

1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL PAUL GORMAN, USA (Ret.), FORMER
2 COMMANDER, SOUTHERN COMMAND, U.S. ARMY

3 General Gorman: Thank you, Senator Kerry.

4 I would add one footnote to the bio: Entered the federal
5 service from the state of Massachusetts.

6 Senator Kerry: That is not a footnote, General. That is
7 a major qualification. Thank you.

8 General Gorman: It is true, sir, that in nearly all of
9 my official reports and in my speeches and in my writings
10 since 1983 I have characterized narcotics trafficking from
11 Latin America as a threat to the national security of this
12 country.

13 After I left active duty in 1985, I served as a
14 consultant to the President's Commission on Organized Crime
15 and prepared a detailed written report for the Commissioners,
16 which set forth the reasons why I believed that the
17 Administration and the Congress should formally adopt the
18 view that national security was involved in drug
19 trafficking.

20 I have three times testified to Committees of the
21 Congress on this subject, and I have met individually to
22 discuss that testimony with members of both bodies. So I am
23 very grateful to you for this opportunity to reiterate my
24 conviction that the American people must understand,
25 understand much better than they ever have in the past, how

1 their safety and that of their children is threatened by
2 Latin drug conspiracies dramatically more successful at
3 subversion in the United States than any that are centered in
4 Moscow.

5 Now, I did not come up to talk today about El Salvador
6 and I do not know anything about the proposal to implant a
7 phony shipment of arms in El Salvador. It would have been a
8 very stupid move in my view.

9 But I would like to make the point, Senator Moynihan,
10 because I think it is germane to the topic here today, that I
11 do indeed remember your speech in 1983, and both Ambassador
12 Pickering and San Salvador and I resolved to test the thesis
13 advanced by the rector of the university.

14 And in August of 1984, I presented to the Select
15 Committee on Intelligence of the Senate the results of that
16 investigation. We sent people into the countryside to buy
17 arms. We made every effort through the Salvadoran armed
18 forces to collect documents which contained in them
19 references to arms in the possession of the guerillas. We
20 examined weapons taken from the battlefields. We collected
21 in all over 500 weapons which had serial numbers on them
22 which could be traced.

23 70 percent of those weapons were weapons that were
24 shipped from the United States to the Republic of Vietnam
25 during the Vietnam War and in our view could only have

1 entered El Salvador via the communist infiltration system.

2 Over 20 percent of the weapons we had no records of. We
3 had very good records of the weapons we shipped into El
4 Salvador. So my conclusion at the time was the rector was
5 simply wrong.

6 Now, he may have been right in the sense that in 1983 no
7 weapons were coming in because the weapons were already there
8 and what was coming in was cryptologic material, people who
9 had been trained on the outside and were being returned to
10 lead the effort on the inside, ammunition, et cetera.

11 I did report to your Committee, you will recall, a
12 specific instance where, while we did not get a smoking gun,
13 we did come very close to doing so, and in the ensuing battle
14 picked up on the battlefield three rocket launchers of
15 Chinese manufacture, the serial numbers of which were
16 identical, that is to say in the same series, as those found
17 in a warehouse in Grenada in the previous months.

18 So my conclusion is quite contrary to yours, sir. I
19 think the Nicaraguans were complicit in moving arms into El
20 Salvador.

21 Now, my point in that being germane to these proceedings
22 is simply that I was able to investigate that, because the
23 United States had in place a tactical intelligence mechanism
24 in Central America which could be brought to bear on issues
25 that were considered germane to the national security and of

1 interest to the Congress of the United States.

2 There is no comparable apparatus being brought to bear on
3 the international drug traffic. And that, sir, I think is a
4 matter of interest to you in your present pursuits.

5 Now, let me detail four reasons why I believe that drug
6 trafficking is a national security threat. First of all, as
7 Mr. Morgenthau made very evident, most of the illegal drugs
8 which are purchased by Americans come from Latin America and
9 the Caribbean, and present and foreseen consumption of these
10 drugs will subvert millions of Americans from productive
11 pursuits and it will channel enormous amounts of money into
12 the heads of foreign criminals who are avowed enemies of this
13 country.

14 I have seen credible estimates, Mr. Chairman, that the
15 aggregate annual financial impact of the nation's drug habit,
16 taking into account that lost productivity, taking into
17 account clinical costs, taking into account public
18 information campaigns to cut consumption, taking into account
19 the expenditures within our legal systems, as well as all of
20 the efforts of the United States overseas to interdict
21 smugglers or to eradicate the plants where grown, taking into
22 account all of that, you are looking at a sum of money which
23 approximates what we spend for national defense -- an
24 enormous outlay.

25 My second reason for believing this is a matter for

1 national security is that the Latin criminal cartels who have
2 profited from the depravity of some Americans constitute an
3 international underworld so extensive, so wealthy, and so
4 powerful that it can literally buy governments and
5 destabilize entire societies -- your point about the offers
6 to pay off the national debt of two nations in the region.

7 This underworld, owned and operated by these cartels,
8 specialized as it is for the smuggling of narcotic and
9 psychotropic substances and for the movements of large
10 amounts of money, often in large sums of American greenbacks,
11 this network has lent itself to the pursuits of those who are
12 engaged in illicit movements of arms or munitions for
13 whatever purposes.

14 If you want to move arms or munitions in Latin America,
15 the established networks are owned by the cartels. It has
16 lent itself to the purposes of terrorists, of saboteurs, of
17 spies, of insurgents, and of subversives.

18 While the interests of the narcotraffickers are not
19 always identical to these others, the prevalence of their
20 cooperation country by country reflects their common outlaw
21 status and their common interest in ineffectual government in
22 any democratic country.

23 And in this respect, I think it is germane to note that
24 among our neighbors only the governments of Cuba and
25 Nicaragua have refused to cooperate with our own government

1 against the narcotics traffickers and have instead given them
2 safe haven and other assistance.

3 My third reason for my conviction that this is a national
4 security matter rests on the fact that drug trafficking, as
5 Mr. Morgenthau alluded to, constitutes a clear and present
6 danger to the very survival of democracy in certain countries
7 which have long been friends and allies of the United
8 States.

9 Now, there are many countries that are so imperiled, by I
10 am confident that none is at the moment more threatened than
11 Colombia, a democracy particularly deserving of our national
12 understanding and support. America's drug habit, our
13 consumption of Colombian drugs, has brought to the people of
14 Colombia political chaos, social upheaval, and pervasive
15 fear.

16 Colombia's system of justice has been directly attacked
17 and severely impaired by thus and guerillas acting for the
18 narcotraffickers. Last week's Washington Post carried an
19 article which asserted that more Colombian males age 14 to 44
20 die of assassination -- lead poisoning, Mr. Chairman -- than
21 any other malady. And if that is true, that statistic makes
22 Colombia uniquely unfortunate of all the nations of the
23 world.

24 I will return to a further analysis of Colombia if I may
25 in a moment.

1 My fourth reason for asserting that this is a national
2 security matter is that Latin drug trafficking directly
3 detracts from our ability to defend ourselves from military
4 attack. Drug abuse has affected readiness within our armed
5 forces and it has figured in foreign espionage aimed at
6 penetrating our most carefully guarded defense secrets.

7 Despite significant diversion of military force to assist
8 U.S. law enforcement agencies in interdicting smugglers from
9 the south, the United States is today unable to detect, let
10 alone to apprehend, drug traffickers penetrating our most
11 vital strategic zone from the south, whether by land or by
12 sea or by air.

13 And that is hardly a tolerable condition of national
14 security in the age of the cruise missile and in the age of
15 the international terrorists with access to very
16 sophisticated and dangerous weapons.

