

DeLorean verdict stings FBI frameups

by Jeffrey Steinberg

"If the cocaine conspiracy case against John Z. DeLorean goes into court this October, it may be sectors of the U.S. and British governments that have to respond to charges of criminal conspiracy, and not the defendant." (*EIR*, Oct. 25, 1983, page 59, "FBI frameups at issue in DeLorean case").

EIR's prediction that "evidence being presented before Federal Judge Tagasugi in Los Angeles could not only destroy the government's case, but expose massive government corruption and abuse of prosecution," was borne out when in the third week of August 1984, 10 months after that analysis was published, a Los Angeles jury acquitted John Z. DeLorean on all counts of drug trafficking stemming from a 1982 FBI-Drug Enforcement Administration entrapment effort. DeLorean, a former top executive at General Motors who set up his own sportscar manufacturing plant in Belfast, Northern Ireland, was targeted for frameup by the FBI at the point that the Thatcher government of Britain was conducting a massive financial warfare effort to drive DeLorean Motors out of business.

The DeLorean verdict, coming on the heels of a Chicago jury ruling in July acquitting a Cook County judge targeted by another FBI sting operation code named "Greylord," represents a dramatic setback for the FBI's drive to consolidate police-state controls over the U.S. political process through the deployment of hardened criminals to frame up and blackmail leading politicians, labor leaders, and corporate executives.

From the outset of the trial, the key issue presented to the jury by defense attorneys Howard Weitzman and Donald Re was whether the FBI would be permitted to get away with deploying hardened narcotics traffickers to entrap innocent citizens in a mockery-of-justice repeat of the FBI's successful railroading of a dozen congressmen and one U.S. senator, Harrison Williams, in Abscam.

The FBI's key witness, James Timothy Hoffman, was a career drug trafficker who had been hired by the federal government as a protected witness and who had vowed to his FBI control agents to "get you DeLorean" in return for lucrative tax-free payments and his continued freedom. In the closing days of testimony, a government witness admitted that Hoffman, as a condition for his testimony, had demanded a percentage of the DeLorean estate seized by the government as so-called narcotics revenues.

At one point in September 1982, when DeLorean, on

discovering that what started out as a legitimate business loan had been turned into a cocaine deal, tried to back out of the arrangement, Hoffman threatened to kill his wife and children because he "knew too much." The tape of this telephone threat just weeks before DeLorean's arrest, was withheld from defense attorneys by the FBI, who claimed that Hoffman had failed to record that date's discussions with DeLorean and strenuously denied his making any such threats. When the tapes were later surfaced, the FBI beat a hasty retreat on its disclaimers.

In addition to the hardened criminal Hoffman, FBI special agents operating undercover as part of the sting team were shown in the course of the trial to have carried out equally egregious criminal violations in pursuit of the DeLorean conviction. FBI agent Benedict Tisa, posing as a crooked banker in on the cocaine deal, admitted on the witness stand that he had doctored his field reports after-the-fact so they would better conform to the specifics of the bill of indictment.

Federal District Judge Robert Takasugi, apparently reflecting his own moral outrage at the government's criminality, delivered clear instructions to the jury that if they found the government had manufactured crimes in order to entrap DeLorean they would rule "not guilty." The DeLorean acquittal was, therefore, a stunning bill of indictment of the FBI's behavior.

The DeLorean case occurred against the backdrop of an FBI powerplay to seize control over the Drug Enforcement Administration, ostensibly the lead agency responsible for America's war against drugs. FBI Deputy Director Francis "Bud" Mullen—stalled by Congress for 18 months from becoming DEA chief—hoped, according to some Washington, D.C. sources, to use the DeLorean indictment as a public relations coup to secure his congressional confirmation. Earlier this year, Mullen was confirmed as DEA administrator. Since then, the agency has been largely absorbed into the FBI—with the resultant collapse of effective DEA involvement in the Reagan administration's anti-drug effort.

Ibero-American sources have bitterly complained to correspondents from *EIR* that the FBI and the FBI-supervised sections of the DEA have been more interested in building their own power base and enhancing the power of those factions linked to the International Monetary Fund and the major New York, London, and Geneva commercial banks than in aiding in the dope eradication effort.

It is perhaps in this context that the DeLorean acquittal will have its most far-reaching impact. Evidence presented in the course of the DeLorean trial raises profound questions regarding the FBI's competence to participate in the anti-drug effort. How, it may now be argued, can the FBI be expected to smash the international narcotics syndicate when the FBI accounting books are filled with millions of dollars in tax-exempt payoffs to known leading drug traffickers?