

# forum

DarkAlliance

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**NOTE: Archive is current through Sept. 17, 1996**  
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## What do you think?

**FOR THE BETTER PART** of a decade, a Bay Area drug ring sold tons of cocaine to the Crips and Bloods street gangs of Los Angeles and funneled millions in drug profits to a Latin American guerrilla army run by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, a Mercury News investigation has found.

Should the government have limits on who it hires as an informant or cooperating witness? Where do you draw the line?

## What's your opinion?

[Go to previous forum responses](#)

*Note: Excerpts from comments made in this forum might be used in the newspaper. If you would not like your comments to be published in the print version, please indicate so in your message.*

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### Closing comments to Gary Webb

**From:** Michael Hoffman ([michael@cybtrans.com](mailto:michael@cybtrans.com)), Palo Alto, CA

**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 1996

**Comment:**

The CIA should be punished for breaking the laws, such as they are. But the laws are wrong, and the CIA's act only caused so much devastation because of the terrible side-effects of the laws, of prohibition. The CIA's act did not occur in a vacuum, and in itself would not have caused devastation; it only became an evil act given that there was already a network of violence-spawning laws in place. The devastation was not simply a function of the crack chemical itself or the agency that supplied it, but is *\*mostly\** a result of the War On Drugs, an extremist and unwinnable effort that backfires and brings more devastation that it supposedly prevents.

Your articles should probably concentrate on the CIA's breaking of laws, not on the real root of the devastation, the evil of these laws. I hope your work does not attribute all the devastation to the recreation chemical itself, but reminds people that *\*given\** the War On Drugs, the CIA's introducing crack was reprehensible. As to whether that given circumstance (prohibition) was good, that is a distinct issue.

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### where is the response?

**From:** Brent Arnold ([friction88@aol.com](mailto:friction88@aol.com)), Seattle, WA

**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 1996

**Comment:** I have been hearing people discuss this idea for years, but I never figured there would be any proof

to come to light.

So now here it is... where is the response of the rest of the media, the government, etc??

I have been waiting to see the NYtimes cover this... all I got was convention junk. The Seattle papers did run the story, for a sec...

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## September 11 Events in Washington DC

**From:** Professor J. Newman ([jmnewman@erols.com](mailto:jmnewman@erols.com)), Odenton Maryland

**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 1996

**Comment:** Dick Gregory, Joe Madison (and I) gave a press conference at the National Press Club at 1:30 pm eastern today. We urged the media to follow Gary Webb's and the San Jose Mercury News' example by further investigating this story, or to at least cover it in detail. We filed a Freedom of Information Act request for the CIA files of Enrique Bermudez and announced that we are seeking a new "Cocaine-Contra Records Act" to compel all agencies to release any documents in their possession on this matter. Gregory and Madison were then arrested at CIA HQ where they charged with creating a disturbance on protected property. They are currently being held at the Alexandria Detention Center and will be arraigned at 9:00 am eastern tomorrow in US Court. As of this time both have begun a fast until Congress agrees to pass this new Records Act. Call congress now!

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## Broadcast Conspiracies?

**From:** Aton-Re' Ausar ([Khemi@aol.com](mailto:Khemi@aol.com)), West Orange, NJ

**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 1996

**Comment:** The print and braodcast media have been trumpeting the 40% rise in drug use among american teen agers during much of this presidential election year.

Given past duplicity and subterfuge committed by playing to america's "drug paranoia", what civil freedom are we being set up to sacrifice unto the constitution's funeral pyre called the "War on Drugs"?

Can somebody hip me to that? Inquiring minds must survive.

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## Reno Dismisses CIA/Crack Connection

**From:** Ted Coe ([tcoe@humanitas.ucsb.edu](mailto:tcoe@humanitas.ucsb.edu)), Santa Barbara

**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 1996

**Comment:** This from today's L.A. Times: Atty. Gen. Janet Reno says a preliminary inquiry by the Department of Justice does not substantiate published allegations that the CIA acted in support of a Northern California drug ring that smuggled cocaine from Latin America to South-Central Los Angeles. . . .The CIA has agreed to conduct its own investigation of the allegations while casting skepticism on them. . . .Reno's action came in response to requests for an investigation by several members of Congress. . . .