17 All four conditions that I have cited to you as national
18 security threats have deteriorated since 1983. Mr. Chairman,
19 despite extensive efforts on the part of the United States
20 government to encourage foreign governments to eradicate
21 cannabis, coca, and opium poppies and to promote alternative
22 agriculture, despite its extensive interdiction efforts
23 involving unprecedented cooperation among U.S. government
24 agencies, and with foreign governments and their security
25 agencies, and despite some striking successes in law

1 enforcement both here and abroad, this security threat has
2 grown.

3 The tendencies as far as I know them are all adverse.
4 Hence, I see a need for reassessment and readjustment. As in
5 any other area of national strategy, if our adversaries seem
6 to have outwitted and outmaneuvered us, then it is time for
7 us to re-examine both our strategic ends and our strategic
8 means.

9 And I propose to conduct such a re-examination for you in
10 the context of Colombia. Most of your constituents, Mr.
11 Chairman, may have difficulty in remembering Colombia as the
12 country from which Panama was carved back at the turn of the
13 century. Few will recall that Colombia has a long record as
14 a staunch ally of the United States.

15 Mr. Morgenthau indicated that he remembers them as an
16 enemy. I remember them as fellow soldiers in Korea, and I am
17 one of the dwindling number of Americans who can bear
18 personal witness to the sacrifices of Colombian soldiers amid
19 Korea's shell-scarred, snow-covered hills.

20 Not many Americans will understand that between Colombian
21 and American military professionals there remains a mutual
22 respect and understanding of long standing, such as exists in
23 very few countries of the world outside of NATO. For
24 example, General Jack Galvin, the Supreme Allied Commander,
25 Europe, was trained as a junior officer in the Colombian

1 Ranger School, the Esquella de Ranchero, and owes to that
2 experience his proficiency in martial Spanish.

3 Mr. Chairman, Colombia is a democracy. It has a
4 remarkable record of freedom from military intervention in
5 politics, and in recent decades a record of economic growth
6 and political vitality.

7 Most Americans have seen Colombians only in those
8 televised coffee advertisements such as those which portray
9 Juan Valdez who is up there picking the coffee beans one by
10 one when they are perfectly ripe. The trouble is, as you
11 know better than most, Mr. Chairman, for both Colombians and
12 Americans the real Juan Valdez's have long since abandoned
13 coffee picking for coca and cannabis, agricultural employment
14 which pays them 10 to 20 times more.

15 Colombia has been the proximate source of 50 percent of
16 the illegal substances, the product of such plants which were
17 smuggled into the United States as measured by value. By
18 volume, Colombia has been the source of more than 75 percent
19 of the cocaine and 60 percent of the marijuana.

20 And of course, in Colombia criminals have organized
21 themselves into elaborate conglomerates for the purposes of
22 growing, harvesting, processing, transporting, selling, and
23 repatriating their profits from cocaine and marijuana. Men
24 like Pablo Escobar, the Ochoa brothers, Jaime Gilio, Carlos
25 Lehder Rivas, these men formed large, continent-spanning,

1 ocean-crossing organizations, Mafia-like rings capable of
2 very large, very complex undertakings demanding significant
3 discipline and very tight management.

4 They built coca processing centers in the trackless rain
5 forests of the Amazon River Basin in Colombia, factory
6 complexes which were capable of converting a mash of coca
7 leaves, termed paste, into crystalline cocaine, and doing so
8 in quantities of tons per week.

9 One of the dramatic aspects of this problem is that if
10 one looks at the potential output of such factories, it is
11 many times what we have seen here in the United States in
12 terms of estimated consumption. So there must be somewhere
13 an enormous reserve of this material available to these
14 combines.

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1 In order to do this, among a trackless jungle, there are
2 no navigation aids out there, no radars, no roads, virtually
3 no infrastructure, these organizations had to fly in
4 virtually all of the wherewithal for this enterprise,
5 generators and fuel, heaters and driers, reagents like
6 alcohol, sulfuric and hydrochloric acid, acetone, ammonia,
7 potassium carbonate, and potassium permanganate, kerosene,
8 gasoline, and diethyl ether.

9 Most of the raw materials, the coca paste, is flown in
10 from Peru and Bolivia, converted in the factories, or as they
11 are known, the laboratories, into crystals of cocaine
12 hydrochloride and then flown out across the Caribbean or
13 Central America to the United States.

14 From coca leaf to successfully smuggled plastic bags of
15 this white powdery substance, then, these criminals effect a
16 transformation which reduces weight and volume by three
17 orders of magnitude, and it pays them better than \$5 in
18 profits for each \$1 they invest in all of that process, a
19 very, very handsome return on investment.

20 Now, I want to make a point which again takes issue with
21 one of the points advanced by Mr. Morgenthau in his excellent
22 presentation. The huge sums of money that flow back to these
23 criminals are held outside of the formal economies. That is
24 black money. It means that it circulates disfunctionally
25 outside of the Colombian government's plans to control

1 inflation and unemployment, to share wealth with Colombia's
2 poor and disadvantaged or to invest in education or other
3 long range projects to ameliorate economic discontinuities.
4 That is not the kind of aid that President Vargas or
5 President Betancur was looking for from the United States.
6 The kind of aid that they were looking for we did not proffer.

7 In time, as we have noted, the narco-trafficking
8 organizations became richer than the government and through
9 bribery, extortion and intimidation, in many respects better
10 informed and more politically powerful.

11 Mr. Chairman, when I first visited Colombia in 1983 --
12 and this goes to the observation of Senator Moynihan -- the
13 narcotics problem was not very high on the agenda of the
14 embassy of the United States. I was initially interested in
15 the possible connections between the narcotraficantes and the
16 guerrilla organizations of Colombia, and those relationships
17 existed, and the embassy was able to detail some of what they
18 referred to as the narc-FARC connection.

19 But they were very clear, the members of the country
20 team, that I should expect no interest on the part of anyone
21 in Colombia in doing anything about such connections, and in
22 particular, I should expect no interest on the part of the
23 Colombian military. The view was that the Colombians regard
24 this drug trafficking as a problem of the United States. It
25 was the American consumer which caused it. The

1 narcotraficante was, in effect, a Robin Hood who was robbing
2 these concupiscent Americans on behalf of Colombia's poor,
3 and therefore, we had to fix the problem up in the United
4 States, not a problem to be dealt with in Colombia.

5 And the Colombian military, I was told, would be
6 persuaded that for them to involve themselves in any action
7 which infringed on the prerogatives of the narcotraficantes
8 would be to invite large-scale corruption within the
9 Colombian military, an event which had occurred in previous
10 years when Colombian governments tried to turn their security
11 apparatus loose on the narcotraficantes.

12 I soon discovered, however, that there were a number of
13 senior Colombian officers, men whom I came to respect deeply
14 as persons as well as fellow military professionals, who held
15 a very different view from that reported by our embassy.
16 They recognized what the narcotraficantes really meant, not
17 only in terms as a source of intelligence and funds for the
18 guerrilla organizations that they were locked in combat with,
19 but as a long term threat to the whole social fabric of
20 Colombia.

21 And I left from my initial visit convinced that there was
22 very much more to be learned about this whole subject than
23 one could in the American embassy in Bogota.

24 Shortly thereafter, President Betancur began to move to
25 deal with a problem of drug abuse in Colombia occasioned by

1 what I have termed was the narcotraficantes' decision to foul
2 their own nest. They began to sell in Colombia the
3 by-products of this processing that they conducted out in the
4 jungles, and in particular, a product called pazuco. Pazuco
5 is like crack in that it is a smoked compound. Usually one
6 takes marijuana or tobacco, dips it in the coca paste, and
7 sells that. It is a putative aphrodisiac. It sold very well
8 among young Colombian males.

