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ILLEGAL DRUGS AND U.S. SECURITY

By

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AMERICA'S HABIT: Drug Abuse, Drug Trafficking, and Organized Crime

REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

AND THE

ATTORNEY GENERAL

by the

President's Commission on Organized Crime

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Summary.

Trafficking in cocaine and marijuana produced in Latin America and the Caribbean Islands constitutes a threat to the security of the United States, both because present and foreseen consumption of these substances subverts millions of Americans from productive pursuits, and because the vast, rich underworld, which thrives on international smuggling of narcotic and psychotropic drugs, is also the milieu of those who are engaged in illicit movements of arms and munitions, in espionage, in terrorism, and in fomented revolution. Moreover, the patent inability of the United States to detect, let alone to apprehend, aircraft or vessels conveying bulk shipments of contraband to the United States reveals inadequate early warning on our southern approaches, a grave vulnerability in the era of the cruise missile.

This threat has grown despite extensive efforts by the United States to encourage foreign governments to enforce counternarcotics laws, to eradicate coca and cannabis, and to promote alternative agriculture, and despite interdiction operations involving unprecedented cooperation among U.S. agencies.

To meet this threat the U.S. will have to engage its intelligence community and its military forces much more broadly. The most promising concepts for counteraction entail increased aid to foreign governments in attacking processing centers, where large amounts of the substances are prepared for export, and in clamping down on furtive aircraft and ships --aid which includes military intelligence support and security assistance. But there must also be better U.S. surveillance over the Caribbean approaches to our own airspace, which will require the Department of Defense to commit to counternarcotics missions both more forces, and more funds, e.g., for communications, radar, operations and maintenance. Since the criminals have displayed remarkable inventiveness in foiling interdiction to date, a DoD research and development effort will also be needed to provide intelligence and enforcement agencies a lasting advantage over their resourceful quarry. However, all of these activities will enhance the readiness of U.S. forces to meet more military threats to security across the entire spectrum of war.

The National Drug Habit

During the past two years I have met with groups of citizens literally from coast to coast, and with many members of Congress, to talk about the Administration's policies in Latin America. In my opening remarks at those meetings I spoke against the neo-isolationist view that the U.S. should remain aloof from revolutions and other miseries south of the border. I pointed out that in our own national interest we needed urgently to be involved there, to sustain the thrust toward democracy in the region, to help our debtors recover economically so that they could meet their obligations to our banks, to assist in controlling the flood of illegal Latin immigrants into our cities and towns, to protect the still-vital sea lines of communication through the Caribbean, and to curtail the burgeoning trade in illicit drugs from the region, especially cocaine and marijuana. I originally anticipated that most of the ensuing discussions would focus on Central America and that I would spend most of my time defending Administration policy in El Salvador, Nicaragua, or Guatemala. But I soon learned that while such issues were obviously of interest, most of my interlocutors were more concerned over the involvement of Latins in our society via drugs. Inevitably, I would find myself talking more about coping with drug traffickers than other facets of U.S. policy.

On reflection, I should have expected such a reaction, because the other topics I touched on were relatively abstract or remote, while almost every American has been touched personally, in some fashion, by drugs. What is remarkable is that so few have identified the source of their difficulty: Latin America.

I recall being in Denver in the fall of 1983 to talk to a gathering of several hundred health-care professionals. An off-year electoral campaign was underway, in which a referendum was before Colorado's voters condemning the Administration's policies in Latin America, and enjoining a pull-back. I took to the podium the morning paper, which had on the left side of the front page an editorial-like apologia for the referendum. But, I pointed out, nearly every other inch of the front page was taken up with stories about cocaine --the Denver-Boulder area as a major brokering center for cocaine, gang-killings over drug money, a public servant corrupted by drug interests, and, especially germane for that audience, a survey establishing that half the students at the University were experimenting with cocaine. Not one word was said about the fact that what that front page was really all about was Latin American intervention in Colorado.

This spring I was in Fall River, Massachusetts, talking to Rotarians, and my visit happened to coincide with adoption by a majority of the legislature of Rhode Island of a resolution calling for the Administration to pursue a hands-off attitude toward any and all governments in Latin America. Asked what I thought of that measure, I opined that it was strange that Rhode Island could adopt so isolationist an attitude toward a phenomena which was changing the face of Rhode Island and affecting all New England: cocaine trafficking. I described Central Falls, Rhode Island, a small, dowdy mill town, where the numbers of Colombian aliens had more

than doubled since 1980, a foreign community which has concealed a small group of Colombian drug traffickers, engaged in systematic pirating of metropolitan Boston and other nearby urban centers. I suspect, I said, Fall River pays its tribute. One report estimates that these criminals send out of the U.S. over \$100 million per year. Rhode Islanders might resolve to avoid involvement with Latins, I said, but certain Latins, bent on evil, were involved with us, and were striking at the very heart of our society.

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration and the National Institute on Drug Abuse, some 40 million Americans buy illegal drugs, spending some \$80 billion for approximately 4 tons of heroin, 60 tons of cocaine and 14,000 tons of marijuana .

Of these substances, cocaine is the highest priced and most sought after --the current drug of choice. Dr. William Pollin, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse believes that only the present legal sanctions discourage much more abuse of cocaine: "We know that cocaine is the most powerfully rewarding substance that exists in terms of drugs of abuse. We know that if you give experimental animals free access to cocaine, they will drop all other pursuits to get it --even food and water. They will literally die --not from the direct effects of the drug but from their abandonment of all other activity. Unlike heroin or cigarettes or alcohol, the liking for cocaine does not have to be learned. Laboratory animals, from the very first use, want it again...If cocaine were as freely available as cigarettes, everything we know suggests that the numbers of cocaine users would very, very rapidly increase by a tremendous factor --at least tenfold."

At the present time, the supply of cocaine appears to be ample, and the demand rising. The amount of cocaine smuggled into the United States is estimated to have quadrupled, at least, from 1975 to 1984. The market or "street value" of these imports has increased, in constant 1975 dollars, from about \$10 billion in 1975 to \$17 billion in 1984, and the numbers of cocaine abusers has more than tripled, from 4 million in 1975 to 14 million in 1984.

Estimates of consumer expenditures for drugs of abuse usually overlook the costs to nonusers, the price paid by the society as a whole. One well-regarded government study of the latter, completed in 1984 for the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration by Research Triangle Institute, found that the U.S. spends another \$47 billion, as follows:

Indirect Costs of Drug Abuse

Lost Productivity

- * Absenteeism, slowdowns, mistakes, and sick leave
.....\$26.9 billion
- * Drug-related deaths.....\$2.0 billion
- * Imprisonment.....\$1.5 billion
- * Leaving employment for criminal careers to support drug habits
.....\$8.7 billion

Medical Expenses

- * Treatment in rehabilitation centers in hospitals and by doctors
.....\$1.2 billion
- * Administration of treatment programs, research, and training
.....\$0.243 billion

Crime

- * Federal, state and local expenditures for courts, police and
prisons
.....\$4.5 billion
- * Alarm systems, and other preventive steps for businesses and
individuals
.....\$1.3 billion
- * Property destroyed during criminal acts.....\$0.1 billion

Total.....\$46.9 billion

These figures surely understate the current situation, not only because they are outdated (the data is from 1980), but also because they may not capture the whole baleful influence of drugs. For example, Governor White of Texas recently told a Congressional Committee that as much as 40 percent of his state's budget for prisons should be attributed to drugs, including inmates incarcerated for dealing in drugs and those for committing other crimes while under the influence of drugs, or while endeavoring to support a drug habit.

But if these estimates can be accepted at face value, last year drugs cost citizens of the United States --directly or indirectly-- something over \$500 per capita. Hence, the cost to each American of our national drug habit now approximates the per capita interest on the national debt, and is beginning to approach the annual cost for national defense.

Nearly all the illegal drugs Americans buy come from foreign countries, and most of the source nations are in the western hemisphere, south of the Mexican border. As much as \$10 billions in illegal drug money leaves the U.S. annually --half of it in cold cash-- to pay drug traffickers abroad, or as "take-home pay" for Colombians and Mexicans who run the distribution networks for cocaine or heroin in the United States. Americans involved in the trafficking also "launder" large amounts abroad, something like \$5 billion per year. More than two-thirds of these illegal funds probably pass through Panama, Colombia, or banks in the Caribbean's island-nations. Outlays by U.S. citizens for drugs exceed the entire annual per capita income for some nations of Latin America. Latin governments who are debtors of ours, whose ability to repay the money they

have borrowed from U.S. banks is crucially dependent on selling their agricultural products in the U.S., justifiably might resent the fact that U.S. importers of illicit drugs pay out to smugglers at least twice as much as all our coffee importers. When I testified before an inquiry into drug interdiction operations by the a committee of the U.S. House of Representatives in March, 1985, I stated that Latin American drug smugglers "attack the fiber of our society --our productivity, our ethics, our education-- more directly and dangerously than any other form of foreign subversion of which I can think."