..... Does she \*REALLY\* think that this will put the story to rest \*that\* easily?!? This seems at the very least like an attempt on the part of the Dept. of Justice to further dissuade the major news media from picking up on this story -- which they've done an excellent job of doing already, wouldn't you say? I am simply furious about this, though!

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### who's responsible for the coverup?

**From:** David Stock ([racetratr@aol.com](mailto:racetratr@aol.com)), Long Beach, CA

**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 1996

**Comment:** These are great stories, which, as others note, are being buried by much of the major news media. They bring back memories of CIA drug operations in Southeast Asia during the 1960's, and provide further evidence that the U.S. government is participating in the destruction of Black communities. The "war against drugs" is a smokescreen for those in government--including almost certainly ex-CIA director George Bush--who expedited the explosion of crack cocaine and gang warfare. It seems to me that the next step is to follow the chain of command up as far as it goes. Who ordered the drug investigations stopped? How could Salvadoran planes have landed at U.S. airbases without the knowledge of the military here? How could trucks enter such bases to pick up drugs? Who gave the commands? Thanks for the expose.

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### Don't stop here. Libya's involved, too!

**From:** M. ([ltolah@umd.umich.edu](mailto:ltolah@umd.umich.edu)), In, MI.

**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 1996

**Comment:** Drug sales fill a vacuum that the demand creates. Therefore, the addicts are partly to blame.

I have a question: Will you investigate Libya's sales of arms to these same gangs. This problem will have a more serious impact on innocent citizens.

Any words?

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### WORD IS SPREADING!

**From:** MIKE CURTIS ([HARDWORKING\\_NICEGUY@MSN.COM](mailto:HARDWORKING_NICEGUY@MSN.COM)), SEATTLE

**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 1996

**Comment:** This story was featured on the front page of our largest newspaper's weekend edition, and is being splashed all over the radio talk shows, including both the right and left wing ones. This has the capability of becoming the 90's version of an overused analogy, the 'watergate' scandal. I sense that there is a growing public resentment of unchecked public officials making their own policy outside of local and international law, and this election cycle will show the results of their disenchantment with the status quo with another 'throw the bums out!'

unfortunately, without a scouring of the lower levels of bureaucracy, all we will get is a repeat in another form of this ugly opportunism.

it's time for a full range of congressional investigations, and in my opinion time for the dismantling of the CIA in its present form. We have other agencies (nsa, fbi, etc) that can take up the slack without causing the international embarrassment and local damage to citizen trust. If this is not stopped dead in its tracks, there is the distinct possibility of our already damaged race relations degenerating into all out anarchy in the inner cities with unforeseen consequences for all of us in the near future.

wake up america!

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### CIA shredders are humming

**From:** George V. King, II ([s1b0031@mail.wvnet.edu](mailto:s1b0031@mail.wvnet.edu)), Harpers Ferry, WV.

**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 1996

**Comment:** There should be an immediate injunction placed on CIA files or you will never get to the bottom of this.  
I guess Ted Turner has been greased already.  
Rupert Murdoch will play ball with the agency and put a hush on. It's now us against them!

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## **Reno = Miami's state's atty during CIA drug smuggling**

**From:** Lee ([leebert@io.com](mailto:leebert@io.com)), Austin

**Date:** Friday, September 13, 1996

**Comment:** From the L.A. Times:

"Atty. Gen. Janet Reno says a preliminary inquiry by the Department of Justice does not substantiate published allegations that the CIA acted in support of a Northern California drug ring that smuggled cocaine from Latin America to South-Central Los Angeles. . . . The CIA has agreed to conduct its own investigation of the allegations while casting skepticism on them. . . . Reno's action came in response to requests for an investigation by several members of Congress..."

RENO \_should\_ know, she was the State's attorney in Miami, FL while the CIA was flying CIA SAT planes into corrosion corner at Miami int'l airport. The constant problems w/ the DEA & Customs finding, hell, SEEING traces of cocaine in the SAT planes werer a constant source of Miami Herald expose's in Miami during the 1980's. RENO was known to be very PO'd by the CIA's activities in her district, but she became increasing powerless to do a thing about it.