9 And there was as a result of all of that a series of
10 incidents which caused the President ultimately to close the
11 national university. There was a series of suicides among
12 Colombian youths, very similar to those reported by Mr.
13 Morgenthau. And the President was impelled to direct the
14 Colombian security forces to strike out into the jungles and
15 go after the laboratories.

16 That decision led to the murder of the Minister of
17 Justice in early 1984, and thereafter, the Colombian
18 government found itself, whether it wanted to be at war or
19 not, very much on the battle lines. A state of siege was
20 declared, martial law was decreed for association with the
21 narcotraficantes, and the Colombians have since been engaged
22 to an incredible degree in a violent campaign against the
23 criminals.

24 You may be aware, of course, that the Colombians sought
25 our assistance. We responded chiefly by talking about the

1 extradition treaty between the United States and Colombia,
2 seeking to bring people like Escobar and Ochoa and Carlos
3 Lehder Rivas before American justice. This was countered by
4 a threat from the Colombian narcotraficantes to kill five
5 Americans for every Colombian extradited to the United
6 States, and in effect, condemning to death any Colombian who
7 aided such an extradition.

8 Murders per capita in Colombia have been five times more
9 frequent than those in the United States. Dreadful as our
10 statistics are, Mr. Chairman, in brief, imagine the suffering
11 of the people of Colombia. Half of Colombia's Supreme Court
12 judges have been assassinated; more than two dozen other
13 judges have been killed, the editor of the second largest
14 newspaper in the country, hundreds of police officers, and of
15 course, innocent bystanders and relatives of victims also by
16 the hundreds. Many a judge's bench sits empty in Colombia
17 today because lawyers fear to accept appointment, and sitting
18 judges have come to know that to approve a U.S. extradition
19 request is to sign their own death warrant.

20 And of course, recently, the Colombian Supreme Court,
21 perhaps understandably, declared that the U.S.-Colombian
22 extradition treaty was unconstitutional.

23 It was after this act by the Supreme Court, however, that
24 the Attorney General of Colombia was executed.

25 Now, in waging this war, the government of Colombia is

1 operating under enormous disadvantages vis-a-vis their
2 opposition. The narcotraficantes have available to them the
3 most modern kinds of air transportation, the best of modern
4 communications. They use satellite radios, for example.
5 They have encryption devices, voice privacy mechanisms. I
6 have seen equipment used on the aircraft that fly between the
7 United States and Colombia, and I can assure you that it is
8 more sophisticated and more facile than the equipment that I
9 had on my aircraft at the United States Air Force in the
10 United States Southern Command. They have the latest and the
11 best.

12 And compared with that, the Colombia government had
13 equipment that dated back to the 1960s. For example, the
14 national communications system, the government communications
15 system is terrestrial microwave with no voice privacy, no
16 encryption. We know that it is regularly intercepted,
17 indeed, used by the narcotraficantes, and the Colombian armed
18 forces are well aware that the narcotraficantes can track the
19 movements of Colombian armed forces and aircraft and ships
20 better than their respective commanders, know more surely
21 where they are and where they are going.

22 Now, Mr. Chairman, I cannot assess our domestic
23 counterdrug programs. I just simply do not know enough about
24 them. I have a strategic sense, however, that one cannot
25 operate on demand alone. You have to operate on everything

1 that we can operate on, supply and demand as well. That was
2 the conclusion of the President's Commission on Organized
3 Crime, and I certainly endorse that idea.

4 I can offer some evaluation of our overseas efforts
5 against the narcotrafficantes which I find to be
6 discouragingly ineffectual. I have argued for years that our
7 national strategy ought to include a strong effort to back
8 Colombia's attack on the narcotrafficantes, and to back an
9 attack where those apparatuses are most vulnerable, in their
10 production centers.

11 We have tried to do so, I will readily admit, but I also
12 maintain that our efforts have been half-hearted. I have
13 four specific points of criticism.

14 First, we have been promising the Colombia's material
15 help since 1983. We have simply not delivered. Whether that
16 help is radars or modern helicopters or actionable
17 intelligence, the rhetoric of the United States has
18 consistently outrun its performance.

19 Second, we have reached for short term measures, in
20 effect, applying Band-aids to what is a massive societal
21 trauma. We have not sought to devise with the Colombians a
22 long term comprehensive strategy for dealing with the
23 narco-traffickers, one which would draw upon all the
24 respective strengths of both countries.

25 Third, we have failed to bring American technology to

1 bear, either for short term tactical advantage or for longer
2 range developments which might promise a decisive strategic
3 defeat for the narcotraficantes.

4 And fourth, the United States has failed to engage the
5 capabilities of the Colombian armed forces.

6 I am very much aware, Mr. Chairman, that recent U.S.
7 ambassadors have been skeptical of the willingness of
8 Colombia's military leaders to accept a major role in a
9 campaign against the drug traffickers, and I know that they
10 are doubtful of the capabilities of Colombian forces, even
11 were those forces to be committed. It is clearly the case
12 that many senior Colombian officers fear the intimidation and
13 corruption which is bound to follow upon any large scale
14 effort against the drug traders, and it is also true that
15 many of these officers believe that the drug traders are a
16 matter for the police, not the military. In short, they
17 disbelieve that the narco-traffickers threaten Colombia's
18 national security. These officers want instead to
19 concentrate on the guerrillas.

20 But, as I have said, there are a few, fortunately senior
21 and influential officers who have a very different view of
22 the matter who are prepared to see in the drug trafficking a
23 threat to Colombia's very survival and are prepared to accept
24 the dangers entailed in a campaign against the
25 narco-traffickers.

1 These officers would probably advocate a small,
2 hand-picked elite force with unique training and equipment, a
3 force carefully guarded to deny its penetration by the
4 narco-traffickers. My own estimate is that they could in
5 fact raise such a force, and especially they could do so were
6 the United States prepared to provide it significant
7 assistance in equipping and training and supporting it with
8 command, control, communications and intelligence.

9 How would such a force be employed? It seems militarily
10 self-evident that one should attack where the foe's greatest
11 vulnerability lies, at the centers where the processing of
12 the drugs occurs. Such centers can be located by
13 technological means, as well as using informants, and they
14 can be assaulted while active. We have demonstrated that.

15 Moreover, most such centers are dependent upon air
16 support, so that a strategy which aimed concurrently at
17 gaining and maintaining superiority over Colombian air space
18 could inflict mortal damage on the narco-traffickers.

19 Even short of air superiority, information about the
20 aerial comings and goings would enable early warning of U.S.
21 agencies, law enforcement agencies, and more responsive and
22 effective interdiction efforts on the U.S. border.

23 Now, my next point again goes to some of the earlier
24 remarks about the centrality of money in this process, and
25 knowing that this room was, I gather, where you have been

1 holding your INF treaty hearings, let me borrow a little bit
2 from the parlance that one uses in thinking about nuclear
3 strategy to remind you that counterforce is not an effective
4 strategy in dealing with low intensity conflicts. One should
5 reach, rather, for countervalue strategies, and here plainly,
6 the narcotrafficantes do not really care about the drugs.
7 They want the money. That is what the name of the game is.
8 And so strategies which aim at blocking or seizing the sums
9 of money involved in this business seem to me to be
10 inherently more valuable than strategies which are aimed at
11 dealing with the substances themselves.

12 I am absolutely convinced, of course, that we must do
13 both, but we are just now beginning to think through the
14 implications of the movements of these huge amounts of
15 illegal -- the illegal movements of these huge amounts of
16 cash entailed in this business, and that genuinely is a
17 matter where I think the United States can make a great deal
18 of progress to the benefit of its foreign policy and its
19 allies.

20 My next point, Mr. Chairman, is that I believe that this
21 committee has got to reconsider its attitudes towards
22 security assistance. We talked about foreign aid in the
23 present presentation, but I am absolutely convinced that
24 unless the United States is prepared to provide assistance to
25 the foreign security apparatuses of these beleaguered

1 countries, they cannot carry their weight in this struggle.

