

By Eric Gravley

**M**OST AMERICANS BELIEVE THE WAR ON drugs is a necessary evil and that we surrender at our peril. Since last April, however, a small but vocal opposition has formed against the war on drugs. An odd coalition of elite academics, psychiatrists, libertarians and a few politicians, the opposition capitalizes on a national mood of fatigue and frustration. They ask, "What price for this holy war?"

Those who oppose current drug policy say that "the drug war" is a dangerous misnomer. Bad metaphors lead to bad policy. Reformers like Princeton professor Ethan Nadelmann criticize the Reagan twin policy of interdiction and just-say-no rhetoric that apparently has reduced neither supply nor demand. Instead drug dealers make off the with gross national product, drug-related crime has reached intolerable levels, courts and jails cannot cope with the volume of new criminals, addicts share needles and AIDS and people who cannot find marijuana are now using crack.

The opposition's message is that there must be a better way. They believe drug abuse should be approached as a social-health problem rather than a criminal justice one. Their tools of choice are education and rehabilitation. In short, they advocate a kinder, gentler drug policy.

**A different track:** The reform coalition is led by academics like Nadelmann, whose front-line articles in *Foreign Policy* and *The Public Interest* earlier this year made him the reform torchbearer; American University's Arnold Trebach, who heads the Drug Policy Foundation, a Washington, D.C.-based reform think tank; and Harvard psychiatrists Norman Zinberg and Lester Grinspoon, who are campaigning to remove the ban on illicit drugs for medical use. They have tried to focus the debate on the costs of drug prohibition and to force policy-makers to think of the drug war realistically, not as a moral crusade.

Another large patch in the reform crazy quilt is sewn by bedrock conservatives. Laissez-faire titans William F. Buckley and Milton Friedman favor legalization, as do free-marketers like the editors of *The Economist*. Prohibitive drug laws, they argue, are no match for the laws of supply and demand. Libertarian purists such as 1988 presidential candidate Ron Paul and David Boaz of the Cato Institute assert that the liberty of the individual should remain absolute as long as the individual does not violate the rights of others. Current drug policy, they say, is a failure that unjustifiably aggrandizes state power. Dallas-based libertarian and *National Review* contributor Richard Cowan warns, "We're not going to be drug-free, just unfree."

The ACLU and other civil libertarians, such as Harvard Law School professor Alan Dershowitz and Drug Policy Foundation attorney Kevin Zeese, share the concern that an extreme anti-drug policy leads to overly intrusive government action. Their main priority is preventing drug testing from becoming an institution of everyday life.

A few reformers such as Friedman advocate legalization of all drugs. Like alcohol and tobacco, illicit drugs would be highly taxed to generate revenue and sold under state control to adults only. Advertising,



Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke: a leading drug-policy reformer.

## Building the case against America's narcotic jihad

however, would be forbidden, as would operation of heavy machinery for users under the influence. Most others in this loose-knit coalition prefer various schemes of decriminalization, a less radical reform than legalization. Under decriminalization, drug use is still "against the law," but the law is not enforced or the penalties are sharply reduced. All say the government must put aside the hysteria and take a fresh look at the problem.

Critics of legalization and decriminalization warn, as did Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), that we will become "a nation of zombies." None of the experts knows for sure if D'Amato is right, but his warning seems more paranoid than prescient. After the repeal of alcohol prohibition more people drank, but the U.S. did not become a nation of drunkards.

Reform leaders like Trebach point to the Netherlands as an example. During the '70s the Dutch decriminalized, reduced funds for enforcement and designated drug treatment the top priority. Today crime has decreased. Overall drug use has dipped slightly, and among teenagers it has fallen markedly. Adicts, however, remain a persistent problem. Soft drugs are widely available and support a healthy drug-cafe business in major cities. The Dutch, it appears, developed a containment policy.

Not surprisingly, politicians have not rushed to join the reform coalition. Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke caused a sensation in April when he asked Congress to hold hearings on the pros and cons of decriminalization. Schmoke's call pressured Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY), the chairman of the House

Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, to conduct such a session in late September.

