

Australia Dossier by Allen Douglas

War on the police

George Soros's stooges, aided by an assault against law enforcement, are leading the charge for drug legalization.

On Nov. 22-25, the first International Conference on Drugs and Young People was held in Melbourne, attended by 650 delegates from Australia, New Zealand, the United States, the U.K., Sweden, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Islands. Lead speakers, including federal Sen. Natasha Stott Despoja of the Australia Democrats and Mike Moore, Health Minister for the Australian Capital Territory (A.C.T., the area around the federal capital of Canberra), almost unanimously called for the adoption of the "harm minimization" strategy designed by George Soros, the mega-speculator and Daddy Warbucks of the worldwide drive to legalize marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and other deadly drugs, as a "solution" to the burgeoning drug trade in Australia, and globally.

The conference was the latest in an unending stream of conferences, seminars, studies, and calls by politicians downunder, to rip up traditional law enforcement methods, and surrender to the drug cartels and their pro-legalization allies in the banks, casinos, and other establishment money-laundering institutions. All of this activity has been financed either by Soros himself, whose chief Australian representative is Mike Moore; by establishment firms such as Rio Tinto; or by the Australian Drug Foundation, a front for the nation's major banks, which profit from the more than AUS \$7 billion laundered annually through the banking system (see *EIR*, June 12, 1998). But, more than anything else, what has energized the call for legalization, has been the soaring crime rates and numbers of drug-related deaths, *which are the direct re-*

sult of dismantling the nation's federal and state police forces.

No one disputes the extent of the problem: A UN report last year found that Australia had one of the highest per-capita consumption rates of marijuana in the world; the nation's heroin problem has been regularly described as "worse than Great Britain's" (which has exploded due to back-door forms of legalization), and has resulted in more than 600 deaths from heroin overdoses last year alone; and crime rates across the country have soared. George Pell, the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, recently described the drug/crime plague in the country as being of "epidemic proportions."

Federal and state governments would of course meet such an emergency by strengthening police forces, beginning by stepping up funding, right? Wrong! From the federal government on down, they have done the opposite, by slashing funding and sanctioning attacks on police and customs forces, including disbanding the two most effective state anti-drug units in the country.

In March 1998, with one eye on the approaching federal elections, Liberal Party Prime Minister John Howard responded to the furor over the explosion in drugs and related crime by announcing a new AUS \$187 million "Tough on Drugs" campaign, reversing his government's previous support for a "heroin trial" in the A.C.T., in which that government proposed to set up "safe injecting rooms." Howard's new-found enthusiasm for fighting drugs was belied by the fact that, since the Department of Public Health formally adopted it in 1986, the govern-

ment's official position on drugs has been "harm minimization," and by the fact that his government had ruthlessly slashed funding for the Customs Department and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) since it came to power in early 1996—to the point that both have been almost driven out of existence.

The Customs Department, for example, in 1997-98 seized a minuscule 38.7 kilograms of cannabis, compared to 24,546 kg in 1996-97; and, it has the resources to examine only three of every 10,000 cargo containers entering the country. Customs' staff union spokesman Stuart Bell charged in October that the number of ship searches had been slashed because of "dramatic staff cuts," and that the "new" federal anti-drug money replaced only *one-third* of the funds previously cut by Howard. The AFP, meanwhile, lost 185 agents last year, and is losing 13 more each month, with two AFP regions covering the Northern Region (the Northern Territory and Queensland) and the Southern Region (Victoria and South Australia) set to disband by year's end. Australian Federal Police Association spokesman Craig Shannon summed up the AFP's situation as "just about bankrupt," yet the government plans to cut another \$50 million from AFP funds!

Meanwhile, fraudulent anti-corruption investigations during the past two years have dismantled the Western Australian and New South Wales anti-drug squads (whose effectiveness was legendary), and slashed police numbers, while the pro-legalization government of Victoria has also slashed its police force. Predictably, drug usage has exploded, as have other crime rates, including a 90% rise in bank robberies in New South Wales, and a 35% rise in street robberies in Victoria, often by junkies wielding blood-filled syringes.