2 Now, the way to go about effective planning and
3 operations is for the Secretary of Defense to task the United
4 States Commander-in-Chief Southern Command, to do the job, to
5 concert an appropriate plan with the Colombian Minister of
6 Defense, coordinating the while with the Ambassador to
7 Colombia, and that Ambassador should receive parallel tasking
8 from the Secretary of State to fit the military plan into a
9 broader U.S.-Colombian national plan. Both the CINC and the
10 Ambassador will have to be backed with resources to ensure
11 implementation.

12 And Mr. Chairman, those sorts of directives have not come
13 from Washington on either side of the bureaucratic chain of
14 command.

15 I remain convinced that an effort to attack the sources
16 of narcotics in the Colombian source, to assert control over
17 the Colombian air space, and to provide early warning of
18 attempts to penetrate U.S. territory will be a much more cost
19 effective way to proceed than investing further in attempts
20 to interdicting our borders. A dollar spent in Colombia, I
21 am confident, will produce far more effect on this equation
22 than a dollar spent on additional AWACS flights over the
23 continental United States.

24 Finally, Mr. Chairman, and consistent with what I have
25 been trying to get across, I would also recommend a long

1 range research and development effort to provide our military
2 services and our law enforcement agencies with decisive new
3 advantages. This phenomenon that you have correctly brought
4 to the attention of the Congress will not go away anytime in
5 the near future. It will be with the next President and his
6 administration and probably with Presidents and their
7 administrations in the years thereafter. As Mr. Morgenthau
8 said, as long as there is a demand, there probably will be a
9 supply.

10 Recently there have been a series of studies in the
11 government of what might be done about these matters. Here,
12 for example, is a summer study of the Defense Science Board
13 which is entitled "Detection and Neutralization of Illegal
14 Drugs and Terrorist Activities." It consists of several
15 hundred pages of analyses and recommendations on technologies
16 that could be brought to bear on this problem. To my
17 knowledge, no action has been taken yet within the
18 Department. That needs to be pressed ahead.

19 Here is a report presented to the President just within
20 the past few weeks, the Report of the Commission on
21 Integrated Long Term Strategy. In this report they deal with
22 the problem of tactical intelligence for the purposes of
23 dealing with the kind of violence that we are just
24 discussing, low intensity conflict. Certain technologies,
25 according to this report, can be especially helpful in

1 bolstering tactical intelligence, and these include advanced
2 information processing systems, low-cost space systems -- it
3 seems evident on the face of it that we at least ought to
4 offer the Colombians some satellite access -- networks of
5 sensors and other microelectronic equipment to monitor the
6 movements of opposing forces, bio and micromechanical sensors
7 with vastly expanded capabilities for detecting explosives
8 and narcotics, vivid digital graphics of dangerous areas or
9 areas denied to U.S. advisors to permit reconnaissance,
10 rehearsal of plans and training for specific operations of
11 the sort to which I made earlier allusion.

12 Mr. Chairman, only the Department of Defense has an R&D
13 community sufficiently robust and experienced to develop such
14 technologies. But although the Defense Science Board and the
15 Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency have separately
16 within the past twelve months identified specific R&D
17 projects worth pursuing towards the objective of curtailing
18 narcotics trafficking, neither has found a champion within
19 the Department of Defense willing to attest that the
20 requirements are real and worthy of priority over other
21 claims for scarce Defense budget dollars. In fact, this may
22 be one set of requirements that you here in the Congress are
23 going to have to assert for the Department of Defense.

24 Mr. Chairman, I have been talking about Colombia, but
25 plainly, Colombia should be considered as typical of other

1 nations in Latin America and the Caribbean Basin where drug
2 trafficking has both threatened the indigenous government and
3 engaged the national security interests of the United States.
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1 Measures such as I have proposed could also be taken in
2 these countries, appropriately coordinated by the regional
3 commander in chief through each U.S. Ambassador.

4 I conclude, sir, by repeating what I told the
5 Subcommittee on Defense of the Senate Committee on
6 Appropriations in June 1985. I then stated that cocaine,
7 marijuana and heroin illegally imported from Latin America
8 constitute, and I quote, "a threat to the nation of such a
9 magnitude that it requires us to bring to bear all our
10 societal defenses, both our criminal justice apparatus and
11 our national security forces."

12 Events since these dread statistics, to point, certainly
13 provide me no basis for altering my judgment.

14 Thank you very much.

15 Senator Kerry: Thank you very much, General. I
16 appreciate enormously the detailed discussion of Colombia,
17 because I think that helps us to underscore what I said at
18 the outset, that these hearings are not only about Noriega
19 and Panama, they are about a problem that is larger and that
20 is really of epidemic proportions.

21 I do, however, in my questions want to talk about General
22 Noriega somewhat, and I want to talk about Panama and some of
23 the other issues about groups that get hold of narcotics and
24 utilize them on their behalf.

25 Let me, by way of building the record, however, begin

1 first of all with a general discussion, if we can, on the
2 Southern Command.

3 You went there in 1983; is that correct? You assumed
4 command?

5 General Gorman: That is correct, Senator.

6 Senator Kerry: You were there from 1983 to 1985.

7 General Gorman: Right.

8 Senator Kerry: Can you describe for us the scope of the
9 Southern Command?

10 General Gorman: The Southern Command has purview over
11 U.S. military activities in the region from the
12 Mexican/Guatemalan border south on the land mass of Central
13 and South America.

14 Senator Kerry: So you are familiar, therefore, with
15 narcotics problems that we have with Mexico, narcotics
16 problems growing in Central America generally? Can you
17 answer affirmatively, because your nod cannot be recorded. I
18 just want to make sure we keep the record straight.

19 General Gorman: I am sorry. I nodded affirmatively.

20 Senator Kerry: The Southern Command is based in Panama,
21 is it not?

22 General Gorman: Yes, sir, unfortunately. I have
23 testified before the Senate that I regard the presence of the
24 headquarters there as singularly dysfunctional.

25 Senator Kerry: Do you want to describe why?

1 General Gorman: It is the only headquarters of a U.S.
2 combatant command, the gates to which are guarded by foreign
3 troops, and the water, sewage, electricity is under control
4 of a foreign power, and, at the moment, I would have to say
5 probably a hostile power; not a very useful kind of a posture
6 to have a headquarters involved in significant military
7 undertaking.

8 Senator Kerry: Is it possible that those very facts are
9 part of the reasons that the powers that be of Panama may
10 have been permitted to do things that otherwise might be
11 prohibited?

12 General Gorman: I suspect that, first, we would have
13 been much better had the government taken my advice tendered
14 first in 1983 and gotten the headquarters out. There would
15 have been a lot less concern about Panamanian attitudes
16 towards our activities.

17 Second, less concern over insecurity of the headquarters
18 than the simple ability readily available to the Panamanian
19 defense forces to make life uncomfortable for Americans
20 living in Panama.

21 The Panamanian Defense Forces issued the license plates
22 for the automobiles.

23 The Panamanian Defense Forces laid down the rules and
24 regulations regarding the wearing of the uniform. The
25 soldier wearing the uniform downtown in Panama City, for

1 example, is subject to arrest.

2 The Panamanian Defense Forces had demonstrated in the
3 years before I went down there, 1981 and 1982, an ability to
4 make life extraordinarily uncomfortable for American
5 servicemen stationed there.

6 One was, therefore, interested, and I was certainly
7 interested, in maintaining good relations, but I can assure
8 you I would not have in any sense done so at the sacrifice of
9 carrying forward a charge of complicity in drugs against any
10 member of the Panamanian Defense Forces.