The Colombian Connection

Our relationship with Latin America cannot be understood without some appreciation of Colombia's role in our lives. From video advertising, most Americans probably recognize Colombia as the Andean homeland of Juan Valdez "who peeks the coffee beans one by one when they are purrrectly ripe". But in recent years, the Juan Valdez' of Colombia have turned to other forms of agriculture, for they can earn ten to twenty times as much tending cannabis or coca as they might picking coffee. In fact, Colombia, a modestly-sized country on the Caribbean littoral in northwest South America, just south of Panama, has been furnishing one-half of illicitly imported substances on the market in the United States, as measured by putative value; by volume, that country has been supplying more than three-fourths of the cocaine sold in the U.S., and three-fifths of the imported marijuana. In 1983 and 1984 the narcotraficantes of Colombia produced more cocaine hydrochloride than criminals of any other nation in the world, transforming coca paste into the white crystalline form in large "laboratories", more accurately factory complexes, usually located in southeast Colombia, deep in the Amazonian jungles, capable of processing daily batches of hundreds of kilos of marketable substance. These represented no small logistic feats, for the process involved long aerial flights over otherwise impassible terrain, substantial amounts of electrical energy and heat, and considerable quantities of reagents like alcohol, sulfuric or hydrochloric acid, acetone, amonia, potassium carbonate and permongamate, kerosene, gasoline, and diethyl ether. More than four-fifths of the coca used in this manufacture was imported, usually by air, from Peru and Bolivia (transported, for example, as coca paste, which has 200:1 weight-compression ratio compared with coca leaf). But more Colombian coca, of appreciably poorer grade, has been entering the market each year as earlier domestic plant ings have matured, generating a surplus for which local outlets tempted. By 1984 estimates Colombian traffickers illegally exported between 48 and 53 metric tons of cocaine to the United States to meet a total demand here of 54 to 71 metric tons. Almost all contraband cocaine was moved across the Caribbean by air, an expense the traffickers could easily afford, given the 7:1 markup to the consumer in the United States (the 1984 price in Colombia per kilo was US \$11,000 --per metric ton, US \$11 million--; for retail marketing in the U.S., each kilo was combined with lactose or quinine, and, thus diluted 50 percent or more, sold at about \$105 per gram (reportedly, recent cocaine sold has tended to be more pure).

Cannabis is grown mainly in northern Colombia, often by the same family-based organizations who dominate the cocaine business. Marijuana, dried and baled, has been moved to market mainly by sea, although aircraft also figure in the trade. The usual shipment has been around 11 tons, with

occasional shipments as large as 50-60 tons. The price of marijuana at the export point has been around US \$18 per kilogram (US \$18,000 per metric ton). But Colombian cannabis is under heavy attack: in mid-1984, after searching for a safe and effective herbicide, the Colombian government began a campaign of spraying cannabis fields with the chemical glyphosphate, which destroyed as much as 40 percent of the annual crop that year, and is expected to eliminate most of the 1985 production.

Just three years ago, it was commonplace to hear Colombians deplore U.S. importers and consumers as the cause of their own drug phenomena and to say that those Americans made the narcotics trade exclusively a U.S. problem. The narcotraficante even had a romantic aura in the popular imagination, being seen as a sort of Robin Hood looting the gringo rich to help Colombia's poor. But Colombians, rich and poor, came to learn that any nation that tolerates drug trafficking in its midst commits societal suicide, invites the suborning of democratic political institutions, the corruption of public officials, and the devastation of education for the young. Despite the fact that extensive earnings in foreign exchange accrued to Colombia from the drug trade, these were "black" funds, untaxed by the Colombian government, and circulating disfunctionally outside of government plans, or controls on money supply or prices. Much of this wealth went into non-productive conspicuous consumption, and the poor were victimized by spiraling inflation.

Inevitably, some Colombian traffickers, out of greed, began to foul their own nest. Probably the availability of inferior Colombian-grown coca was an incentive for them to sell within Colombia cheap by-products of their international trade. Sell they did. In late 1983 Colombian government health authorities admitted to the press that drug addiction had become a major public health problem. Thereafter public attention was drawn by the media to increasingly dramatic evidence of the extent to which drugs had seized hold of Colombian youth --e.g., a wave of suicides among young, middle class males in Bogata, and closure of the National University because of pervasive drug trafficking on campus. Youths' smoking of basuco --a reputed aphrodisiac: tobacco or marijuana soaked in coca base or paste, often laced with toxic adulterants such as lead compounds-- was recognized as the major factor in the spreading abuse.

President Betancur of Colombia manifested sensitivity to the rising public alarm over drug abuse, and to diminished control over his own party as the drug families sought to buy or intimidate his followers, to manipulate public opinion through media campaigns, or even to set up their own political parties. Prodded by Betancur, Colombian government operations against the narcotraficantes intensified. In March 1984 one raid upon a nexus of ten coca processing sites and six air strips near one locale in the Caqueta region of southeastern Columbia, called, ironically, Tranquilandia, led to the largest cocaine seizure of record (about 8,500 kilograms).

In February 1984 Eduardo Gonzalez, a ranking official of Colombia's Ministry of Justice was assassinated, apparently because of his public support for implementing the extradition treaty with the United States. In April 1984 the drug families overplayed their hand. Betancur's Minister of Justice, Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, was shot on the streets of the capital, a crime which lost the narcotraficantes much popular support. The murder of

that popular young political leader occasioned such public revulsion that Betancur has been able to move confidently in arresting and even extraditing to the U.S. individuals accused of drug trafficking, in declaring a state of seige which subjects accused drug traffickers to martial law, in launching comprehensive cannabis and coca eradication campaigns, in grounding aircraft suspected of involvement in smuggling, and in ordering the Colombian Navy to cooperate with the U.S. Coast Guard in combined blockades of the Caribbean coast. In May 1984 several prominent members of drug families met in Panama with Betancur's Attorney General and a former President to seek a modus vivendi in which they would cease cocaine operations in return for legal immunity. But Betancur, with strong support from his Congress and the people, rejected the deal, and has since pressed his campaign to put them out of business.

Some prominent traffickers went into hiding, for example, in Spain. But the apparatus itself also had to be protected. The countermove of the drug families has been threefold: (1)tactical relocation, seeking even more remote and inaccessible sites in Colombia for their processing centers; (2)strategic relocation, moving their refining operations out of Colombia into neighboring Venezuela, Brazil, Panama, or even more remote countries like Peru, or Nicaragua; and (3)narcoterrorism, resorting more widely to violence against those who oppose them. The last was a departure from previous policy. As a generality, narcotics traffickers had preferred to avoid notorious violence because it invited unwanted publicity and underwrote governmental sanctions. But as President Betancur escalated his pressure on them, some have responded by hiring killers to strike at persons who were visible symbols of law and order, ostensibly in a systematic attempt to deter and intimidate governmental leaders from vigorous antinarcotics policies. Death threats have been issued against President Betancur and other Colombian government officials, and against the U.S. Ambassador. Traffickers who threatened to kill five Americans for each Colombian extradited were probably responsible for the November 1984 bombing near the U.S. Embassy in Bogata.

In April 1985 President Betancur met with President Reagan in Washington, and the two Presidents agreed "to fight against drug trafficking at all levels." President Reagan said that, for its part, the U.S. would not only continue to help with interdiction, "but also here, where the largest market is, that we continue our efforts to take customers away from the drugs --which must complement our efforts to take the drugs away from the customers." Betancur promised "to destroy the crops, the laboratories where the drugs are processed...to interrupt the transportation to the U.S. market and to see that those responsible for the trafficking are severely punished." The U.S. committed itself to "increasing its efforts to diminish use and demand of drugs, to destroy crops and to strengthen its support for the war against narcotics."

In Colombia, as governmental-measure and trafficker-countermeasure intensified the conflict, it had become increasingly evident to President Betancur that only by engaging the resources of Colombia's armed forces could he hope to prevail. Under the provisions of the declared State of Seige, as of May 1, 1984, civilians charged with narcotics offenses could be tried by Courts Martial. More importantly, as the National Police, its Special Anti-Narcotics Unit (SANU), and its investigative branch, found their inquiries leading them further and further into the jungle, beyond

government control or even presence, requests for assistance have been lodged with the Ministry of Defense. The President's personal involvement in many of the investigations has tended to lend the force of order to such requests.

