

Editorial

Liberal traitors attack Noriega

Liberal traitors in the Reagan administration have launched a campaign to overthrow, and possibly assassinate, the Commander of Panama's Defense Forces, Gen. Manuel Noriega. The end result of such an operation will be only one: to hand over Panama, and the strategic Canal, to the Soviet-linked narco-terrorists who head Panama's opposition movement.

The destabilization campaign is well advanced. The major media controlled by the Eastern establishment—the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Washington Times*—have pumped out “news” on Panama to fit their plans. American citizens have been told that Panama is under the grip of a corrupt, drug-running dictatorship, run by the General Noriega.

Economic aid to Panama from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and U.S. government agencies, has been restricted, first held up on “technicalities,” then conditioned on acceptance of laws demanded by bankers, now withheld until “political changes” occur. A new U.S. ambassador to Panama was appointed, who promptly announced that his assignment is to force the military back into their barracks, and the government to “democratize.” Hearings into “corruption” and “instability” in Panama have been called in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

North Carolina's Sen. Jesse Helms, sounding every day more like a “human rights” advocate from the heyday of the Carter administration, has made himself the champion of the “Panama in crisis” campaign, linking his attacks on Panama to a similar campaign against the government of Mexico.

Members of Panama's “opposition movement” have been promised full U.S. government support for their efforts to overthrow the government of Panama. They have been given time on U.S. national television, interviewed by the U.S. press, consulted regularly by U.S. State Department personnel, and brought before U.S. congressional hearings.

U.S. promotion of this “opposition” movement has

reached the level of national scandal. Documentation of the drug mafia activities of leaders of the “democratic opposition” is all available in court papers and government documents in the public domain inside the United States, as are the connections of the mafia's “opposition” movement to the networks of Gnostic terrorists deployed by the drug mob throughout the Central American-Colombian region. *EIR* has assembled this documentation in a new Special Report, released June 18.

This opposition is not “anti-communist.” It is part of a South American narcotics business whose current headquarters is in Fidel Castro's Cuba, where Colombian cocaine czar Carlos Lehder's business partner, American mobster Robert Vesco, receives state protection. More than the Soviets and their Cuban allies are involved in the drug trade, but the Soviets and the Cubans have placed the resources of their states behind the narcotics mafia—of which leaders of Panama's opposition movement are a part—as their main weapon of warfare on the Americas.

The opposition's campaign against General Noriega and “drug-traffic” in Panama echoes the smear campaign launched by the Colombian mafia against Colombian Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, shortly before a mafia hit-squad assassinated that courageous anti-drug fighter on the streets of Bogota. Is the same thing in store for Noriega?

The opposition has declared that it is willing to use violence, terror, and sabotage to impose its will on Panama. Leaders of the Christian Democratic party, principals in the mafia's opposition movement, state outright that they are already “preparing the soil for a new El Salvador or Nicaragua” in Panama.

Conditions of civil conflict in Panama are precisely those under which a Soviet-directed terrorist hit upon the Canal could be carried out, with the least political penalty. State Department officials are not only aware of the security threat, but they state outright that they are willing to sacrifice the security of the Canal to further their political goals. The time to stop them is now.