Now she's poo-poo'ing the new reports. What a stench!

After the Christic Institute lawsuit in Miami got killed at the 11th hour by Judge Hoover, the newspapers and local 'zines started ignoring the story.

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## **A modern day tragedy**

**From:** smiranda ([smiranda@usatncs.gannett](mailto:smiranda@usatncs.gannett)), Danville, VA

**Date:** Friday, September 13, 1996

**Comment:** This is proof that the U.S. government does give a hoot about the African American race. We were never considered to be human beings. I'm ashamed of being a citizen of this country.

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## **We as a people should demand that the C.I.A. be checked for unethical behaviour just like all the other government agencies**

**From:** Danny Menendez ([dannym@address.net](mailto:dannym@address.net)), Los Angeles

**Date:** Saturday, September 14, 1996

**Comment:** We the people of the United States (including non-citizens) should demand the the C.I.A. be investigated by a independant agency and that an agency be placed permanently to check for any unethical behaviour on the part of the agency. The Judiciary branch, The Legilative Branch, and even the Executive branch are overlooked and checked by

various committies and so should the C.I.A.  
We must demand that the C.I.A. dismantle itself if it is tied to the drug trafficking connections in our cities. If Richard Nixxon can be called upon for unethical behaviour so can the C.I.A. Remember Watergate. Should the C.I.A. be given absolute power to do what ever it wants. You mean we can investigate our own President and not an agency?

We can not let ourselves to believe that the agency can monitor its self. Think about it. If you were accused of a crime and a prosecutor asked you to bring damaging evidence upon yourself and investigate the case, would you really do it. I don't think so. We must create a new agency that may be called something like Ethics Commitee for National Intelligence Agencies to oversee their actions.

I am a Salvadorean who fled the contry in 1983 because of the war that was created partially by the United States. Central Americans are tired of being used as tools for American interest. We are exploited as cheap labor and when we try to express our discontent of our exploitation and oppression we are murdered or harrassed by C.I.A. trained death squadrons. If any Central American government is not in tuned with U.S. interest it is quickly overturned by C.I.A. commanded coup d'etats.

Anyone is welcome to write me back directly at my E-mail address.

Thank you (Mercury News)for you devotion to investigate the true causes that have contributed to killing our fellow Americans in our inner cities.  
Keep up the good work!

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## Ten Years Too Late

**From:** Carol Coney ([ckc.atlanta@worldnet.att.net](mailto:ckc.atlanta@worldnet.att.net)), Atlanta , GA

**Date:** Saturday, September 14, 1996

**Comment:** Thanks for the expose, but unfortunately it comes ten years too late. Does anyone remember the La Penca bombing? The Christic Institute worked throughout the 80's to expose the drugs-for-weapons ring that was used by CIA operatives to bankroll the Contra War against Nicaragua. The Christic Institute amassed extensive documentation in order to bring a legal case against those responsible for the illegal venture. Ultimately, they were shut down for taking on Uncle Sam. It is a moral outrage and a flagrant abuse of taxpayer money that any U.S. government agency would provide a conduit whereby illegal drugs could be sold for profits to be channeled to a subversive guerilla army charged with overthrowing a legitimate sovereign government. The "chickens came home to roost", to quote Malcolm X, and the drugs and weapons that were the byproduct of our government's misdeeds continue to plague our urban centers. Hey, wasn't it the Reagans who invented the "Just Say No to Drugs" campaign? What sickening irony!

## Washington Post Responds

**From:** Jane Marcus ([mmfamily@ix.netcom.com](mailto:mmfamily@ix.netcom.com)), Palo Alto

**Date:** Sunday, September 15, 1996

**Comment:** Last night I posted a question in an online discussion to William Claiborne, West Coast reporter for the Washington Post. I asked why the Post had not yet reported on the Mercury's Dark Alliances series.

I got a prompt response this morning correcting my claim that the Post has been silent. Claiborne said it had run articles about Senator Boxer's letter to Deutsch and about the recent Black Political Caucus meeting.