Colombian military leaders view the propensity of their President to throw them into the anti-narcotics campaign with deep misgivings. The last time they responded to a government mandate to roundup narcotraficantes, the criminals retaliated by buying officers, and in some instances, whole units. The resultant corruption almost destroyed professional cohesion. Too, they have what they regard as a more urgent mission: counterinsurgency. But President Betancur has long desired to negotiate an end to government hostilities with insurgent groups and to bring the latter back into the mainstream of Colombian society. He has persisted despite the fact that, in many parts of the country, the insurgents are the law, and they do not seem willing to accept any other civil order. While declaring a "state of seige" in his war against the narcotics families, Betancur has pressed for broad amnesty for insurgents, a "cease fire", and negotiations with the guerrilla leaders with the same fervor with which he has attacked the narcotraficantes. Thus, the Colombian military finds itself in the anomalous position of being constrained from attacking a long-standing enemy, in some cases still actively pursuing hostilities against them, while being urged to support distasteful and dangerous police operations.

Betancur's policies have created profound anxiety within the Colombian armed forces, particularly within the Army, which has borne the brunt of casualties in the counternarcotic campaigns to date. Colombia is one of the most violent countries in the hemisphere, with endemic insurgency since World War II. Year in, year out, for decades the Colombian Army has been in combat, pursuing its missions of providing security to rural civil administrations, and extending the civil infrastructure along Colombia's extensive jungle frontier. The Colombians are proud that their's was the only Latin army that fought alongside that of the U.S. in the United Nations Command in Korea. In equipment, doctrine and tactics, the Army has progressed little since the U.S. Southern Command withdrew most of its large Military Group in the late 1960's. But the U.S. Army's influence is still evident, especially in Colombian Army schools. In all three Colombian services, there are many officers who have attended U.S. service schools, and there is a significant reservoir of good will toward the U.S. armed forces. Comparatively speaking, the Colombian military are more professional than most of their Latin counterparts, and on the record, less inclined to interfere in politics. One explanation for this relative concentration on military versus other undertakings is the continuing civil war.

At the moment the Colombian government is opposed by five principal insurgent organizations, of which the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) is the most experienced, best armed, and best trained. The FARC has several guerrilla "fronts", about half of which operate where cannabis or coca are grown. During the Tranquilandia raid, a FARC camp was discovered about one half-mile from one of the factories, and in the aftermath there was fighting between the army and guerrillas in the province capital. The exact relationship between the insurgentes and narcotraficantes is not clear, and probably varies widely from place to place. But it seems

evident that there is a considerable commonality of interest in opposing extension of government control over the countryside. It is known that from drug traffickers the FARC has obtained arms, munitions, radios, and other supplies as well as money. This "FARC-narc connection", as the U.S. Country Team refers to it, goes back to May 1982 when the FARC high command decided to raise money by extracting payments from coca growers. Since, the FARC has extended its services to charge traffickers about US \$450 per hectare cultivated, and US \$410 per kilogram processed.

Another armed group, the "19th of April Movement" (M-19), which also operates in drug-producing areas, has had links both with international drug smugglers and with Cuba. In 1980 M-19 terrorists stormed an Embassy in Bogata, seized a group of diplomats, including the U.S. Ambassador, and held them hostage for weeks. M-19 at least once traded drugs for arms from Cuba through the Colombian trafficker Jaime Guillot-Lara, an arrangement which was exposed, leading to the indictment of 14 persons in November 1982, including four senior Cuban officials. In the spring of 1985 Carlos Ledher Rivas, a drug kingpin sought in Colombia for extradition to the United States, took refuge with an M-19 unit. Surrounded by armed men, he held a televised press conference in which he declared war on the United States, calling all Colombians to join him in struggling against a nation that sought to rain poisonous chemicals on Colombian crops and to throw Colombians into foreign prisons.

Senior Colombian military officers with whom I have talked over the past two years are sharply divided on how to proceed. One camp argues that the President had no right to intervene in the conflict with the insurgents with his amnesty and cease fire, and even less in ordering the armed forces to become police auxiliaries. The other camp argues that the President has sensed correctly the national mood, that the narcotraficantes are the prime threat to national security, and that by striking down the traffickers the armed forces would deliver a possibly vital blow to the insurgents. Factions have been forming, and there have even been rumors of golpe. My own judgement is that the key leaders have been of the second persuasion, strongly supportive of President Betancur. This is not to say that these officers have not been seriously concerned over the corruption issue, or over the prospect that the FARC and M-19 would use the amnesty as a respite to gather strength for a nationwide thrust for power in 1987 or 1988. Their approach has been to seek ways to confine military exposure to the narcotics mission to a well-trained, thoroughly-vetted elite, and to inquire of me whether there were ways in which U.S. intelligence could so define targets that small, commando-type forces could be reliably effective.

I have responded that I thought there were ways in which the U.S. could be helpful, notably in assisting them to produce better intelligence themselves, and in providing technically-derived intelligence which they could not collect. I was, of course, using the term "intelligence" in the professional sense, referring to the entire process of collection, analysis, and dissemination. Among the deficiencies in Colombian intelligence, on which I think we all agreed, were the lack of a radar surveillance system --either for sea surface search or air monitoring-- and inadequate communications, especially secure voice networks for the passage of "perishable" information. The Colombians, including President Betancur, have expressed interest in having the United States present them

one or more air early warning radars (meaning, in effect, a grant aid turnover for Colombian operation), with particular emphasis on a site on San Andreas Island, the Colombian resort island off the coast of Nicaragua, which has been claimed by the Sandinistas. Concerning technically collected information, the Colombians knew as well as I that the collection tasks for coping with the drug traffickers --broad area surveillance (preferably with heat-sensitive sensors, since processing either cocaine or cannabis is heat-intensive), pin-point localization, real-time reporting-- were similar to those U.S. SOUTHCOM was facing and mastering in Central America. As far as I know, little has been done to follow up on these exploratory conversations, but I remain convinced that modest U.S. help to those military leaders willing to commit selective force in support of President Betancur's policy could open promising courses of action for both nations. After all, it is very much in our national interest that Betancur succeed.

Other Sources to the South

The Andean Ridge Countries

More than four-fifths of the coca processed in Colombia originated in Peru and Bolivia. Following are the latest available statistics from the Department of State, production data for 1983, preliminary estimates for 1984, and projections for 1985, all stated post-eradication (with amounts expected to be sprayed or cut down deducted):

Illicit Coca Leaf Production

	1985 Metric Tons	1984 Metric Tons	1983 Metric Tons
Bolivia	43,804	49,200	25,000-40,000
Peru	56,820	60,000	30,000-60,000
Ecuador	2,600	895	
Colombia	7,600	11,680	11,215
Total	110,824	121,775	66,215-111,215

Of the countries shown, only Colombia grows appreciable quantities of marijuana exported to the United States. Ecuador and Peru share with Colombia the characteristic that they sit astride the Andean Ridge, with population and infrastructure concentrated on the Pacific slope, and a frontier in the Amazon basin. Ports, airfields, road network, power grid, communications, air traffic control and early warning radars --civilization in general--face west. Bolivia is locked off from the sea, but also has both the high Andes and the Amazon Basin within its borders. All four countries have significant aboriginal populations, Indians culturally accustomed to growing and chewing coca leaves. Ecuador is as yet relatively uninvolved in the drug trade. Bolivia is a political and economic basket case. Other than Colombia, Peru offers the greatest opportunity, and the greatest dangers for U.S. counternarcotics policy.

Peru. The largest producer of coca leaf in all Latin America, Peru, U.S. experts believe, could easily produce three times the amount of coca now being grown there. Peru's government is one of our severest critics, and positions itself closer to the USSR on many issues than other nations in the region. During the 1970's, Peru was ruled by a leftist military which pursued socialistic domestic policies, and a "non aligned" foreign policy that led to equipping the Peruvian Air Force and Army largely with Soviet materiel. (The Soviet Military Mission in Peru is the largest in this hemisphere. There are more Soviet "technicians" in Peru today than the USSOUTHCOM has in all its Security Assistance Offices throughout Latin America.) The return of constitutional democracy to Peru in the 1980's coincided with the development of severe economic difficulties. Among the Andean Indians, crushing poverty in recent years has induced many to turn to selling coca to the narcotraficantes. This is natural enough for a people who by archeological evidence have been growing coca for 5,000 years for medicinal teas, or for chewing to reduce hunger, fatigue, and altitude malaise. Generally speaking, however, democratic Peru has become more open to the United States. Government and public recognition of the problem of domestic drug abuse grew, and government leaders watched the

damage wrought by narcotics trafficking on traditional moral, political, and social values in Bolivia and Colombia. As a result, Peru's government became more amenable to American proposals for joint action to curtail illegal coca trafficking. In mid-1983, per an assistance agreement with the U.S., Peru began eradicating coca bushes. It eliminated 700 hectares in 1983, and more than four times as much in 1984.

