

Editorial

Too much is indeed too much

In the "kinder, gentler America" of 1989, the eighty-six year sentence of Rochelle Ascher is unfortunately no anomaly, even if it is grotesque. A more-than-life sentence for a "crime" which in any normal situation would have been litigated in a civil rather than criminal trial, must be compared with the twenty-five year sentence given to Nazi war-criminal Albert Speer.

The crime of being an associate of Lyndon LaRouche apparently is three times as grave—according to the Virginia jury—than that of murdering one's child, if we compare Mrs. Ascher's sentence to that of Joel Steinberg. The grossness of this miscarriage of justice is already being registered internationally.

It is being reported by Right-to-Life advocates that more than 20,000 protesters against the legalization of abortion, in the United States, have been arrested since the beginning of this year. Indeed, only the Soviet Union has a higher per capita rate of individuals in jail, than the United States.

What does this mean? Obviously, the jails are not yet, being overpopulated with LaRouche associates and others of the most moral elements in U.S. society; rather, the prisons are being filled with lower-level miscreants whose actions bespeak a degenerating culture, while the real criminals, like the bankers who launder the drug big bucks, go scot free.

Ironically, the news of the Ascher sentencing has broken at a time when the administration has suffered another major blow to its credibility. The U.S. government was forced to stipulate, in a document released during the Oliver North trial, to the direct complicity of now President Bush and former President Reagan in the "crimes" of Ollie North.

If the revelations agreed upon by the government to be facts and submitted to the court in the North trial are intended to accomplish "damage control," one can indeed wonder what is still being covered up.

As it stands, the Tower Commission and the congressional investigation of the Iran-Contra scandal are shown up for what they were—merely another government attempt at coverup. Furthermore, the document places George Shultz and Cap Weinberger at the

center of the affair, which they had pretended to oppose on principle.

The government now officially admits that as early as 1983 CIA chief Bill Casey asked the Secretary of Defense to obtain from Israel weapons confiscated from the Palestine Liberation Organization. These weapons were then provided to the Contras, without the knowledge and against the directive of the Congress.

Eleven governments, including Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China, Israel, South Korea, Honduras, and Panama were asked to give aid to the Nicaraguan resistance on behalf of the United States, which was otherwise prevented from doing so directly.

The importance of these revelations is not so much that these were impeachable offenses, as that they expose the cynical dishonesty of both the Reagan and present administrations, which are using national emergency procedures and subterfuge in place of the rule of law under the U.S. Constitution.

Another example of this is the declaration by the President of a continued State of Emergency to exist in U.S. relations with Panama. The year-long U.S. boycott against the Panamanian government—now to be extended—was declared under the provisions of a declaration of national emergency.

Unfortunately, President Bush's pre-election declarations about his intentions for the United States appear to have just as much credibility as the so-called democratic reforms in the Soviet Union inspired by President Gorbachov.

Lyndon LaRouche and his six associates are still being held in jail pending appeal. Two months remain before Rochelle Ascher's final sentencing. An appropriate intervention by the Bush administration can reverse both travesties of justice.

If President Bush does not act quickly, the LaRouche case—in which Mrs. Ascher's conviction must be included—will be the most dramatic political trial of this century. Human rights violations in the United States will overshadow those in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.