ILLICIT DRUG AVAILABILITY: ARE INTERDICTION EFFORTS HAMPERED BY A LACK OF AGENCY RESOURCES?

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JUNE 27 AND 28, 1995

Printed for the use of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

26-966 CC WASHINGTON : 1996

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402
ISBN 0-16-053761-4

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ILLICIT DRUG AVAILABILITY: ARE INTERDICTION EFFORTS HAMPERED BY A LACK OF AGENCY RESOURCES?

TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 1995

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:45 a.m., in room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. William H. Zeliff (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Zeliff, Ros-Lehtinen, Blute, Souder, Shadegg, Thurman, Slaughter, and Condit.

Also present: Representative Clinger.

Staff present: Robert B. Charles, staff director and chief counsel; Judy McCoy, chief clerk; Jane Cobb, professional staff member; Donald Goldberg, minority assistant to counsel; Cherri Branson, minority professional staff member; and Jean Gosa, minority staff assistant.

Mr. ZELIFF. Good morning. The Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice will now come to order.

This hearing is to continue our review of the President's national drug control strategy. Over the next 2 days, we will focus on the availability of illegal drugs in our Nation and the effectiveness of current drug interdiction efforts.

In my view, no problem is of greater significance to the Nation than illegal drugs. No American citizen is untouched by this national security threat. The influence of illegal drugs and violent drug cartels is painfully visible in the rise of street violence, domestic abuse, urban family breakup, medical costs for crack babies, AIDS, gunshot wounds, drug abuse treatment and overdoses. Illegal drugs suck up an estimated $50 billion out of the U.S. economy every year. Illegal drugs are now linked to roughly 80 percent of the Nation's prison population. Illegal drugs rip at the Nation's moral fiber, and their influence cries out for action by our Nation's leaders.

I dodge no bullets. This responsibility is ours in Congress as much as it is the President's. But with drug availability and drug use increasing sharply across the board in all age categories over the last 3 years, especially among our Nation's young children, we must act as a Nation now. We must talk about it, confront drug

use and stop it. We must put a high priority on it. And if we don't do it now, we are likely not to get a second chance.

Since our first hearing in March when we were privileged to hear the testimony from Mrs. Nancy Reagan, I have gone to the front lines in the drug war. We have visited prisons, prevention centers, talked with kids and commanding officers and even spent time in the transit interdiction zone. I am convinced, now more than ever, that our Nation is in the grip of a threat that we have too easily underestimated.

With that realization, I have called upon my congressional colleagues and the White House to join me in forging a bipartisan effort to reawaken the Nation. These hearings are a part of that effort. I renew that call today, and I stand ready to work with President Clinton. We will and we must target this threat head-on, together, on a nonpartisan basis. Now, obviously, we should do it across the board; but if in fact we can't get total support, the Congress will have to do it on their own.

Today and tomorrow we will hear from the agency heads leading the interdiction effort and see demonstrations, including drug-sniffing dogs, which will come up shortly, and state-of-the-art technology. We will hear testimony from the head of the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Customs Service, as well as policy leaders at the Departments of State and Defense. We will hear a report from the Government Accounting Office, based on their recent study of United States efforts in Colombia and Mexico.

And, this morning, we are privileged to have with us some very outstanding students from Washington, DC. They are mostly eighth graders. I believe there is also a ninth grader, and a seventh grader. They are local kids that are doing a great job. They are outstanding leaders in the drug war. They have each been selected by the Drug Enforcement Administration and are members of a leadership group called Students Mobilized Against Drugs. To them, especially, I say welcome and thank you all for coming. It's a privilege to have you here.

When all is said and done, it is for the Nation's children that we are here. Because if we do not move swiftly, forcefully and effectively to confront the national security threat posed by rising drug availability and the drug cartels, our children and our grandchildren will be the ones that will lose the most.

Before we hear from our young witnesses I would like to explain that the U.S. Customs Service has brought two drug-sniffing dogs for demonstration purposes, and after opening statements from the ranking minority leader we will start with that demonstration immediately.

The Chair now recognizes the ranking minority leader, my good friend from Florida, Karen Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to recognize Chairman Zeliff for his continuing commitment to this important issue.

This is the third in our series of hearings examining the Nation's continuing fight against drugs. Since our first hearing in March, this subcommittee has devoted a great deal of energy on what, un-

fortunately, is still a very serious threat facing our youth. As we have heard, drug use is again on the rise among young people.

I would like to reiterate a point I have made previously: Drugs have no ideological affiliation. While there will continue to be disagreements over the effectiveness of interdiction strategies and our commitment to treatment and prevention efforts, such as the drug-free schools program, I do know that all of us on this subcommittee are committed to the same singular goal: eradicating drugs and their crippling effects from the lives of our citizens.

While the drug war continues to rage, we have witnessed a recent and significant victory. The arrest of the head of the Cali cartel in Colombia puts a dent in South American drug trafficking.

As reported in an article by Michael Massing in this Sunday's Washington Post, former DEA Administrator Robert Bonner suggested or stated during his tenure that the Cali cartel is the most powerful criminal organization in the world. No drug organization rivals them today or perhaps any time in history. I am sure current Administrator Constantine will elaborate on this important development.

In addition, the Government of Mexico is indicating more willingness to act against its own powerful drug lords. This will be a major battle as the land routes from Mexico continue to bring in the cocaine and heroin that finds its way into American streets.

As we will hear today, source country interdiction has been very successful in the past 3 months. Since the United States resumed information sharing with the Government of Colombia and Peru in March of this year, the Colombian Air Force has captured or destroyed 10 aircraft and the Government of Peru has seized four and shot down one. The result so far is that there are no more north-to-south flights being picked up on radar. They have stopped.

Other intelligence shows that there is a significant backlog of cocaine on the ground in Peru because drug pilots are afraid to take to the air. However, we have seen victories before, huge shipments seized and arrests made.

I am very concerned about stated priorities versus actions in the House. We will hear from the agencies that are testifying before us about the lack of necessary resources to carry out interdiction efforts. The Foreign Operations Appropriations Act that we are considering this week will reduce international narcotics control funds by more than $100 million—from $213 million to $105 million for fiscal years 1996 and 1997. This is distressing, since the House just recently approved H.R. 1561, the American Overseas Interest Act of 1995, which authorized the higher figure of $213 million.

However, even if we have unlimited resources and material and involved the entire military in the war on drugs, the sad fact is that drugs will not disappear. As long as there is a demand, the supply of drugs will find a way to the users.

We must remember to not focus only on interdiction efforts but on prevention. Only through a multi-prong strategy will we be able to make progress with this problem.

In closing, let me once again pledge my full support to Chairman Zeliff and the administration in combating drugs. Only by working together will we be able to find an ultimate solution.

Finally, let me thank today's witnesses for participating in this important hearing. I especially want to take this time to recognize the students who have come this morning to testify. Just so you will know, I used to teach eighth graders math in Florida before I got into politics, and I am very interested to hear what our student panel has to say about the drug situation in today's schools, and we thank you all for being here today.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you Mrs. Thurman.

If agreeable, in order to save time and to hear the valuable testimony before us, I would appreciate it if all opening statements by other Members could be submitted in writing for the record. Is that agreeable?

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Yes, that is agreeable.

Mr. ZELIFF. Without objection, so ordered.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Cardiss Collins follows:]

STATEMENT OF REP. CARDISS COLLINS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

U.S. DRUG INTERDICTION EFFORTS

I would like to commend Chairman Zeliff for holding these hearings. The influx of illegal drugs has been a destructive force throughout this country, and is something that all of us in Congress have a responsibility to stop. We must examine the entire national drug strategy, from education in schools to drug treatment in prisons, to see what is working and what is not. Drug interdiction is a component of that strategy.

Two years ago, the Clinton Administration, relying on a lengthy study by the National Security Council, made the decision to shift some of the interdiction resources from the transit zones-- the Caribbean islands and passages through which many of the smugglers move-- to the source countries where the narcotics are produced.

One of the strong arguments for this change is that the smugglers are now shipping most of their drugs across the border with Mexico and by commercial shipping containers. Interdiction efforts in the transit zones cannot stop these shipments, but devoting more interdiction resources to the source countries can.

These hearings will allow us to examine the shift to see how well it is working. The government of Colombia, under increased pressure from the United States, recently arrested one of its biggest narco-traffickers. We will hear testimony from the Administration that since information sharing resumed in mid-March, the Colombian and Peruvian Air Forces have captured or destroyed more than a dozen smuggling aircraft.

As a result, the smuggling flights have virtually stopped. That means that the raw cocaine base cannot get to the Colombian production laboratories. Cocaine base is backlogged on the ground in Peru, its price is dropping, and the pilots will not fly.

However, we will also hear this morning that ship days, surveillance radars, and interdiction aircraft have been reduced and that seizures are down. That is the tradeoff that we need to review.

The resources devoted to the fight against illegal drugs is the responsibility not only of the Administration but also of this Congress. At the previous hearings that this Subcommittee held from Dr. Lee Brown, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, testified that House Republicans had cut all funding for the Drug Free Schools program, which is a cornerstone of our prevention and education efforts.

Now we see that the Appropriations Committee has passed an amendment that cuts more that half of the Administration's request for the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement.

The State Department budget is critical to the success of our interdiction strategy because it directly supports our cooperative drug programs including the training of foreign counternarcotics units by DEA, Customs, and the Coast Guard. It is essential that we develop trained law enforcement units in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and other sources nations to crack down on narcotics traffickers. We cannot do it all ourselves.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we do not find ourselves in a situation where this Committee has hearings on the need for more resources while the Appropriations Committee slashes those very funds.

There is the further troubling issue of proposed pension cuts that I would like to point out. I know that Mr. Zeliff heard this during his fact-finding trip last weekend, and there was an article about this pressing issue in the Washington Post this week. The problem is that if the Congress passes the pension proposals that were contained in the House Budget Resolution, we could see mass retirements by senior FBI and DEA agents.

That proposal was adopted without the approval of this Committee-- the Committee of jurisdiction-- and would have a devastating impact on this nation's crime fighting efforts. We cannot afford to lose our most senior law enforcement officers at a time when we need them the most.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to the testimony at these hearings, but I hope that our actions match our rhetoric.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would like to now introduce John Krob, the Canine Enforcement Officer Instructor, Course Development, for the U.S. Customs Service. John will kind of give you an overview of what to expect. And maybe introduce your special guest, if you would, John.

Mr. KROB. Thank you very much. Thank you very much for inviting me here. I was a little surprised at all the activities already going on in the building.

I am sure some of you have already seen one of the dogs that we have. Most of you are probably not familiar with where we train and how we train.

We are located in Front Royal, VA, on about 230 acres. It is the U.S. Canine Training Center. The dogs that you will see today, as do about 99 percent of the dogs, all come from dog pounds. We go out, and we procure these dogs. We look at about 70 dogs to find 1 dog that is appropriated for the dog program.

One of the things that we are looking for, one of the most important things is the intent to retrieve. So the dogs you will see today—one is a black Lab by the name of Garth Vader. This dog is still in class. He will be in class for about another 7 or 8 weeks.

The other dog will you see is a Golden Retriever who has a little seniority, about 7 years. You will see the difference in temperament.

Garth, the black dog that you will see here, is what we call a positive response dog, and this dog will bite and scratch. The other dog you will see, the Golden, Patton, is a passive response. That dog will sit once he detects the narcotics.

The narcotics that these dogs are trained for are heroin, cocaine, marijuana and hash. Of course, there are a lot of other derivatives that they can detect, such as prescription medicines.

To give you an idea how well these dogs work, last year we had approximately 430 dogs in the program to cover about 9,000 miles of border; and, out of that, they seized over $10 billion in narcotics, over $50 million in cash. So if you figure that for 430 dogs, they did quite a good job. And the nice part about it is all these dogs, or 99 percent of them, have all come from dog pounds.

Now what you are going to see today first is Garth. Garth Vader is going to come out here, and he is going to search these boxes.

Now, one of the things we look at is boldness. Now, this dog has never been in this building. This dog has never given a demonstration. So we brought him up here just to see how he would react, and he reacted very well.

So we are going to bring him up. We are going to run these empty boxes here, and he is going to sniff these boxes. And what is he doing? All he is doing is detecting the air around the boxes. His capability is about 250,000 to 300,000 times better than yours. So the most minute amount—if the odor is available and he is presented the odor, the dog should respond to that.

So we are going to run him through here, let the dog search. The handler is going to take him out, Jim Wilder. Then I am going to hide a narcotic box. In that narcotic box is marijuana. We are going to hide it here. We are going to run the dog again. The dog is going to, I hope, detect it.

And if he detects it, his reward will be this towel. This is what the dog works for right here, nothing else. This is his toy. If you have children at home, they have toys to play with, you have dogs at home, the dogs have toys to play with. This is his reward, his paycheck the rest of his life.

These dogs work till they are about 9 or 10 years old. And, of course, the handlers normally take them home with them because we give them all our secrets and stuff while we are driving down the road; and, needless to say, they know so much and we get so close to them we take them home with us.

This towel right here, again, I stress is their reward. Now what's going to happen once this dog responds to this box of narcotics, the handler will then receive—give him this reward. But we have done it a little different today so he can really do some tearing up. We have the towel also with the narcotics. So he can rip through the box, get his towel, his reward, and then he will play tug-of-war. Then we will take him out.

The golden retriever that you are going to see is just the opposite. This dog was trained to work in airline terminals, in passenger terminals. Because he's a passive dog, he will sit when he responds. Of course, we can't use a biting and scratching dog. We found out, of course, through years of experience that the drug smugglers are body-carrying this in, everything from adults to children to animals.

We also have a dog at the training center that you are probably aware of by the name of Cokie. Cokie also smuggled in approximately 5 pounds of narcotics through his stomach. And, needless to say, when he got to the other end, he probably would have been killed getting the narcotics out of him.

Now, Patton, if he was working at the airlines—if you have all flown before, you know it takes about 30 to 40, 50 minutes to get your bags, if you get them. Then you are standing around the luggage belt. And then a dog like Patton would come around the luggage belt really unnoticed and start working.

All this dog is working on is air currents. So there is a tremendous amount of air currents. So we will work this dog through the air currents; and once it detects an odor that he's been trained for—heroin, cocaine, marijuana and hash—then he will respond. He will work his way into as close as he can to the source, and then he will sit. And once he sits, then the handler then will show him the towel, make sure he sits, and then give to it him. And then a tug-of-war is presented after that, and that's the game.

So that's what you are going to see today. And I want you to understand we have 430 of these dogs, and that all of them have come from dog pounds. It costs about $4,000 a dog to train these, and you can see what kind of return we've gotten.

I worked in the Customs program 23 years, all in the dog program, and the influx of narcotics in the mind of these people who are smuggling is getting better and better every day, making it much more difficult for us to detect. So that means that our training has to be that much sharper.

We used to get our handlers from the military. Now we get the handlers from all over the country. So it is an opportunity for a lot of people to get into this program.

I think we have a dog out here already. This is Garth Vader?

Mr. WILDER. This is Garth.

Mr. KROB. All right, Jim. You might have to stand up to see this now. He is going to take a pass through, check everything out.

Mr. WILDER. Garth.

Mr. KROB. He searches in the box. He is trained to put his nose on the boxes. There is nothing up there. I want to make sure when you take him out you cover his eyes so he won't see this. Remember, they are color-blind, too.

Mr. WILDER. OK, here we come.

Mr. KROB. That was quick. They can do about 5,000 pounds of mail.

Mr. WILDER. Get it out of there. Get it, Garth. Get it. Tear it up. All right, that's my boy.

Mr. KROB. You notice he is all excited. The handler is excited. This is a game to the dog.

Now, don't think these boxes aren't tough. Believe me, they're tough. And this dog got through the box and into the towel in a heartbeat. This is all a game to them. His reward will be the towel, and that is the way it is done.

You will see a little bit more passive response in the next dog.

Mr. WILDER. All right.

Mr. KROB. I don't think we can use this dog in the terminals. He will be a little disruptive.

OK, can we give him a hand?

Mr. WILDER. All right.

Mr. KROB. Now, for this situation, we are going to have some volunteers. Watch that or my career is over. And then when it is over, I will show you the narcotics that are in there.

I already picked some volunteers. Would you like to come up? Some of them don't look like they are too happy about volunteering. You know, since the—we don't need all of you yet. Why don't we take these two gentlemen here, move them over here. No, you all come over here. We are going to run this thing twice, OK? Just line up here, line up here. We have to get some volunteers from up here.

How about you? What's your name?

Mr. STEPHEN SHADEGG. Stephen.

Mr. KROB. Stephen, come on up here. Come up here, Stephen.

You guys fly in? You did. Just line up here.

OK, what is going to happen here—the dog is going to come in here. Remember, this is a very short exercise. Normally, we can run 100, 200 passengers with no problem. We are going to do this very short.

The dog is going to come in, search back here. He is going to go behind, search them. He will come back out the same way. Then we'll put our plant in.

Steve, you don't have anything, do you?

Mr. STEPHEN SHADEGG. No.

Mr. KROB. OK. You are going to see as soon as the dog detects it, he is going to sit. He has been trained not to touch or jump on anyone.

Through a lot of tests, we have found out even if the narcotics are taped to the chest with time the narcotics will work its way all the way down to the ankle.

Jim is not here. OK. I gave you something, but I am going to take it back.

Also, what we have done, we go to so many schools we have decided to make trading cards the size of baseballs. They have the history on the back of the dog, a little bit about them, where they came from, the type of dog it is.

If you notice, if you go through these cards, you will see that the majority of them are going to be working dogs such as Bird Dogs, Labradors, Golden Retrievers, and German Shorthairs. A lot of people ask us why we don't use German Shepherds. Very often, it's because a lot of the time we have a tendency to have a lot of hip displacement problems with them; and because the dogs have to be between 1 and 3 years out of the dog pound then that creates a problem for us.

Give us a second. We had to run. Of course, the dog is 7. I don't know if he can get up all the steps.

What is your name?

Mr. BROWN. Will.

Mr. KROB. Will?

What is your name?

Ms. SURLES. Surles.

Mr. KROB. I don't think they can hear that.

Ms. SURLES. Surles.

ROBIN. Robin.

HAZEL. Hazel.

Mr. KROB. And Hazel. Aren't you two together? OK, they are kind of a support group here. One wouldn't come without the other.

Is he on his way?

That's you. You are on your way? Wrong guy, wrong guy. Makes it tough when you have to go up three flights of steps.

In the meantime, do you have any questions on the dog? You might have a question on the dog. No? Everyone here with pencil and paper.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER. Do they take elevators?

Mr. KROB. Do they take elevators? Yes, they will take elevators. But because we are so strict on our physical fitness, they have to do what we have to do. It is quite tough running these dogs up and down.

It takes about 12 weeks to train a dog, but it takes about 1 year to get them really active, and so they are running up and down the hills, and it's pretty strenuous. Besides, the dogs have four legs, and they can do it twice as fast as we can.

I got to whisper. Tell him about the money.

OK. We also have another canine team. We have six of them that detect currency. And people question this because you read a lot about the currency in the paper being drug laden with—all the currency is ladened with drugs.

The type of dogs we train are not trained on narcotics. They are only trained on currency. So that means that it doesn't make any difference if it has narcotics on it or not. They will only detect a

particular odor on the money itself. And last year four dogs seized over $50 million in narcotics.

Here is Patton. Don't get him too close. There is a box over there. Check Stephen there. Real close. Notice he is working real close, OK? Gone around. Gone around. OK, good. All right.