He also said that a piece about the series appears in the 9/15/96 Outlook section. It is an essay by author Ishmael Reed and can be found at:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPlate/1996-09/15/081L-091596-idx.html>

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## What happened at Dick Gregory and co's. arraignment??

**From:** M. Blyden ([blydema@texaco.com](mailto:blydema@texaco.com)), O.C. USA

**Date:** Monday, September 16, 1996

**Comment:** Please give an update on Dick Gregory and let us know if he is still on a hunger strike. Anyone out there have the facts??

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## The 12 September Arraignment in Virginia

**From:** Dr. Newman ([jmnewman@erols.com](mailto:jmnewman@erols.com)), Odenton

**Date:** Monday, September 16, 1996

**Comment:** In response to query about the outcome in court on Thursday, September 12. Madison and Gregory were arraigned by a magistrate who asked if they wished the he rule on the matter or if the pair wished a hearing

in district court. Their attorney, Dan Alcorn, indicated they wished a trial in district court. The judge approved this and stated the two were to be released and then to reappear on the 20th for a preliminary hearing. The two had decided that Madison would attend the Black Cuacus hearing and that Gregory would stay. Gregory then demanded that he remain in his jail cell until his trial, where he intended to fast. Later that day, the CIA dropped all charges against both, thus preventing Gregory from remaining in prison. The CIA also agreed to their demand for a meeting, but both sides have so far been unable to agree on the participants of a meeting. Madison and Gregory held a press conference today to release their written response to DCI Deutch.

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## New York Times Checks In

**From:** Jane Marcus ([mmfamily@ix.netcom.com](mailto:mmfamily@ix.netcom.com)), Palo Alto, CA

**Date:** Monday, September 16, 1996

**Comment:** It looks like the New York Times had a small article on page A16 today (9/16) about Drug Czar McCaffrey's calling for a hearing on the Dark Alliances allegations. The article apparently also mentioned the Black Political Caucus' demands for an investigation as well.

According to a comment on the NYT online forum, the Boston Globe ran quite a long article over the weekend.

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## America's history is written in people's of color blood

**From:** Ulysses Brown ([ujbrown@grits.valdosta.peachnet.edu](mailto:ujbrown@grits.valdosta.peachnet.edu)), Tifton, Georgia

**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 1996

**Comment:** Yes, I believe that the United States government would seek to systematically destroy African-Americans by polluting their neighborhoods with drugs and assault weapons. Unfortunately, the U.S. government is no stranger to engaging in nefarious genocide plans that seek to destroy a people. I'm sure that many citizens remember the Tuskegee Experiment and the shameless attempt by the govenment to expunge the Indian population. Yes, America is quite capable of killing people that it perceives as its problem. Most people of color are not surprised by this unconscionable act but saddened that America's history is still being written in other people's blood.

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## How deep does the corruption go?

**From:** Brad Ems ([bems@hilco](mailto:bems@hilco)), St. Louis, MO

**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 1996

**Comment:** The relative silence of Big Media in response to the SJMN's revelations speaks volumes. It seems that the major media's DC-centric focus would be in jeopardy should the bottom of this particularly loathsome barrel be sounded out. Just what role did George Bush have in the running of cocaine (let's remember that Boy Scouts rarely get to head the CIA)? Are the claims of LD Brown, Bill Clinton's security chief, to be heard with a bit more credence now that corroborating evidence has been found of CIA involvement?

The drug was was and is a stupid idea, but it seems that the primary objective of it has been to restrict supplies to jack up prices to enrich our "leaders."

This story should be pursued with all due zeal. Congrats, SJMN.

Brad Ems  
[bems@hilco.com](mailto:bems@hilco.com)

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**BRAVO, BRAVO, BRAVO!**

**From:** Barbara Jean Hope ([bjhope@mail.biosis.org](mailto:bjhope@mail.biosis.org)), Philadelphia, PA

**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 1996

**Comment:** Thanks to all staff members who worked on this story. Gary Webb deserves every prize there is out there for his marvelous job. As an African American woman, I deeply angered that the CIA has been dumping drugs into inner city neighborhoods, beginning with LA. I call talk radio often, my friends who also call talk stations are keeping this story alive. This story must not die until there is a full investigation.

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