In Peru as in Colombia, however, action against drug traffickers soon became entangled with action against insurgent groups. The Peruvian government has been under attack from various terrorist groups. The most prominent is a neo-Maoist, anarchist organization, calling itself El Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path). One of the centers of its activity, the Upper Huallaga Valley in Huanoco Province, is a principal coca production area and one of the centers of drug trafficking. U.S. assisted control programs in Peru have been focused on the Upper Huallaga. While there is no known linkage between the terrorists and the traffickers, they are both interested in minimum governmental presence and police effectiveness. In mid-1984 the depredations of Sendero Luminoso had evoked such a public outcry that President Belaunde Terry declared a State of Emergency, and ordered his armed forces to secure rural areas under attack. In July, the Peruvian Army assumed responsibility for the Upper Huallaga, and while the counternarcotics program continued, violence continued. In November 1984, 19 U.S.-funded field workers, eradicating coca in the Upper Huallaga, were massacred, apparently by gunmen hired by the narcotics traffickers. The counternarcotics effort ceased abruptly. As the recent report of the U.S. Department of State to Congress stated: "(Peruvian) Army efforts to stamp out terrorism were not accompanied by narcotics enforcement, and thus it appeared by year-end 1984 that peace in the Upper Huallaga Valley had been bought at the price of allowing the narcotics traffic to flourish again". There was another massacre in February 1985.

According to latest estimates, coca production increased in Peru during 1984, despite the government's programs. It seems evident that a much larger-scale effort will be required, and it is evident that this could not be undertaken without active operations by the armed forces against the traffickers. Recently elected President Alan Garcia, of the center-left American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), is committed to opposing the narcotraficantes. He wants to link Peru's cooperation with the U.S. in this respect to help with rescheduling Peru's foreign debts. No matter how this approach works out, he, like his predecessors, will have to turn to his armed forces to implement his policy.

The dilemma before the leaders of Peru's armed forces is similar to that facing their Colombian counterparts. They, too fear, with good reason, the prospect of the drug traffickers' corrupting rural commanders or detachments, and many of them consider law enforcement a professionally inappropriate, even illegal, mission, as well as nationalistically objectionable and dangerous. But some --and again, I know these include key leaders-- acknowledge the greater dangers inherent in failing to contest the drug traffickers, and believe that it is merely a matter of time before the terrorists and the traffickers form more formal alliances. These latter rationalize the Huallaga situation by saying that the Army put the terrorists as first priority, but that action against the traffickers would follow. A few even claim that the Army has been using the traffickers as a source of information on the terrorists, and that in

the process the Army was becoming sufficiently knowledgeable about the traffickers to warrant confidence that the crackdown, when it came, would be swift and sure. Whether the target be the terrorists or the traffickers, the Peruvians' principal needs are similar to those of the Colombians: better intelligence, and secure communications. Given the altitude and the terrain, the Peruvians probably face more difficult mobility and logistic problems. My impression is that they would be receptive to U.S. assistance in these respects, even if that assistance were conditioned on bolder counternarcotics operations. The hazard is that those who object may see fit to get rid of both democracy and the counternarcotics mission in one golpe. This might leave the U.S. facing a worse situation than at present, with Peru under another leftist junta, one actively or passively cooperating with the narcotraficantes.

Bolivia. Besides Peruvian coca, the other major source of the cocaine sold in the U.S. in recent years has been coca grown in Bolivia. This Andean republic has a population habituated to chewing coca leaf (estimated consumption, 16,000 metric tons), and the worst record for military intervention in government of any Latin nation (190 governments in 159 years of independence). In recent years when General Garcia Meza was in power, the Bolivian government itself became an international drug trafficker. Although constitutional democracy was restored in October, 1982, President Siles' government has led a precarious existence. It has been plagued with economic difficulties, wracked with labor troubles, and threatened constantly with golpe from one or another of the various factions within the armed forces. Siles has succeeded in ameliorating the government's stance on drugs. This has occurred in part in response to U.S. pressures but also because of concern for spreading drug abuse, especially that involving addiction to pitillo, a cigarette composed of tobacco and coca paste, like the Colombian basuco.

The Bolivian government signed a bilateral assistance agreement with the U.S. for eradication and enforcement programs, but to date little progress has been made in carrying these out. As the Department of State has said, "corruption, insufficient resources and inadequate laws have hampered Government of Bolivia efforts to suppress coca production, refining and trafficking." In August 1984, because of virtual anarchy in the Chapare region, one of two principal coca growing areas, President Siles ordered the armed forces to establish a "military zone" there and to restore public order. Although the military did his bidding, their move precipitated countrywide strikes and demonstrations from farmers and from workers agitated over the prospect of being cut off from their coca leaf for chewing, and over the military's thus participating in what was called "U.S. intervention". The military were soon withdrawn.

In the meantime, Bolivian traffickers, observing reforms underway in Colombia, and eyeing new profits for themselves, set up more processing centers in both the Chapare and Beni regions. Smuggling of cocaine hydrochloride from Bolivia is on the upswing. Lately, as a result of publicity, there appears to be a move by some traffickers to acquire a semblance of legality, but so far the firms established for this purpose have been largely facade.

Bolivia is an excellent object lesson in the economic depravity of drug trafficking. The decline in the Bolivian economy in general caused

farmers to turn from legitimate agriculture to coca production for traffickers. Food costs inflated rapidly, to the general disadvantage of the poor. The traffickers have invested almost none of their ill-gotten gains in legitimate enterprises in Bolivia. The net domestic effect of the narcotics operation has been disastrous.

The outlook is bleak. As the State Department says: "Coca producers and traffickers recently have organized themselves into legitimate-appearing organizations. Because the traffickers see a need to protect their illicit activities in the face of increasingly adverse publicity against them, this trend towards quasi-legitimate organizations with even more overt political clout is likely to continue... Given the long entrenched traditional chewing of coca leaf, political, social and media attitudes toward the simple practices of cultivation and domestic consumption are understandably sympathetic. In addition, several influential groups and individuals regard the use of cocaine as a U.S. problem, a view that is rapidly being shown false by growing domestic abuse in Bolivia. Nevertheless, many such groups currently adhere to the notion that the entire narcotics problem is brought about solely by the demand for cocaine in the developed nations. Cocaine traffickers are devoting increased resources to propaganda which perpetuates these attitudes and stymies narcotics control efforts." Among the groups with anti-U.S. attitudes are nationalistic factions within the Bolivian military.

Ecuador. An oil exporter, member of OPEC, Ecuador also returned to constitutional democracy in the 1980's after a period of military rule. In August 1984, following exemplary national elections, Leon Febres Cordero was inaugurated President. The ceremony provided the occasion for a Latin American summit meeting at which Vice President Bush represented the United States. International trafficking in drugs was agenda item number one, ahead of the debt crisis, ahead of the Nicaraguan issue. There was consensus that if all parties coordinated their efforts, the traffickers could be defeated. Subsequently, when I met with President Febres Cordero, he assured me that he would not permit Ecuador to become the refuge of Colombian traffickers, and that he intended to act swiftly against existing coca and cannabis operations. He has appointed a narcotics "czar", a Presidential Advisor, who is a colonel of the Ecuadoran Army. Eradication operations in the remote jungled region in the northeast, adjacent to Colombia, have begun, and possibly just in time, given reports that the seeds for coca are arriving from Colombia and Peru. Generally speaking, the Ecuadorans expect their National Police to conduct the campaign against the traffickers, supported by the Customs authorities and the armed forces.

The attitude of Ecuadoran military leaders is generally supportive of the President. Some believe reports that there are coca-growing guerrilla groups in the Esmeraldas region (northwest Ecuador, a coastal area of endemic unrest), and hope the President's zeal for counternarcotics will lead to more vigorous counterinsurgency. Other senior officers are clearly frustrated with their inability to act on well-substantiated reports of repeated use of Ecuadoran air space for illegal flights between Colombia and Peru. The location and Peru-ward orientation of air defenses hamper them, but given the means, I have no doubt that the Ecuadorans would act decisively to control that air space.

Colombia's Eastern and Northern Neighbors

Brazil. Besides the narcotics problem, the countries cited thus far share a border with Brazil in the Amazon Basin. As pressure has mounted against traffickers in the smaller nations, the vast, unpoliced wilderness of the Upper Amazon have offered relative safety. All available information --still inconclusive-- indicates that the traffickers have indeed sought new production fields, processing centers, and transportation means in Brazil. Marijuana abuse is widespread in Brazil, but it is mostly grown by poor farmers for domestic markets. Brazil's hazard is that it will not only come to harbor traffickers from abroad, but also that these will seek to develop a much larger Brazilian market for cocaine.