Now we'll grab a couple more of these people. How about you. How about you? You look like a candidate? Why don't you introduce yourself? Put you right here. All right. OK, we are going to try this again. You are not smiling. Smile. OK, we're ready.

Mr. WILDER. He was on a union break.

Mr. KROB. He was on a union break.

Mr. WILDER. Find it.

Mr. KROB. Now he has detected something. He's not quite sure. Keep moving. Because there are air currents where the door is at. Keep moving. Keep moving.

Mr. WILDER. Patton, find it.

Mr. KROB. OK. Now, someone probably said, ah, he hit the wrong one. We are dealing with air currents, OK, and in a very close space. If this was a real working environment, that gentleman right there and that gentleman right there would be questioned. We have the right to do that.

Would you show us your narcotics there? You got it? It is a pretty simple one. It is in the ankle.

Most of the passengers will have it in the groin areas, the ankle or the armpits. Those are going to be in the areas—they are going to be in areas that people don't want to search. They don't care if you are the President of the United States. They don't care. They work in that manner.

Tell him what a good dog he is.

Mr. WILDER. Good boy, good boy.

Mr. KROB. Look at this.

You have to talk to him. Tell him your name, Stephen. He doesn't work for just a stranger.

Mr. WILDER. Oh, that's Stephen.

Mr. KROB. Do it again. How old are you, Stephen?

Mr. WILDER. Hold on, hold on. Pull, pull, pull.

Mr. KROB. It is a game. That's all it is.

You notice they are not intimidating dogs. They are dogs that, when you walk into a place, everyone likes them.

The smallest dog we ever had, a Yorkshire Terrier, was too small for the airport due to the fact that a lot of people are rushing through the airport. Nobody can see it.

You remember Corky. Corky has been retired twice. He seized about $30 million worth of narcotics himself.

So we thank you very much. We hope you got a lot out of it.

[Inaudible question from audience.]

Mr. KROB. She asks a good question. If you had it hidden in your bra, would he find it? Two things: If the odor is available and the dog is presented the odor, the dog will detect the odor. So if—given enough time, no problem.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

Mr. KROB. Thank you very much.

Mr. ZELIFF. Very impressive.

I would just like to say on our trip on the NAFTA hearings in Mexico we stopped at the Customs Service, and the dog was able to pick up a smell of a 4-inch PCP pipe about 18 inches long that was in the gas tank of a Blazer. And how the dog was ever able to do it is beyond me. But my hat's off to you.

Mr. KROB. Can I get just 1 second here?

Mr. ZELIFF. Sure.

Mr. KROB. The largest seizure for a dog—and it's in the book, the Guinness Book of World Records—is 8,700 pounds of cocaine in a propane tank truck. It took them 2 days to take it apart to find it. That tells you, if the odor is available, the dog will detect it.

Mr. ZELIFF. It is absolutely amazing. Thank you very much.

Mr. KROB. Thank you for your time.

Mr. ZELIFF. I want to thank Patton and Garth as well as you, John, and your assistant. Thank you all very much for a very impressive demonstration.

Mr. KROB. Thank you very much.

Mr. ZELIFF. We are now privileged to have with us today four student leaders available from local Washington area high schools. These folks were invited by DEA, and they are volunteers who have come to share some opinions with us.

I would like to introduce them: Michael Taylor from Browne Junior High School. Let's see, Natasha Surles from Roper Junior High School; Will Brown from McFarland Middle School—I've got a son Will, also; so, Will, you must be pretty special—and Lan Bui from Bell Multicultural School.

If you would come up and sit at our table, I just want to chat with you for a second. Your name's here, Natasha, over here. Michael Taylor over here. That just keeps us from getting mixed up.

Mr. TAYLOR. Sure.

Mr. ZELIFF. And Lan and Will. How's that?

OK. Let me tell you what we'd like to do here. What you're going to help us with is very, very important; and we thank you for coming. It's vital to the future of our country, and we are trying to get as much information as we can on the record so that we can effectively evaluate how we are doing in our Nation's drug war. But you are a very vital, vital part of that.

What we normally do is we swear in the witnesses. And, if I can, if you would be willing to just stand up and just—we'll just stand up and then raise your right hand. I'll do the same. OK, Will?

Mr. BROWN. Yeah.

Mr. KROB. This is painless. This is not hard.

Mr. BROWN. I know.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Let the record show that the questions were answered in the affirmative. Thank you very, very much.

Now, I understand that two of you will be giving statements—whether they are written—if you would like to summarize, you can do that. And then the other two can voluntarily jump in. Just tell it from your heart. This is what we'd like to hear, and then we will ask you some questions, if that's OK. OK? Thanks.

STATEMENTS OF MICHAEL TAYLOR, BROWNE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL; NATASHA SURLES, ROPER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL; WILLIE BROWN, McFARLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL; AND LAN BUI, BELL MULTICULTURAL SCHOOL

Mr. BUI. Can I start first?

Mr. ZELIFF. Who is going first? OK, Lan.

Mr. BUI. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the House Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice.

My name is Lan Bui. I am from Vietnam. I have been here for 17 months. I am a junior at Bell Multicultural High School, and I am also a Youth Team Leader at Indochina Community Center.

This is a great pleasure and honor for me to testify on the availability of the illegal drugs. I would like to share with you my ideas about and, my experience with illegal drugs. I also want to tell you how I feel about the illegal drugs and how illegal drugs have an effect on me, my family and my friends and my community.

It is really easy and cheap to buy illegal drugs in my community. I have seen them everywhere, from the streets which we use to get to school every day to right in front of my building. Last 2 months I saw a man who was selling illegal drugs next to my apartment.

Illegal drugs are destroying my community. Many families are suffering because their parents, their children are using illegal drugs. I have a friend whose father is using drugs, and this father spends all the family money for the drugs. That's why he quit school. He has to go to work.

Illegal drugs affect me and my family terribly. Last summer, when I left my workplace after tutoring the kids at Lincoln Junior High School, I was attacked for no reason by three drug dealers. I was unconscious 6 hours.

My family worries so much. They fear for my life. All the while they fear for the hospital bills because we didn't have the insurance. After that, I left the hospital, I totally lost my—all memories until now when I am trying to study or read a book for long hours, I have terrible headaches. After that incident, I am really scared to walk on the streets because I think I could be attacked again.

My incident is just a small example about the destroying illegal drugs do in my community. We hope you consider the youth as the first and most important priority of the Nation. We need to protect the youth from using drugs. We should have more youth drug prevention and other programs. We should get the youths involved in community service.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bui follows:]

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, Criminal Justice.

My name is Lan Bui. I am from Vietnam. I am a junor at Bell Multicultural High School. I am also a Youth Team Leader at Indochinese Community Center. I am representing the youth in my school, and my community.

This is a great pleasure and honor for me to testify on the availability of illegal drugs. I would like to share with you my ideas, my experiences about illegal drugs. I also want to tell you how I feel about illegal drugs and how illegal drugs have effected on me, on my family, my friends and my community.

There is really easy to buy the illegal drugs in my community. I have seen them everywhere, from the streets which I used to get to the school everyday, to right in front of my building. Last two months, I saw a man who was selling the illegal drugs next to my apartment.

Illegal drugs are destroying my community. Many families are suffering because their parents, and their childrens are using drugs. I have a friend whose father is using drugs. His father spend all money which used for family's survival for drugs.

Especially, Illegal drugs have effected on me and on my family terriblely. Last summer, when I left my work place after toturing the kids at Lincoln Junor High School. I was attacked for no reason by three drugs dealers. I was unconscious in six hours. My family worried so much. They feared for my life. Otherwide, they feared for the hospital's bills, because we did not have the insurances. After left the hospital, I totally lost all my memories. Until now, when I try to study or read the books for long hours, I usually have terrible headache. After that incident, I'm really scare to walk on the streets. I am scare that I may be attacked again.

My incident is just smallest example about the destroying of illegal drugs in my community. ~~We~~ I hope that you consider the youth as the first and most important priority of the nation. We should have more programs to prevent the youth from using drugs, such as: gang drugs prevention and other programs which get the youth to involve in community service. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Mr. ZELIFF. Michael.

Mr. TAYLOR. Good morning. I don't have a real good speech, but I'm just going to sum up on what he said.

As you know, drug use and violent crimes in the District have increased during the past several weeks. Anywhere you can go in the city you will find access, drug deals, drug abuse, drug use and other violent crimes. What he is saying is true about drug dealers in neighborhoods and all that.

Personally, I don't know, but I do know some people who have told me that drug use and drug dealers do happen a lot. There are ways to get drugs on the street. It doesn't really depend on who you know or who you don't know, but it all depends on who is out there.

For myself, if I didn't know him and I saw him with a lot of money, a lot of nice clothes, I would think that he's a drug dealer. But you have to see the person inside to ask if they are a drug user or a drug dealer.

Therefore, what he is saying is true. You can find many drug dealers and drug users out in the streets, but it all depends on how you carry yourself. Because what happened to him is a sad case. He got into an incident with another drug dealer. That could have been me. It could have been you. It could be any person in this room.

We need to know what it is that we can do to stop other people from doing acts like this, whether it is programs, seminars, or conferences. We have to find someway that we can stop from making people like him, like me or him, become a victim of a violent crime.

Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much for the excellent testimony.

Natasha or Will, anything you would like to add to that or—to represent your views, as well?

Mr. BROWN. What I would like to say is that I am tired of people judging other people by the way they look or the way their haircut is or something.

I understand you have to dress a certain way and you will be judged by that because you have to make a good impression, like if you go for a job interview. If you don't have like the certain designer clothes or something, you are judged as like being poor trash or something, and I don't think that is right.

Now to get on the fact of the drug issue, around my neighborhood, I know there are drug dealers; but some of them that people are saying are drug dealers, they might not be. Because I think they should not go on what they hear, they should go on what they see and not upon what people tell them or what they hear about the person. And that is all I have to say right now.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you all very, very much.

What I'd like to do on the questioning, if I could, is we will give each Member of Congress 5 minutes for questions. After all Members have had the opportunity to question the witnesses, we will then recognize Members for a second round if time permits.

I would like to just start out by saying that we are very fortunate, when the community is represented by fine people like the four of you. And let me just ask you, what made you want to take

a leadership role in the fight against drugs? And that's question No. 1.

And question No. 2, what programs do you think are needed—what programs are presently given to support your kind of ideals and what programs are needed? In other words, what programs do we have now and what do you think we need to do that's different?

And just open it up to anybody that would like to participate in the answer.

Ms. SURLES. Well, let's see, the program that I am in is the Youth Force Dealing with Drugs. I think we should have more programs that are pertaining to not thinking about drugs but thinking about positive things like the Boys and Girls Club. We should have more of them because kids are focusing on things like playing instead of doing drugs.

Mr. ZELIFF. That's excellent. Good.

And what about role models? I will just throw that in, too, if you want to comment on that.

Ms. SURLES. Well, some children, they can't look up to their parents because their parents might be doing drugs. They can look up to the President, stars that are not doing drugs. They can look up to themselves if they keep a high, positive thing.

Mr. ZELIFF. Good. Excellent.

Anybody else? Yes, Lan.

Mr. BUI. The reason that makes me a leader is because like I have many friends who is all again, who using drugs, and I really want to stand up and to fight back the illegal drugs to take my friend back.

I have friends, you know, they were abused by drug dealers. Drug dealers use them to deliver the drugs, you know, in front of my school. And I had to, you know, tell the police and the principal so many times and right now my friend is in the operation.

I want to be a leader because I really want to make a different and a new thing for my community, especially my community—my Vietnamese community is a new one in DC. Many Vietnamese people, they don't know how to speak English and they really—I mean they—they got a bad job. They have nothing. And I want to be, you know, like a role model and to help them and to be a mirror for my friend to see my reflection and they can follow up.

Mr. ZELIFF. How old are you, Lan?

Mr. BUI. Actually, I am 19, but—in document I am 20.

Mr. ZELIFF. Great.

Mr. BUI. Because like, in 1975, in my—my father was like criminal—no, political criminal, and he was sent to re-education camp. And that's why my mom, they—she changed my name, my sister's, and brother's names and our ages, you know. Just like we hide away. We didn't let the communists know who were we because we were scared. And that's, you know, that's so I could go to school in Vietnam. I change my name. But, actually, I am 19.

Mr. ZELIFF. Will, how old are you?

Mr. BROWN. I'm 14.

Mr. ZELIFF. You're 14.

Mr. BROWN. I'm turning 14 in like——

Mr. ZELIFF. You're turning 14.

Mr. BROWN. Yeah.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thirteen going on 14.

Mr. BROWN. Yeah.

Mr. ZELIFF. Anything to add to role models? Why you want to be a part of the leadership group? Why you think it's important? What kind of programs we need? Those kinds of things?

Mr. BROWN. I think it is good that we have role models, positive role models like certain stars that some kids idolize.

Mr. ZELIFF. Talking about sports guys and girls?

Mr. BROWN. Not just that. Like——

Mr. ZELIFF. Just everybody?

Mr. BROWN. Everybody. Like you could idolize—some people could idolize you or they could idolize Bill Clinton. Like most kids idolize the person that in—like the certain profession they want to take on when they are old enough to—like, if I wanted to be a sports broadcaster, I could be like—who could I say?—Rene Knott, Rene Knott or——

Mr. ZELIFF. Yeah.

Mr. BROWN [continuing]. Or I could be like George Michael. That is if I want to take that profession.

Mr. ZELIFF. Yeah.

Mr. BROWN. But I think the main role models in the kid's—in the child's life—is their parents.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. BROWN. But sometimes, some kids, their parents are not there for them, so they have to take on other role models. This is when they take on the role models. And like friends in the neighborhood and neighborhood drug dealers, that's the only people—to some kids, that's the only people they have to look up to. So they become that.

Mr. ZELIFF. I think what you are saying is if we could get the President and all of us in Congress and all the leaders and all the sports figures and all the broadcasters and all the people in the movies and we can get everybody in America talking about saying just say no to drugs, that would be a help, wouldn't it?

Mr. BROWN. Yes, it would. Because I think some of the kids there, they'll be watching TV, and they'll see, well, hey, Bryant Gumbel, he doesn't do drugs. Maybe I shouldn't.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right. And he is successful, right?

Mr. BROWN. Right.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right on. Thank you.

Natasha. Anything you would like to add? And Michael.

Mr. TAYLOR. What were the questions again? You didn't get to me so I—one thing I—a couple programs that I can say are really helping kids would be Network Three, SMAD—Students Mobilized Against Drugs—and Project Success. These programs deal with hearing how kids think and what kids want to know about drugs. There could be many more programs that could help kids out in my age.

With William saying about broadcasters and really famous people saying that drugs aren't good for us, that's good, but we should have just more volunteers come out to schools and let kids know that I didn't use drugs and look at me now. If it can happen to me, it can happen to you.

I'm not saying that there is nothing wrong with me—with someone being on TV saying that they don't use drugs, but being on TV and being in person are two different things. You can say—you can say you don't do it, but then when that camera goes off, who knows what you do.

So there is nothing wrong with just coming to school sometimes, not saying that you have to be principal and teacher but just come and talking to kids, letting kids know that I didn't use drugs, I didn't smoke, I didn't run cars and look at me now, look what I can do. I did this. I—I took this step and look what—and look what happened to me. You can take this same step and become even better.

So that's one step that we all need to take.

Mr. ZELIFF. Makes a lot of sense, Michael. How old are you?

Mr. TAYLOR. I'm 14. I will be 15 Saturday.

Mr. ZELIFF. You are a big boy for 14 going on 15.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Natasha, how old are you?

Ms. SURLES. Eleven.

Mr. ZELIFF. You are 11, OK. Anything you would like to add?

Ms. SURLES. I don't remember the question.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK, what it was is why are you interested in being a leader in this, and then is there anything that we need to do that we are not doing to help you in that leadership role?

Ms. SURLES. Well, I can be a leader. Well, the reason why I wanted to be a leader is because most grown-ups are on drugs in my neighborhood, but not all of them. They are trying to do something. So I think if children come out and help, then it will help a little bit. And there's why I wanted to be a leader and because people will look up to me for what I am and what I am trying to achieve.

Mr. ZELIFF. That is special, isn't it?

Ms. SURLES. Yes.

Mr. ZELIFF. Sure is, because you carve out a special niche in life. You lead by example. And I think, Michael, what you are saying to us is when the cameras are off, too, we need to lead by example, too, right?

Mr. TAYLOR. Yeah.

Mr. ZELIFF. My time, I am afraid, is up.

I would like to now turn it over to Mrs. Thurman, the ranking minority from Florida, very, very solid, committed person in the drug war.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me also say that we are very, very pleased that you are here; and I think all of you have made some good statements.

What is happening today in your schools? I mean, one of the things that we are interested, because we kind of believe that if we can get to students at a younger age, what kinds of programs are happening in your schools today that you believe are having an impact? Or are there any? And since you are all from different schools doing different things?

Mr. TAYLOR. Since she doesn't want to go first I will say a couple words.

As I said before, SMAD, Network Three, Project Success, programs like that. I can go on and on because there are so many at the school that I attend, Browne Junior High. These programs, like I said before, mainly deal with our views and opinions on drugs, how we won't take the step that so many other kids do and what we can say that has helped us from not taking this—this step to a worse environment.

Mrs. THURMAN. Do you have success at that, Michael? Is there success at that? Is there a lot of peer pressure?

Mr. TAYLOR. Oh, yes, there is peer pressure. But like I said before, it all depends upon the type of person you are. You can be a low self-esteem person, that if I told you to jump off a bridge, you are going to jump off a bridge. Or I can tell you to—well, I have—well, I can tell you to do something that you know was wrong and you will still know it is wrong but still do it.

And then there are other people like us four. We know the good and the bad. We—we have all seen cases which someone has told us to do something, but we know that it's wrong because it won't benefit us or the other person. Therefore, we just say no and just walk away.

So, yes, it has helped me because it's made me feel that I know what I have to do to succeed just as these people—I mean just as these peers. So, yes, it has helped me.

Mrs. THURMAN. Michael, let me ask a question because you have raised an issue that I think does make it very difficult and certainly one that you have chosen the right path and have—and have done that successfully.

But what do you think made you different and pulled you in a different direction than the person who jumps off the bridge because somebody told them to? Do you know? And is there something we can do to instill that into others to make those right choices?

Mr. TAYLOR. Well, at—well, I think that mainly comes from having a strong parents' background. If you have strong parents who care, who want to know what—what happens in your lives every day, that—that's—that is what makes a good—a good person become better.

Parents need to ask their kid after every day how was your day? What did you do? What did you learn? What can you tell me that can help me out? That's what—that's where it all comes from. Because some parents don't care where the kids are, as long as they are out of the house.

But, for me, I—I had a strong parenting background who wanted to know what my views and what my opinions were in life, what I thought was wrong, what I thought was right. But I could say help me out at the beginning and at the end of my school—of my school life until now.

And with all these other problems such as teen pregnancy, crime, drugs, as we are speaking now, it all comes from the parents. If the parents are going to do it, 9 times outs of 10 the kids are going to do it. So, therefore, we need to have more—more strong parents, parents who care, parents who want to know this is my son, this is my daughter, I care about their lives. They are part of me. What I do rubs off on them.

Therefore, if they do—therefore, if they do that, we can—you will have more than four scholars out here today, you will have 8, 12, 16 and so on. Therefore, it all comes from the parents.

Mrs. THURMAN. Natasha.

