

The hypocrisy of Newt's 'death to pushers' rap

by Joyce Fredman

On Friday, Aug. 24, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich dropped what he must have hoped to be a political bombshell—automatic death sentences for convicted drug smugglers. “If you import a commercial quantity of illegal drugs, it is because you have made the personal decision that you are prepared to get rich by destroying our children. I have made the decision that I love our children enough that we will kill you if you do this.

“The first time we execute 27 or 30 or 35 people at one time, and they go around Colombia and France and Thailand and Mexico, and they say, ‘Hi, would you like to carry some drugs into the U.S.?’ the price of carrying drugs will have gone up dramatically,” Gingrich boasted to a crowd at a fundraiser for Rep. Charlie Norwood, a fellow Georgia Republican.

What a hero, defending our children, standing up to the criminals, what a brave guy; what a liar! Playing on the fears of Americans concerning the drug epidemic, Gingrich has blustered at every available opportunity, sounding forth the battle-cry, while in Congress he has led the defeatist camp. Slashing programs shown to aid in the anti-drug effort seems to be his main occupation. But talk is something else.

‘Or let’s legalize’

Last July in Philadelphia, at the summer meeting of the Republican National Committee, he said the country should get serious and either “kill” importers or else legalize drugs. “Either let’s have a decisive program that has the kind of penalties I am talking about, or let’s legalize them. Let’s quit playing games where the sanctions are so limited that people get to be millionaires by destroying our children,” he told the *St. Petersburg Times*, a Florida newspaper.

Gingrich says he will introduce his bill when Congress reconvenes after its summer recess. According to such a bill, anyone convicted of smuggling large amounts of drugs into the United States would have only 18 months to file no more than one appeal of the conviction. He boasted about his plans to curtail due process to a crowd at a sports festival in Georgia on Saturday, Aug. 26. “They wouldn’t have 10 years of playing games with the system. Do it one by one, it’ll add up. If the word gets back that we’re serious and we’re actually implementing it, then it will have a very chilling effect on people bringing drugs into the U.S.,” he said.

Chilling is certainly the word, but the effect is not re-

served for those importing drugs. For those who claim to be so concerned about international human rights issues, including Gingrich himself, such legislation would put the United States in the company of China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Burma, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Iran, the only other countries to institute such measures.

In fact, while in San Diego, speaking to the American Legislative Exchange Council, Gingrich put his seal of approval on laws such as those in Singapore and Malaysia, where not only are convicted drug smugglers executed, but very long prison terms are dealt to those who are found with drugs in their possession, and he also called upon state legislators to pass laws for the death penalty for domestic producers of drugs.

The real truth behind his blood-curdling boasts, however, is that Newt Gingrich has led every effort to sabotage any effective programs presently in place in the United States to fight drugs. He and his cohorts in the Conservative Revolution crowd have limited funding wherever possible, even in the domain of law enforcement. The only effect he has had is to sabotage any efforts of the Clinton administration’s fight against drugs.

Now, an underdeveloped nation which is faced with an undeclared war by well-armed (and foreign-funded) narco-terrorist armies *might* perhaps argue that it is forced to execute those armies’ leaders as their only recourse to defend society under war conditions. But in a wealthy society, with the penal technologies available to the United States, the death penalty serves no purpose but that of feeding the bloodthirst of a frustrated populace—indeed, of further chipping away at the fundamental tenet of western civilized society, that man is made in the image of God, the very decline of which has provided fertile grounds for the growth of the drug subculture.

‘He has not thought it through’

The speaker’s cynical attempts to capitalize on the very real concern of Americans is typical of his populist methods. Those who are involved in seriously fighting drugs see things much differently.

Dr. Lee Brown, White House drug policy adviser, who recently concluded a tour of Latin America where he held meetings with the Presidents of Peru, Bolivia, and Venezuela, responded immediately to Gingrich.

He called the plan to execute the drug smugglers “another simplistic solution to a complex problem with no potential for real impact. This proposal, offered on the heels of the idea he gave forth last month to legalize drugs or use draconian measures, shows that the Speaker will say and do anything except implement and fund the President’s comprehensive anti-drug strategy. I cannot imagine that he has thought through these ideas: for example, the recent uptick in marijuana use by young people, given that a large proportion of

the marijuana is domestically grown, has little to do with smuggling.”

