

# Soros's role in the drug takeover of Colombia

by Valerie Rush

Mention the South American country of Colombia to most Americans today, and what unhappily springs to mind are the twin scourges of drugs and terrorism—and rightly so. But how many Americans are aware that it is George Soros, and the London-centered financial apparatus he represents, that are *directly behind* this criminal takeover of Colombia? Not only has Soros moved into some of the premier drug-money-laundering institutions of the continent, including Colombian banks, but his own funds are being directly deployed in defense of Colombia's murderous narco-terrorist armies, the same terrorists serving as plantation guards for the country's narcotics crops and laboratories.

Worse, Soros and the Colombian cocaine cartels are in the process of a major market "diversification" effort—into heroin. According to Thomas Constantine, the director of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), just back from a trip to Colombia, "About 63% of all heroin we seize in the United States now comes from Colombia." In fact, Colombian national police chief Gen. Rosso José Serrano recently predicted that heroin will "replace cocaine" as Colombia's main drug export.

U.S. law enforcement sources are also reporting that Colombian heroin being seized on U.S. streets is now as much as 90-95% pure! Compare this to slightly over a decade ago, when the purity of heroin from all sources—Southeast Asian, South West Asian, and Mexican—was approximately 7% at the street level. By 1995, retail purity levels had already risen dramatically, to 39.7%, of which Colombian heroin was averaging an unprecedented 56.4% purity. Today, police and the DEA are consistently seizing Colombian heroin that is 70-95% pure.

As law enforcement officials are quick to point out, such purity means that heroin can be smoked or inhaled, instead of being injected directly into the bloodstream. The result is that American teenagers, including many from the middle class, are turning to heroin in record numbers, no longer having to contend with the terror of contracting AIDS, or the stigma of the heroin junkie with needle tracks up and down his arms. Officials estimate that heroin use in the United States grew by 20%, from 500,000 to more than 600,000 users, in just the past three years.

American youth are being driven down the road to hell

through Dope, Inc.'s employment of a classic marketing technique, one which might well have been taken from a Harvard Business School text: Cut prices, increase sales. In just the past few years, the price of heroin has been slashed, as the chemical purity dramatically increased. The result? A significant increase in sales, as also indicated by the rise in users cited above. A January 1997 DEA report notes that Colombian heroin was selling wholesale in some cities for \$2,800 to \$5,000 an ounce, while Southeast Asian heroin went for \$5,500 to \$8,000 an ounce.

The drug cartels are not newcomers to this marketing strategy, having used the identical approach with cocaine over the past 15 years, in order to hook the U.S. population on cocaine and crack cocaine. As readers of this magazine know, it was Sir George Bush (the crack cocaine kingpin) and his Contra support networks who were responsible for this holocaust. Now, an even worse threat looms. According to President Clinton's national drug policy director, Gen. Barry McCaffrey, "Colombian heroin is a global threat of growing proportions. Colombians have gone from zero to producing 6.5 metric tons in five years, and are now using an incredibly aggressive marketing strategy."

The saturation of American youth with heroin is especially terrifying in light of expert opinion, by doctors and others, that the heroin addict is not as *physically* decimated by his habit as the cocaine addict, and thus is a guaranteed "consumer" for many decades longer than the typical cocaine user. Dope, Inc. knows just what it's doing—and so does George Soros.

## Financing the invasion

While the Colombian cocaine cartels retool for this heroin invasion of the United States, George Soros readies his own troops. According to Bogotá's *Semana* magazine of April 28, Soros is financing an Oct. 8-9 meeting in the Colombian city of Medellín, notorious as the birthplace of the Medellín cocaine cartel, and will fly in academics and other delegations from around the world to push drug legalization, and for an end to the war on drugs. According to Dr. Ethan Nadelman, director of Soros's Lindesmith Center, the Soros-bankrolled Drug Policy Foundation—the leading legalization lobby in the United States—will be addressing the Medellín event.

As *Semana* warned, Soros's "obsession is now precisely drug legalization. With the conviction that it is the only answer, Soros has set his sights on Colombia."

It should surprise no one that Soros would find a congenial atmosphere in drug cartel-ruled Colombia. He has already made significant inroads in the country's drug-financing networks, both in his own name and through allies in the banking community. In 1994, the Gilinski family in Colombia—closely identified with Soros's financial interests—used leverage from their Banco Andino to take control of Colombia's second-largest bank, Banco de Colombia, when the government privatized it in that year. Both of those banks were iden-

tified by Fabio Castillo, author of *The Cocaine Horsemen*, as drug-money laundries for the Cali Cartel, with officials in their main branches virtually functioning as employees of that cartel.