Ms. SURLES. Well, at my other school that I went to, we achieved to be a drug-free school, and we had SMAD. And in our SMAD group we had different activities to keep us nonfocused on drugs. And we had student leadership, and it teaches us to be student leaders. And we had activities that focus on the positive things that we do, and we didn't have that many things focusing on drugs.

Because when we leave school that's different. We—we might see the drug dealers, but we walk in different ways. And our teachers are there for us. They teach us what to be. That's why we don't focus on drugs, and we are leaders.

Mrs. THURMAN. Do you agree with Michael that some of it has to come from home?

Ms. SURLES. I know a lot of it has to come from home because my mother, she is strict. And she helps me focus on my work and off of other things. She helps me and my brother focus on our work, and that is how we become leaders, and we are interested so much in reading.

Mrs. THURMAN. Lan.

Mr. BUI. I agree we need to have strong parents because most of my friends who are involved in drugs, they—their parents, I mean they really have, you know, problems in their families.

For example, I have a friend, he was a very good student. But when he came he was only with his mom, and his father is still in Vietnam. Then when they came here and his mom want to—want to get married again but he disagree, he got upset and you know he feel very depressed about his mom. Then he start to use drugs.

You know, firstly, he just use drugs for, you know, not to be sad, but eventually he became a drug—addict. And I believe if his mom didn't want to get married his situation would be better.

Mrs. THURMAN. Willie.

Mr. BROWN. Could you repeat the question again?

Mrs. THURMAN. I kind of wanted to know in your schools what kinds of programs are going on that you think have been beneficial and then Michael brought up the issue of why people make different choices.

Mr. BROWN. Well, I think some people make different choices to run with the crowd. I mean, it is—I think it is flattering that the pop—most popular group in school will come to you and ask if you want to join them. I think that's flattering, and that's what some kids go by. That's where gangs come in.

And I think that children need to learn how to grow and develop without that type of influence by—like say if you have friends that smoke or something. I don't think you should leave them and don't try to correct them. I don't think it's right. Because they were your friends until they started doing bad things, and they weren't getting into the things that you were interested in.

But, like, if you try to help them instead of leave them, I think there will be—if one person does that, there will be one less person

on drugs if they could try to influence them and get—they try to influence them and get them off of this because it is possible.

Mrs. THURMAN. Willie, I appreciate that. And I just want to say that I appreciated your remark earlier, too, about how we judge people. And some of us would believe that because of the profit in selling of drugs and the peer pressure that is put on the youth to having the best clothes and the best shoes and, you know, whatever, has in some ways created some situations for us out there because they can't make those same kinds of dollars working somewhere else.

Mr. BROWN. May I say something else?

Mrs. THURMAN. Please.

Mr. BROWN. I also wanted to say that if somebody was selling drugs and they stopped, I think that is good, too. Because it is not good that they first started out selling drugs. Because some people sell drugs like kids my age 12 or 13 that you can't get a job because that's illegal. And if you get hurt working, you can sue them, and they don't want to go through that so they're not going to hire you.

So that's why some kids, they sell drugs to make money. Because they see the drug dealers walking around here with the fancy cars, fancy clothes, the designer watch, Indigo, what—all those designer kind of watches. They see them with lots of money, buying everything they see. So the kids want that same thing, too.

Because I know the parents, some of the parents cannot give them like $300, $400 a week, say buy what you want. You will get more like that Doritos commercial.

And so I think that is—I think that if the person quit and did not sell—doesn't sell drugs anymore, he is trying to start a new, better life, I think that is good, also.

Mr. ZELIFF. They become very good, strong role models, don't they, Will?

Mr. BROWN. Yes, they do.

Mr. ZELIFF. You guys have been great.

We have just been joined by the chairman of the full committee, Bill Clinger, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, who has been a big leader in this fight on the war on drugs.

Mr. CLINGER. Thank you, Mr. Zeliff, and let me commend you on holding these hearings. I think they are very, very critical.

And I want to congratulate the panel, too. I think you have given some very moving and compelling testimony. My sense is that it's a lot tougher to be in school these days than it was in my day. The temptations and the——

Mr. BROWN. Pressure.

Mr. CLINGER [continuing]. The dangers and the threats that exist out there are very real. And I never had to deal with that sort of thing. You are resisting a lot of temptations; and I think you are also taking an active role in trying to convince others that this is not the way to go.

And I can certainly relate to what you were saying, Will. Unfortunately, too often the role model is the guy who has got the great threads and all the money and all the whatever, and he got that by dealing drugs. And so I can see there is a tremendous temptation there for somebody to say, well, if that's the way I can get out

of this or I can change this. It's not easy and I really commend all of you.

My only fear is that you may be somewhat unique. I hope that's not the case. I mean, I hope that there are more of you than there are of those that have maybe fallen off the cliff.

[The prepared statement of Hon. William F. Clinger, Jr., follows:]

Statement of

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM F. CLINGER, JR.

Tuesday, June 27, 1995

Subcommittee on National Security,
International Affairs and Criminal Justice

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would first like to take this opportunity to welcome the young children here today to tell us about the availability of drugs in their schools. Your experiences and views are very important in helping us in Congress understand what is really going on among our nation's youth. We can see the numbers which tell us that drug use, especially among eighth-graders, is on the rise. But you may be able to help us get a clearer picture of what those numbers really mean. I thank you again for taking time out of your summer break to come here today, and I thank your parents, some of whom are taking valuable time off work, to allow your children to share with us their experiences and views. I know you are proud of them for actively taking a stance against drugs.

And Mr. Chairman, I want to commend you for holding these very important hearings on the efforts being made to try and keep drugs out of this country and out of the hands of our children. You are doing your very best to

elevate the drug issue back to the top of our national agenda where it belongs -- hand-in-hand with violent crime. The two issues are so obviously and inextricably linked.

Statistics show that since the introduction of crack cocaine into the United States in 1985, violent crime has shown a marked increase. According to DEA statistics, 75 percent of the violent crime committed in the United States is directly attributed to drug use. In my own state of Pennsylvania, prison wardens tell me that as many as 80 percent of inmates are in for drug-related crimes.

It is estimated that the annual cost of drug abuse is approaching $70 billion dollars a year and over 10,000 lives. This drug scourge is taking a huge toll on us. But it is also taking its toll all around us. Countries large and small, in this hemisphere and all over the world, are increasingly threatened and intimidated by the drug barons. Their economies and legal institutions are literally being bought. And what are we doing about it? Let's look at the indicators.

At one time <u>number one</u> on the National Security Council's list of priorities during the prior administration, drugs is now off the radar screen -- down near 20th. This is highly disturbing given the recent increases in all types

of drug use, especially by our very young children, as recent statistics regarding eighth-graders shows. The lack of leadership and concern about the drug problem was demonstrated early on by President Clinton and has continued to be alarmingly absent despite repeated pleadings otherwise. And frankly, I believe that Dr. Brown's job, or anyone's job, as Drug Czar is virtually impossible without the sincere backing of the President.

As these hearings are expected to reveal, our men and women on the front lines are operating in a dangerous vacuum. They may hear the rhetoric, but the resources are not there. They may hear the rhetoric, but there is no overall gameplan. And they may hear the rhetoric, but no one is really in charge.

Again, I must commend the efforts of this subcommittee's Chairman, who in traveling to the front lines and in holding numerous hearings, has made a strong commitment to elevate this issue before the Administration and Congress, and rightfully link it with our nation's crime problem as a top national security concern.

Mr. Chairman, the alarm clock keeps going off, but someone keeps hitting the snooze button. It's past time for this Administration to wake up and begin dealing with

this issue as the highest national priority. The social and economic damage is increasing daily and we simply cannot continue to take this toll.

Mr. CLINGER. I just have one real question. Yesterday the Supreme Court handed down a pretty controversial ruling, in effect saying that random drug testing of students in schools, elementary schools, I assume, is going to be legitimate. We have talked about some of the positive encouragements that you see to kind of discourage drug use. This would be a more—sort of a negative. I mean, we talk about the carrot and the stick. The stick would be having a possibility of drug testing. What do you think about that? Do you think that is a good idea, a bad idea? Should we have both the carrot and the stick or should we just have the carrot?

Mr. BROWN. I think it is a good idea, especially with the kids who are hooked on sports and stuff. Because Lyle Alzado took steroids until he died.

Mr. CLINGER. Right.

Mr. BROWN. Because he wanted to be good, he wanted to be better, he wanted to do things that no human could possibly do. He wasn't human. See, a human person is a person that can pull off feats that a human can do. Nobody can play one whole game, have no subs, play offense and defense without getting tired or having to sit out. Humanly impossible.

So the drug testing thing in schools, I sort of think that is a good idea and a bad idea. The good part about it is children who are taking drugs or playing sports, you can use that against them. You don't have to command them to do so. You can tell their parents. It's good to inform their parents as far as what their activities are as far as drug abuse.

So the good thing about it is you can say, well, if you are using drugs, you can't play. Then that's going to be like, well, I really like this sport, really like drugs. Drugs is not going to help me in life, the sport is. It could help me get a college education, a free education if I can't afford it.

So, most likely, the child is going to pick the sport over drugs, even though the drugs are making the money if they are selling it. But if they are taking it they are just losing money.

And the bad part about it is the way they test them. I think that instead of having them take the test at school with the school nurse, they should take it to their private doctor, if they have one. If they go to the clinic, go to the clinic and get tested there.

That's the way I get my tests done when I play football every season and basketball. Every season, I have to get my physical. I don't get my physicals at school because I think it is unorganized. I don't want to have to go through that, losing all my files and stuff so I can get my test done at the hospital.

Mr. CLINGER. OK. Anybody else have a view on the idea of drug testing?

Ms. SURLES. Yes. I think it is a good idea because it is helping us to find out if the child is using drugs. And if they are, then it is helping them to stop it. Because the teachers might get involved and try to help him cope with not using drugs.

I have to disagree with you, Will, on saying that it is good for the private doctor to take the physical. Because the private doctor might like him, and he might be playing for a school that he like, so he might say he is not using drugs when he actually is.

And the nurse will probably tell the truth, whether the child is using drugs or not using drugs, to help him have a better life. And maybe if he doesn't start using drugs, he might focus on his education and he might get a scholarship by using his mind instead of his ability to run and play football, handle a ball or kick one.

So that is all I have to say right now.

Mr. BROWN. Can I say something real quick?

Mr. CLINGER. I will let you respond in a minute, Michael.

Mr. TAYLOR. What Will said and what we said, it is hard being an athlete. Plain and simple, it is hard. When you are an athlete you also have to be a scholar, and it is hard being a scholar and an athlete. And what she said is right. Private doctors aren't so good, but how can one afford a private doctor when—when your mom or dad is only making enough money to pay rent, and pay bills?

Mr. CLINGER. Eat.

Mr. TAYLOR. Eat.

Mr. BROWN. Eat.

Mr. TAYLOR. And to put clothes on your back. So how can you say that a private——

Ms. SURLES. If the person has a private doctor. That's what I am saying.

Mr. TAYLOR. Do you have a private doctor?

Ms. SURLES. I'm getting one.

Mr. CLINGER. You think it is a good idea, though? Do you think the testing is a good idea? It is just a question of when——

Mr. TAYLOR. It is a good idea because it can help athletes and scholars. It will help athletes know if you want to play sports you have to be positive—I mean negative, yes or no. If you want to go to jail, if you want to be a victim and not a scholar, do drugs, plain and simple.

Mr. CLINGER. OK, Will, some rebuttal.

Mr. BROWN. OK, all the back cuts—No. 1, the schools—we cut our day short. We were supposed to get out the 23rd. We got out June 3rd, No. 1, because of the money.

No. 2, the schools—they have trouble raising money. Schools barely have enough money to get a football team. How are they going to get, pay for a scale or the proper equipment to take a physical or take a drug test? What if that equipment is inaccurate and you don't use drugs and a test comes out you are positive? What is that going to show you? Then you are going to have to end up going to a hospital when you could have done that in the first place. That's wasting your time.

Mr. CLINGER. We got a very interesting couple opinions.

Mr. ZELIFF. It is a very interesting discussion.

But I think the bottom line is I have a son, Will, who is named Will; but I have another one, Michael, who is in the Marine Corps. And he knows when is he going to be drug tested on a random basis. Believe me, they don't have problems with drugs in the Marine Corps. Because what happens is if you test positive, you are out of there. And the same thing with schools.

And I am really pleased to hear you all admit to the fact that it is basically a good idea if it can be done fairly. Obviously, anything not done fairly is wrong.

We are going to have to move the discussion along a little bit, if I can. Steve Shadegg, before we go to your dad, any comment that you would like to make as an interested observer in this discussion?

Mr. STEPHEN SHADEGG. No.

Mr. ZELIFF. Any question—any questions that you have of the panelists?

How does it feel behind there—behind that mike in the chair there? Do you think you will be running for your dad's seat?

Mr. STEPHEN SHADEGG. Yeah.

Mr. ZELIFF. Yeah. OK, how about John Shadegg?

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to ask a couple of questions having to do with the availability of drugs. We have had drug-free school programs and drug-free school legislation for as long as I have been around. I spent 8 years in the Arizona Attorney General's Office, and we pushed through some drug-free school legislation back then with stiff penalties.

I'd like to ask each of you, looking at your school today, how easy is it to get drugs? Could you go back to your school and get drugs at your school? And—or do you know that other kids can get them at your school? And, if so, what kind of drugs?

Mr. BUI. I just said it is really easy to get drugs in my community, my school. Because like I am—in close my school these days, the building, I know they are selling drugs in there. If I want to buy it, I just came there to buy easily. Actually, if I have, you know, $10 I can buy, you know, enough amount for me to use.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Right on the school grounds.

Mr. BUI. About a 5 minute walk from my school. And my friends, they bought the drugs in there, I know. Actually, you know sometimes it is hectic, rush building, I still see it happen in there.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. How about anybody else?

Mr. TAYLOR. Well, the school I attend, it's not that—it's kind of hard getting drugs if you are into that type of thing because I have a strong principal, strong teachers who care about their students and who want to know, well, my student has a problem. I can go home and just sit around or I can talk—or I can talk to him or her to see how she is or he is, see what they have on their minds, see what I can do, see if I need a conference with their parents so we can talk and we can find out what the problem is. So it's—it's a very difficult task if you want to find some kind of drug at Brown Junior High School. It is a very difficult task.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. So if you wanted drugs, you would have to go off campus somewhere else?

Mr. TAYLOR. You have to go off campus to get 'em.

Ms. SURLES. At my school, you don't sell drugs.

At the old school I used to—you don't have drugs because elementary students mostly, the ones I know, they don't focus on drugs. But if they do you couldn't because the teachers are looking everywhere to make sure that you don't have drugs. And they don't sell it on school because teachers come outside. They make sure nothing bad happens. And so if they wanted to get drugs, if they—like if they use drugs, I don't actually know, they would have to

go off school somewhere near school. But they can't leave school, so they would probably do it after school.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. OK. Will.

Mr. BROWN. It is very easy to get drugs, especially when you are not real famous. You don't—like somebody who is on TV all the time, they are like, well, I am for—I am against drugs. I don't take drugs and all that.

And the drug dealers see you on TV. Then you come back asking them for some drugs. They're going to think, hey, he's asking for drugs, and he just got on TV and said he was against it. Something's wrong.

And that's when you have people thinking. Because you don't think drug dealers are dumb. They are smart enough to have their business going on this long, they have to have something working. They must be doing something right.

And, also, if you—it is very easy to get drugs. Because as long as you have the money and you know who to get it from—you can't just go to a bad neighborhood and just say, hey, to anybody—hey, I want some drugs. Because it might be the wrong person. You might be talking to an undercover police officer or somebody who doesn't have anything to do with drugs at all. You can go to the wrong person.

You have to know the connection. You have got to have the connections. You have got to know what type of drug to get, know how to process it, know how to pay for it, and make sure that they don't cheat you and know how much is in it, know what type of bag looks, know how—know the way it smells, know the way it tastes.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Do any of you know friends or peers that come to school high on drugs?

Mr. BROWN. Yes. Not friends, peers.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. That's pretty neat.

Ms. SURLES. I know some, but they are my associates.

Mr. BROWN. Associates, I like that. I've got to use that one day.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Lan.

Mr. BUI. Yes, I have some friends who are using drugs.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Would they be critical of you for coming forward today or for getting into a leadership role against the use of drugs?

Mr. BUI. I'm sorry?

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Is there peer pressure? Would they criticize you for speaking out against the use of drugs to your friends, to your other friends? Or would they say, no, that is all right, you can take that position?

Mr. BUI. Actually, when we play together they always want me to use drugs with them, you know. They just want to get me, you know, on their side, you know, you just with them and share something with them. But I always try to—I always try to, you know, take them back. I always tell them just very dangerous. And I enjoy the leadership around because I just want to help them, want them to quit using drugs.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Let me ask you a different kind of question. You are all aware of the publicity that encourages people not to drive while drunk. That is drunk driving. Have you ever seen commercials or is there a MADD organization at your school, people

who are opposed to drinking and driving? Are you familiar with that?

Mr. BUI. Yeah, I have seen.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Have you ever given any thought to whether one of the problems is that our society hasn't made up its mind whether drugs are bad or not? It is kind of an open question. Some parents in your school may say it is OK to use drugs and some parents may say it's not?

Mr. BUI. I mean, when my friends using drugs, their parent ignore them. They don't mind anything. They say OK, you use drugs, you going to die, who care? If you smart, you live, and you stupid, you die. That what they said, you know. They really don't care about their childrens.

And it's really a reason for them to use more drugs, you know, because they say my parents doesn't care about me, and I don't care them, too.

And my friends, he really upset when he heard his parents said that and I tried to tell him, but he told me, are you my parents? Because my parents say—doesn't care about that. Why do you care? You know, this is really hard for me to convince them, you know.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Anybody else have any——

Mr. TAYLOR. About the leadership question or—well, to some people being a leader is being a follower and to some people being a leader is standing up for yourself.

Now, people hung Jesus on a Cross, so what makes—so what makes me think they are going to treat me any better? So, personally, I don't care if a person told me to die today. I know what I have to do. They can tell me that your a sellout and your this and that, but if I am a sellout now, speaking to you all could save a person's life, and if that's a sellout then I am the biggest sellout in the world.

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Do you have a feeling about whether or not our society has made up its minds—its mind on whether drugs are good or bad?

Mr. TAYLOR. Well, I have been hearing in the media that smoking marijuana can cure some kind of illness. I am not familiar with it. But if that's the case, well, there should be good marijuana and bad marijuana. Good marijuana should be in stores, licensed for selling that product. They should be—they should be able to see how much a patient needs, what time they should take it and how often they should take it.

And then you have other marijuana that is a drug—I mean, that is on the streets that you can buy a dime a dozen.

So that issue is very divided because there is cons and the pro side of it. The con side is out there. The pro side is, well, it can stop—it can stop someone from dying tomorrow.

So speaking on that issue would take many, many, many hours of discussion, facts, views. So one can't say that it is right or wrong. It is an open discussion.

Mr. ZELIFF. Michael—if I could jump in, John, for a second?

Mr. JOHN SHADEGG. Sure.

Mr. ZELIFF. Are you advocating legalization of, let's say, marijuana?

Mr. TAYLOR. I can't say. I can't say what is right or wrong. It's——

Mr. ZELIFF. The reason I ask that question in hearing all four of you and your stories—and, frankly, the reason we almost doubled the amount of time for this panel is because of your very effective testimony I think is very vital, but there—the debate centers on the fact that if it is more available, doesn't it hurt more kids?