11 Senator Kerry: This is probably an appropriate place to
12 make it clear in the record, also, that when you arrived in
13 Panama in 1983, there had previously been a kind of tension
14 between the military command and the State Department down
15 there as to who was going to deal with General Noriega. Is
16 that accurate?

17 General Gorman: At the time it was General Paredes, who
18 was the commander of the Panamanian Defense Forces, then the
19 Guardia Nacional at the Panamanian National Guard.

20 Paredes had political ambitions and, in fact, the first
21 summer I was there retired so that he would be eligible to
22 run for president in the elections of 1984. He had already
23 begun to make political statements, and the Ambassador had
24 had a falling out with him over his political activities.

25 My actions upon arriving on the scene were simply to

1 tender the whole problem of relations with the Guard to the
2 embassy, saying, in effect, look, we have an election coming
3 up in this country. This is going to be a very political
4 year ahead. The United States Southern Command has many
5 problems on its list of missions which are going to require
6 my frequent absence from the country, so you, Mr. Ambassador,
7 are going to call the shots here, and my instructions to my
8 subordinates were to do nothing that was not decided upon or
9 cleared with the embassy.

10 Senator Kerry: Now, the military command had under its
11 control, did it not, several intelligence agencies. Is that
12 accurate?

13 General Gorman: Yes.

14 Senator Kerry: Would you describe those for us?

15 General Gorman: I would prefer not to.

16 Senator Kerry: I do not mean describe them in detail but
17 just by heading. The Navy had one; the Army had one. Is
18 that accurate? Each had its intelligence unit?

19 General Gorman: Yes. Each of the service components
20 under my command had intelligence organizations. They were a
21 nexus of various kinds of organizations with varying
22 capabilities, and they changed from time to time.

23 Senator Kerry: Prior to your arrival in Panama as
24 commander, you received both from general sources, diplomatic
25 network, word of mouth, et cetera, as well as from

1 intelligence sources briefings and knowledge of the region,
2 did you not?

3 General Gorman: I did.

4 Senator Kerry: Did that knowledge include a knowledge of
5 Noriega and his nefarious activities?

6 General Gorman: Noriega was, at the time, a colonel, the
7 head of Panamanian Intelligence. Yes, he was identified to
8 me.

9 After I became the Commander in Chief, I had an
10 investigation conducted into Colonel Noriega's connections
11 and activities. The picture that emerged was definitely not
12 one of a blue collar criminal. This fellow was or at least
13 behaved as though he was a businessman. He had holdings in
14 all sorts of commercial enterprises: shipping firms;
15 airlines; various kinds of importing and exporting activities.

16 It was quite evident that very little was going on of a
17 commercial nature in Panama from which he did not in some
18 sense directly profit. He was making money and making money
19 in a very diverse way.

20 Senator Kerry: Did you understand precisely how he was
21 doing that?

22 General Gorman: No.

23 Senator Kerry: Did you come to learn that?

24 General Gorman: No.

25 The reports that I got were all of the second and third

1 party nature: It is rumored that, it is reported that, we
2 believe that this and thus is so.

3 What I got was the impression of a man who was certainly
4 venal, was involved in a lot of very, very shady kinds of
5 undertakings; but I never saw a report that pinned him
6 specifically to a criminal act or undertaking of the sort
7 that one could adduce in a court.

8 Senator Kerry: Were you there at the time that Dr. Hugo
9 Spadafora was killed?

10 General Gorman: No.

11 Senator Kerry: You had left just prior to that?

12 General Gorman: That is right.

13 Senator Kerry: That was late 1985, I guess.

14 Now, when did you first hear that General Noriega was
15 involved in laundering drug money in the narcotics business?

16 General Gorman: In the President's Commission on
17 Organized Crime there were documents that were put in front
18 of us for our examination. I was asked to comment on all of
19 that.

20 Senator Kerry: When was that?

21 General Gorman: 1986.

22 Senator Kerry: Prior to that, while you were in Southern
23 Command?

24 General Gorman: No; to the contrary. The
25 representations that were made to me then by presumably

1 knowledgeable officials of the embassy were that General
2 Norlega was a major contributor to American efforts to do
3 something about narco trafficking.

4 Senator Kerry: If I could just interrupt you for a
5 minute.

6 Those responses were in response to your inquiries of
7 concern, were they not? You were raising this issue as one
8 of concern?

9 General Gorman: Yes.

10 Senator Kerry: You were told essentially no, General, do
11 not worry, things are okay? Is that accurate?

12 General Gorman: That is accurate.

13 Senator Kerry: Now, can you tell us what officials
14 shared that with you?

15 General Gorman: Again, I would prefer to identify those
16 officials, because of their job, to you in executive session.

17 But suffice to say, they were in a position to know.
18 They pointed out to me that General Norlega, by this time now
19 a general and by this time a commander of what he had renamed
20 the Panamanian Defense Forces, had cooperated with the United
21 States to the extent of identifying and destroying a large
22 shipment of diethyl ether, one of the agents used in cocaine
23 processing, and General Norlega had conducted an attack on a
24 Colombian drug processing laboratory that he had detected in
25 the Darien.

1 These were cited as just the most visible evidences of
2 the degree to which he was cooperating with American agencies
3 concerned with such matters.

4 Senator Kerry: Now, it is true, is it not, that of the
5 23 people arrested, including General Noriega's secretary or,
6 I believe, second in command, Lieutenant Mello, who were
7 arrested at Darien, they were all released subsequently? Is
8 that accurate?

9 General Gorman: I cannot testify to that. I do not know.

10 Senator Kerry: Well, there will be later testimony in
11 the course of the hearings as to what happened.

12 General Gorman: Yes. I know that Mello was in
13 Venezuela, I believe.

14 Senator Kerry: You know Mello, who was arrested in
15 Darien, to be who?

16 General Gorman: I cannot say. I do not know.

17 Senator Kerry: Now, General, were there officials within
18 our government during that course of time that you were there
19 and subsequently who wanted to take action against Noriega?

20 General Gorman: I do not know anyone who has ever dealt
21 with General Noriega in an official capacity for the United
22 States Government that would not have preferred to be dealing
23 with somebody else.

24 Senator Kerry: More specifically, were there not efforts
25 made by some of these people to push a specific detachment

1 process, to say we have to move to the alternative? Were
2 there not specific recommendations by people?

3 General Gorman: I did not hear any when I was in office,
4 Senator.

5 Senator Kerry: Did you make any?

6 General Gorman: No, I did not. My attitude on Noriega
7 is very similar to that of Mr. Morgenthau. I see him as a
8 player on the rump of the elephant. He was certainly not a
9 major strategic factor, in my view, given the missions that I
10 was discharging for the government. He was a very minor
11 player.

12 Senator Kerry: What services did General Noriega perform
13 for the United States, to your knowledge, that gave him this
14 claim on us?

15 General Gorman: Well, to cite my own particular
16 relationships with him, he promised to permit me to retain
17 the School of the Americas in the Republic of Panama, a move
18 that would have been advantageous for Panama and for the
19 United States.

20 He did not deliver on that promise. So as far as the one
21 thing that I personally asked of him, I got nothing for that
22 relationship.

23 Concerning the other contributions that he is alleged to
24 have made, I can only say "alleged" because I get it
25 secondhand. He was dealing with officials of the embassy on

1 matters pertaining to drug trafficking, which we just
2 discussed; the Cuban presence in Panama, one of the largest
3 in the hemisphere. Just off of the end of the runway of
4 Howard Air Force Base belonging to the United States Southern
5 Command is the Pacific base of the Cuban fishing fleet.
6 There is very substantial coming and going of Cubans every
7 week to and from that installation.