Castillo also put Colombia's largest bank, the Banco Ganadero, in the same category. Forty percent of the Banco Ganadero was bought in 1996 by Spain's Banco Bilbao Vizcaya (BBV), which also teamed up with Soros's Quantum Fund to buy up 40% of neighboring Venezuela's number one bank, Banco Provincial, that same year. Thirty percent of the Gilinskis' Banco de Colombia, meanwhile, was sold to another of Spain's leading banks, the Banco Central Hispano (BCH). BCH and BBV are both linked to British financial interests, including the Queen's own drug bank, the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp.

### Human Rights Watch: the Soros hit squad

While no one is quite sure where Soros's financial assets begin and end in Colombia, he has left no doubt that his money is being used politically to protect the drug trade and the narco-terrorists.

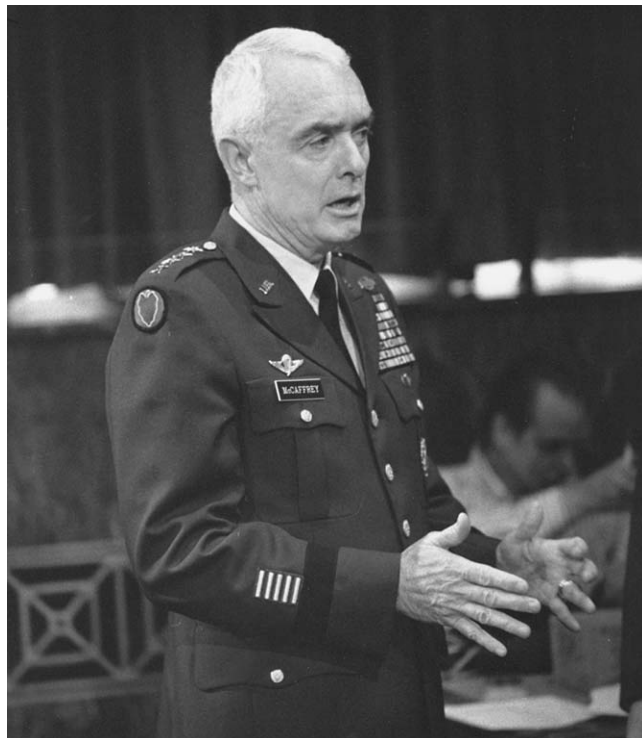
For this, Soros's flagship operation is the non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch/Americas. Soros gave HRW/A its start-up capital, and he has continued to pour in his largesse over the years. The group's 1995-96 annual report lists Soros and his wife as among their largest donors, those who provided \$100,000 or more.

In Ibero-America, Human Rights Watch specializes in attacking those national forces deployed against the drug cartels—especially the armed forces—most typically accusing them of “human rights violations.” For example, in November 1996, they issued a report called “Colombia's Killer Networks,” which concluded: “The [Colombian] military has not only created paramilitary groups but allows virtually all of them to carry out political killings when it serves a common purpose, ridding the country of perceived guerrilla support.” The “perceived guerrillas” that HRW is referring to are the FARC and ELN narco-terrorists, who today control about half the country's municipalities, and form a drug cartel in their own right, which is rapidly taking over the entire nation.

Human Rights Watch's 1996 report cited confidential defense documents, to charge that U.S. military advisers had fuelled these purported “death squad” activities against the well-meaning guerrillas, and then echoed the calls by London-based Amnesty International a month earlier, demanding the immediate suspension of all U.S. and European military aid and arms sales to Colombia, until human rights violations were curbed.

Needless to say, the FARC and ELN—and their cartel allies—fully concur.

What is actually behind this “human rights” facade, came to light in a revealing incident a few years ago. On Nov. 8, 1990, the heads of Colombia's Medellín Cartel, in the midst of their most violent killing spree, in an effort to stop any plan



*White House Drug Policy Adviser Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.): “Colombian heroin is a global threat of growing proportions. Colombians have gone from zero to producing 6.5 metric tons in five years, and are now using an incredibly aggressive marketing strategy.”*

to extradite them to the United States, sent an open letter, which they signed as “The Extraditables,” to a leading politician in the country. In the letter, they promised to free a number of Colombian journalists held as hostages, if the government met one condition: that it publish and circulate widely a report issued in October of that year by Soros's Americas Watch division of Human Rights Watch. That report denounced the government's anti-drug actions as violations of the cartel's “human rights.”

The Extraditables demanded that “all the communications media of the country . . . provide space to the human rights organizations, so that they can denounce all the violations of these rights. We wish that this opportunity be given, very particularly, to Americas Watch,” the narco-trafficker butchers said.

Six days later, Juan Méndez, who wrote the Americas Watch report, gave an interview to the Colombian daily *Espectador*, calling for “the most total disarmament possible” of Colombia—even as the Extraditables were bombing and murdering almost at will. Méndez claimed that HRW did not call for the outright abolition of national Armed Forces, but said, “We do celebrate the decision of Costa Rica in 1948 to dissolve its Armed Forces.”

Such are the legions of George Soros.