As for Gingrich’s great love for the nation’s children, Brown called on the Speaker to put his money where his mouth is. “Parents want to do more to assure that kids don’t use drugs, and drug education in our schools is a key. It’s time that the Speaker understands that stopping the demand will be the most effective anti-drug activity we can possibly take. That’s why the Speaker should work with us, instead of against us, to assure full funding of the Safe and Drug Free Schools program which reaches 39 million children in 94% of the nation’s school districts. The Speaker should work with us to assure full funding of the President’s treatment initiative, so that we can break the cycle of crime and drugs which puts drug criminals on the streets. The Speaker should work for American families by restoring the cuts made to the Health and Human Services treatment and prevention programs.

“The President’s comprehensive strategy also strongly supports interdiction and eradication in source countries, and effective measures to stop drugs from crossing over the borders.

“The 1995 National Drug Strategy attacks drugs on all fronts—supply and demand, education and punishment, treatment, rehabilitation, interdiction, eradication, international cooperation. The strategy has begun to work: the Cali drug cartel responsible for 80% of the cocaine that reaches our shores has begun to crumble, and casual (once a month or more) drug use remains at less than half the level of the mid-1980s.

“What the Nation needs from the Speaker is help in implementing and funding the President’s comprehensive anti-drug strategy, not ill-conceived ideas and congressional defunding of a plan proven to work. It’s time to put children and families ahead of political grandstanding.”

And what about the bankers?

In 1985, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. spelled out a 15-point Hemisphere War on Drugs strategy that called for a total war against the international narcotics cartel known as “Dope, Inc.” The LaRouche plan—as distinct from the Gingrich appeal to lynch-mob rage and even from the Clinton administration’s far more productive and successful effort—called for the marshalling of all the available resources of the United States and its allies throughout the Americas to knock out the drug cartel at the point of production, on the high seas, on the streets, and where they can be hurt the most, in the board rooms of the major international banks and within the circles of the British monarchy, where the top executives of Dope, Inc. are to be found.

How telling it is that on the subject of these higher levels “above suspicion,” where the big money and big power are made from the trafficking in mind-destroying drugs, our loquacious Speaker Gingrich is . . . silent.

FBI, DOJ misconduct shown in Weaver case

by Edward Spannaus

With hearings on the 1992 shooting incident at Ruby Ridge, Idaho set to begin in the Senate on Sept. 6, a major focus of attention is expected to be the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) 542-page report on the incident, which documents serious FBI and Department of Justice misconduct in the aftermath of the shooting. *EIR*’s analysis of the report has discovered a pattern of misconduct among DOJ personnel—up to the level of Deputy Attorney General Mark Richard—which has so far been ignored by the media.

But at the same time, the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings are causing justifiable concern among top officials at the Justice Department over the possibility that the hearings could interfere with the ongoing *criminal* investigations of FBI officials involved in the Ruby Ridge incident. Speaking to the press on Aug. 31, Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick warned that the “worst-case scenario” could be what she called “the [Oliver] North scenario, which is that a conviction is overturned, or that a prosecution simply cannot go forward.” She was referring to the manner in which North and other Iran-Contra conspirators were able to get their convictions overturned and walk away free, because Congress had required them to give testimony in public hearings under a grant of immunity from prosecution.

The ghost of J. Edgar Hoover

The DOJ report on the Ruby Ridge incident shows that corrupt practices, including hiding and destroying documents, which the FBI and DOJ said had ended decades ago, were still going on as late as 1992 and 1993.

The report was prepared last year by a task force appointed by Attorney General Janet Reno, but has not yet been officially made public. Justice Department spokesman Carl Stern told *EIR* that the department was ready to make the report public last December, but they were requested not to release it by the local prosecutor in Boundary County, Idaho, who is conducting his own investigation of possible criminal conduct by FBI agents and officials. The report was leaked to the *Legal Times* newspaper in mid-July, which put it on the Internet.

Most of the news media reporting about the DOJ report has focused on the dramatic issue of the FBI’s altered “rules of engagement,” under which an FBI sniper shot and killed Randy Weaver’s wife as she was standing behind a door