8 Senator Kerry: Were you aware at any time of his
9 trafficking in visas for Cubans?

10 General Gorman: I knew that he was deeply involved in
11 the comings and goings of Cubans.

12 Senator Kerry: Do you want to be more explicit?

13 General Gorman: No, I do not think so.

14 Senator Kerry: Not at this time?

15 General Gorman: Right.

16 Senator Kerry: We will get it out in executive session.

17 General Gorman: Yes, I think you need an executive
18 session.

19 He traveled widely, and he reported to American officials
20 on his travels. He traveled in France, in Northern Africa;
21 he visited Cuba frequently and had conversations with Fidel
22 Castro; and he provided reports concerning these
23 conversations.

24 I do not think any of us put much credence in what he
25 said, but there certainly was that kind of --

1 Senator Kerry: When you say "none of us put much
2 credence", he was a CIA operator. He was working with the
3 CIA at that time; correct?

4 General Gorman: I do not want to testify about that.

5 Senator Kerry: Well, it has been published.

6 General Gorman: I did not put much credence in it.

7 Senator Kerry: It has been publicly stated in most
8 journals in the United States that he was working for the CIA
9 at the time. Is that not a matter of public record?

10 General Gorman: Most journals in the United States are
11 wrong most of the time about such matters, Senator.

12 Senator Kerry: Are they wrong about that one, or you do
13 not want to testify?

14 General Gorman: I do not want to testify.

15 Senator Kerry: When you say we did not put much stock in
16 what he was saying, why was the relationship important, then?

17 General Gorman: It was not important to me.

18 Senator Kerry: Why was it important to others?

19 General Gorman: I cannot testify. I do not know.

20 Senator Kerry: You have no sense of that at all?
21 Speculatively, you have no opinion as to why people found it
22 still important?

23 General Gorman: I could certainly repeat what I said
24 before. Our headquarters was there. We were, in effect, in
25 the hands of this man.

1 Secondly, he did have significant power to harass, to
2 intimidate and to make life difficult for the men and women
3 of my command. I, therefore, treated him with a degree of
4 circumspection. I would not do anything to irritate him lest
5 he indulge in one of his picayune acts of retribution, of
6 which we knew him to be fully capable.

7 Senator Kerry: I want to come back to General Noriega in
8 a couple of contexts, but I would like to keep going on this
9 broad issue that we are talking about a little bit, because I
10 think it ties into it and to some of the final questions
11 about it.

12 have narcotics traffickers begun to operate out of Costa
13 Rica and to establish air strips and other infrastructure in
14 Costa Rica?

15 General Gorman: I began to see as early as 1984 evidence
16 of increased traffic out of Colombia and out of Panama into
17 Costa Rica.

18 I know from my own sources and from that of other
19 agencies that there was a significant increase each year in
20 1984 and 1985 when I last looked at it.

21 I looked at statistics when I was with the President's
22 Commission on Organized Crime, which seemed to imply that the
23 trafficking involved both marijuana and cocaine and that,
24 beginning in 1984, there was a significant indigenous
25 marijuana growing operation, particularly in the northern

1 part of the country where the Costa Rican law apparatus is
2 scanty, at best.

3 The Costa Ricans that I know, officials of the Costa
4 Rican government who dealt with such matters, were, at the
5 time that I left, very apprehensive about the implications of
6 that for the future, but I have no recent information that I
7 could impart.

8 Senator Kerry: What about Cuba during the period that
9 you were there?

10 General Gorman: Cuba is an interesting case because it
11 is on the opposite side of the ledger. All of the
12 information at my disposal suggests that the Cubans made it
13 possible for drug traffickers to do business without
14 significant interference from the Cuban security apparatus.

15 Indeed, there is a lot of evidence that they got, in some
16 instance at least, active cooperation in terms of ports made
17 available, islands made available for the transfer of
18 substances from a large oceangoing vessel to a small boat for
19 a run-in to the United States, et cetera.

20 Senator Kerry: I might add that a number of our
21 witnesses, beginning this afternoon with the personal
22 involvements, will corroborate that in testimony.

23 General Gorman: In that connection, it is worth noting,
24 and it goes again to this hearing in 1984 that I mentioned to
25 Senator Moynihan, in that same hearing I laid out what I knew

1 about the movement of the Escobar Operation from Colombia
2 into Nicaragua, a move which was apparently done with
3 significant involvement of Cubans.

4 There were a lot of goings and comings between Nicaragua
5 and Cuba associated with the activity at Los Brasillas
6 Airport. We were very puzzled by all of that. We did not
7 know what was going on. I did not really understand what was
8 happening until the indictments were brought in the federal
9 court in Florida concerning the drug operation that Mr.
10 Escobar was running.

11 That airport, Las Brasillas, is north and west of the
12 capital, and we knew it to be under the control of the
13 Ministry of the Interior. What we did not understand is why
14 all the Cubans were going and coming into that particular
15 locale.

16 Well, if you can take the incidents that have been
17 reported in court as indicative of what was happening, it is
18 as simple as Mr. Escobar set up his drug processing lab there
19 with the assistance of a number of Cubans.

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1 Senator Kerry: Did you gain evidence of increasing drug
2 trafficking and involvement of the Medellin cartel with
3 either Nicaragua, the Bahamas, or Mexico? Or all three?

4 General Gorman: First, let me make the point that I did
5 not suffer from a lack of people who spoke the language. I
6 had individuals in my organizations who were Columbianos, who
7 knew the parlance of the traffickers, and my heart goes out
8 to the law enforcement agencies that have to deal with these
9 matters.

10 Without that kind of talent, it is a very difficult
11 target. They are very circumspect. They have burst
12 transmission communications equipment, as I mentioned
13 earlier, a high degree of encryption. It is a tough target.

14 The trends throughout 1984, as near as we were able to
15 track them from the distance at which we were then operating,
16 were that the pressure mounted by the Betancourt government
17 had caused a number of the Medellin cartel to make the
18 decision to move their operations outside of the country.

19 One of those moves was into Nicaragua. And as I say, we
20 did not really understand what was going on until after the
21 DEA brought forward its evidence in court. But it does seem
22 that that was just one of a number of such displacements.

23 We had reason to believe at the time that some of the
24 operations were moved into Venezuela. We had reason to
25 believe that some of them were moved into Brazil. We had

1 some information, not corroborated, that some had been moved
2 into Ecuador.

3 But the movements that were the easiest to follow were
4 those into the Caribbean Islands and Nicaragua. And I think
5 that that probably happened.

6 Senator Kerry, I live just a few miles from a farm in
7 Virginia which was rented by a group of Columbians and
8 converted into a cocaine processing laboratory. They were
9 flying paste into the United States.

10 Now, when they will go to that length, you can imagine
11 the economic disadvantage of doing that when you go from
12 paste to crystal and you decrease the volume and weight by a
13 factor of 200.

14 If they are willing to do that, they have got the
15 wherewithal to go almost anywhere they want to. And that
16 bespeaks the importance of regionality in addressing this
17 phenomenon.

18 One of the dysfunctions of the United States government
19 in getting a handle on this is our propensity to wire up our
20 embassies in stovepipes. The chief of station reporting up a
21 stovepipe, the ambassador reporting up a stovepipe.

22 Very little exchange of information among the several
23 undertakings in the region. And that kind of a regional
24 flushout phenomenon, as I say, did not make sense because of
25 this blind side in our military intelligence. We did not

1 understand enough about the drug business.

2 Let me give you one other example which goes to this
3 difficulty. There is a facility in Miami which is supposed
4 to be watching the Caribbean basin for the purposes of
5 detecting inbound drug shipments.

6 When I testified before the House Joint Committee on
7 Narcotics in 1985 I took advantage of being there to walk
8 across the street and into this center and ask to see some of
9 their recent information pertaining to drug movements.

10 And I was surprised to discover in the first batch of
11 reports they handed to me a group of reports from El
12 Salvador, of aircraft coming and going, landing in El
13 Salvador, and then departing on northerly azimuths, as though
14 they were flying up into Guatemala or Mexico.