Thus far, Brazilian authorities have not reacted to narcotics trafficking as sharply as have their western neighbors. In 1984 the Brazilian Federal Police became more active in the Amazonas, and had some success eradicating coca plantations. They also actively cooperated with Colombian authorities across the border. The Brazilian Army inaugurated a program of education on the dangers of drug abuse for soldiers. Regarding narcotics, however, Brazil's future appears to have been left in the hands of the traffickers.

Venezuela. President Lusinchi, who took office in February 1984, professes to be determined that international traffickers will not transform Venezuela into a major narcotics producer-nation. A new anti-drug law has been put into effect, providing stiff penalties for traffickers. It permits seizure of all property and wealth attributable to trafficking. A treaty with Colombia aimed at curtailing cross-border smuggling has been signed. A counter-narcotics intelligence center has been established, and some Venezuelan authorities have hinted that they would be willing to invite the United States to station intelligence-gathering ships and aerostat radars (balloon-borne) along the north coast. The government has also mounted a vigorous publicity campaign against drug abuse. In 1984 destruction of cannabis increased, as did seizures of cocaine enroute through Venezuela.

Nonetheless, there has been a perceptible rise in cocaine trafficking, manifestations of penetration by the narcotraficantes of political parties and business, a flow of cash through Venezuelan banks probably associated with drug trading, and increasing drug abuse involving cocaine, basuco, marijuana and methaqualone. Cooperation among the Ministries of Justice, Interior, and Defense, all of which have counternarcotics police responsibilities, is less than effective. Lusinchi has been criticised for disbanding a counternarcotics intelligence network set up under his predecessor, and his government has been rocked by revelations connecting police figures and retired military officers to the narcotraficantes, including the infamous Colombian Carlos Lehder Rivas.

Panama. In the Republic of Panama, to Colombia's north, there has been another example of "spillover" from Colombia. In the spring of 1984, the Panamanian Defense Forces attacked and destroyed a processing site newly-constructed by Colombians in the Darien, the province adjacent to Colombia. But this penetration of Panama by Colombian traffickers

undoubtedly continues to be far less important than the use of Panamanian banks to launder money from narcotics transactions, of Panama City as a brokering and meeting center for traffickers, and of Panamanian ports and airfields for the transit of the chemicals essential to the large-scale processing of coca, such as diethyl ether, enroute south, or shipments of marijuana or cocaine enroute north.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury in reviewing Federal Reserve Bank receipts on international transactions found that those from Panama had increased more than fourfold during 1980, 1981, 1982, and 1983. The Treasury Department believes that something like \$2.2 billion in unreported cash was moved to Panama in those years, often in batches flown there in private aircraft. In 1984 Federal law enforcement agencies and the U.S. intelligence community conducted an analysis of "money laundering" operations, and concluded that, on the record, Panama was probably the largest center of such in the world.

Panama City has more than 125 banks, most of them headquartered in the United States, Europe, or Japan, with total deposits of some \$50 billion, protected by banking secrecy laws more stringent than those of Switzerland or Austria. The United States has been urging Panama to ease these laws to permit access to information dealing with large cash transactions, or others which might figure in narcotics trading. If unchanged, these laws will make Panama the black-market money capital of the world. For a small country with no natural resources, other than its location, however, such changes come hard.

Because of the Canal, Panama is a world shipping center. As such, it is one place where the processing reagents used in refining drugs--the so-called "precursor chemicals"-- can be observed in transit. These are a principal vulnerability of the traffickers. Tracing shipments of ether from origin to destination, for example, has revealed much information on where the processing is taking place, and who is involved. Action in 1984 by the Panamanian Defense Forces to destroy a large shipment of ether passing through Panama set a very desirable precedent.

The transporting of marijuana or cocaine through the Panama Canal, or via Panamanian airfields, is probably a daily occurrence, but mechanisms for surveillance and enforcement are rudimentary. What the U.S. knows of that traffic depends largely on information collected outside Panama. There is much suspicious activity within Panama about which we know little. These include activities of the Cuban Pacific fishing fleet, which is based just north of Panama City, adjacent to the U.S. Howard Air Force Base. One aspect is certain: central to greater Panamanian effectiveness in either surveillance or enforcement is the Panamanian Defense Forces, or more exactly, its senior leadership, who maintain strict accountability over their subordinates. Their reaction to U.S. pressures on narcotics policy depends largely on their assessment of our regional foreign policy. To the degree they perceive the U.S. moving purposefully and cooperatively to provide for regional security, they are likely to combine with us in either security or counternarcotics matters. To date they have been helpful, and been receptive to our bringing in more powerful surveillance devices, e.g. upgrading their air surveillance radar.

Costa Rica. Another country where Colombian traffickers have

apparently increased activities is the democracy to the north of Panama, Costa Rica. Seizures in late 1983 and 1984 pointed to the presence there of cocaine processing facilities. Recent estimates hold that 7 to 8 metric tons of cocaine may pass through Costa Rica each year enroute to the United States. Cannabis production in Costa Rica has also grown, and marijuana shipments to the U.S., both domestically grown and in transit, have been increasing.

Four factors influence the narcotics situation in Costa Rica: (1) its proximity to the U.S., which puts it within reach of private aircraft and boats from the States; (2) its depression, the worst in 40 years, which has driven many farmers into cannabis production; (3) the deteriorating security situation in its northern provinces, along the Nicaraguan border, where dissident armed groups have gone into the drug business, and where drug smuggling and arms smuggling appears to go hand-in-hand; and (4), its security forces engaged in counternarcotics operations. These have received U.S. Security Assistance funds, and with U.S. training and materiel, have become demonstrably better able to deal with rural armed bands and cannabis growers. With U.S. help, national-level coordination and planning have also improved. But as is the case with Panama, Costa Ricans tend to view their counternarcotics policy as one aspect of their general alignment with U.S. goals and objectives in the region. The present Costa Rican leadership professes to be willing to help the U.S., even to the extent of accepting U.S. radar or other surveillance devices, provided that these did not entail stationing U.S. military personnel within the country. However, presidential elections will take place this year; the President cannot succeed himself, and most of the cabinet portfolios are certain to change hands.

Governments Complicit

Nicaragua. Since 1981 the United States has been receiving information that Nicaragua has been used by drug traffickers as a way station enroute to and from the United States, and that officials of the revolutionary government there, the Sandinista Directorate, were involved, probably to earn hard currency. As Colombian pressures on major traffickers mounted, certain of these, notably Jorge Ochoa and Pablo Escobar, have relocated to Nicaragua. There is convincing evidence that the Nicaraguan government is actively involved in their operations.

Following is a recapitulation of some of the information that forms the basis for the foregoing judgements:

- o A reliable source reported that in March 1981 a senior official of the Nicaraguan government stated that the Nicaraguan government was studying a plan to sell marijuana grown in Nicaragua as a means of acquiring more hard currency.
- o In 1982 there were reports, later substantiated, that Interior Minister Tomas Borge was directing a scheme to purchase Colombian drugs for resale in the United States.
- o Another reliable source reported in late 1982 that Cuban and Nicaraguan intelligence officers were involved in a

the United States, using aircraft of Nicaragua's Aeronica Airlines.

- o Deputy Assistant Attorney General John C. Keeney, at a hearing of a Senate Subcommittee, chaired by Senator Paula Hawkins, recently declared that "high officials of the Nicaraguan government were indeed involved in the international cocaine traffic." He described an investigation by Federal officials in Florida, which had uncovered an attempt by representatives of the Government of Nicaragua, assisted by fugitive financier Robert Vesco, to establish cocaine markets in the United States and Europe. Keeney testified that: "What the evidence gathered during this investigation suggests is that during 1983, Nicaraguan government personnel attempted to make all the arrangements necessary to establish Nicaragua as a major cocaine exporter. Toward this end, they developed a source of cocaine. The evidence indicates that this source was a revolutionary guerrilla group operating in Colombia." (The Nicaraguans attempted to establish a cocaine processing laboratory, and imported expert technicians from the United States to operate it. They also contacted an established European drug dealer.) "Our evidence indicates that once the necessary resources had been gathered, the Nicaraguans and their cohorts began the process of the distribution of cocaine. An initial shipment of cocaine was provided by the Colombians directly to Frederico Vaughn and Captain Atha, both Nicaraguan government personnel. Under the supervision of these men and under the watchful eye of Nicaraguan soldiers who guarded the cocaine and assisted in packing it for shipment, the cocaine was shipped to Europe for sale. The funds derived from these drug transactions were, according to at least one eyewitness, returned to Nicaragua by Nicaraguan diplomatic personnel. During the course of the investigation of these events, a great deal of evidence has been amassed which confirms the involvement of the Nicaraguans in cocaine trafficking."
- o A September 1983 report provided further details of a Nicaraguan-supported drug operation: a drug trafficker, who had been involved with Rodolfo Palacios Talavera, former First Secretary of the Nicaraguan Embassy in Ottawa, said that Palacios was "a small cog" in a machine which involved such "big wheels" as Tomas Borge and other Sandinista comandantes. (Palacios had been arrested in July 1983 by Canadian police for possession of cocaine valued at US\$10,000.) According to the informant, Borge allowed Colombian traffickers to use Corn Island (a former U.S. possession off the east coast of Nicaragua) as a transshipment point for drugs bound for the U.S., and that he also was arranging for Cuban assistance.
- o Another source reported that as of late 1983 a vessel purchased by the Nicaraguans was in Colombia being fitted with secret compartments for concealing drugs. Drugs shipped from Cuba to Nicaragua were to be loaded on this ship at the Nicaraguan east-coast port of Rama for smuggling into the United States.
- o According to information in a U.S. government affidavit filed in