Schmoke has paid for invoking the "L-word." Followers of Lyndon LaRouche, led by his vice-presidential candidate Debra Freeman, have led a harassment campaign against Schmoke by once heckling him when he spoke, by demonstrating at city hall and by littering Baltimore with leaflets calling Schmoke a "pusher." More responsible black church leaders, who form Schmoke's political base, express doubts about their mayor. This is not the kind of response that encourages other politicians.

Still, there are a few. In April New York State Sen. Joseph Galiber introduced a bill in the state house to legalize all drugs. The bill has seen little movement and is not likely to, but it is a comprehensive draft of legislation that counters the common criticism that reformers pay no attention to specifics. Other politicians urge "re-examining" drug policy, a convenient euphemism that allows them to be both in and out of the closet. In this group are Minneapolis Mayor Donald Fraser, Washington Mayor Marion Barry and two Democratic Congressmen, James Scheuer of New York and Pete Stark of California.

**The case for legalization:** The reform movement promotes a fatalistic, "face facts" argument: the tunnel has no end and no light. Accordingly, the nation should make peace with a difficult problem and manage what cannot be contained. They argue as follows:

- Drug prohibition, not drug abuse, produces the "drug-related" crime terrorizing American cities. As with alcohol prohibition

during the '30s, illicit drugs create a black market in which profit drives an engine of violence. In Washington, D.C., for example, there have been more than 340 homicides so far this year—at least 50 more than the previous all-time record. City officials attribute the rise to turf wars between crack and cocaine dealers.

- The illicit-licit distinction distorts actual health concerns regarding popular drugs. Francis Young, the administrative law judge for the Drug Enforcement Administration, wrote in a recent opinion that in marijuana's medical history "there are simply no credible medical reports to suggest that consuming marijuana has caused a single death." The use of all other illicit drugs is responsible for 5,000 to 6,000 deaths a year. In comparison, alcohol kills an estimated 100,000 people a year, and cigarettes take the largest toll at 350,000 a year.

- The supply of drugs cannot be stopped, no matter how many agents, boats, planes and radar blimps the government deploys: the volume of traffic is simply too large. One cargo plane can store enough crystalline cocaine to supply the U.S. for a year. As for shutting off supply in the source countries of Asia and Latin America, the prospects seem slim. The United Nations has a noble crop substitution plan, but as long as drugs yield that easy money, other crops are no substitution. Finally, like stubborn weeds, new supplies of drugs will always turn up.

- The demand for drugs will remain high in a society with an established drug culture. Spuds MacKenzie is the spiritual godhead for a nation that fortifies its diet with vitamins rather than vegetables, has a pill for every ailment, enjoys its cigarette and forever awaits Miller Time. An estimated one-third of Americans have tried illicit drugs, 6.8 million use cocaine at least once a month and 25 million use marijuana at least once a month, according to the select committee.

- The drug war has severely strained the criminal justice system. A two-year study by the American Bar Association released this

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month concludes that increased criminal justice efforts have not had a significant impact on the drug problem and "have instead distorted and overwhelmed the criminal justice system, crowding dockets and jails, and deluding law enforcement and judicial efforts to deal with other major criminal cases."

- Changing collective behavior using the criminal justice approach will require the militarization of society, an unacceptable result. Social-health policy remains a more practical and less vindictive way to reduce drug use. Per capita tobacco use dropped from 41.7 percent in 1965 to 32.6 percent in 1983, largely because people learned about the health costs of smoking.