15 I did not have any of that kind of information available
16 to me in my previous command. I inquired whether my
17 successor had access to such information. The answer was
18 no.

19 There is a membrane, an artificial membrane, between the
20 intelligence relating to the drug business and the
21 intelligence relating to the military business. My argument
22 then and now is that we should not allow that kind of
23 distinction to be drawn.

24 And I think that much has been done within the
25 intelligence community to break down those membranes. But I

1 am not confident that the traditional law enforcement person
2 looks at intelligence the way that a military intelligence
3 officer would regard it.

4 The whole fixation on prosecution leads to a set of
5 procedures and EEI, essential elements of information, which
6 are very different from what a military intelligence
7 operation would focus on. We need both. We have not been
8 getting it.

9 Senator Kerry: How do narcotics traffickers tie in with
10 guerilla movements of left or right?

11 General Gorman: That is different, of course, country by
12 country. Let us start by saying that if one wants to
13 organize an armed resistance or an armed undertaking for any
14 purposes, the easy place to get the money and the easy places
15 to get the guns are in the drug world.

16 So whether you are --

17 Senator Kerry: Let me just interrupt you. You said to
18 me earlier when we were talking that not a group, there is
19 not a group that does not use narcotics in order to fund it
20 at some point.

21 General Gorman: I believe that to be the case. I know
22 of no exception.

23 Senator Kerry: Did you run into that while you were in
24 Central America? Did you see that happening with respect to
25 El Salvador or Nicaragua or any of those areas?

1 General Gorman: The Salvadorean guerillas grow pot and
2 sell it on the local markets. Virtually everybody who thinks
3 about a revolutionary, or coup detat, revolutionary movement
4 or a coup detat, et cetera, has to get money.

5 Now, this is, I think, a very central issue. It goes
6 back to the point that I made about the importance of the
7 United States getting a handle on the money flows. If you
8 want to have a revolution, Senator, get money.

9 Money is what fueled the Salvadoreans. Not Marxist
10 ideology, but money. And the money came from diverse
11 overseas sources. We know a lot about that now that we did
12 not back in 1983. Or we learned a lot about it in 1983 and
13 1984.

14 But without money, there would have been no violence. Or
15 certainly not the degree of violence that existed in that
16 country. The most ready source of money, big money, easy
17 money, fast money, sure money, cash money, is the narcotics
18 racket.

19 Senator Kerry: Were you aware at any time of the
20 Southern front depending on narcotics money to support it?

21 General Gorman: Referring to the --

22 Senator Kerry: Southern front in Costa Rica, the
23 Southern front with respect to Nicaragua.

24 General Gorman: Well, as I say, I knew that there were
25 fairly sizable marijuana operations up there. Now, whether

1 those were contras, you know there are 200,000 Nicas in Costa
2 Rica right now.

3 And up on that border there were defectors from the
4 Nicaraguan armed forces, there were so-called contras,
5 sometimes contras sometimes not --

6 Senator Kerry: What I am trying to get at is not as
7 specific. Based on your knowledge of how it works and what
8 you understood from your experience down there, it would not
9 surprise you?

10 General Gorman: Not at all. Particularly if they had
11 been on somebody's payroll and had their funds cut off, would
12 be the natural recourse of those people.

13 Senator Kerry: Now, you also said that when Mr. Noriega
14 visited the United States he visited in a different way than
15 other people that were under your command. Can you describe
16 that?

17 General Gorman: Typically, when a senior military
18 commander came to the United States, he was the guest of the
19 military establishment of the United States, and would
20 usually be escorted by myself or by one of my principals
21 while he was up here. Normal courtesy plus our interest in
22 hearing what he said.

23 So, for example, I visited this body with the Commander
24 of the armed forces of Honduras twice, the Minister of
25 Defense of El Salvador on two occasions, the Minister of

1 Defense of Columbia, several other visits which I did not
2 personally attend to came out of my command.

3 We never, in my memory, sponsored a visit, General
4 Noriega had other mechanisms at his disposal for visiting the
5 United States and other sponsors here. They were not the
6 military.

7 And I do not think, you know, that General Noriega
8 considered himself just a military commander. He saw himself
9 as the embodiment of the dream of Omar Torillos.

10 Senator Kerry: Who did sponsor his visit when he came up
11 here?

12 General Gorman: Another agency of the government,
13 Senator.

14 Senator Kerry: Not the State Department.

15 General Gorman: Not the State Department.

16 Senator Kerry: Not the White House specifically.

17 General Gorman: No.

18 Senator Kerry: Not Health and Human Services,
19 certainly.

20 General Gorman: Not to my knowledge.

21 Senator Kerry: Did anybody want you to keep some
22 distance from Noriega during the time you were there?

23 General Gorman: I never received any such instructions,
24 except from the Ambassador, and then under specific cases in
25 point.

1 Senator Kerry: But you did receive specific instructions
2 from the Ambassador as to certain cases.

3 General Gorman: Oh, yes.

4 Senator Kerry: And do you recall what those were?

5 General Gorman: Well, for example, in the whole set of
6 negotiations involving the Paredes retirement and the role
7 that Paredes was going to play in the upcoming political
8 campaign, we got guidance from the Ambassador to keep away
9 from any association with the social events and avoid making
10 any statements that might be used on behalf of what the
11 embassy regarded as an untoward development in Panamanian
12 politics. A judgment in which they were eminently correct.

13 Senator Kerry: While you were at the Southern Command,
14 were you ever advised by anyone that Noriega was providing
15 help to the contras at the request of the United States?

16 General Gorman: No.

17 Senator Kerry: You never had any knowledge of that?

18 General Gorman: No, and I would be pretty sure that if
19 it were going on in that sense, somehow or other we would
20 have picked that up.

21 Senator Kerry: Were you ever aware during that period of
22 time of arms shipments to El Salvador, or anywhere else, by
23 General Noriega?

24 General Gorman: No.

25 Senator Kerry: Your intelligence did not have that, or

1 you did not at that point?

2 General Gorman: There was some cooperation between the
3 Panamanian defense forces and the Salvadorean defense
4 forces.

5 General Noriega took a direct interest in the raising and
6 training of the civil defense forces in El Salvador as an
7 example. Some Panamanian officers went up and worked with
8 Salvadorean staff on preparation of plans.

9 But I do not know of any arms shipments as such. And I
10 think, again, I would think that I would have known that.

11 Senator Kerry: At one point you tried to argue within
12 the Defense Department that you thought there were things we
13 could do and that we ought to be doing with respect to this
14 Central America narcotics problem, but that you felt you did
15 not get a favorable hearing, or you could not make it move.
16 Can you describe that?

17 General Gorman: Yes. The representations that I made to
18 you today are essentially those that I made beginning in
19 1983.

20 I was trying to draw the attention of the Department of
21 Defense to the larger strategic issues, the more enduring
22 strategic issues. You will recall, I am sure, vividly, that
23 in those years nobody wanted to talk about anything but El
24 Salvador.

25 El Salvador was the problem. Not the contras, not

1 Nicaragua, but El Salvador. And that remained the case, I
2 would say, until, just about until I left office. Then the
3 focus began to shift to the Nicaraguan incident, and the
4 support of the contras.

5 But I could not get the attention of the JCS or the
6 Secretary of Defense on what I considered to be the more
7 acute problem, certainly the one that was going to be of much
8 longer duration for the United States, this massive powerful
9 emerging phenomenon of these international drug cartels.

10 Senator Kerry: With respect to the international drug
11 cartel and that effort in the Defense Department, in our
12 private conversations you made what I thought were some very
13 straightforward, graphic descriptions of the problem.