Agency became aware through an informant that two major Colombian traffickers, Pablo Escobar and Jorge Ochoa, had reached an agreement in April 1984 to use Nicaragua in a cocaine-smuggling operation. In early June 1984, a Cessna Titan with 750 kilograms of cocaine aboard flew out of Colombia into an airfield just northwest of Managua called Los Brasiles. The facility was in joint use by the Nicaraguan armed forces and the Ministry of the Interior. Apparently coordination among the Nicaraguans was faulty because the aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire as it approached its destination, and, damaged, made an emergency landing. Frederico Vaughn, who is a personal assistant to Tomas Borge, arranged for the pilot, a DEA informant, to return to the United States to obtain another aircraft, leaving his damaged plane and the cocaine at Los Brasiles. On June 24 1984, the pilot returned to Los Brasiles in a C-123 aircraft, equipped with a hidden camera, to retrieve the drugs. Both Vaughn and Escobar, escorted by Nicaraguans in uniform, personally helped the pilot load the cocaine into the C-123. (In photographs which accompany the affidavit, taken clandestinely during the loading, both Vaughn and Escobar are clearly identifiable). Vaughn was paid \$1.5 million for providing the drug traffickers "secure facilities."

- o In July 1984 the same pilot made another trip to Nicaragua from the United States to take supplies for a new cocaine processing complex under construction there. Additionally, large shipments of ether reached Nicaragua from Europe via Havana. In a taped conversation with the pilot in mid-July, Frederico Vaughn stated that the processing center was ready for use.

Senator Hawkins has charged that the goal of the Nicaraguan Government was "to run drugs, primarily cocaine, from South America, through Nicaragua...with a two-fold purpose: first, to raise hard cash for the (Nicaraguan) revolution; and second, to destroy American youth and cripple American society by flooding our country with drugs." And U.S. Customs Commissioner William von Raab has stated that "both the Cuban and Nicaraguan Governments are in a class of nations --pirate nations-- led by individuals whose national policies foster drug trafficking, terrorism, or both."

Cuba. Threaded through the Nicaraguan reports were references to the role of Fidel Castro's Cuba in drug trafficking. Prior to mid-1983, evidence of Cuban complicity was based largely on the testimony of confessed traffickers. According to these, Cuba provided a safehaven for key traffickers, like Robert Vesco, where they could be safe from U.S. extradition attempts, or for smugglers, where they could avoid U.S. interdiction operations. One reported refueling his aircraft in Cuba; another that senior Cuban officials, including Cuban intelligence officers, arranged for the distribution of drugs to the United States. Since 1983 the U.S. government has acquired the following corroborating information from other sources concerning Cuba's continuing role in drug smuggling:

- o Use of airspace. Recent reports indicate that drug traffickers regularly fly through Cuban airspace, airspace which is otherwise tightly controlled. Traffickers apparently have an assigned corridor,

which they can transit without challenge from Cuban air defenders.

- o Use of coastal waters. Drug traffickers know that northbound vessels can put into a number of ports in Cuba for food, water, and fuel. Captains of these craft have told sources that once Cuban authorities learn that they are carrying drugs for the U.S., their cargo is not questioned further.
- o Transshipment. To circumvent intensified U.S. surveillance over the Windward Passage and the Yucutan Channel, Cuba offers traffickers means to transfer Colombian drugs to other carriers for the final legs of their journey. For example, a June 1983 report stated that a Cuban official rented a Panamanian ship for \$24,000 per month to move drugs from Colombia to a small island off Cuba's southern coast. The scheme involved flying the cargo across Cuba to a second island off the north coast, whence it would go by boat to Florida.
- o Government Approval. Given the tight controls exerted by Castro's security apparatus over all aspects of foreign travel and communications, the foregoing arrangements would be quite impossible without the knowledge and approbation of the highest officials of the Cuban government, including Fidel Castro himself. To cite one case, in November 1982, based on evidence of conspiracy to smuggle drugs, a U.S. District Court indicted four Cuban officials: Rene Rodriguez Cruz, President of Cuba's Institute of Friendship with the Peoples; Fernando Ravelo Renedo, former Cuban Ambassador to Colombia; Gonzalo Bassols Suarez, an official of the Cuban Communist Party; and Vice Admiral Aldo Santamaria Cuadrado, then Vice Minister and Commander of the Cuban Navy.

Other Caribbean Producers

Mexico. In 1984 traffickers smuggled into the United States from Mexico about one-third of the heroin sold here illegally. Mexican opium poppy growers produced, net after eradication, some 21 metric tons. Thus far, they and the processors and traffickers they supply compete on the U.S. market only against Asian growers. As Colombian cannabis eradication proceeds, Mexican traffickers are expected to take over the lion's share of the U.S. marijuana market. Mexican traffickers are also our largest suppliers of clandestinely manufactured amphetamines; they also sell counterfeit mandrax tablets in the U.S., and chemicals for secobarbital and diazepam in Europe.

In 1984 Mexican authorities, with U.S. aid, seized an estimated 10,000 tons of unprocessed cannabis in the state of Chihuahua and broke up a major transportation and processing center there. The United States government has welcomed statements by President de la Madrid that he intends to direct Mexico's U.S.-supported eradication program against both opium poppies and cannabis plants. But the Department of State, noting increased production in 1984 despite these statements, reported that "there are strong indications that the Mexican program has been less effective over the past two years and that corruption is playing a major role in this decline."

Mexico provides way stations for smugglers. Clandestine airports

are utilized for refueling or transloading small aircraft capable of making low altitude runs into the U.S. Small boats ply between the U.S. and island and coastal ports, while overland from Mexico, trucks, tractor-trailers, fuel tankers, and other vehicles carry the substances across the long, permeable U.S. border. Within Mexico the drug rackets are controlled by Mafia-like organizations which appear to have penetrated the police and security forces. While there is no known connection between Mexican traffickers and terrorists, the former make extensive use of violence and intimidation in pursuing their trade.

Belize and Jamaica These two former British dependencies (in which the British remain involved in security), also serve as way stations for smugglers. This traffic, and indigenous cannabis production, present the principal counternarcotics problems.

Illicit Cannabis Production

	1985 Metric Tons	1984 Metric Tons	1983 Metric Tons
Colombia	2,500-3,000	7,500-9,000	11,200-13,500
Mexico	6,124	5,850	4,975
Jamaica	1,559-2,909	1,627-2,977	2,460
Belize	191	1,053	620
Total	10,374-12,224	16,030-18,880	19,225-21,555

There are, of course, other nations which should be mentioned in any comprehensive survey of the counternarcotics problem facing the United States, especially way-station countries like Guatemala, and the Cayman and Bahama Islands, positioned astride the main smuggling routes. But for the purposes of this discussion, this brief description of the prime producer-countries and Cuba covers the principal malefactors.

Summary

The nations that produce the bulk of the drugs sold illegally in the United States are Bolivia, Peru, Colombia and Mexico. Organized traffickers from Colombia and Mexico are the main motive forces behind large scale smuggling. However, the governments of all these countries support, in principle if not in deed, the counternarcotics policies of the United States. Within limits imposed by their internal security, political strength, corruption and inefficiency, all except two southern neighbors of the United States are committed to programs of reducing their own production and consumption and preventing the unauthorized export of illicit substances. Only the two Marxist garrison states, Nicaragua and Cuba, pursue a contrary policy of abetting the traffickers.