Mr. TAYLOR. Yes, it hurts more kids. Because mainly for—the fact is if—if it didn't hurt so many kids, we would have more athletes, more scholars. There are athletes that have died from marijuana—Len Bias, a famous basketball star.

Mr. ZELIFF. The Baltimore Colts.

Mr. TAYLOR. No, basketball player.

Mr. ZELIFF. Basketball. I'm sorry. You are right.

Mr. TAYLOR. Basketball.

Mr. ZELIFF. Good try.

Mr. TAYLOR. He passed away from using marijuana.

Reggie Lewis, a famous basketball star, he did things I could say I could do but can't do.

There are scholars that have taken drugs, but no one knows about it.

So I can't say that it's right and wrong. In cases it is, and cases it isn't. So that is an open discussion.

Mr. ZELIFF. Anybody else want to comment on legalization? And then I am going to turn it over to our friend Gary Condit from California. Will.

Mr. BROWN. Could you repeat the question again?

Mr. ZELIFF. OK, what do you think about legalization of drugs? In all the things you have talked about—the importance of kids getting hurt by drugs and how important you are taking a leadership role, trying to lead by example and getting drugs out of society, do you think it's a good idea to legalize it, make it available to anybody who wants it?

Mr. BROWN. I believe that you will never get drugs out of society. There are people that have been doing drugs, selling it, so long, that they don't know anything else to do. That's the only way they can make money. So they going to continue using drugs, selling drugs to other people.

And the thing I don't understand is—the main thing I don't—have a problem with, how come these big-time kingpins don't do their own dirty work? They get a whole lot of money.

Mr. ZELIFF. You cut right to the chase, didn't you?

Mr. BROWN. Yeah. I mean, they get like billions of dollars, buy the drugs from what, Colombia, somewhere in South America, some part of east Asia, parts from there, bring it all the way over here to the United States to corrupt our people. How come they don't leave the stuff over there? I mean, we don't need enough—we don't need any help corrupting ourselves. We do that enough with our own.

Mr. ZELIFF. All right. I think you signed off on a perfect note.

Another leader in this fight is the gentleman from California, Gary Condit. Gary.

Mr. CONDIT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me congratulate you and compliment you for holding the hearing and your leadership in this area. I am delighted that I am here this morning; and, this panel, you have has done a great job. I have never met a Willie Brown that was as smart and clever.

Mr. ZELIFF. And will—you will have to explain that.

Mr. CONDIT. I am not disappointed this morning. This has been a great panel, and they have showed tremendous thoughtfulness on this issue.

I just have one question because I know we have to move on.

I have heard the discussion about the safe schools and your—some of your associates and peers may or may not be using or selling drugs. I'd like to focus on the punitive side of this just for a moment. If you—what your thought is about your associate or peers, if they are caught using drugs on campus, selling drugs on campus or near campus, what should the punishment be?

If you've got someone your age selling drugs—and Mr. Brown has made reference to maybe the person selling the drugs is not the kingpin, that it's just a runner, you can take that in consideration. But do you think that we ought to—we ought to take punitive action? Should we punish people who disrupt by selling and using drugs on campus?

Mr. BROWN. Well, I agree with the fact about the punishment. Now, what type of punishment should be, I think what the crime is—like if you were a drug dealer selling the drugs, then you—then he came up to somebody, a child, asked him to help him and if—would he help him pay him all this money, the child was influenced by the dollar bill. So they should be different—there should be different punishments for the different types of drug abuse crimes.

Like, for example, the Clinton three-strikes-you're-out crap, I don't believe in that. I seriously don't. Three strikes you're out. You go to jail for a couple years. It's a 60, 70—65, 70 percent chance you're going to die in jail even if you don't get out on parole. So if you come back out, you might—you might do the same thing and then he get another—then he gets another three strikes until he goes back unless they keep up with his records. If he can stay clean long enough, they'll just let him go.

Mr. CONDIT. So what should we do?

Mr. BROWN. I think what we should do is, instead of that three strikes you are out, I think we should have something else like, let's say, bring down the—bring down the age limit of going to jail, go to prison, or—matter of fact, when—if they are too young to go to juvenile hall, take them to Lorton and let them stay there for 1 day. Let them stay in that cell by themselves for 1 day and let them feel—let them experience how this could be for them. Instead of being just 1 day, they could be there for like 25, 30 years max, right?

Isn't it the life sentence? What is the life sentence for drug abuse, selling drugs? What is that about, 30 years? Something like that, yeah. Twenty years in a prison, nobody to come and really visit you except your mom and your relatives. And really who is going to want to come and visit you anyway because that's making their family look bad? Might as well disown you.

So I think that the punishment should fit the crime. Can't be just one punishment.

Mr. CONDIT. Anyone else want to comment to that?

Mr. TAYLOR. On that issue, like Will said, having three strikes and you're out—one strike you're out.

If you are so good and you're so the man, why do you need to take this demon to feel better about yourself? If you have millions and millions of people who are saying I want to be like you, I want to be like you, if they want to be like you, why should you have to do this so people can say, well, at one moment he was the best thing in the world, now he's just a—an act, he's just a case.

Mr. BROWN. That's going back to role models.

Mr. TAYLOR. That's going back to role models like Will said.

So I think you should have—it shouldn't be a three strikes you're out, it should be one strike. If you're so good and you're so the man, why do you need this demon for you, like you are?

I'm not saying that any of you all do it. But if you all—you all are the best that Washington has to offer, and if we caught you all doing something that wasn't right because you all—because you are in the House, does that give you the right to say, well, you messed up once, two more strikes, you're out?

No one is better than—than anyone else. We are all the same, same, same people. You are all the same people. So it shouldn't matter who's—who's who. If you mess up, you're out, plain and simple.

Mr. CONDIT. Any other thoughts?

Mr. BUI. I think we should give really strong punishment just for the top up, like, I guess just like the drugs they are a system, and we should give strong punishment for the top of that system.

Because like if you catch the kids who delivery the drugs and send them to the prison, I mean, the drug dealers—I mean the higher level, they can get the other kids to do that just as easily.

I think we need to punish, to get to the root of this problem. We need to catch all Mafia, something. We catch all of them, then you can prevent—just like if you—if you catch this part, they going to have the other part. But if you catch the top, they are going to be down.

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Chairman, did you——

Mrs. THURMAN. Would you yield for a second?

Mr. CONDIT. Yes, Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Could I, just for clarification purposes——

Mr. ZELIFF. Sure.

Mrs. THURMAN [continuing]. And if I'm wrong, Gary, help me.

I think one of the things that we are trying to get at here is—and you said in the punishment, and the crime is—in your minds, is it the user or the seller? Because that's how we determine a lot of times in our laws. Do you think they are both equal in this or do you think one is worse than the others? Or is there a higher penalty that should be paid for those that are selling it as versus those that are using it? And do you think——

Mr. BROWN. Want to go first?

Mrs. THURMAN [continuing]. And do you think maybe that some of the programs for drug offenders, as far as going into treatment and things of that nature, are good ways in helping people?

Mr. TAYLOR. Well, I believe that it's the buyer's fault. The buyer knows what he's doing. The buyer knows that if I sell you this product, you are going to come back and want more, plain and simple.

So I think both of them should be punished. They are both guilty of committing a crime. Just because one bought it, that doesn't mean you have to buy it. He didn't put a—he didn't put a gun up to your head and say if you don't buy this product I'm going to shoot you. So, therefore, it should be the buyer and the seller being punished for the crime, plain and simple.

Mr. BROWN. Well, I agree with Michael. But the thing about it is if you're addicted to something like—addicted to smoking or using drugs or something, like how come you can't just do something else for a change? Like instead of smoking, exercise or eat more fruit. Or like on Lethal Weapon III, just eat a dog biscuit, I'm saying.

But the thing about it, they can't kick it. They can't beat what is just handed in front of them. I mean, what—what's the use of $50 billion, $60 billion worth of drugs when there is no one to buy it? That puts the drug dealer out of business—business.

See, we need to get—first, we need to start with our community, then work in our city, State, then work in our sections or regions. Then we just get a whole section of our part, like the United States, involved with the drug crime prevention.

Because the drugs are not coming from here. They're coming from all out of the country. Bring it into our State. See, we're the first place to go because we got all the crazy people, you see, all the people's going to buy it. That's their fault.

So the people—the person who should be really punished, I think, should be the user. Because the user's stupid. If the user is stupid enough to stoop so low to buy the stuff, he should be the one to get punished.

Mr. ZELIFF. The unfortunate thing is the user is supporting that whole industry, that whole segment, right, the culture?

You guys have been terrific, and I would like to thank you for your leadership. You are very special, and we thank you. You have been a very special part of our hearing. We just thank you for all your efforts on our behalf and continue to fight against drug use.

We need to also continue the fight from here, as well. It is going to take all of us together to win this war, and I thank you all very, very much.

If you would like to, you can resume your spots in the audience and listen to the heads of the DEA who will be the next witness.

The Chair would like to welcome the Honorable Thomas A. Constantine, the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration and a public servant with a long history of law enforcement experience. He was, until recently, the superintendent of the New York State Police and the first superintendent to rise through the ranks in over 30 years.

He has been on the board of the International Association of Police Chiefs and is widely respected across the country. I want to pass on a special greeting from one of our police chiefs in Dover. Formerly, it was Charles Reynolds, a friend of yours and ours, but

Chief Fenamin has just recently said what a great job that he thought you were doing, and wanted to pass on his best regards.

If you would be willing to rise, stand and raise your right hand.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Let the record show the witness responded in the affirmative.

Mr. ZELIFF. You can either summarize or read from a prepared statement which will be included in the record. That's your choice.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS A. CONSTANTINE, ADMINISTRATOR, DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CONSTANTINE. There will be a longer statement for the record, Congressman, and I will just summarize.

But before I begin, I—somehow, after listening to the opening statements of Michael and Lan, I feel somewhat inadequate to be able to fully describe some of the things that I have said in the 15 months since I have been here in Washington.

I have a belief that not everybody is completely aware of how serious this drug problem and violent crime problem is. And when you listen to young people express their experiences in life—and I couldn't help but, as Lan was talking, thinking somebody whose family had survived years of war, internment in some type of a political imprisonment and having to hide out under fictitious names and ages and then to come to the United States and find themselves assaulted and injured by people involved in the drug traffic I think probably says more than I can ever say in a full statement or written statement.

And I think that that is the type of thing that constantly has to be brought out to people, that this problem over the last 35 years has continued to deteriorate and become so extremely serious, in my opinion, that it threatens our way of life. And in many communities in the United States, a lot of it deals with drug abuse and drug trafficking.

And I just want to thank you, one, for the hearings and the opportunity to listen to these four young people and for the rest of us to make our statements.

I know that you were in our Boston DEA office recently. Our agents enjoyed that opportunity to explain to you some of the things that are happening in New England.

I think New England really is a model that explains to those who aren't familiar with the impact of drugs and violence and the interrelation in the United States. Heroin availability in that area now is at an all-time high with purity levels so high that there have been recently six overdose deaths from heroin, one in New Hampshire and five in Massachusetts. Numbers of homicides are now being linked to this heroin traffic.

And on June 21st of this year, the New Hampshire Attorney General's Drug Task Force, the Manchester Police Departments, the New Hampshire State Police and the DEA culminated a fairly substantial investigation in the arrest of 42 individuals from New Hampshire for drug trafficking, all of whom have been federally indicted. Some, if convicted, would face life without parole.

And Manchester, like many communities—Schenectady, where my home was before I came here, or Savannah, GA, Tulsa, OK, are all under this same siege from drug peddling and violence.

We have seen as we look at these investigations in New England what looks like a fairly lower level investigation in the beginning usually winds up in Boston or New York. And then from Boston or New York we find out that it's something controlled by organized crime Mafias from outside the United States. I'll get into that in a little bit.

But this young man over here that just left was right on the money. There are Mafia leaders throughout this world who are controlling criminal activity within the United States and in some ways are beyond the reach at least of the U.S. justice system.

What we have in DEA, in looking at this, is that it is really a continuum. What happens in the source country often affects what happens on the streets of Boston or Schenectady or Tulsa or Savannah, GA. And law enforcement has to develop a strategy that, in essence, is a mirror image of what the drug trafficking pattern is.

And what we tried to do is strike a balance. And in the period of time that I have been here as—and, as you mentioned, not only 34 years in local law enforcement in New York State and virtually every county and every city and at every rank but also in writing the Chiefs of Police Violent Crime Report in 1993, one of the complaints and issues from the chiefs was that they felt that the Federal Government, by concentrating totally internationally, had in some ways abandoned people in local law enforcement.

So what we tried to do in a period of time was to try to strike a balance between our domestic responsibility and our international role. And what became fairly obvious is that you can't bifurcate the strategy into international and domestic. Nor can you afford to ignore either end of the spectrum. This must be viewed in a global context. Decisions being made today in Cali, Colombia, will eventually affect us in Washington, DC.

In order to address some of the violent crime drug gangs that are operating within the United States, we culled out at least 60 agents from headquarters in DEA to send them out to the field to work with State and local law enforcement. The strategy is, from our point, fairly simple. We will try—and we are achieving some successes recently to—really to destroy some of these organizations rather than merely disrupt them.

Disruption is somewhat like trying to come up with an antibody to a virus. Every year you have to have a different flu shot because they adjust to it, and they seem to get stronger and more powerful as we have different disruption strategies.

We think these people who lead these organizations should be arrested. We think they should be locked up for time commensurate with the acts that they have committed—which in my humble opinion is at least a lifetime sentence—and, in some instances, extraditing their leaders to the United States to face justice.

I am concerned from not only listening to what these kids had to say but just what I have witnessed begin and again and again. And last afternoon I was out with a special group that we had working here in the District and talking to people who are trying

to run safe public housing in Washington, DC, probably not more than 2 or 3 miles from here.

I'm concerned that if we relent on any of our efforts to control the drug problem in this country that we're going to be facing immense problems in the future and that we have to address this problem effectively and dramatically in the present.

It's not only cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamines that are widely available and relatively cheap, but we are seeing a resurgence of heroin. It's now available in more cities at lower prices and higher purities than ever before in our history.

To give you an example, heroin on the streets of the northeastern quadrant this country when I was working narcotics as a lieutenant or a captain was about 5 to 7 percent pure. It is roughly 70 percent pure right now and in some cases up to 90 percent pure. And the milligram price on the street is one half of the price it was in 1970.

We saw a recent and dramatic development which we announced last week. We have been tracking this for about 18 months.

South American heroin was unknown to people in law enforcement up until 2 years ago. We have a program called the Signature Program in which every heroin buy is analyzed by a special laboratory. We can tell from that laboratory analysis who the chemists are and where that drug has come from. In a short period of time, South American heroin—and primarily from Colombia—has gone from a nonplayer to approximately 32 percent of all of the heroin that we have analyzed in this system.

That just shows you how in a few short years drug trends can change significantly. And there's a great challenge to us—to those of us who are in the law enforcement business to try to keep pace with these changes.

I know much of your discussion over these several days will deal with interdiction. Although DEA is not, in essence, an interdiction agency as would be Customs and Coast Guard, we see it as an important aspect of any law enforcement strategy.

We have always known that the drug interdiction itself has to support a larger law enforcement strategy, and it necessarily had to end with the arrest and the conviction of the drug traffickers. We feel it is best suited to be driven by intelligence because that gives you greater value to these very expensive assets that you have to use in interdiction.

And we find that most of the major seizures that occur occur because you have prior intelligence that a certain plane, a certain ship, a certain individual is going to be in a certain location. Not only does that optimize the chance of you finding and seizing a drug because it's intelligence driven, you very likely have the names and identity of the ultimate receivers of these drugs in the United States. And you also, from our experience, have the names and identities of the individuals responsible for shipping the drug to the United States.

Let me give you an example of an investigation that occurred in cooperation between the U.S. Customs Service and the DEA starting about 4 years ago, and I think it will become somewhat more apparent. There was a major news show on CBS about it last night.

On June 5th, after this 4-year investigation, an indictment was unsealed against three attorneys in the United States and 56 other individuals, including the entire leadership of the Cali cartel in Colombia. It's probably the most significant drug trafficking indictment of what I think is probably the largest, most powerful organized crime syndicate that we have ever known about in the United States; and for the first time in the history of the United States that I know of a Mafia-organized crime syndicate from outside of the United States is controlling the criminal activity within the United States.

But the investigation began with an intelligence-driven interdiction program. In the late 1980's, and early 1990's, the Gilberto and Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela faction of the Cali Mafia have, as they have and still do, orchestrated multi-ton shipments of cocaine into the United States through a number of smuggling routes. The cocaine was concealed in lumber in Honduras, in frozen broccoli, in ceramic tiles from Panama and Guatemala and in concrete fence posts from Venezuela and in coffee shipments from Panama. Prior intelligence in a number of these initial shipments resulted in their interdiction.

The indictment contains detailed allegations concerning cargo-smuggling operations used by the Rodriguez-Orejuela organizations, use of a new route through Mexico to import cocaine into the United States, the organization's methods of laundering their narcotics proceeds and the Cali Mafia's attempts.

And many of us point to Colombia and their problems with corruption in criminal justice. I have always said that they also had the potential to corrupt systems within the United States. And, in this case, the allegation is that they did; and they undermined the judicial process in the United States through acts of obstruction of justice.

The indictment alleges that attorneys in the United States laundered the Mafia's drug money and participated in the organization's attempts to obstruct justice. I think if anyone were to analyze this particular case, the value of intelligence-driven interdiction becomes obvious and that seizures must be a means to an end, not just an end in themselves.

The group in Cali that I mentioned I have talked about continually since I have taken this position. Their profit, moderately, conservatively with wholesale, not retail prices, is about $7 billion to $8 billion a year net each and every year. That's 8 times the size of the DEA's annual budget.

They are responsible for over 80 percent of the world's cocaine. They are now involved in about 30 percent of the heroin coming into the United States. They have developed a relationship with long-standing Mexican trafficking organizations to transport large shipments of cocaine into the United States. They have bought a fleet of more than 40 large planes, such as Boeing 727s, Caravelle jets and Lockheed Electras, which are used to bring multi-ton loads of cocaine into Mexico.

We have made this group and the individuals in charge of it one of our primary goals.

I am happy to report that a little over 2 weeks ago the Colombian National Police, along with the people from American law en-

forcement, were able to find Gilberto Rodriguez cowering in a closet in one of his safe houses in Cali, Colombia. Since then, two major traffickers have surrendered.

A lot remains to be seen as to how their cases are handled in the criminal justice system and to whether their punishments are commensurate with their crimes. But it is a major step that shouldn't be underestimated.

It shows the will of the Colombian National Police. I think that has given them confidence. I think it gives confidence in people who want to provide information. It is a beginning blow.

It's our understanding that a couple of times Miguel Rodriguez and Pancho Herrera, two other major traffickers, are talking about surrender under a belief of a lesser sentence.

The methamphetamine traffic, which isn't mentioned often, is becoming a drug of choice throughout the entire West Coast of America. If you were to go to California and talk to all of the people in California law enforcement, as I have recently, that's all they talk about again and again is methamphetamine.

It consists of ephedrine, a precursor drug used for asthma. There is enough ephedrine being shipped into Mexico that would lead you to believe all of North America suffers from asthma. That drug is then smuggled into the United States, mostly California laboratories, for the production of the drug. The price per pound has dropped from $12,000 a pound to $2,000 a pound. It is rapidly moving throughout the United States.