14 And to paraphrase quote you, if I may without violating
15 anything that I think was between us, I hope, and you tell me
16 if you do not want me to say that. But you said we are a day
17 late, a dollar short, you said we are talking, promising,
18 failing to deliver year after year.

19 General Gorman: I said that.

20 Senator Kerry: You said the gun and badge boys cannot do
21 it.

22 General Gorman: I said that. Cannot do it alone.

23 Senator Kerry: Cannot do it alone.

24 General Gorman: Cannot do it alone.

25 Senator Kerry: I agree. That these guys are a very well

1 organized phenomenon. Almost organized like a military
2 campaign. Why are we a dollar late, short? Why are we
3 failing, what is your sense of why we are failing on this?

4 General Gorman: Well, let me cite three contributing,
5 these are almost cultural sorts of attitudinal problems.

6 The first is that the primary mission, focus, the proper
7 preoccupation of the Department of Defense is the East-West
8 problem, particularly the Soviet problem. And if it is not
9 colored Soviet, it is not a matter for the Department of
10 Defense.

11 I happen to believe, and I am sure you would agree, that
12 many of the threats to our security arise from factors over
13 which the Soviets exert very little control, if any. And
14 many of the problems that we face would exist if there were
15 no Soviet Union or, a compliant, friendly cooperate Soviet
16 Union.

17 But there are many in the Department of Defense, and they
18 are in very high positions, who simply believe that if it is
19 not part of the U.S.-Soviet business, the military has no
20 role, or the Department has no role or prerogative.

21 Second, there are many who hold with great vehemence to
22 the belief that there ought to be a "separation of powers"
23 between the military and the law enforcement agencies. And
24 they see the boundaries that have been drawn between them
25 since the drafting of the Constitution, as right, proper,

1 something to be safeguarded. And they can get very
2 principled, I guess is the word about all of that.

3 Again, I simply believe that we are dealing here with a
4 phenomenon that requires us to reconsider those legal
5 boundaries. The Congress has shown a much more illumined
6 attitude in its moves on Posse Comitatus, for example, than
7 some of the senior officials of the Department of Defense.

8 Finally, it is a dirty business, Senator. It is not a
9 crisp, clean set of issues and undertakings. And frankly, a
10 lot of my fellow professionals are simply repelled by the
11 kinds of people they have to do business with in order to get
12 into this realm. They would much prefer to consign it to the
13 Coast Guard and the other law enforcement agencies.

14 Put all of that together, and you can begin to see why
15 some of these representations fall on deaf ears. And then,
16 of course, there is the question of priorities in a time of
17 dwindling budgets.

18 All of this can only be undertaken at the expense of
19 something else, and that something else is always much more
20 important.

21 Senator Kerry: With respect to that attitude, et cetera,
22 as far back as the early 1970s, President Nixon's drug
23 enforcement administration was picking up intelligence on
24 General Noriega's involvement in narcotics trafficking. You
25 are aware of that, correct?

1 General Gorman: No, I am not aware, you know, how far
2 back all of that goes.

3 Senator Kerry: But narcotics trafficking on the part of
4 certain elements of the Panamanian defense forces became part
5 of the canal treaty discussions in 1977. You are aware of
6 that?

7 General Gorman: Not aware of that.

8 Senator Kerry: You are not aware of that.

9 General Gorman: But I am not surprised, I am not
10 surprised.

11 Senator Kerry: Then in 1984, as you are aware, General
12 Noriega provides safe haven for key members of the Medellin
13 cartel. Correct?

14 General Gorman: During the negotiations with the
15 Attorney General of Columbia, at the request of President
16 Betancourt.

17 Senator Kerry: At that point, Panama becomes a major
18 drug laundering, money laundering, drug transit money
19 laundering locale. Correct?

20 General Gorman: Correct.

21 Senator Kerry: Today, General Noriega stands indicted by
22 two United States grand juries. Today it is fair to say that
23 the interests we have in Panama are greatly at risk, that the
24 country is destabilized. Is that not accurate?

25 General Gorman: Yes.

1 Senator Kerry: So what do we say about that policy? In
2 light of that history, how well have the national security
3 interests of the United States been protected while we have
4 basically been willing to bed down with this narcotics
5 trafficker of major consequence?

6 General Gorman: The whole history of our relationship
7 with the Republic of Panama has a severe indictment of the
8 United States' ability to handle its relationship with any
9 foreign country.

10 But it is a particular indictment because in this
11 country, as in the case of the Republic of the Philippines,
12 we have had a long residential involvement, unlike our
13 relationship with Columbia, for example.

14 I mean, we are part and parcel of the history of Panama
15 in a blood sense, and in an in situ sense. And the fact that
16 we have allowed these events to eventuate in the country
17 being run by this pimple on the rump of an elephant, to use
18 Mr. Morgenthau's phrase, is a travesty of sorts in American
19 history.

20 And I do not exempt myself from blame in this respect. I
21 should have been more prescient, should have been more
22 aggressive. I suppose that most other officials, like me,
23 would make the same case. That back at the time I had my
24 mind on other things and I did not see, I could not foresee
25 where all of this would go.

1 Senator Kerry: Well, General, I think you have been very
2 forthcoming, and I certainly appreciate your testimony.
3 There are some questions that we do want to ask you in
4 Executive Session, and there are a few that we want to ask
5 about the record. The time is moving rapidly.

6 I am going to place some questions in the record from
7 Senator D'Amato, which you would also like to have answered.
8 If I may, there is one item here that I got delivered to me
9 this morning, I did not have a chance to ask you.

10 And if you could, perhaps, approach me here, because I
11 just want to see if you can answer it, and I will not ask the
12 question if you cannot.

13 General Gorman: Let the record reflect I'm approaching.

14 Senator Kerry: Thank you very much, General. What I
15 would like to do is identify for the record an exhibit which
16 we will call Exhibit No. 1, which is a now-unclassified page
17 of Oliver North's diaries which bears in it the title General
18 Gorman underlined, and then asterisk, include drug case. And
19 you have seen that now, and you understand that?

20 General Gorman: Yes, sir. What is the date again?

21 Senator Kerry: The date is 12 June 1984. Did you have
22 occasion to meet with Oliver North frequently?

23 General Gorman: Frequently, yes.

24 Senator Kerry: With respect to?

25 General Gorman: Well, he travelled frequently in the

1 region, usually with an official party of some description.
2 I don't know about the particular date, but I could infer
3 that it is a reference to the point that SOUTHCOM's
4 briefings, both in Washington and in the region, always
5 included the drug case.

6 That is to say, we were trying to call attention to
7 visiting Congressional delegations, visiting teams from the
8 Administration, to the fact that the problem in the region
9 was significantly larger than the rubric of the Salvadorean
10 insurgency.

11 And I do not know, again. There is just those cryptic
12 phrases there from which to draw for an aide memoir. But I
13 would infer from the way that's laid out that he is thinking
14 of including in his own presentations a comparable
15 dimension.

16 And I would guess that what is underneath there that is
17 blocked out is probably some of the stuff that he picked up
18 from one of our conversations.

19 Senator Kerry: So the drug issue was at that time being
20 discussed?

21 General Gorman: Well, I was certainly doing my
22 damndest, Senator, to discuss it. Each of my presentations
23 to the Defense Resources Board, each of my meetings with the
24 JCS, any opportunity that I had to testify before this body
25 or the other I brought it up.

1 Senator Kerry: Okay. Well, I thank you very much, and
2 that helps us enormously. What I would like to do is reserve
3 the right, General, if you are willing, we would like to
4 follow up on some of those things privately, if we can.

5 General Gorman: Yes, sir.

6 Senator Kerry: And talk further. We will recess until
7 2:00, when we will resume for the afternoon witnesses. Thank
8 you very much.

9 [Whereupon, at 1:10 p.m., the hearing was recessed, to
10 resume at 2:00 p.m. the same day.]

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