

postscript

DarkAlliance

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Pair arrested while urging probe of CIA

Activist, talk show host called for congressional inquiry

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WASHINGTON -- Activist Dick Gregory and a radio talk show host were arrested Wednesday as they called for a congressional inquiry into possible CIA connections to a Bay Area drug ring that helped ignite the "crack" cocaine epidemic of the 1980s.

Gregory and talk show host [Joe Madison](#), who called on Congress to pass legislation that would declassify documents relating to the CIA's drug connection, were later arrested for disturbing the peace outside CIA headquarters in McLean, Va.

"The black community has been used by one of these elements inside the (CIA) for the unconscionable purpose of making money for war off the blood of our children," Gregory said, referring to a recent Mercury News series.

The Mercury News' three-part series, "Dark Alliance," detailed how a Bay Area drug ring sold tons of cocaine to the street gangs of South-Central Los Angeles and funneled millions in drug profits to a CIA-run guerrilla army. The series traced the crack cocaine explosion to two Nicaraguan cocaine dealers, [Danilo Blandon](#) and [Norwin Meneses](#), who were civilian leaders of the Frente Democratica Nicaraguense (FDN), an anti-communist commando group formed and run by the CIA during the 1980s.

Blandon, who is now an undercover informant for the Drug Enforcement Administration, admitted in federal court recently that his biggest customer was a South-Central crack dealer named "[Freeway](#)" [Rick Ross](#), who turned Blandon's cocaine into crack and distributed it to the Crips and Bloods street gangs. He told the DEA in 1995 that at the height of his business with Ross, he was providing 100 kilos of cocaine a week to the gangs.

CIA Director John Deutch last week [ordered the spy agency's inspector general](#) to investigate the report after [Sen. Barbara Boxer](#), D-Calif., and [Rep. Maxine Waters](#), D-Los Angeles, called for a probe.

Gregory and Madison said they would call for prayer vigils and fasts to make sure the story was not ignored by the press or by public policy makers.

"I've always said there's more to this than what they tell us," Gregory said at a news conference at the National Press Club.

A representative for Gregory and Madison said they were arrested after trying to deliver the Mercury News report to a CIA security guard. They will be arraigned today in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Va., and have begun a hunger fast, she said.

"No matter what the consequences, we as Americans and, most importantly, our children are not safe until we get the answers from a thorough and truthful investigation of the facts in this case," Gregory said.

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John Newman, a history professor at the University of Maryland, joined Gregory and Madison and argued for full access to sealed records that relate to the smuggling and distribution of illegal drugs into the United States.

"The major street dealers are going to prison for life without the possibility of parole, while those who supplied them hundreds of kilos of cocaine year after year spend months in prison and are set free to walk the streets as sting operators for the Drug Enforcement Administration," Newman said.

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-- *Activist Dick
Gregory*