Our people in the Southeast, our Georgia office, has reported to me that there are major shipments of methamphetamine coming into Atlanta whereby it is spread out to the suburbs of Atlanta, all or virtually all of the rural areas of the Kentucky and Tennessee, where it is again becoming a drug of choice.

There are three major trafficking groups that we really look at: one, the group from Cali, and the Asian heroin traffickers.

We have been successful recently in locking up 10 people from the so-called Shan United Army, actually an army of 10,000 people whose area borders Thailand, made up of ethnic tribesmen, the people left over from the Chiang Kai-shek regime of the late 1940's. They control the Southeast Asian heroin trade, about 65 percent.

We have them locked up right now. We are trying to get them extradited to the United States. They are key players to the degree that for a month or two after the arrests there were threats being made that equivalent numbers of DEA people in Thailand would be either kidnapped or murdered. We are waiting now to see when they come to the United States and what will occur.

And the Mexican trafficking groups have become huge.

And the last but not the least and I think the most important to American citizens is a whole series of violent drug gangs that have grown up around the United States that is either controlling this traffic or fighting with one another.

I think sometimes we are led to believe that this is just in the major cities of Boston or New York or Chicago. Believe me, if you talk to sheriffs or chiefs of police, it's from Orangeburg, SC; to Vidalia, GA; to Enid, OK. And if you sit down with them, they will talk to you about drive-by shootings and drug gangs and the effect it has had on the quality of their life.

One of the areas that I think should be of key and continuing concern is this whole Southwest border, this 2,000-mile border that we have. This has become the area for 70 percent of the cocaine, all of the methamphetamine traffic, and increasingly the heroin traffic.

What we have done is, in working with Director Freeh and the FBI, we have pooled our assets at every one of our border offices. We have targeted these groups that are operating in the United States and Mexico. It is probably the most major, comprehensive, joint investigation that the FBI and the DEA have ever conducted together. We would look down the road to a year or two when we will have the names and criminal evidence against all the major figures in both countries in this activity.

The last thing before I just summarize the statement, as I mentioned, we have been really besieged by chiefs of police and sheriffs for assistance as drug gangs moved into these communities from throughout the United States and just overwhelmed the resources of many of the local law enforcement in the United States. As a result of removing numbers of people from headquarters and saving wherever I could, we have established what we call mobile enforcement teams. Very simply, it is a whole group of special agents stationed throughout the United States.

So if a—if a chief of police in Providence or a chief of police in Richmond, VA, or any place in the country said that they had huge drive-by shootings and drug gangs, we can give them 12, 24, 36 DEA agents for a short period of time.

And how we have approached this is that we will not control the investigation. I think the last thing that a local chief or sheriff wants to hear is somebody coming from Washington saying they are going to take charge of the investigation, which usually means they are going to take credit for the investigation. And the chief is left there having to deal with the town board, the city board and crime victims.

Our theory on this is, we'll do the work; we will take none of the credit. The press conferences will all be held by the chief or sheriff. If they want to say something about it, fine. If they don't, I couldn't care less as long as the right people are locked up.

We have trained 30,000 police officers throughout the United States to do interdiction within the country because these drugs move in vast amounts.

And in a thing called "Operation Pipeline" on interstate highways, just to give you a sense of what deputy sheriffs, highway patrolmen and uniformed troopers have done with this information, in 4 years since—not quite even 4, since October 1991, they have seized 53,000 kilos of cocaine, 58 tons and $153 million in cash from drug dealers who are traveling the interstate highways of the United States.

I don't think there's any easy solutions to this problem. I think we, too often, have people who want some type of a panacea, an easy cliche, easy enforcement program.

I have watched this thing develop over 35 years. I think it is a disaster for this country. I think it is going to take an inordinate amount of will, resources and ability to fight this for 5 or 10 years so that we are not faced with, 10 years from now, sitting here and

having another group of young kids and all of the demographics and all of the work from Professor Fox at Northeastern University and John De Ullio tell us demographically we have a time bomb ticking in the United States.

Because by the year 2005 there will be more teenagers in our population than ever before in the history of the United States, and that's where all of the big surge is in the murder rate and the violence rate and the increased usage that we see in narcotics once again in our young population.

I hope not to still be in law enforcement 10 years from now; but I certainly do not want to leave what is my lifelong profession, responsibility, what I think is a situation that is deplorable and intolerable, that of violent crime in the United States and that it has to be addressed and it has to be addressed very dramatically by all of us.

So that's my statement. We'll have a longer statement.

As I said, I think these kids probably did a better job than I could ever do in presenting those facts.

Mr. ZELIFF. I have to admit that they were a tough act to follow, but I think you also gave us some very important information as well that we need to zero in on.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Constantine follows:]

Thomas A. Constantine

Administrator
Drug Enforcement Administration
United States Department of Justice

Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to appear before you today to discuss the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) law enforcement strategy. DEA's strategy is designed to implement the President's National Drug Control Strategy which calls for strengthening interdiction and international efforts to control the flow of drugs which end up on the streets of America. I would like to commend the Subcommittee for holding these hearings and bringing attention to the drug problem at a time when drug use and drug trafficking is threatening the very fabric of American life. Before beginning my statement, I would like to ask permission to submit a longer statement for the record.

First, Mr. Chairman, let me thank you for visiting our Boston office last month. The Special Agents of our Boston office enjoyed the opportunity to brief you on the drug situation in the communities of southeastern New Hampshire that you represent.

The city of Boston and the New England corridor provide an excellent example of the interrelationship of drugs and violence in the United States. Heroin availability is at an all time high with extremely high purity levels. Several recent homicides in the Boston area can be linked directly to heroin trafficking. An investigation was recently culminated which involved an inner city gang that was trafficking and distributing very high purity of heroin through the Boston area. The purity of heroin ranged from 65 to 95 percent.

On June 21, 1995, The New Hampshire Attorney General's Drug Task Force, the Manchester, New Hampshire Police Department, DEA and other agencies arrested forty-two individuals from Manchester, New Hampshire and surrounding areas. A total of fifty-five individuals were federally indicted in this joint state, local and federal investigation. Two of the individuals arrested were involved in a drug related drive-by shooting/murder of an individual from the Lawrence, Massachusetts area.

In another investigation, our office in Boston joined forces with the Boston Police Department to solve these homicides. Our RED RUM task force program was utilized to focused

on the "CODE OF SILENCE" gang, which involved violent career criminals who had committed a number of murders and were involved in the trafficking of PCP and Cocaine in the community of Charlestown, Massachusetts.

This case culminated with the conviction of forty-five defendants; three of the principal defendants were sentenced to life without parole and five murders were cleared. To further assist the Boston Police Department and capitalize on the working relationships established in the "CODE OF SILENCE" case, two DEA Special Agents have been assigned to work on major investigations involving unsolved drug-related homicides.

Cocaine and heroin drug traffickers in Boston, as well as those throughout the United States receive their drugs from drug trafficking organizations based in foreign countries. We must, therefore, not only investigate local drug traffickers but also their suppliers outside the U.S. Our Boston office has investigated a cocaine smuggling organization which has been operating in the greater Boston area for several years that brings in multi-kilograms of cocaine to New England on a monthly basis from Colombia to the Boston area. We have also investigated organizations in Boston in which both Dominicans and Colombians are the major sources of supply and have direct ties to Colombia and the Dominican Republic.

DEA has recently established two significant initiatives in the Boston area: a Mobile Enforcement Team which will concentrate its efforts on violent career criminals in New England and a DEA Cross Borders Initiative aimed at targeting organizations responsible for heroin and cocaine drug trafficking from major cities along the Massachusetts northeastern border into the New England States of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. A number of state and local police officers from these states will work closely with DEA in a concerted effort to stem the flow of narcotics into these areas.

Mr. Chairman, I started my law enforcement career as a deputy with the Erie County Sheriff's Department in 1960 and in 1962 joined the New York State Police. During my career

with the New York State Police I worked as a uniform trooper, served as a Narcotics and Major Crime investigator and held various supervisory positions until being appointed Superintendent in 1986. I brought this 34 years of experience in state and local law enforcement with me when I was appointed Administrator of DEA in 1994.

When you are in state and local law enforcement you witness first-hand the devastating effects drug-related violence has brought to the innocent citizens of our communities both rural and urban. No county or city is immune from this plague of drug-related violence fueled by drugs flooding into this country from abroad. The links between violence and drugs is indisputable. Over one-third of all violent acts, and almost half of all homicides are drug-related. Since 1960, violent crime has increased almost 450%, ten times faster than our population has grown. Drug use among young people is increasing, after fourteen years of steady decline, and fewer teenagers associate drug use with negative consequences. Drug use is being glorified again by musicians and the media.

As a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and as the former head of the New York State Police, I take the view that the proliferation of drug trafficking and its attendant criminality forces us to view the illegal drug trade as a continuum between the source countries where the drugs are produced, and the streets of our communities where the drugs are sold and consumed. Law enforcement strategies must be developed to take this continuum into account.

During my association with the Chiefs of Police, there was a widespread feeling—and concern—that the federal government was not addressing the real needs of the American people by dealing with the drugs and violence which plagued so many communities. Police Chiefs across the country believed that the federal government was only interested in attacking the international drug lords who lived abroad, while ignoring the local kingpin responsible for murders and drug trafficking in Savannah, Georgia or Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Striking a Balance: Domestic and International Drug Enforcement

When I became Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, one of the first things we were able to accomplish was to strike a better balance between DEA's domestic role and our international role. You cannot bifurcate our strategy into international and domestic, nor can you afford to ignore either end of the spectrum. Our nation also cannot afford to develop and impose drug strategies which are the latest fad, crafted by bureaucrats reacting to the perceived priorities of the moment.

Drug trafficking and its attendant violence must be viewed in a global context that begins in distant and remote areas of the Andes mountains of South America or the jungles and hill country of Southeast Asia's "Golden Triangle" and ends up, after running the gauntlet of law enforcement interdiction efforts, in the hands of street dealers in towns and cities throughout the United States. A vicious drug trafficker like Ricky Jivens who operated with virtual impunity in Savannah could not exist without the well-organized Colombian drug lords who also terrorize their nation.

In order to address violent drug crime in our communities, while continuing to target the world's most significant drug traffickers, DEA returned almost 60 DEA agents from Headquarters to the field, where they are working with State and local counterparts to reduce violent crime in our communities. And through some new programs, which will be discussed later in my testimony, DEA was able to resume the kind of work which the American people have demanded from us. Law enforcement groups such as the California Narcotic Officers Association have hailed the willingness of DEA to work with state and local agencies at all levels who are on the front line in this battle. There is a growing perception in the law enforcement agencies of the country that DEA will actively assist them in facing the most serious problem of this era.

The American people are tired of living in fear for their lives, tired of being prisoners in their own homes because of wanton drug-related violence in their neighborhoods, and they are looking to law enforcement for help. I have witnessed the quality of life of citizens in communities and cities deteriorate because of the effects of drugs and violence. And I have witnessed entire communities and cities lose the quality of life they once had because of the effects of drugs and violence. I want to be able to tell the elderly woman who is afraid to go to her corner store that because of our efforts, the drug crew operating in her neighborhood is behind bars.

For the first time in our history, America's crime problem is being controlled by worldwide drug syndicates who operate their networks from places like Cali, Colombia, or Burma. Add to this their wealth and power which rivals a Fortune 500 company, and they become increasingly immune to our abilities to curtail their operations. Our strategy is simple: To destroy, rather then the disrupt, these drug syndicates by arresting, incarcerating, and in some instances, extraditing their leaders to the United States to face justice.

Mr. Chairman, I am greatly concerned for the future if we relent on our efforts to control the drug problem in this country. Demographic and violent crime statistics suggest that things will get worse before they get better. I am concerned that our country will be facing some very serious problems unless we address the drug issue more effectively right now.

Demographics for the coming years indicate that the teenage population will increase significantly by the year 2005, when we will have more teenagers than ever before entering the most violence prone age group, 18-24. Violent crime rates for 14-17 year-olds are twice as high as adult levels. Among males 13-and-14-years-old., we've seen the arrest rate for homicide increase by 145 percent. For 15-year-olds, over 240 percent.

The latest surveys indicate that drug use among our children is going up. Last year, after fourteen years of steady decline , drug use by high school seniors increased by almost 4 percent. Marijuana use is up in grades 8 through 12. And LSD use increased almost 2 percent among high school seniors, nearing the peak levels in the mid-1970's.

Some experts have suggested that violence and drugs are not only tied together or related, but are mutually sustaining. Our most recent national surveys show that over one third of all violent acts committed and almost half of all homicides are drug-related. In New York City alone, a study released by Cornell University Medical College showed that nearly one-third of New York City's murder victims had cocaine in their systems when they died.

And cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine and other drugs are widely available and relatively cheap. We are seeing a resurgence of heroin. It's now available in more cities, and at lower prices and higher purities, then ever before in our history. Recent developments, such as the deep involvement of Colombian traffickers in heroin production demonstrate to us that in just a few years, drug trends can change significantly, challenging law enforcement to keep pace with these changes.

Interdiction: Support to Law Enforcement

We in DEA know that interdiction is only one aspect of a sound law enforcement strategy. We must use our limited resources in a manner which focus' our interdiction assets on targets where we have a significant potential for success, rather than random interdiction of targets of opportunity. We have always known that drug interdiction supports a larger law enforcement

strategy which must necessarily end with the arrest and conviction of drug traffickers. Drug seizures must be driven by intelligence which is cued to cases brought against major drug traffickers.

Let me use a recent example which I believe illustrates how an intelligence driven seizure can evolve into a sophisticated investigation which has far-reaching results.

On June 5, after a lengthy investigation, an indictment against three attorneys and 56 other individuals was unsealed in federal court in Miami. In the weeks preceding the indictment, three other attorneys pleaded guilty to related charges.

This joint DEA/USCS investigation, which was four years in the making, would not have been possible without a methodical chronicling of events and associations that surrounded a number of drug seizures and prosecutions in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The Rodriguez-Orejuela faction of the Cali mafia orchestrated multi-ton shipments of cocaine into the United States through a number of smuggling routes. These shipments included cocaine secreted in lumber from Honduras; in frozen broccoli and ceramic tiles from Panama and Guatemala; in concrete fenceposts from Venezuela; and in coffee shipments from Panama. The frozen broccoli route included over 65,000 kilos of cocaine over six years, and the concrete posts route contained approximately 50,000 kilograms of cocaine in a one-year period.

Prior intelligence on a number of these initial shipments resulted in their interdiction. The indictment contains detailed allegations concerning cargo smuggling operations used by the mafia—the Rodriguez-Orejuela organization's use of a new route through Mexico to import cocaine into the United States; the organization's methods of laundering their narcotics proceeds; and the Cali mafia's attempts to undermine the judicial processes of the United States and Colombia through acts of obstruction of justice.

This case illustrates, in part, the value of intelligence-driven interdiction. Seizures are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. A mere seizure in a time of production surplus has the value of at least removing product from the system. But it has a limited effect on the price or purity, two milestones that have been historically used to measure the effectiveness of our drug enforcement efforts. When the information gleaned from the seizures is methodically investigated and prosecuted—as has been the case with many of the seizures detailed in the indictment—those responsible for the importation are brought to justice and the ultimate end game of law enforcement is achieved.

The Cali Mafia

As Superintendent of the New York State Police, I concentrated our drug enforcement efforts on Colombian groups operating throughout the state. I saw firsthand the connection between these international drug organizations, the cocaine they were smuggling into our country and the violence occurring on the streets of our communities. These drug groups operated sophisticated drug trafficking operations and were the cornerstone of drug operations in most of the communities in the state. Now, after 15 months as Administrator of DEA the global nature of the problem presented by these Colombian drug groups, headed by the leaders of the Cali mafia, have become obvious.

The Cali mafia is the largest drug trafficking organization in history, with annual profits of $7 billion, eight times the size of DEA's annual budget. The Cali mafia runs a tightly controlled, elaborate network of cocaine production, trafficking, transportation and communications. The top Cali leaders know each aspect of every cocaine shipment right down to the markings on kilo packages of cocaine for sale in the United States.

This organization is responsible for eighty percent of the world's cocaine and has now diversified into heroin trafficking. DEA's heroin signature program has determined that over one third of the heroin seized in the United States --- or 34%--- now comes from Colombia. Colombia

heroin accounted for only 15% of seizures in 1993. The cultivation of opium poppy in Colombia has also dramatically increased; in 1991, Colombia had 2,500 hectares of opium under cultivation, compared with 25,000 today.

Colombian traffickers are using Mexican trafficking organizations to transport large shipments of cocaine into the United States. With the shift away from the Caribbean and South Florida in the late 1980's and early 1990's, traffickers found well-established trafficking networks in Mexico ready and willing to transport tons of cocaine into the U.S.

Cali mafia transportation experts have bought a fleet of more than 40 large planes, such as Boeing 727's, Caravelles, and Lockheed Electras which are used to bring multi-ton loads of cocaine into Mexico. This cocaine is then off loaded for vehicular transport into the United States and frequently millions of dollars are loaded onto these planes for return to Colombia.

The Heroin Threat

Heroin continues to be a significant problem for us with Asian traffickers running worldwide heroin smuggling networks. Southeast Asian heroin is the predominant type of heroin available in the United States. According to our recent surveys, Colombian heroin is becoming a major source of concern. For the first time, Colombian heroin accounts for nearly one-third of all heroin seized by DEA. This drug is widely available in our major cities and we are seeing cheaper, purer heroin than ever before. The world's most notorious heroin trafficker, Khun Sa, employs an army of 20,000 in the Golden Triangle of Burma, Thailand and Laos where the majority of the world's heroin originates.

We are also facing a serious methamphetamine problem, particularly in California and along the Southwest border. It is also becoming apparent that methamphetamine is spreading to areas such as Georgia, Kentucky and Tennessee where Mexican traffickers have made inroads.

Other drugs such as marijuana, LSD, methcathinone, synthetic and diverted drugs continue to challenge us and stretch our resources.

These major trafficking groups --- the Cali mafia, Asian heroin traffickers or Mexican trafficking syndicates deliver their product to the thousands of violent domestic drug gangs operating in the United States. The drugs become the source of the violence. These gangs are not limited to our major cities but operate in such places as Vidalia, Georgia, Charlestown, Massachusetts and rural Texas City, Texas. They distribute drugs, intimidate witnesses and murder anyone who gets in their way. It is all part of the same continuum. Any effective law enforcement response requires recognition of that fact and a coordinated intelligence and enforcement program that can maximize intelligence and drug seizures as part of a total operational plan aimed at the arrest and incarceration of the perpetuators.

DEA's Programs

DEA has all of the Cali mafia leaders under indictment in the United States. DEA is working every day in many countries around the world to accumulate evidence against the Cali mafia leaders and their surrogates.

Our efforts are not limited to cocaine traffickers. DEA is working domestically and overseas to bring to justice major heroin traffickers including Khun Sa and his associates.

One of our most comprehensive efforts to date to attack all aspects of the cocaine trade, including the individuals who run the transport systems, is our Southwest Border Initiative. Current estimates indicate that as much as 70% of all cocaine coming into the United States is transshipped through Mexico and then across the U.S.- Mexico border. Working with the FBI, we are focusing our resources along the entire U.S.—Mexican border to target Mexican trafficking and transportation organizations. Along with the relevant U.S. Attorneys' Offices, we have initiated a joint investigative strategy to combat the major Mexican drug trafficking organizations responsible for transporting much of the drugs across the border. This effort combines

investigative expertise and prosecutorial talent to provide the maximum impact possible by identifying these smuggling organizations through investigative activity, proactive undercover operations and effective analysis of drug-related intelligence.

