I tried to inculcate even amongst soldiers that if they had their feet blown up by land mines, and were given morphine to kill the pain, I reached the level where I got some boys who would refuse that morphine; they would rather bear the pain than take the morphine.

5) The fifth is, of course, research. You need a tremendous amount of research. As I said, one of the things that we still fail to find an answer to is what happens to a chap who has been cured of drugs? Can he be a normal person?

So these are the five areas that we attach great importance to. But we have always said that drugs pose a security problem. As I said, if half your population is subject to drugs and not mentally capable of dealing with problems you're not much of a nation and you can easily be subverted. Then the second part of it is that drugs have been used to get money, to raise funds for the purpose of creating problems for the country. We know, for instance, in our area, along the Thai border, that there are a lot of drugs being sold to support the communist aggregations in order to attack the government.

So, we have always to consider drugs as a very serious problem, and therefore we arrived at the conclusion we did, bringing a law in Parliament, supported by the whole country, supported by the whole Parliament unanimously—opposition and everybody—that the death sentence must be enforced against those people who have been proven to be traffickers in drugs. . . . There's the story of the French

woman, you recall [arrested in Malaysia recently for trafficking drugs]; she had the death sentence, and the judges commuted it to life imprisonment. That shows the seriousness with which we regard the subject of drugs.

In this session [of the United Nations General Assembly] our Prime Minister made this point, and in the last session, if you followed my speech you also find the same thing. In the session that I was in Vienna, when I was a non-elected member of the Drug Commission, we always insisted on international cooperation. But, what is this international cooperation? For one thing, we do not have a proper accounting of the artificial drugs that we manufacture in factories. Most surely this is one area where advanced countries that manufacture these drugs will have a proper accounting centrally so that everybody knows where these drugs go to, and who actually are the users. Because we will need drugs for medical purposes. I am not saying that we should completely abolish the production of drugs. But where, for instance, opium is being exported from, say Pakistan, or Turkey or Laos, there's been no accounting of how much is going out.

**EIR:** Do you think that with proper international accounting and supervision the drug trade could be. . . .

**Shafie:** That would be *one* way. I am not saying that this will be the answer to our problem, but this will be one way to make it somewhat difficult to get drugs very easily. Because so many of these people, you know, are very respectable peddlers, like doctors. They think they are doing their patients a favor, and we sometimes abhor all these things but if there's no proper accounting then you find these drugs go in the wrong places.

**EIR:** You referred earlier to a relationship between drugs and terrorism. . . .

**Shafie:** Yes, in the sense that drugs could finance terrorist activities. It's one of the methods of funding; I'm not saying that this is the sole method. But we have seen in some countries that it is a method of funding.

**EIR:** You mentioned syndicates involved in peddling drugs. How well organized do you think these entities are?

**Shafie:** We feel that these syndicates are international, and they have their agencies all over the place. Therefore, international cooperation is needed. There's no doubt about that. Drugs don't really sell in just one area; it is a worldwide trade, and it needs a very big organization to run it.

**EIR:** Have you studied the problem of how drug money is laundered?

**Shafie:** We have as part of our law that where we find this kind of a bulge in somebody's accounts the government has the right to inquire as to the source of this kind of income. The law is very harsh in this regard, and I found tremendous resistance—because I was the one who introduced the law—from our own people because they thought that we might be

abusing this power and might start to inquire into the wrong areas. I do remember that we went to some length because we had to find a way to circumvent our own constitution, which provides for the right to property and income and so on.

**EIR:** As you may know there is a movement in the United States for the decriminalization of drug use, and naturally our publications have been critical of this. As a representative of a country which has a very good approach to the drug problem, if you could speak to the American population on this subject what would you say?

**Shafie:** I have spoken to the chief of your Drug Enforcement Agency in Washington. I have expressed my opinion and my abhorrence at the thought that one should decriminalize drugs. If at all, one should do the other way around. One should be making it even more severe, and much more difficult to get drugs rather than to give it respectability. I have a feeling that perhaps in a country like the United States that is so large and so varied in many ways, that there are many people who are liberal enough to think that drugs are a very light problem, that if you can take whiskey or wine, why not get high on drugs, without realizing that the physical and psychological effect on the brain and the mind is much more serious, so serious that we in Kuala Lumpur feel very threatened by drugs.

I have expressed this to the State Department; I have expressed this at the United Nations; and I have spoken with the [former] chief of your Drug Enforcement Agency in Washington, Mr. Bensinger. I went to Washington to speak about this, and I said I really abhor the states in the United States that say, "We can live with drugs"—that is very un-clever, very unwise.

**EIR:** Are you satisfied with the reaction you got and with current international cooperation?

**Shafie:** Well, the one thing in the international field that we want to do, and we are taking it up both in Vienna and here, is to transfer the problem of drugs from the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to another council which deals with security—not necessarily the Security Council, but something more than just an economic and social council. The previous chap who was in Vienna, Dr. Ling, was very sympathetic with my idea. Mind you, I am speaking on the basis of my experience before I became Foreign Minister, when I was Interior Minister and Chairman of the Anti-Drug Commission in Kuala Lumpur. We found that we had a lot of sympathy over there in Vienna. The last Secretary General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, already began to see this as something that we had taken very seriously. I have no doubt that we would find some new attitude, it may not be this year, but we are continuing to press the international community to recognize how seriously we regard drugs and how seriously everyone should regard drugs.

## The Propaganda-2 infesting Mexico's

by Timothy Rush

The same international Nazi and neo-Nazi networks currently under fire in Bolivia are in the midst of their most important upgrading and restructuring in Mexico in a generation.

The leading conspirators in this effort trace their histories back to the Cristero movement of the 1920s, the *Sinarauistas* of the late 1930s, collaboration with the Nazis in the 1940s, and the proliferation of paramilitary fascist shocktroop formations such as the MURO and the Tecos in the 1960s.

The reorganization, *EIR* investigation has determined, is to establish the shocktroop wing of a powerful politico-military combination to block the consolidation of the nationalist economic measures recently undertaken by the government, destabilize the incoming administration of Miguel de la Madrid, and prevent Mexico from declaring a debt moratorium on its \$80 billion foreign debt. These networks were already in motion starting early this year, as Mexico's economic crisis dramatically deepened and oligarchical strategists targeted the destabilized middle class to become the cannon fodder for a "pots and pans" movement like that which was sent into the streets of Chile to prepare the bloody coup against Salvador Allende in 1973.

Preliminary efforts to get such a "pots and pans" movement going during the summer months suddenly ran into trouble in the weeks immediately after the bank nationalization and other emergency economic measures of Sept. 1. The nationalist outpouring of support for these measures made overt opposition impossible. The conspirators instead met privately, *EIR* has discovered, to forge a unified command structure and a national movement out of various local and regional movements.

Then on Oct. 8, the reorganized fascist movement opened a new phase, as large open meetings followed in succession in Monterrey, Puebla, and Torreon. Many in this "movement of civic insurgency," as the National Action Party (PAN) likes to call it, or the "Movement of National Integration," as those trying to keep clear of party affiliation denote it, believe that dramatic further worsening of the economy will