- A policy change also means shifting budget priorities. This year the U.S. spent

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By Joel Bleifuss

## Exporting fascism

On November 4 Miguel Martin of *El Nuevo Periodista* (the New Journalist), a left-leaning Buenos Aires-based magazine, reported, "Members of a supposedly clandestine army and marginal politicians like Norberto Imbelloni [an Argentinian politician, now in exile, who supported the military dictatorship] plan a coup d'état in Argentina by March at the latest." In addition to giving a forewarning of the military insurrection of December 1-4, Martin examined the little-noticed role Paraguay plays as an exporter of far-right revolt. He reported that this upcoming coup attempt in Argentina was being supported by "elements of the Spanish fascist movement [Falangists who fled to Paraguay after Franco's death] and the president-for-life [Alfredo Stroessner]... Even though much has been written about 'Paraguayan protofascism,' it's necessary to remember the agenda of famous Falangists and Nazis who still live in Paraguay." These assorted fascists are grouped around the Euro-American Circle of Art and Culture, a sister organization of the World Anti-Communist League (WACL), which was once headed by an anti-character Gen. John Singlaub. Martin reported that the meetings of these self-described "fugitives from the synagogue of radical Judeo-Marxism" are sometimes held in Imbelloni's home. "In one of the latest meetings, an ex-Argentine military officer began to criticize Col. Mohamed Ali Seineldin, but Imbelloni interrupted him by saying, 'In this house we do not insult the best of the soldiers of our glorious army.'" It was the same Col. Seineldin who led the attempted coup.

## Quayle takes another hit

Allegations of Vice President-elect Dan Quayle's encounters with the drug culture continue to bubble (see "In Short," Nov. 16). In 1968 frat man Dan Quayle, then a junior at DePauw University, lived in the Delta Kappa Epsilon (DKE) fraternity house. According to the school yearbook, *The Mirage*, the theme of the DKE's 1968 fall house dance was "The Trip." This frat party—the first held without the supervision of a housemother—was described in *The Mirage* as "a colorful psychedelic journey into the wild sights and sounds produced by LSD." A former collegemate of Quayle's told Doug Hissom of the Milwaukee weekly *Shepherd Express*, "LSD was not served directly by the fraternity, but it most certainly would have been taken by the members."

## Pick a source, any source

Have you ever wondered when reading the *New York Times* exactly who are those unnamed official sources that so often pop up in a story? Bruce Porter reports in the current *Columbia Journalism Review* that sometimes they don't have a name. They don't exist. In an examination of the changes at the *Times* under the two-year tutelage of executive editor Max Frankel, Porter writes: "Last year word went out that it was now OK for Washington and foreign correspondents occasionally to interpret on their own hook what stories meant, without having to attribute that interpretation to 'official sources.' But last fall, when the then diplomatic correspondent, David K. Shipler, put the policy to work in a story analyzing what effect Caspar Weinberger's departure would have on the dynamics of White House decision-making, editors back in New York automatically stuck the phrase 'administration officials said today' into the lead sentence without notifying Shipler."

## The resemblance was in the teeth

Last month the Standardbred Horse Sale Company of Hanover, Pa., sold 1,572 harness horses for \$32,513,400—an average of \$20,583 a steed. *Harness Horse* magazine reports that one of the auction's basement bargains was Colonel North, a two-year-old colt. The Colonel sold for only \$1,400. In *These Times* reader and horse breeder Bill Hughes of Topsham, Maine, writes: "As you probably know, most people who invest in racing stock are miles from us politically. At least the breeder of Colonel North had the good sense to name a bad horse after the hero of Jerry Falwell. In case you wonder how I am mixed up in this, my father was from a Pennsylvania horse-country family, and although I escaped from the family's political beliefs through exposure to Gene Debs, Vito Marcantonio, Norman Thomas and Rev. [A.J.] Muste, I was already hooked on the narcotic known as fast horses, and have been entirely unable to shake the habit."



## Navy mistreats dolphin conscripts

The next dolphin you see swimming the ocean may not be the peaceful creature who might someday save your life in rough seas. Recent reports allege that the U.S. Navy is training 115 dolphins and about 100 pilot whales, beluga whales and sea lions for top-secret missions and national defense purposes. And it is said that an increasing number of these dolphins and sea lions are going AWOL, due to a mismanaged training program that is exceptionally hard on the animals involved.