Neither the Cali mafia nor the Asian heroin organizations could flood the U.S. with cheap, pure drugs without active, organized drug gangs operating in the United States. These drug gangs use violence and intimidation to terrorize their communities. The Ricky Jivens gang in Savannah, Georgia, was responsible for one-third of the city's 59 homicides in 1991, and the weekly distribution of 25 kilograms of crack cocaine each week. Other gangs such as Washington D.C.'s "First Street Crew" controlled a wide share of the city's crack cocaine market with murder, violence and intimidation. Informants were murdered, and gang members retaliated against witnesses, including eleven who were gunned downed in the streets of the nation's capital. There are many more domestic drug gangs operating across the nation, trafficking in violence and drugs.

The DEA has developed the Mobile Enforcement Team-or METs- initiative as a response to the growing problem of drug-related violence and the needs of Americas domestic law enforcement agencies. The DEA METs initiative has been designed to fight violent crime. It was designed to support, not to supplant State and local efforts to address violent crime and drug trafficking in their communities. Most violent crime is linked directly or indirectly to drugs. The MET initiative is designed to support State and local law enforcement agencies which suffer from limited resources and whose personnel are known by local narcotics users and sellers, making undercover buys and penetrations of local distribution rings difficult and dangerous. It is a program that is being hailed by law enforcement executives across the country as a positive federal law enforcement initiative to address the drugs and violence that is causing a deterioration in the quality of life in other communities.

DEA is establishing 12 regionally based METs each consisting of approximately 12 Special Agents. METs will be dedicated to going after violent drug gangs, many of whom operate on an interstate basis and many of whom are responsible for the majority of unsolved homicides and continuing violence in local communities. The core of their violence is related to protecting and expanding their lucrative drug trade. Furthermore, once you establish that these groups are not immune from law enforcement action, witnesses are more willing to come forward. Informants and cooperating individuals can be developed through the drug investigation. The overall result is a meaningful reduction in the levels of violence in the community through the removal of drug gangs. In Savannah for example the arrest of Ricky Jivens and his associates resulted in a 50 percent decline in homicide rates.

Operation Pipeline, which has been operational since 1985, enlists the aid of uniformed highway officers to identify and arrest large-scale traffickers using the Interstate Highway System. To date, DEA has trained over 30,000 officers. During the first three quarters of FY 95, almost $26 million and a significant amount of cocaine, heroin and other controlled substances have been seized by Operation Pipeline.

Conclusion

Now is not the time to lessen our resolve or diminish the resources of law enforcement to fight drugs. There are no easy solutions, and no simple formulas for success. It will take years of hard work on the local, state, and federal levels, in schools and families to solve our crime problem, and will require bold, persistent action and leadership.

This concludes my prepared statement Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to answer any questions that you or the other Members of the Subcommittee may have at this time.

Mr. ZELIFF. I was particularly interested in hearing your comments relative to combining crime and drugs together as a marriage, and I wonder if we are doing enough of that. And if we do do that, then wouldn't it take center stage and be a much higher priority for our country?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. There is absolutely no doubt about it.

One of the things when I came here was to try to point out to people that it's not drug abuse alone. I think up until about 1988 or 1989, as I recall, drug abuse, the problem of illegal drugs, the people in these—at that time from Medellin—became a No. 1 issue.

People in the Partnership for a Drug Free America tell me there were 600 stories in the media during the year that focused on drugs. There were headlines in the national news magazines. I think violent crime became so bad and became so horrible to people in the United States that it pushed drugs off, and people didn't make the connection.

Of all of the polls that I have seen—I suspect people in this room are more astute on polls than I am, but all the polls I have seen, violent crime is the No. 1 issue in the country, and I think rightly so. I think it is the primary consideration of Government, and drugs is about fifth or sixth.

I think if you tie the two together, which they are tied together, you would have a social issue that is like 2 or 3 times of more importance than any other social issue that the American citizens look at.

If you do what I have done for 34 years before I got here, which is going to community meetings, community meetings throughout New York State, whether it was drunks in a bar or dope peddlers, people are absolutely frustrated with people like me in Government and everybody else.

Mr. ZELIFF. And all of us as well.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Yeah, that this system continues. And they want something done about it.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let me ask you this. NSA security lists—where do you think drugs are on that list? And where do you think crime and drugs have compared? Where will that end up?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I have to tell you, first of all, I am a career cop. With me, it is crime and drugs, the No. 1 issue in the United States. I am less concerned about being hit by a ballistic missile from Russia than I am somehow getting shot in a drive-by shooting.

Mr. ZELIFF. Does the NSA security list confirm that?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I really don't know, Congressman, to tell you the truth.

Mr. ZELIFF. One of the things we need to do is somehow have everybody in the Government agree with your statement.

Let me ask you this. We're fighting a war that—and I visited with many of your agents, including the ones from New Hampshire as well as the ones in Massachusetts as well as some in the Bahamas on our Coast Guard trip. And I think, overall, the agency is doing a terrific job in fighting a losing war.

And I was just wondering if maybe you would just describe how you—in just 30 seconds or so or 1 minute, how do you—how would you describe our Nation's war on drugs, No. 1. No. 2, how would

you describe that directive in terms of where you have to go within your agency and where is your focus?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I have always been skeptical about the term war on drugs or war on crime, to tell you the truth, Congressman. I have heard that, starting early in my career, that there was always a war on these two things. And it never balanced out from my experience with having been a young boy, growing up in World War II and seeing this country being willing to make immense sacrifices, both for the institution of a country and personally as individuals for freedom.

And, to me, one of the biggest deprivations of freedom right now is crime. So if we term it a war, that's an inappropriate term. And we're always going to say we are a loser because, to fight a war, everybody has to be committed—every citizen, citizens' groups, all of us from all of our backgrounds—and being willing to direct the types of will and resources against that problem that would—we direct against an enemy in a war.

Mr. ZELIFF. So you don't——

Mr. CONSTANTINE. So the use of the term war on drugs I have tried to avoid because I think it leads to an inappropriate conclusion.

Our role in DEA, as with the assets we do—first of all, to go over the major figures, where we can in the United States try to suppress some of the chaos, disorder that are in communities so that the—so that community people or groups can work their improvements.

I'm reminded of when I was head of the State Police. The city that I lived in was Schenectady. There was huge drive-by shootings and drug problems. People from New York City—to make a long story short, we wound up locking up about 175 people in one morning. And I wound up meeting with a young fellow that I knew who worked at the Boys Club, and I had known him since he was a young kid in the neighborhood.

And what he said was, thank God, something was done. Because the parents would not let anybody come down to the Boys Club when it got dark, which was 5 at night up there. And, furthermore, that they were afraid, as employees of the Boys Club—and this guy was about 6' 7"—of the dope peddlers on the street.

So the role of law enforcement is to somehow create a sense of order so that these groups that hopefully can improve many of these problems can get involved, and I think that's the role that I have seen, whether it was State police or here in DEA.

Mr. ZELIFF. We talked to some of your folks down in the Bahamas, and I think it's fair to say that they felt a little overwhelmed and that they are losing resources in the war on drugs. If their perception is accurate—I mean, how do we justify DEA's emphasis on—on changing from transit to source countries, putting more assets in domestic? How do you—how do you look at—I mean, when we see your folks out in the field dealing with this thing and they lack resources, for example, simple radar tracking ability, less resources since 1992 put in on this drug effort—any comment on that?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Well, two things. Those things that you talk about I think are in other budgets. But as far as DEA is concerned,

last year, through the help of both the House and the Senate, both parties, obviously—our budget for personnel is in pretty good shape. We have put in a lot for infrastructure things in addition to some enhancements this year in the heroin strategy.

What I think we have to be careful about is changing the strategy every year. Because it's got to be somehow kept in balance, so that we have some predictable way to direct it. And I think we have to, if it's possible, leave the professionals, at least in the law enforcement community, to be able to tell us what they think is the appropriate strategy.

When I first took over DEA, rather than come in and tell them what to do, I surveyed all of the people who were field commanders throughout the world in DEA and said, look, what do you think are some of the issues and some of the problems and how should we address it? We listened to them. We developed a strategy.

What we do now is we ask, if we have someone—for example, Mr. Festa up in Boston for all of New England, we ask him, what is your biggest drug problem in New England? How do you want to go about addressing it? What resources do you need? And we would let him make that.

So we tried to find a balance between the transit zone, which is for the most part interdiction and for the most part in the hands of Customs, Coast Guard and the military.

But as far as the source country, I think what I find appalling is that there is a huge organized crime syndicate operating in Colombia presently, and to a lesser degree in Mexico and somewhat in Burma, is that to do an investigation here in the United States, what you do is you hit the wall.

You might at best get a mid-level dealer. But you know that person is never going to talk or provide information because the names on his job application—they have actual job applications that are 5 or 6 pages long—lists his brothers, his sisters, his mother, father, in-laws, cousins, aunts and uncles. So that if that individual gives us information, you can bet there's going to be some type of retributive action that takes place in that country.

So we felt that the source country, going after the top of these Mafias was a very worthwhile goal. We learned it in the United States when we thought that the Mafia—up until the 1960's, people thought it was immune from enforcement pressure. I think we have been able to prove, after 30 years of constant pressure and eventually sending the John Gottis of the world to prison for life, that we can make substantial inroads into reducing the impact of organized crime. I think we are starting to see that in the Colombias of the world, in some of the arrests in Mexico.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you feel that the source country strategy that we presently have is working?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Yes. I think it's—let me say this, I think it is starting to show results. I have to tell you I was very skeptical about it until about a month ago.

Mr. ZELIFF. How about our current transit zone strategy?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. The biggest transit zone we have right now is the 2,000 mile border with Mexico and the Southwest border. The Caribbean is now about 25 percent of the traffic. We looked at tremendous effort now on Mexico and that border. I think that is

going to be our problem for 5 or 10 years. Any resources that I get additional I am funneling to the Southwest border, and I know Customs and many of the other people are doing the same thing.

Mr. ZELIFF. So you feel that's working?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Well, working to show more seizures, and more arrests, but certainly not working to show reduction in price or a deterioration in the quality of the drug. That's what's frustrating.

Mr. ZELIFF. It seems to me—and I will turn this over to Mrs. Thurman—but from the people we talked to in your organization, both in the Caribbean and we talked to some folks in Mexico when we did the NAFTA trip, it seems like we are kind of overwhelmed in terms of fighting that war.

In Mexico, particularly, we lack the cooperation we need on the ground. A tremendous amount of those drugs are coming over the border. Once drugs get to Puerto Rico, it is just like they are in the United States. And it seems like since 1992 we have cut back major resources, and it just seems that we don't seem to be able to get on top of the fact that we are not doing much in terms of results. But——

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I don't think anybody should—that you are not overstating the problem. I mean, the problem is immense.

Mr. ZELIFF. Far bigger than I ever thought.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I think—I had run a big police organization, and we did big investigations on the Cali group. I had 350 people at this time working narcotics. I had no sense of the scope and the power of these organizations.

Some of the things that I see are improvements. The new Attorney General Lozano in Mexico has in many meetings shown a great deal of cooperation. I have many long-time people in Mexico who have worked there dating back to the kidnapping of Kiki Camerena who were very skeptical, who are hard-nosed, tough cops who have been in that environment for 5 or 10 years who are somewhat optimistic that they see a glimmer of hope now.

There's a whole infrastructure that I haven't even got any sense as to how they are going to build that. I mean, when we select policemen in the United States or DEA agents, they have gone to college to take criminal justice. We have 10,000 applicants for every 100 positions. We do backgrounds, we do polygraphs, we do psychological testing, we have basic academy programs.

None of those things are in place in Mexico presently, and that's all going to have to be rebuilt. But, in the meantime, you work with what you have; and there has been an improvement over the last 6 months.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. When we did the House budget resolution, as you well know, there were some pension issues in there. And you have just talked a little bit about how you have been gathering your information and how you would go about what is the best war against drugs—I know you don't want to use those terms.

Do you see us losing some valuable players in these games because of this or—we are just very concerned that this could potentially happen and particularly with your comments too, in fact, those are the people you went to.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Director Freeh and I both co-authored a letter to most of the people that are in key positions in the Senate and in the House raising great concern about this.

The first hiring that DEA did since 1991 or 1992 was about 3 months ago. That means that we had a substantial backlog of vacant positions for ages that had to be trained, and then we had to get into recruiting and selection.

We will, out of a normal retirement process, have substantial number of people who will retire over the next 2 or 3 years. There are 600 people, experienced key people in the DEA, who are eligible to retire presently.

Most of them stick around because they love it, and they believe in it, and it's an exciting, rewarding profession, and you are never going to get rich in it. But if you make it a financial disincentive for their retirement, they are going to make some family decisions that are not going to be in the best interest of DEA.

Because if we are simultaneously hiring 600 to 1,000 people, you need a cadre of solid, experienced people to give them the institutional knowledge. And both Director Freeh and I are very concerned for both of our agencies if that disincentive should occur for law enforcement—because they are kind of unique. They have got to get out at 57 anyway, and I think that is a good decision.

So they are different than most people who could—if you make a decision today that affects somebody who is 55 years old, well, if they could retire at 65, maybe they could see some recovery in the outyears. They know there's going to be no recovery, so they would probably opt to retire.

Mrs. THURMAN. We're going to get a chance for a second round of questioning?

Mr. ZELIFF. I'm sorry.

Mrs. THURMAN. Because your 5 minutes and my 5 minutes were quite different.

Mr. ZELIFF. If you set yourself up——

Mrs. THURMAN. I did. I don't have control of the light.

Mr. ZELIFF. You have another question?

Mrs. THURMAN. I have several, but go ahead.

Mr. ZELIFF. Why don't you take one more question, and then we will move on.

Mrs. THURMAN. Actually, we have several other questions, but——

Mr. ZELIFF. Take two.

Mrs. THURMAN. It is my understanding that the drug traffickers have smuggled drugs into the country by a variety of methods and that the current favorite methods are the use of containers which are contained within the legitimate cargo of ships and other conveyances. Do you believe this trend will continue? If so, why?

And, additionally, what effect will increased transit zone interdiction have on container smuggling?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. The biggest problem we see right now from all of our investigations as far as cocaine traffic—and let me narrow it to that first because that is our biggest problem for drugs and violence. It is coming from Colombia into Mexico, being stored 50, 70, 80 tons at a time.

Now, it comes into Mexico by container ship. These cargo—huge airline flights that are bringing 8 tons, 15 tons at a time into Mexico. There the cartels break the load down. And it enters the United States not so often through a cargo container situation but through all of the regular points of entry along the border where they will break the load down into 50 to 100 kilos.

And they will put them in campers, put them in trunks of cars. They will then bring it through what they think is a vulnerable point that they have determined through intelligence. And they are very skilled at this.

Then they'll get the load of drugs into Arizona or Texas or Southern California. They'll coalesce the load, bring it up usually to Houston or Los Angeles, turn it back over to Colombian cells operating in the United States. The Colombians will then direct the distribution throughout the United States.

Heroin traffic is somewhat different. That is probably in large amounts, often a cargo container situation. I think probably—and I don't duck questions, but the more appropriate person for that would be someone from Customs, because that is their responsibility.

We will—if we get information from our innumerable sources either on an investigation that is going on in Los Angeles or Houston or one going on in Venezuela or Colombia, we will provide that information for a Customs lookout.

I think if you ask Commissioner Weise he will probably give you a much better answer than I could give on how to handle cargo container shipments.

Mrs. THURMAN. Some would argue that the success of a transit interdiction effort setup can be a paradox, that a successful transit zone operation will garner large amounts of illegal narcotics for a while but seizures will then fall off as drug traffickers figure out the existence and location of the transition zone dragnet. Would you comment on that?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Well, I think the first thing we have to do is look at interdiction as not an end in and of itself.

Yeah, they are going to try to smuggle narcotics. That's their business. They are businesspeople. They are ruthless. They will use anything that they can.

However, if you can—you can coordinate, and it's easy to do. I mean, the coordination aspect, the intelligence of who is shipping the 500 pounds in an aero commander and dumps it into a body of water on one of the islands out of the Caribbean and where it is going to go to—you build a conspiracy case against all those individuals, and the narcotics that you seize is part of the evidence.

I think it would be a myth to believe that we can seize all of the narcotics coming through here through all of these zones and thereby solve our narcotics problem.

We have tried that again and again with interdiction. I have to tell you, there is very little effect on the price or the quality of the drug, so I think the transit zone accounts for 25 percent.

These Mafias have exerted great control over some of those islands in the Caribbean presently, and I think the Congressman and everybody should be aware of the fact that once they—and they do it in such a way that, without getting into the details and

all of the technology that you have presently, they have very often all of the same technology. I mean, if we have global positions satellites, they have global positions satellites.

Mr. ZELIFF. What would happen if we, all of a sudden, put this thing at such a heightened level that not only do we observe and have intelligence of a plane coming in to make a drop in the Caribbean but you also have the ability to shoot down a plane if you have the evidence that they just dropped and they are not willing to land on your terms. Wouldn't that send an awfully clear signal that we really meant business?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Well, I think if you could, with tremendous resources, affect a lot of their distribution systems, you would create some chaos for them and make it probably a lot easier for us. It makes them vulnerable. It makes them take chances that they shouldn't be taking, makes them risky. Right now, they control the deck in a lot of places.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. It could have an effect. To shoot down planes—I know in South America I sat and listened to it. It is a great threat.

My big fear with it, to tell you the truth, is that there are innocent people in a plane. And although I am tough, believe me, on crime and criminals and I give them no quarter, I am—I was always—when I was in shooting situations or near shooting situations in the United States and when I had to fire, I often did not fire because of who was around. That's what I worry about.

Mr. ZELIFF. I guess the balance in this thing is those kids that preceded you. They are all innocent as well. There are thousands and thousands, millions of them, beyond that; and that is the problem. But it certainly gives you some tough choices——

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Yes, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF [continuing]. And—as we fight this.

The gentleman from Indiana, Mark Souder. You have been very patient and thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. I have two brief questions, and I know we have a lot of panelists. If we could submit some questions in writing. I was serious. I apologize for being late. I just got in from Indiana.

Did I hear you say a few minutes ago you were pessimistic up to a month ago?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I was pessimistic about whether—just to give you—put it in context with my testimony and some of the answers. The control of the cocaine traffic in the United States for the last 15 to 20 years has been controlled out of Cali, Colombia. Up until about 1988, 1989, they controlled probably 50 to 60 percent. With the implosion and destruction of the cartel out of Medellin, they took over 80 to 90 percent of all the cocaine.

Not one of the major figures had ever been arrested in Colombia. We knew who they were. We had them indicted redundantly. There was a great deal of personal pressure every time that I spoke here or anyplace else, pointed out that we knew these individuals were running these syndicates. We thought they should be brought to justice.

There was a great deal of governmental pressure brought in the last decertification round on the international waiver. A new head

of the National Colombian Police, General Serrano, a very impressive career person, seemed to be interested in doing it.

I had a long discussion with him for 2 hours back in late April or early May in the Dominican Republic. He was concerned about how they would overwhelm the tremendous technology, influence, wealth and control these people had in Cali.

The arrest of Gilberto Rodriguez, the No. 1 person for this organized crime group, and the subsequent surrender of two fairly substantial figures in the last week indicates to me that this pressure is having an effect; and the people who have surrendered indicated that they feared for their lives because of all of the raids and all of the pressure. And that continues as we speak. There's daily raids at safe houses and locations in Colombia.