The U.S. Response

The awareness of the people of the United States that they have a "drug problem", on which I earlier commented (pp. 3ff.), has led to action by Congress, by Federal, state, and local governments, and by the private sector. In general, there are seven courses of action open to us:

- (1) Eradication of cannabis, opium poppies, and coca bushes where such plants are grown in quantity.
- (2) Seizing of harvested vegetable matter or the chemical derivatives thereof, and interdiction of traffickers enroute to the U.S.
- (3) Blocking shipment of chemical reagents used in processing narcotics, especially ethyl ether and acetone.
- (4) Seeking extradition of narcotraficantes for trial in the U.S.
- (5) Impounding the funds and property of traffickers.
- (6) Reducing demand here in the United States by educational and clinical programs.
- (7) Legalization and government control of sales.

We have initiated action on each course except (7). The first five require the close cooperation of foreign governments, and therefore adroit diplomacy. The U.S. Department of State and other U.S. government agencies operating abroad have invested major efforts on (1), (2), and (4). The National Narcotics Border Interdiction System is the most visible action taken by the Reagan Administration on (2) and (3). Much of (6) has involved treating abusers, deterring or dissuading abusers, and apprehending and prosecuting traffickers.

These efforts proceed under overall direction of the National Narcotics Enforcement Policy Board, chaired by the Attorney General of the United States. It has as members the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Transportation, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Since the summer of 1983 the Organized Crime/Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDEF), a Federal/state/local cooperative undertaking, has been investigating and bringing charges against drug traffickers, resulting in over 1,000 indictments against nearly 5,000 defendants. Of cases prosecuted, the conviction rate has been 90 percent. Nearly one-half of the total cases involved organizations whose primary purpose was smuggling or marketing illegal drugs. About one-third dealt with organizations connected both to drugs and to other major felonies, including traditional organized crime groups, and outlaw motorcycle gangs. Priority has been given to those organizations whose activities are international in scope, and more than 48 percent of the OCDEF's court cases relate to international trafficking.

The Attorney General, Edwin Meese III, reports that "diligent

efforts have been made to create new levels of cooperation with state and local law enforcement agencies. By the end of last year (1984), almost half the Task Force investigations resulting in indictments had been conducted in cooperation with state and local agencies. From the beginning, that sort of cooperation had been viewed as absolutely essential to the success of the Task Force Program. Drug trafficking is a problem which affects every part of our nations. To combat it effectively means utilizing every available criminal justice resource..." The Attorney General also attached importance to close working relationships with foreign law enforcement agencies, and noted that some 4 percent of OCDEF investigations started by 1985 involved foreign agencies.

To quote Mr. Meese further: "The Task Force Program is a key part of our overall efforts to combat drug trafficking and all of the evils that flow from it. Our total strategy is composed of many elements. We place heavy stress on initiatives with other countries to reduce the production and delivery of drugs. Interdiction initiatives have a major priority. In addition to their work on the Task Forces, Federal agencies continue to develop a wide range of other important drug cases. Great attention is given to drug treatment and prevention programs --especially programs to prevent drug use among our young people...The debate in the country today is over the adequacy of drug enforcement resources. I believe there has now developed throughout the nation the most intensive public support for drug enforcement that has ever existed. The law-abiding citizens want drug trafficking rings put out of business. They want an end to the crime and human misery and death caused by drugs. They want the young protected against these drug traffickers. We believe the public supports today's Federal drug enforcement programs and the greatest level of resources ever utilized against drug trafficking. We will not win the war on drugs today or tomorrow or next week. But we will eventually win it..."

Among the Federal agencies that have significantly increased contributions to the broad attack sketched by the Attorney General is the Department of Defense. This past spring Dr. Lawrence J. Korb, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Installations, and Logistics testified before a House subcommittee as follows:

The Defense Department is contributing to the anti-drug effort to the maximum extent possible under current law, and under the resource and military preparedness constraints with which we must abide. Before addressing the specific issues affecting our support for the civilian drug law enforcement community, let me put the DoD role in perspective...Under the legislation passed in December, 1981, DoD provides Federal, state, and local civilian law enforcement officials with information collected during the course of normal military operations, makes military equipment and facilities available, and provides training and expert advice. This law expressly forbids direct participation by members of the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps in arrest and seizure activities, or in any other form of law enforcement --except, of course, where allowed under other statutory authority. And finally, the considerations of military preparedness and reimbursement must affect all our decisions. National security cannot be undermined as the Department of Defense meets its other responsibilities under the law. Under the law, the

support we provide must not jeopardize military preparedness and the Secretary of Defense has issued both directives and other guidance to that effect.

Assistant Secretary Korb then presented data from calendar year 1984 concerning service aircraft operating in support of civil law enforcement agencies (10,000 hours), ground radar surveillance of the Mexican border on behalf of the Border Patrol (958 targets detected, 292 apprehensions), USN ships with Coast Guard tactical law enforcement teams (TACLETS) embarked (135 ship-days), and airborne surveillance radar support over the coastal approaches to the United States:

The Navy provided 1455 hours of radar support...the USAF operates two aerostat radars located at Cudjoe Key and Patrick AFB. These radars provide effective look-down capability against low flying aircraft. Both aerostats, digitally linked to the Customs Service Miami C[^]sp3[^] facility and the Tyndall Region Operations Control Center (ROCC), were operational over 10,000 hours in 1984. Various electronic equipment is loaned including a secure radio to the DEA. The Air Force also maintains a variety of equipment at the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) centers. In 1984 the Air Force provided extensive overnight refurbishment on a DEA C-123 transport aircraft enabling DEA to use it on a special mission...The Army, Navy, and Air Force provided 42 personnel who provide expert assistance to six National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) Regional Centers in addition to the NNBIS headquarters in Washington, D.C. When you include other personnel in the Pentagon dedicated to this mission on a full-time basis, their combined annual salaries are nearly two million dollars...There have been increasing calls on the Department of Defense to do more...to provide more assistance to civilian law enforcement agencies. I think the data I just cited support our contention that we have provided a great deal of assistance...We are also open to the possibility of supporting new initiatives...The bottom line is this: if the proposal for DoD support is viable, both from a legal and operational readiness standpoint, we will assist...What we ask in return is recognition of the need for Defense to balance requests for assistance with budgetary restraint, readiness implications and national security mission imperatives.

Late in June 1985 the Secretary of Defense wrote Chairman Les Aspin of the House Armed Services Committee expressing somewhat stronger objections to extension of the DoD role in drug interdiction. Prompted by an amendment introduced by Rep. Charles E. Bennett of Florida, which would authorize members of the armed forces "to assist drug enforcement officials in drug searches, seizures or arrests outside the land area of the United States...", Secretary Weinberger went on record opposing such a law, on the grounds that "reliance on military forces to accomplish civilian tasks is detrimental to both military readiness and the democratic process." He stated that the Bennet Amendment would break down "the historic separation between the military and the civilian spheres of activity" which he said is "one of the most fundamental principles of American democracy. We strongly oppose the extension of civilian police powers to our military forces."

Inferentially, if not explicitly, Secretary Weinberger has rejected the idea that drug smuggling is a national security problem. Both he and Assistant Secretary Korb see profound differences between the routine functions and activities of the armed forces aimed at gaining and maintaining readiness and DoD aid to the civil agencies engaged in counter-smuggling operations. Both appear prepared to provide continued very conditional support for the fundamental interdiction strategy of NNBS --a picket-fence of surveillance around the U.S. borders. But neither seems receptive to any bold initiative involving DoD, nor a different strategy calling for a larger role for their Department in combatting narcotics traffickers.

A Threat to U.S. Security?

My recent testimony before Congress differs from the expressed views of Secretaries Weinberger and Korb both in my assessment of the threat and in my appraisal of the effectiveness of our strategy to meet that threat. But, of course, my background and experience has been very different from theirs, my judgements being formed not only by my 2 years of command in Latin America, but also by 40 years of military service.

My first official encounter with the modern drug culture came in Korea in 1952, when I noted approvingly that an infantry unit occupying trenches along the floor of the Chorwon Valley below the Chinese-occupied Osang Mountain had developed extraordinary proficiency in concealing its positions with camouflage nets. But when I looked into it, I discovered that the troops were harvesting and drying marijuana as garnish on those nets. Whatever security the concealment afforded was more than offset by the substantial loss of nocturnal alertness occasioned by cannabis use in that outfit.

A decade later, as a long range planner in the Army General Staff, I read studies predicting that in the 1960's and 1970's, widespread use of mind-altering chemicals would be one of the factors fundamentally affecting national security, from the defense production base to front line units. Those forecasts turned out to be understated. In two tours of command in the Republic of Vietnam, and in every position I have held as a general officer since, I have had to deal with drugs as a pernicious influence on military personnel. Marijuana, heroin, and cocaine impact adversely personal professionalism, and divert the attention of unit commanders from their responsibilities for readiness to dealing with consequent indiscipline, crime, and needless injury or death among relatively small numbers of abusers. Hence, I have come to regard drug abuse as a national security problem.