Training dolphins for war began in 1960. The animals were first used in 1971, in South Vietnam's Cam Ranh Bay, to guard ships. Today the Navy and the CIA train marine mammals at clandestine facilities in Florida, California and Hawaii. According to the *National Journal*, former Navy psychophysicologist Michael Greenwood testified last October at closed hearings of the Senate Select Intelligence Committee that dolphins were being taught to attack and kill enemy scuba divers. Greenwood said that dolphins were being trained to attack Soviet ships docked in Havana, Cuba. The Navy denies that dolphins have been used for "dispatching" enemy frogmen but confirms that dolphins are used to intercept and capture enemy swimmers.

Several U.S. Navy dolphin trainers charge that "abuse, weight loss, corporal punishment and damage to animals after transport" have left some of the Navy's dolphins and sea lions crippled or dead. Last week Ed Offley of the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* reported that 13 dolphins trained for a secret Navy program have died in the past two years. Medical reports from the Navy's marine-mammal program reveal that five of the 13 died soon after being transported from one naval facility to another. Records indicate that before their deaths nearly half the dol-

phins suffered from lack of appetite or stomach ulcers. Hepatitis and pneumonia also took a toll. The Navy had previously admitted that two dolphins died in the last year, including one of six dolphins detailed to the Persian Gulf to protect ships and locate mines and a dolphin involved in research in an underwater weapons lab. In light of these deaths, the federal Marine Mammal Commission has opened an investigation of the Navy's marine-mammal program.

Richard Trout is a trainer of marine mammals for 15 years who has worked for the past three years for SEACO, a private corporation that trains marine mammals for the Naval Oceans Systems Command in San Diego. Trout has gone public with a long list of Navy training-program abuses. He says he informed his superiors of several near-drownings of sea lions in unsafe pens made of netting, but that no action was taken until an animal was killed. Said Trout, "That [drowned] animal was taken out of the net with no formal notice to appropriate authorities that I heard of and weighted and sunk [into the ocean]."

A dolphin also got tangled in the net by a muzzle that was placed over his snout, according to Trout. He said he had never heard of using muzzles on dolphins in the marine-park industry, and when he asked why they were being used in the Navy, he was told the low skill level of present Navy trainers and the high number of animals in the program made muzzles necessary to "discourage the animals from feeding themselves." Other negligent and abusive handling that Trout says he witnessed includes a dolphin left out of the water in the sun and a sea lion getting "kicked in the head twice for refusing to eat," as well as routine beatings with fists, boots and buckets. Trout says as many as 80 percent of civilian SEACO personnel working as marine-mammal trainers for the Navy have recently quit due to the

alleged abuse.

These revelations shine some light into the murky waters of the militarization of marine mammals, but an obscure section to the 1987 Defense Authorization Act allows the Navy to capture 25 marine mammals a year for the national defense without having to report what it does to them as required under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. In fiscal years 1985 through 1989, the Navy received \$28.7 million for "advanced marine biological systems" [marine mammal] research.

The Navy has also remained silent about the number of marine mammals that have gone AWOL. According to rangers at San Miguel Island off Southern California, a number of sea lions have shown up this year wearing secret Navy equipment harnesses. And in December 1986, the Florida Marine Patrol reported an emaciated dolphin swimming in South Florida wearing a muzzle on its snout. The dolphin had apparently escaped from the Navy dolphin-training operations at Key West, Florida.

Environmentalists and animal rights activists fear that the militarization of marine animals will make these animals targets for U.S. adversaries. "Will countries who view the U.S. as unfriendly begin to blow out of the water every dolphin and whale that approaches their ships or harbors?" asked Peter Wallerstein of Sea Shepherd, an environmental group that takes credit for sinking an Icelandic whaling ship in 1986.

A counterattack has begun. Members of the group Charly Tuna of Rainbo Warriors cut the nets and attempted to release dolphins from Naval Oceans Systems Center in San Diego. And Greenpeace plans to fight the construction of 16 dolphin-holding pens at the Trident Nuclear Submarine Base in Bangor, Wash.

As for your next ocean encounter with Flipper, just hope the dolphin is not a stressed-out killer commando gone AWOL. —Todd Steiner