

# Will Walsh's parting shots hit Bush?

by Jeffrey Steinberg

In a pair of letters issued in late July, Iran-Contra Special Prosecutor Lawrence Walsh informed both former President Ronald Reagan and former White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan that they were not "targets" of his grand jury probe.

Weeks of speculation about a possible Reagan indictment were fueled in July when Walsh indicted former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger on charges he concealed Reagan's knowledge of the coverup of the Iran-Contra program. An intelligence community "deep throat" alerted Walsh's office that the former defense secretary had stored his personal papers at a national security depository at the Library of Congress. Weinberger was forced to provide those papers to Walsh; they contained notes of a series of November 1986 meetings chaired by Reagan where the administration's coverup response to the Iran-Contra fiasco was planned out.

Sources close to the Walsh probe have told *EIR* that the "deep throat" responsible for the leak was close to Israeli intelligence, and that the fingering of Weinberger was "pay-back" to Weinberger for his role in exposing the Jonathan Jay Pollard espionage ring.

With the decision to forgo an indictment against Reagan, only a few top Reagan-Bush administration officials remain on the possible target list. According to news accounts, the chief continuing target is former Attorney General Edwin Meese. In early August, Charles Cooper, a former top aide to Meese, was called before the Walsh grand jury several times. Former Secretary of State George Shultz has also been named as a possible target of a last-minute Walsh indictment.

## Why isn't Donald Gregg on the list?

Notably missing from the recently published lists is Donald Gregg, the chief national security aide to then-Vice President George Bush throughout the Iran-Contra era and now ambassador to South Korea. Both Gregg and Bush have been frequently cited during the ongoing trial of Claire George, the Reagan-era head of CIA operations.

On Aug. 4, "former" CIA agent Felix Rodriguez (a.k.a. Max Gomez) testified at the George trial about his role in the Contra program. Rodriguez was a longtime CIA colleague and friend of Gregg. He had a string of meetings with Gregg and his boss Bush while running Contra supply operations out of the Ilopango Air Base in El Salvador. Rodriguez has also been named in a federal court action in Little Rock, Arkansas as being a mastermind, along with Oliver North,

of a guns-for-cocaine ring that operated between the United States, Mexico, and South America, servicing the Nicaraguan Contra rebels.

The mere appearance of Rodriguez on the witness stand at the George trial revived longstanding allegations that Bush was a central player in the Iran-Contra operation and coverup. The Aug 5. *Wall Street Journal*, commenting on Rodriguez's testimony, noted that "while the general outlines of Mr. Rodriguez's involvement have been known for some years, his testimony yesterday showed the extent to which he used his own personal contacts to assist the supply network. This is significant both because it demonstrates that he was more than a bit player in the affair, and because . . . it raises questions about how Mr. Bush could have been so uninformed of his activities."

Under two National Security Decision Directives signed by President Reagan in early 1982, Vice President Bush was in charge of the entire White House Central American covert program from beginning to end.

## Pressure on Walsh

There is a great deal of speculation about why Special Prosecutor Walsh has avoided the Bush question. On Aug. 4, the *Washington Times* published a front-page attack on Walsh, citing House Republicans Gerald Solomon (N.Y.) and John Duncan (Tenn.) as sources of allegations that Walsh and his chief deputy, Craig Gillen, misappropriated government funds for their personal use. The two lawmakers are leading a drive to have a special prosecutor appointed to probe the Walsh activities. A Government Accounting Office (GAO) team of auditors is already poring over Walsh's expense records and will issue a report in September.

In December, the congressional act which established the special prosecutor system expires, and President Bush has threatened to veto any legislation that would continue the system either in its current or in a modified form.

Further complicating the situation are reports that the Walsh probe has been used by people inside the intelligence community to hasten the cleanout of the older generation of Cold War spies and their replacement by younger intelligence officials more attuned to the "new realities" of the new world order, with its emphasis on economic and financial warfare against former Cold War allies and Third World nations. These sources cite the role being played by Alan Fiers in the current prosecution of George as one example of the "generational war" now playing out inside the intelligence community. Fiers, who headed the CIA's Central America Task Force under Reagan, reached a plea bargain agreement with Walsh early this year and has been the star witness in the George trial.

Walsh is expected to release a final report before the November elections. The report is expected to reveal aspects of his investigation that have been so far kept secret, thereby delivering a serious blow to President Bush.