And that is the first time that has happened, to my knowledge, in law enforcement in that particular group. That gave me encouragement, and it also said that our gathering of evidence against these people for the last 10 years turns out to have some value and some worth. And if you're going to do an investigation against any type of an organized crime syndicate, you eventually have to go after the leadership. And to go after the leadership, in this case, it's in Colombia presently.

Mr. SOUDER. I appreciate that clarification on that cartel. I hope we don't get too optimistic because so much has moved to Mexico.

I know in our office we just had a group of people from Colombia who visited with us who suggested that that isn't happening as much in Colombia as we would hope in the relationship with the Government. I would like to follow up on some of the points they raised with our office——

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Sure.

Mr. SOUDER [continuing]. And also the domestic expansion of some of the alternative and created drugs. So that the drug problem isn't disappearing, but at least we've got the Colombia problem. When you said you are more optimistic, we did break Colombia, but I didn't know whether you meant the whole thing.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I was optimistic as to that source country's organized crime syndicate. In the beginning, as I told the panel, I am very concerned. I mean, this situation over 30 years in this country has deteriorated substantially, involving both violent crime and drugs; and I—I am not optimistic about that.

Mr. SOUDER. I have some follow-up questions that I would like to put to you in writing related to how many of the breaks we're getting—are due to, basically, undercover agents and whether, in fact, if we don't have undercover agents working to an extended degree whether we are actually breaking things in the laundering.

And I would also like to ask some questions related to the interdiction efforts and the relationship with the domestic efforts. You have had some statements in your testimony regarding that, and I have——

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Yes, sir.

Mr. SOUDER [continuing]. A couple of follow-ups. Because I am concerned that, at the local level, we are just getting overwhelmed from outside. And it is a tough balance, as you well know, coming from local law enforcement.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. That's one of the problems that I mentioned, Congressman. And as we have lent assets to cities that really have some difficulties, some in Indiana, with a lot of violence and drug dealing, I have taken most of those assets out of headquarters.

But in some quarters I am criticized for helping out American law enforcement too much, and I think we have always had a responsibility to do that where we can. And it is trying to find that balance and trying to find a strategy that we can stick with for a substantial period of time.

Mr. SOUDER. We have a huge problem in Fort Wayne.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Yes, we do.

Mr. SOUDER. And we will continue to be in touch with your office because we have such a big crack problem.

I would like to see an extension office there. We have contacted you. But I am most concerned about how to reduce the amount of drugs coming in. And, if that is best served by putting people in Fort Wayne and helping with our task force, because we're third in the country in crack right now, a piling in or wherever you can get to it and would like to pursue that because it is just overwhelming our city. We have got gang warfare spreading into the counties around in an area that is not used to this at all.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. We have just recently, the head of our Chicago office, which is responsible for them, met with Lloyd Jennings, the head of the Indiana State Police, and we have contributed substantial resources to look at that very thing, which is the crack gangs which move from Chicago or move from Gary and wind up getting in gun battles with people who are from Fort Wayne. And we are aware of that problem in Indiana. I have talked with Lloyd about it, and we talked with the chief, and I think it's substantial.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Mark.

The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Florida, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Constantine, for being here with us.

I'm from Miami, FL, and, as you know, SOUTHCOM has just been designated to move from Panama to Miami. We are elated over that decision. We don't know exactly where in Miami it will be located, but it's certainly a welcome addition in our community. SOUTHCOM has been very important in our dealings, not only with stable democracies throughout the hemisphere, but also in our battle against taking—getting drugs into our country.

Now it is my understanding that an important position, a DEA position at SOUTHCOM in Panama, was left unfulfilled for a number of months. My reports had indicated it was about 6 months. I was wondering if you could explain to me some of the details regarding that situation.

What was the exact duration that this position remained unfilled? Can you explain the reason why this vacancy occurred? Is it an important position in the overall drug control strategy? What sort of duties would this person be expected to perform? Is it typical for positions of this nature to go unfilled by DEA for months at a time?

Also, about the language capability of DEA agents in SOUTHCOM. Do you think it's important that they speak Spanish or not? If you could give me a fuller explanation about this DEA vacancy in SOUTHCOM.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Well, I am familiar with that to a degree. General McCaffrey, who was the head of SOUTHCOM, in my impression—I met with him numbers of times. He is dedicated, serious, believes in trying to do more about the drug problem. I think he's as frustrated as many of us from time to time. His sense is he wanted to have a new person working in SOUTHCOM.

When that happens in DEA, we then have to form a career board that chooses the people who are involved. There then is a—often, at least—a 3- or 4-month lag for that individual who is now selected for the new position to be able to acquire property, to be able to settle out wherever they are—in this case, the individual was from Chicago and was the No. 2 or 3 person in the Chicago office—for that person to get family straightened around and all of the things that take place.

This is fairly traditional in Federal service, which was somewhat new to me, the period of time that it gets somebody ready to go there. The position in SOUTHCOM is a liaison between the military and the DEA. We have people stationed in all of those countries in South America who are actually on the ground providing information to host country law enforcement that we derive from investigations, say from Miami or some other place, or take the information that we receive from the host country investigations, taking it back to Miami.

Those people are virtually 99 percent all fluent in the language or trained to a level that they can be there. I can't tell you for sure whether the person who is in SOUTHCOM working with the military is language fluent, but it would not be an essential quality for that particular individual because their contacts are, for the most part, with the U.S. military and the U.S. military resources in the SOUTHCOM command.

So language—I would not say for that particular office, as opposed to putting somebody in Colombia, putting somebody in Venezuela or Argentina or the rest—or France or whatever it might be, where language would be a component. But that's the reason that it took so long. They were looking for a new person.

I told them we would find them a new person and to do that the person had to sell their property.

I have met the General since then. They seem to be comfortable with the relationship.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. So that kind of problem of lead time that you need, would you see a need to change that in the future or do you just think that that's the normal course?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. I am uncomfortable with it. And it's usually about 3 months, and I would have to check to see if that was a 6-month gap.

Because, as I recall, I met the person who was assigned there assisting General McCaffrey in September 1994, and I don't think the other individual who left there had left there 6 months. I know it hadn't because I was only in my present position then for about 5 months, and the individual who was in SOUTHCOM was still

there when I came over from the State Police of New York to take the position as head of this agency.

And then, in September, I met him with the General and they were working together. Now, he may not have relocated his house. He might not have been permanently in residence at that point in time, but he was assisting SOUTHCOM already. But 3 months is about average. I think that is far too long, but that is the system that we have to deal with.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. I don't have any further questions.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK.

I think probably what you are going to get is probably quite a few questions submitted in writing.

I just would like to kind of summarize one quick question here. Is there one strategic plan out there that brings all the agencies together in some kind of an action plan that governs your actions? For example, when you decide to put 30,000 DEA agents into the United States fighting the drug war, is that part of a response to an overall plan that brings all the agencies together?

And then, within that plan, is there anything that measures success in terms of goals and strategies and targeting process so that you can kind of start out your year and say, OK, I've got my marching orders. How do I fit into this whole thing? How do I develop strategies that attain national goals? And then at the end of the year you measure your goals and say, hey, this has been successful. Is there anything like that that we need to be doing?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. There is a national strategy that DEA has contributed to for the last 4 or 5 years. In other words, when the national strategy has been formulated from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, DEA has had a role in submitting their suggestions in the area of law enforcement.

What happens when that policy then comes out? DEA has 3,702 sworn agents for the whole world. That is all of the United States and 70 countries—or 50 countries, 70 offices outside the United States. We try to allocate our resources and objectives commensurate with that plan.

Now, that plan is only, for law enforcement, probably 8 pages long. We are probably conducting 1,000 investigations a year.

What I think I mentioned earlier, what we then do is we contact both in the United States and outside of the country the people who run the DEA in the region. For example, presently the individual in charge of DEA out of Miami is responsible for all of Florida and virtually all of the Caribbean. That will change when we open our division permanently in Puerto Rico.

The person in charge of the Miami office reports back to the Chief of Operations in DEA and says, these are the primary narcotics enforcement problems in Florida and in the Caribbean, and these are the way we are going to use our resources for the next year.

That work plan is then reviewed by the Chief of Operations in DEA in conjunction with all of the other offices to make sure if there is a national trend that that is simultaneously addressed.

If we agree with that and we think that those are worthwhile objectives and they meet those broader goals, we then allocate the money. When I came here, all the money was controlled here at headquarters. I think centralized control of criminal investigations—you are just too slow to react. So we then sent the resources to Miami office.

That person then at the end of the year will report what they have done in the way of investigations. I could tell you if I looked at every office, whether it was the Boston office or the Miami office, phenomenal cases, phenomenal arrests and great conspiracy investigations that are beyond anything I have thought capable in law enforcement.

If the goal is a reduction in usage of drugs, I have to tell you that that is not something that we are able to show. I think we can show an impact selectively on certain locations and cities—they mention Indiana. If somebody says Fort Wayne, IN, has a big drug problem and drive-by shootings, if we can go in there and identify the drug gangs that are killing everybody and lock 'em up, I can show you substantial progress in those locations where the violent crime rate drops dramatically for at least a limited period of time. What happens 1 year, 2, or 3 years out becomes part of the community——

Mr. ZELIFF. The basic, far-reaching or overreaching goal of the 1995 National Drug Control Strategy is reduce the number of drug users in America. So, obviously, if we measured our performance against that overall strategy, we obviously—the performance doesn't match the goal. Would you agree with that?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. If that's what the objective is overall. But, I mean, I look at it from the enforcement, our enforcement strategy. If you look into that thing——

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. CONSTANTINE [continuing]. That's our bible. There's a whole chapter on that. That's where we take our guidance.

Mr. ZELIFF. Your enforcement strategy, I mean, who is basically in charge of the drug effort, in your judgment?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Overall it would be the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Mr. ZELIFF. Dr. Lee Brown?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Right. For law enforcement issues, my immediate superior where I take directions on criminal cases and putting things together is the Deputy Attorney General and the Attorney General, which is my primary line of authority.

Mr. ZELIFF. How does it fit in with Mr. Kramek from the Coast Guard and Chief of the Interdiction Committee?

Mr. CONSTANTINE. He runs the interdiction committee. I am a member of that committee. I sit in on monthly or bimonthly meetings with the Admiral, and I attended his interdiction committee. And what I try to do is bring to that the law enforcement perspective.

Mr. ZELIFF. There is, obviously, a lot of different agencies and a lot of different resources being marshaled against this effort; and, obviously, the strategy has to be clear, the direction has to be clear, in terms of who's in charge; and the accountability has to be clear in terms of how do we measure the effort.

I just want to thank you very, very much for appearing here this morning. You are going to probably get a lot of questions that we appreciate answers from. We are fighting hard to get on top of this issue.

We have dealt with your New England folks as well as your folks in the Caribbean. We have nothing but great respect for what you're trying to accomplish. And we will take advantage of your invitation to visit you at great length and get into it even deeper.

But what we are trying to do is put our arms around—we have been in Framingham Prison for Women. We are talking to people who have been affected. We are—we've been in treatment centers, interdiction areas. We're trying to get involved in law enforcement. We're trying to ultimately bring an effective demand policy that affects—brings all of us together to try to help you do your work as well.

So thank you very, very much for appearing this morning; and your testimony is very well appreciated.

Mr. CONSTANTINE. Thank you, Congressman. Appreciate it.

Mr. ZELIFF. The Chair now welcomes Joseph Kelley, head of the International Affairs Section of the Government Accounting Office whose team has just returned from Colombia, Mexico and the source countries.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Let the record show the answer is in the affirmative.

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH KELLEY, DIRECTOR-IN-CHARGE, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ISSUES, GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE, ACCOMPANIED BY JOHN BRUMMETT, SENIOR MANAGER; RON HUGHES; AND AL FLEENER

Mr. KELLEY. Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. Good morning and thank you for appearing.

Mr. KELLEY. I would like to introduce John Brummett who is my senior manager on this work that we are doing for the committee.

Mr. ZELIFF. Great.

Mr. KELLEY. I have a statement which I would like to submit for the record and try to go through and summarize it, if I can, to save some time for questions.

Mr. ZELIFF. Without objection so ordered.

Mr. KELLEY. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chairman, we are pleased to be here today to provide some preliminary observations based on our ongoing review of the strategies and efforts of U.S. agencies to stop production and trafficking of cocaine and heroin destined for the United States.

As part of our review, sir, we observed counternarcotics programs in Colombia, Mexico and several countries in the Far East, discussed these programs with United States officials at headquarters and field locations. We also reviewed results of an October 1994, counterdrug conference sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the United States Southern Command. This conference was attended by over 100 senior and mid-level officials from agencies involved in these programs.

On the basis of this work, coupled with our past work, which in my statement I list several reports we have done over the last several years, we have five general observations.

First, as you may know, the executive branch has changed the focus of its international strategy for cocaine from law enforcement and drug seizures in the transit zones to stopping drugs in the source countries before they reach the transit zone. However, the executive branch has had difficulties implementing a key part of its strategy, that is of shifting resources from the transit zone to the source countries. Also, a proposed heroin strategy was submitted to the President in mid June of this year and is awaiting his approval.

Second, in addition to combating drugs, the United States has other important foreign policy objectives that compete for U.S. attention and resources. As a result, the United States must make tough choices as to which objectives to pursue most vigorously.

Third, the many U.S. agencies involved in counternarcotics efforts overseas do not always coordinate their efforts. U.S. officials have agreed that more coordination and leadership is needed.

Fourth, the U.S.' funds are not always well managed. In the past, we have recommended improvements in how the U.S. counternarcotics assistance funds are managed. We found that the extent to which U.S. agencies monitor end use of assistance provided to foreign governments varies. Furthermore, specific measures of how programs are contributing to the overall counternarcotics goals have yet to be established in our view.

And, finally, Mr. Chairman, the effectiveness of the U.S. international drug control program depends in large measure on the willingness and the ability of the foreign governments to combat drug trade in their country. The extent and direction of host country actions often vary over time. Recent actions by the Government of Colombia, such as the arrest of these three high-level members of the Cali cartel, are positive steps, but continued commitment is needed. For a variety of reasons, foreign governments are not always willing to fully participate in counternarcotics efforts. Even when they are willing, Mr. Chairman, they often lack the necessary resources to make real contributions. Extensive corruption in some countries further weakens host country actions to combat drug trade.

I would like to elaborate on the five areas I just mentioned to you, and I will try and go through and summarize some of the important points in here.

In November 1993, the U.S. Policy on International Counternarcotics in the Western Hemisphere established a strategy for combating production and trafficking of cocaine. Among other things, the policy called for a gradual shift of resources from the transit zones of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean to the source countries of cocaine—primarily Colombia, Peru, Bolivia.

According to the Department of Defense, the amount of resources applied to the transit zone has been significantly reduced. However, to date, we have not seen a shift in resources to source countries. For example, the Drug Enforcement Administration is reducing its presence in Colombia. The U.S. Southern Command is now flying fewer sorties per month to support source-country interdiction than it did in 1993. Counternarcotics assistance to each of the three primary source countries was less in 1995 than it was in 1991 and 1992.

Now, I should note that the administration's budget for fiscal year 1996 proposed an increase of $89 million over what was appropriated in 1995, and I understand most of this is going to the foreign source countries. Now, I understand it is—the House Appropriations Committee has not approved that and is recommending the level of funding they got last year, so I think we have to put that in some context.

Additionally, in several instances, officials of U.S. agencies expressed concerns about shifting resources from the transit zone. We have talked to DEA administration people in Mexico, and they were concerned if they were going to lose transit zone money and shift it to the source countries, that it could affect their operations there negatively.

The Interdiction Coordinator, who was appointed in 1993 when they had the new guidance, said he supports the shift in emphasis to the source countries, but he also cautioned against reducing funding in programs for the transit zone before the United States has an active implementation plan in the source countries.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to the heroin issue, the production and trafficking of heroin, as you know, is becoming a more serious problem as usage in the United States is reportedly increasing. In November 1993, the executive branch announced that within 120 days it would develop a separate strategy to combat the heroin trade. As of today, as far as I can tell, about 19 months later, there still is no heroin strategy approved. However, we understand that the recommended strategy has been presented to the President and is awaiting his approval.

I would like to turn to the issue of balancing foreign policy objectives. It is clear that the United States has a variety of foreign policy objectives that compete for U.S. attention and resources. Deciding which of these objectives are the most important is quite difficult. These decisions may result in counternarcotics objectives receiving less U.S. attention than other objectives. In our recent work, we saw some examples of this.

In Mexico, there are competing priorities, obviously. For that country, countering the drug trade is the fourth highest priority in what they call the U.S. Mission Program Plan, which is essentially what the Ambassador and his country team puts together, and sends to the State Department for approval.

During our recent field work, the United States Ambassador to Mexico told us he had focused his attention during the past year and a half on the higher priority issues of trade and commerce so—obviously, the NAFTA and the peso crisis—and he had insufficient time, really, to focus on counternarcotics issues.

Conflicts in United States policy toward Burma have also affected counternarcotics efforts. And this is a fairly common, pretty well-known issue that we have an issue out there with respect to human rights—the State Department is not interested in putting a big anti-drug program in Burma because it will appear that we are supporting a government that shows repressive actions toward their citizens. So, therefore, for several years we have had a small program there, but they are going to have to deal with that since Burma is probably the source of most of the heroin coming into this country.

In another case, Mr. Chairman, $45 million originally intended for counternarcotics assistance to source countries, was reprogrammed to assist Haiti's democratic transition. These funds were needed in Haiti to support activities such as paying for costs of non-United States personnel assigned to multinational forces, training of police forces, and developing a job creation and feeding program.

Excuse me. I would like to discuss the issue of interagency leadership and coordination, one of the items I outlined earlier.

During our review, we discussed with U.S. officials the need for strong leadership and better coordination in this program. These officials generally agreed that no single organization was in charge of antidrug activities in the cocaine source countries or the transit zone. They also recognized that better leadership was needed to integrate all U.S. programs in the region to develop a coherent plan.

Officials who we discussed this with at the Office of the National Drug Control Policy indicated that they had made some progress toward developing a plan to bring more leadership to the drug war but acknowledged that the staffing constraints had limited their progress.

Our recent work in the field has again pointed out some issues that tie back to this—or some examples. In Colombia, we found that a lack of coordination and a clear statement of responsibilities, has led to confusion over the role of the offices that are responsible for intelligence analysis within the Embassy and related operational plans for interdiction. Several United States officials in Colombia told us that they were unsure who had operational control over their activities and questioned who would be the best agency to provide that control.

As I said, the position of the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator, which was established in 1993, to enhance coordination among U.S. agencies, but specific roles and authorities of the coordinator at that time were not established. Although we understand the Coordinator has provided advice to the Office of National Drug Control Policy on interdiction issues, coordinator officials in our discussions with them told us their ability to coordinate activities was limited because of a lack of funds, expertise and authority over agencies involved.

And I might just briefly mention that there is an interagency working group for international counter-narcotics. It is chaired in the State Department, who has responsibility for developing and ensuring implementation of the international counternarcotics policy. We have not really sat down and chatted with those folks yet, but we do intend to before we finished this work.

Mr. Chairman, we noted that accountability for U.S. funds for the drug war is the same as they should be for any U.S. funds. Because of concerns that we have noticed over the years that U.S. assistance intended for the drug war might be used for other purposes end-use monitoring requirements have been established. However, in Mexico, the Narcotics Affairs Section of the Embassy, when we were down there, and other agencies in the Embassy support assistance that requires little end-use monitoring because the Government of Mexico has been reluctant to accept assistance that

includes United States oversight. It becomes a sovereignty issue with them and it becomes rather difficult.