But is drug smuggling a national security problem too? I have come to believe it is. Two years ago, in April 1983, just before I was posted to Panama, President Reagan in an address to the nation outlined four basic objectives of U.S. policy in Latin America. I took these as my marching orders. He said then that it is our purpose there to support democracy, reform and human rights; that we are there to stimulate economic development; that we are there to support dialogue and negotiations; and that we are there to support security as a shield for democratization, development, and diplomacy.

I think that recent years have witnessed distinct progress toward all of those objectives. Concerning democracy, if you go back to 1979, two out of three of the people in Latin America were then living under authoritarian governments. Today, nine out of ten are living in countries with democratic governments. Since 1980 military juntas have turned back control of governments to civilians in eight countries; and since 1980, 15 countries in mainland Latin America have held free elections. Just this year national electoral campaigns have been held in Peru, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatamala. From what I have seen, there is a deep yearning among Latins for the sort of polity they observe here in the United States, and it is, in my view, very much in our interest to help them achieve just that. Democracies make better neighbors for us, and for our children, and there can be little doubt that Latins are now convinced that democracy better assures their future as well.

But now they understand as never before that drug trafficking is one of the main threats to their progress toward democracy and prosperity. In the past, U.S. efforts to block it have often poisoned our diplomacy with Latin nations, and created internal political problems for governments we support. But now most Latin governments realize the dangers posed by narcotraficantes and want as much as we to suppress them. We and the Latin democracies we support must together find better ways to counter this form of criminality.

I am convinced that the drug traffic from Latin America into the United States constitutes a threat to U.S. national security interests because:

- (1) Latin Americans produce and ship most of the marijuana and cocaine imported into the U.S., and a significant part of the heroin as well. These substances attack the fiber of our society--our productivity, our ethics, our education--more directly and dangerously than any other form of foreign subversion.
- (2) The channels through which drugs and related personnel or material are moved within Latin America and the Caribbean constitute a region-wide, well-financed, illegal, trans-national infrastructure. This infrastructure is used to move other unlawful cargoes (such as arms and munitions); dangerous persons (such as terrorists, spies, subversives or criminals); and pernicious information (such as political, economic and military intelligence). All these have been used in the past and could be used in the future to imperil U.S. national interests.
- (3) The vast funds generated by these activities are economically wasteful and politically dangerous. Even in the form of "laundered" funds, they seldom underwrite permanent development, often spawn local crime and corruption, and frequently have been used to finance revolutionaries of the right or left who are determined to overthrow established governments. To the degree the U.S. has taken renewed interests in the democracies to our south, and through such mechanisms as the Caribbean Basin Initiative and the Jackson Plan committed large sums for their economic revival and political well-being, we have a stake in their welfare and security against the threat posed by drug

trafficking.

- (4) Drug traffickers have reacted to pressure from lawful authorities in many countries by forming common cause with Marxist-Leninists, anarchists, and international terrorists. The money, mobility, communications, and trans-national resources of the narcotraficantes lend wholly new dimensions to threats to U.S. lives and property from terrorists or insurgents. Again, where such threats imperil democracies we support, our interests are engaged. ^bo

In considering what to do about this threat, I have applied a military approach: I have looked for the vulnerabilities of the traffickers, the places where they or the substances in which they deal can be found in greatest concentration. I am convinced that for cocaine, marijuana, and heroin, these places are the processing centers where the substances are prepared and readied for shipment to the U.S. For cocaine, the most dangerous drug of abuse, the advantages of attacking the big laboratories are particularly persuasive. Coca leaf is reduced in size and weight by a factor of 10^2 in conversion from leaf to paste or base, and then again by a factor of 10^3 in conversion to cocaine HCl. Once in the latter form, shipments of a few grams are profitable. Several smuggled kilograms can pay couriers handsomely and buy a whole aircraft. Since the "laboratory" where the final conversion occurs can often be located by technological as well as human intelligence, there, I am convinced, is the place to strike.

A Broader Countersmuggling Role for DoD

In June 1985 before the Subcommittee on Defense of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, I stated that marijuana, cocaine, and heroin illegally imported from Latin America constitute "...a threat to the nation of such a magnitude that it requires us to bring to bear all our societal defenses, both our criminal justice apparatus and our national security forces." However, I am sceptical about investing further resources in the picket fence of NNBS. Drug enforcers tell me that their successes have come mainly from advance tip-off of an impending smuggling, not from alerts from sentries posted along our perimeter on the lookout for traffickers. Early warning, they believe, enables planning and executing legally sustainable arrests, whereas quick reaction to chance encounters often leads to the quarry's escaping, either during an impromptu arrest attempt, or subsequently in court on evidentiary grounds. I have advanced five premises or principles which I believe should guide the policy of our government in countering the smuggling of narcotics:

- * Striking against drug smuggling at its sources is strategically more sound, more economical, and more helpful to friendly democratic governments facing parasitical narcotraficantes than relying on the NNBS strategy of picketing our borders.
- * With the exceptions of Cuba and Nicaragua, Latin American governments share the U.S. interest in stopping drug trafficking. Where drug traffickers prosper, the proponents of political violence profit, and arms flows and subversion are facilitated. Conversely, aiding Latin nations to rid themselves of the plague of

narcotraficantes would be a welcome form of U.S. aid, particularly were that aid proffered to include badly needed help with intelligence and communications.

- * Intelligence exchanges and security assistance, properly conditioned on performance against narcotics production, processing, and transportation, and the individuals or organizations which underwrite and manage such activities, should be offered to democratic governments willing to commit their own military resources against their ^{^it}narcotraficantes^{^it}. If thereby their internal security is strengthened, so much the better.
- * The most important DoD contribution to such assistance would be intelligence. From the viewpoint of the military intelligence collector, the problem sets involved with guerrillas are virtually identical to those with ^{^it}narcotraficantes^{^it}. Broad area surveillance, pin-point localization, and real-time reporting are central to effective counteraction by a cooperating government against either threat.
- * Neither the Department of Defense nor any of its subordinate commands should be tasked or resourced to do any other agency's job. The objective is to put DoD in support of, not in charge of, the ongoing U.S. counter-narcotics campaign.

Were U.S. commanders of deployed military forces tasked appropriately, I am convinced that they could provide significantly greater contributions to NNBIS and to cooperating foreign governments without detracting from force readiness, as Secretary Korb has feared. Indeed, I believe that the JCS could devise a plan that would substantially interfere with the drug traffickers, and yet cost little or nothing in terms of incremental defense outlays. Such a plan might capitalize on training which has routinely centered on hypothetical or posed hostile operations. Pitting our forces for training against wily, elusive smugglers would furnish our forces more realistic experience and provide greater readiness.

While much of what I have proposed could be sustained within the existing force structure, there are three add-ons to the Defense program that I recommend:

- (1) A Caribbean Basin Radar Network, designed to enhance early warning of aircraft approaching the United States from the south. As matters stand, we have no comprehensive system for sensing incoming or outgoing piloted airplanes, or cruise missiles. Technology is in hand for closing this gap in our national defenses. The airborne radars now in use, supplemented by portable, land-based and ship-borne radars, all tied into a communications network, could provide both our air defenders and our law enforcement agencies with a general appreciation of the nature and extent of unregistered flights on which better to plan seizure on arrival.
- (2) Command, control, communications and intelligence (C³I) centers capable of collating from all sources, including the

radar network, information on the activities of drug traffickers, and of disseminating derived intelligence quickly to foreign counternarcotic authorities, to U.S. forces engaged in surveillance, and to U.S. law enforcement agencies. These C³I centers could economically be built onto existing DoD centers, utilizing commercial SATCOM channels, suitably encrypted

- (3) Research and development directed at gaining and maintaining a decisive advantage for law enforcers, U.S. or foreign, in detecting and foiling drug traffickers. The robust R&D community of DoD is in the best position to undertake such an effort. In fact, merely reviving certain R&D, which was eliminated at the end of the war in Southeast Asia, would yield benefits for our anti-narcotics campaign, as well as raising our readiness for low intensity conflict.

As for other governmental expenditures, I have recommended modest increases in security assistance for cooperating Latin governments, on the order of \$10 to \$30 million per annum, conditioned on their using this for military operations against narcotraficantes. I am convinced that such sums would be at least ten times more effectively spent than further investments in large maritime dragnets, or buying more patrol aircraft for NNBS.

In sum, the fight against drugs of abuse should be taken to their sources. In addition, other means at our disposal should be used by our own military forces and those of our allies. The threat is so large, so resourceful, that to counter it, military operations and security assistance are mandatory recourses.

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