In Colombia, the Narcotics Affairs Section of the Embassy conducts reviews of how the national police use counternarcotics assistance. The U.S. Military Group relies primarily on the host nation military reports, which is understandable because it is a fairly small organization. However, we know that the United States Embassy lacked reports from the Colombian Air Force on how United States-provided equipment is being used—and this is for some of the big end items we are talking about, C–130's and things like that—and the Colombian Air Force is a major recipient of the military assistance in the country. So the U.S. Military folks aren't really getting that kind of reporting.

On the issue of host country willingness, I would like to say a few words on the capability to combat the drug war. My statement notes that the success of the efforts to stop the international flow of drugs is dependent in large measure on the willingness of—and the ability of foreign governments to combat the drug trade within their countries. While we can provide all of the assistance, the impetus for going after these folks and really the responsibility to make drug seizures and arrests and prosecutions lie with the country, obviously.

Some of the observations we obtained from our folks in country would support that. The United States Ambassador to Mexico recently reemphasized the importance of political will when our team was down there. He indicated that an army of 10,000 Americans could not win the war on drugs against—in Mexico, and the key lies with the Mexicans, who must be committed and involved.

And, in the same regard, in February this year, President Clinton determined that all three primary source countries for cocaine—Colombia, Peru and Bolivia—were not cooperating fully in the drug war. The political will of the Colombian Government to act forcefully against the drug cartels was of particular concern to the President.

The State Department told the Government of Colombia that six actions were needed—this was in March—to be taken by this month to demonstrate its willingness to cooperate more fully. One of those actions was to arrest one of these high-level Cali cartel members, and as we heard from Mr. Constantine that has happened.

There were several other requirements placed on them with respect to passing money laundering legislation and enacting tougher guidelines for convicted drug traffickers; and, based on our work, it looks like the Colombian Government is moving to do some of those kind of things.

On the country's capabilities, Mr. Chairman, many drug-producing countries and transit countries lack the resources necessary to effectively combat drugs. Necessary resources include pilots, mechanics, other properly trained personnel, and equipment such as fixed and rotary-wing aircraft that are properly maintained. In many instances, the massive profits generated by the drug trafficking organizations have resulted in them having more sophisticated equipment than the police units that have been tasked with curbing them. In Colombia, United States officials told us that the in-

telligence activities of the Cali cartel are more sophisticated than those of the Government of Colombia.

In many instances, the counternarcotics forces lack the basic forms of equipment, training and transportation. For example, the director of the counternarcotics police in Colombia said that the police have 10 helicopters available at any one time for counterdrug interdiction and eradication efforts throughout Colombia. Mexican and Colombian law enforcement officials, by United States standards, are poorly trained for investigation and interdiction.

Last, Mr. Chairman, I would like to mention the corruption issue. We have been looking at these programs since probably the early 1990's and back in the middle 1980's, and corruption has been an endemic problem for some time. And it continues to undercut the willingness and the ability of the nations to combat the drug trade.

The United States Ambassador to Colombia said on our recent trip that corruption in Colombia is the greatest single impediment to successful counternarcotics effort. Although the Colombian Government has taken some steps to eliminate corruption, United States officials in Colombia told us that the United States still refuses to share certain information with the Government for fear that the information will be compromised, ongoing investigations will be undermined and informants will be injured or killed.

United States Embassy officials in Mexico said that corruption is as pervasive there, as well. For example, one of the problems in Mexico we have seen for years and as these officials explained that the salary level for police officers, is the equivalent of about $3 per day, which makes them susceptible to accepting bribes.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my summary. I will be happy to answer any questions for you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kelley follows:]

Statement of Joseph E. Kelley, Director-in-Charge International Affairs Issues, National Security and International Affairs Division

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to provide some preliminary observations based on our ongoing review of the strategies and efforts of U.S. agencies to stop the production and trafficking of cocaine and heroin destined for the United States.

As part of our review, we observed counternarcotics programs in Colombia, Mexico, and several countries in the Far East and discussed these programs with U.S. officials at headquarters and field locations. We also reviewed the results of an October 1994 counterdrug conference sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the U.S. Southern Command. This conference was attended by over 100 senior and mid-level officials from most of the agencies involved in the drug war overseas.

On the basis of this work, coupled with our past work,[1] we have five general observations to offer.

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[1]Drug War: Observations on Counternarcotics Aid to Colombia (GAO/NSIAD-91-296, Sept. 30, 1991); The Drug War: U.S. Programs in Peru Face Serious Obstacles (GAO/NSIAD-92-36, Oct. 21, 1991); Drug Control: Revised Drug Interdiction Approach Is Needed in Mexico (GAO/NSIAD-93-152, May 10, 1993); The Drug War: Colombia Is Undertaking Antidrug Programs, But Impact Is Uncertain (GAO/NSIAD-93-158, Aug. 10, 1993); Drug Control: Heavy Investment in Military Surveillance Is Not Paying Off (GAO/NSIAD-93-220, Sept. 1, 1993); Drug Control: Expanded Military Surveillance Not Justified By Measurable Goals (GAO/T-NSIAD-94-14, Oct. 5, 1993); Drug Control: Interdiction Efforts in Central America Have Had Little Impact on the Flow of Drugs (GAO/NSIAD-94-233, Aug. 2, 1994); and Drug Control: U.S. Counterdrug Efforts in Central America (GAO/T-NSIAD-94-251, Aug. 2, 1994).

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

First, the executive branch has changed the focus of its international strategy for cocaine from law enforcement and drug seizures in the transit zone to stopping drugs in the source countries before they reach the transit zone. However, the executive branch has had difficulties implementing a key part of its strategy--shifting resources from the transit zone to the source countries. Also, a proposed heroin strategy was submitted to the President in mid-June 1995, and is awaiting his approval.

Second, in addition to combatting drugs, the United States has other important foreign policy objectives that compete for U.S. attention and resources. As a result, the United States must make tough choices as to which objectives to pursue most vigorously.

Third, the many U.S. agencies involved in counternarcotics efforts overseas do not always coordinate their efforts. U.S. officials have agreed that more coordination and leadership is needed.

Fourth, U.S. funds are not always well managed. In the past, we have recommended improvements in how U.S. counternarcotics assistance funds are managed. We found that the extent to which U.S. agencies monitor the end use of assistance provided to foreign governments varies. Furthermore, specific measures of how programs are contributing to overall counternarcotics goals have yet to be

established.

Finally, the effectiveness of U.S. international drug control programs depends in large measure on the willingness and ability of foreign governments to combat the drug trade in their country. The extent and direction of host country actions often vary over time. Recent actions by the government of Colombia, such as the arrests of three high-level members of the Cali Cartel, are positive steps, but continued commitment is needed. For a variety of reasons, foreign governments are not always willing to fully participate in counternarcotics efforts. Even when they are willing, they often lack the necessary resources. Extensive corruption in some countries further weakens host country actions to combat the drug trade.

Let me now elaborate on each of these five observations.

THE COCAINE AND HEROIN STRATEGIES

In November 1993, the U.S. Policy on International Counternarcotics in the Western Hemisphere established a strategy for combatting the production and trafficking of cocaine. Among other things, the policy called for a gradual shift of resources from the transit zone of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean to the source countries of cocaine--primarily Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia.

According to the Department of Defense, the amount of resources applied to the transit zone has been significantly reduced. However, to date, we have not seen a shift in resources to the source countries. For example, the Drug Enforcement Administration is reducing its presence in Colombia, the U.S. Southern Command is now flying fewer sorties per month in support of source-country interdiction than it did in 1993, and counternarcotics assistance to each of the three primary source countries was less in 1995 than in 1991 or 1992.

Some agencies' programs and assets are better suited to interdiction in the transit zone than to the current source country strategy. However, shifting resources between and within agencies has been problematic.

In several instances, officials of U.S. agencies expressed concerns about shifting resources from the transit zone. In mid-1994, the Drug Enforcement Administration's Attache in Mexico cautioned that the primary drug interdiction initiative in Mexico--known as the Northern Border Response Force--had been jeopardized by the loss of detection and monitoring coverage in the transit zone. In addition, the officer in charge of counternarcotics programs for the U.S. Atlantic Command, which has primary responsibility for detection and monitoring activities in the transit zone, told us that he sees a need to continue detection, monitoring, and interdiction efforts in the transit zone and believes that shifting

resources to the source countries would adversely affect this coverage. The Interdiction Coordinator supports the shift in emphasis to source countries but has also cautioned against reducing funding and programs for transit zone interdiction before the United States has an active implementation plan for the source countries.

It should also be noted that the Office of National Drug Control Policy has designated Mexico as the second most important country in the international narcotics program--behind Colombia--even though Mexico is listed as a transit-zone country. Moreover, the Drug Enforcement Administration Attache in Mexico recommended that Mexico be reclassified as a source country so it can be considered for more resources under the strategy.

The production and trafficking of heroin is becoming a more serious problem as usage in the United States is reportedly increasing. In November 1993, the executive branch announced that within 120 days it would develop a separate strategy to combat the heroin trade. As of June 23, 1995, about 19 months later, there still was no heroin strategy. However, we understand that a recommended strategy was presented to the President in mid-June 1995 and is awaiting his approval. Delays in developing this strategy were due in part to difficulties in balancing U.S. objectives in Burma--the primary source of heroin.

BALANCING U.S. FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES

The United States has a variety of foreign policy objectives that compete for U.S. attention and resources. Deciding which objectives are most important is difficult. These decisions may result in counternarcotics objectives receiving less U.S. attention than other objectives. Our recent work showed difficulties faced in balancing counternarcotics and other foreign policy objectives.

Mexico is an example of competing U.S. priorities. For that country, countering the drug trade is the fourth highest priority in the U.S. Mission Program Plan. During our recent fieldwork, the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico told us that he had focused his attention during the past year and a half on the higher priority issues of trade and commerce. He explained that because of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the U.S. financial support program for the Mexican peso, he had had insufficient time to focus on counternarcotics issues. In our view, this is understandable.

Conflicts in U.S. policy towards Burma have also affected counternarcotics efforts. Burma is the primary source of heroin entering the United States. Yet the U.S. government has limited counternarcotics activities in Burma. Because the current Burmese government is considered to be brutal and repressive, the U.S. government has chosen to limit its contacts with Burmese officials. Combatting the heroin trade in Burma will probably require

cooperation with the Burmese government, but such cooperation could send a signal that the United States is de-emphasizing its concerns over human rights and democracy issues. U.S. Embassy officials told us that they have proposed some counternarcotics initiatives to the State Department. They said that some have been rejected as representing too much engagement with the Burmese government, and others have been approved when the level of involvement was deemed acceptably low.

In another case, $45 million originally intended for counternarcotics assistance to the cocaine source countries was reprogrammed to assist Haiti's democratic transition. These funds were needed in Haiti to support activities such as paying the cost of non-U.S. personnel assigned to the multinational force, training of a police force, and developing a job creation and a feeding program.

Efforts to reduce federal spending have brought about other tradeoffs in U.S. policies. For example, the Department of State has decided to close the U.S. Consulate in Barranquilla, Colombia, to reduce its costs, even though Drug Enforcement Administration and other agency officials told us that retaining a consulate in Barranquilla is important to their counternarcotics operations.

INTERAGENCY LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

During our review, we discussed with agency officials the need for strong leadership and better coordination. These officials generally agreed that no single organization was in charge of antidrug activities in the cocaine source countries or the transit zone. They also recognized that better leadership was needed to integrate all U.S. programs in the region to develop a coherent plan. Officials of the Office of National Drug Control Policy indicated that they had made some progress towards developing a plan to bring more leadership to the drug war but acknowledged that staffing constraints had limited their progress.

Our recent work in Colombia provides some indications of problems with the integration and coordination of U.S. programs. The lack of coordination and clear statements of responsibilities has led to confusion over the role of the offices responsible for intelligence analysis and related operational plans for interdiction. Several U.S. officials in Colombia told us they were unsure who had operational control over their activities and questioned who would be the best agency to provide that control.

The position of U.S. Interdiction Coordinator was established in 1993 to enhance coordination among U.S. agencies involved in interdiction, but specific roles and authorities of the coordinator were not established. Although the Coordinator advises the

Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy on interdiction issues, Coordinator officials told us that their ability to coordinate activities was limited because of the lack of funds, expertise, and authority over agencies involved.

An interagency working group on international counternarcotics policy, also established in 1993 and chaired by a representative of the Department of State, is responsible for developing and ensuring implementation of an international counternarcotics policy. The group is to report its activities and differences of view among agencies to the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy for review, mediation, and resolution. At this point in our work, we have not reviewed the group's activities or assessed its effectiveness as a coordinating mechanism. However, we plan to do so in the upcoming months.

NEED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Good financial and program management dictates accountability for U.S funds, including funds for the drug war. Because of concerns that U.S. assistance intended for the drug war might be used for other purposes, end-use monitoring requirements have been established. However, in Mexico, the Narcotics Affairs Section of the Embassy and other agencies support assistance that requires little end-use monitoring because the government of Mexico has been reluctant to accept assistance that includes U.S. oversight. In

Colombia, the Narcotics Affairs Section conducts reviews of how the National Police uses counternarcotics assistance. The U.S. Military Group relies primarily on host nation reports. We noted that the U.S. military personnel lacked reports from the Colombian Air Force on how U.S.-provided equipment is being used.

In 1993, we reported on control weaknesses at the Colombian warehouse used to store U.S.-funded spare parts for rotary and fixed-wing aircraft used by Colombian counternarcotics police. Subsequently, the Embassy conducted an inventory and found that over $200,000 worth of equipment could not be accounted for. U.S. Embassy officials stated that they have since installed a system to account for commodities being purchased with U.S. funds.

Furthermore, in 1993, we recommended that U.S. officials establish a quantitative baseline to evaluate the progress that U.S. antidrug programs in Colombia are having in meeting U.S. objectives and goals. The Office of National Drug Control Policy is now developing a system for measuring the contribution of U.S. agencies' efforts to achieve U.S. counternarcotics objectives.

HOST COUNTRY WILLINGNESS AND CAPABILITY TO COMBAT THE DRUG TRADE

The success of efforts to stop the international flow of drugs is dependent, in large measure, on the willingness and ability of

foreign governments to combat the drug trade within their countries. While the United States can provide these countries with support and assistance, in the end, the producing and transit countries must make the drug seizures, arrests, and prosecutions that are necessary to stop the production and movement of drugs.

The U.S. Ambassador to Mexico recently reemphasized the importance of political will. In June 1995, he told us that "an army of 10,000 Americans could not win the war against drugs in Mexico; the key lies with the Mexicans, who must be committed and involved." The importance of political will has also been widely recognized by many organizations. U.S. agencies agree that more needs to be done to encourage countries to take stronger action against the drug trade.

Combatting drugs is not necessarily a high priority for foreign governments. Some countries perceive drug production and trafficking as a U.S. problem, and the perception that the United States lacks political will to combat drugs within its borders has been widely reported in foreign media.

In February 1995, President Clinton determined that all three primary source countries for cocaine--Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia--were not cooperating fully in the drug war. The political will of the Colombian government to act forcefully against the drug cartels was of particular concern. The State Department told the

government of Colombia of six actions that needed to be taken by June 1995 to demonstrate its willingness to cooperate more fully. These included arresting at least one high-level member of the Cali Cartel, passing money laundering legislation, enacting tougher sentencing guidelines for convicted drug offenders, and meeting specific eradication targets. Colombia recently arrested three major members of the Cartel. Based on recent actions, it appears that Colombia is making progress on the other five actions. For example, according to U.S. Embassy reports, Colombia has enacted money laundering legislation and has exceeded goals for eradicating coca.

Many drug-producing and transit countries lack the resources necessary to effectively combat drugs. Necessary resources include pilots, mechanics, other properly trained personnel, and equipment such as fixed and rotary wing aircraft that are properly maintained. In many instances, the massive profits generated by drug trafficking have resulted in traffickers' having more sophisticated equipment than the police units that have been tasked with curbing such activities. In Colombia, U.S. officials told us that the intelligence activities of the Cali Cartel are more sophisticated than those of the government of Colombia.

In many instances, the counternarcotics forces lack the most basic forms of equipment, training, and transportation. For example, the Director of the counternarcotics police in Colombia said that the

police have 10 helicopters available at any one time for counterdrug interdiction and eradication efforts throughout Colombia. Mexican and Colombian law enforcement officials are, by U.S. standards, poorly trained for investigation and interdiction.

Corruption continues to undercut the willingness and ability of host nations to combat the drug trade. The U.S. Ambassador to Colombia said that corruption in Colombia is the greatest single impediment to a successful counternarcotics effort. Although the Colombian government has taken some steps to eliminate corruption, U.S. officials in Colombia told us that the United States still refuses to share certain information with the government for fear that the information will be compromised, ongoing investigations will be undermined, and informants will be injured or killed. U.S. Embassy officials in Mexico said that corruption is pervasive there as well. These officials explained that the salary level for police officers--the equivalent of about $3 per day--made them susceptible to accepting bribes.

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This concludes my prepared remarks. I would be happy to respond to any questions.

(711146)

Mr. ZELIFF. Mrs. Thurman, questions?

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Kelley, we are pleased to have you here today. And I am going to try to summarize what you have said and then ask you to respond to a couple of questions, if that's all right.

It's my understanding that you believe that there is a lack of leadership and confusion as to who is in charge in the host countries. Additionally, there is some indication that the source country policy has not been fully implemented. And, with that, then I'm going to ask some questions. What would it take to fully implement that strategy?

Mr. KELLEY. The source country strategy.

I think one of the things that has to occur is—well, let me back up. I think the funding situation is a real problem. I think that, if we are serious, something has to give on that; it has been going down, as I said, for several years. But I think, having said that, the issue that I touched on with respect to the organization, leadership, and I think the question you are asking, Mr. Chairman, to Mr. Constantine about who is in charge needs to really be addressed I am talking perhaps not so much in the macro sense as I believe you were but more on the in-country level, the source countries, and the region that someone has to be in charge.

We have several agencies with several different appropriations all operating, and they have coordinating groups within each U.S. mission, where the Deputy Chief of Mission normally heads up. But if someone—if the Ambassador is really interested in and wants to see a lot of progress in these programs, you will see some progress to some extent. But you still have to get over the problem of the different agencies operating in-country.

And what they have done? In some cases like in Peru and in Colombia as well, they have set up an operational planning group which is like a committee to decide how they are going to use helicopters, for example. Should we use it for enforcement or should we use it for eradication? And there's always these competing requirements out there. And so it becomes rather difficult to decide how we are going to use our assistance. It's usually a decision by committee. And one day we'll do this; the next day we'll do that.

But I think at the SOUTHCOM conference I mentioned that occurred last fall, there was almost unanimous agreement that somebody needs to be in charge, and I think SOUTHCOM is probably pushing that more than anyone. And I am talking particularly now in Latin American situations, that without this we're just going to continue to go back and forth on who has the money. If whoever has the money—they're probably gonna use it where they want to, whether it is for eradication or helping DEA out. So I think that's one of the key things that has to happen.

Mrs. THURMAN. And let me just say this, because my next question was budget cuts, and you are suggesting that that is a part of the problem as well.

Mr. KELLEY. I think it is.

But one of the things that has to happen I think, if I could go back to the need for a plan, we have to decide what are the requirements out there. In the military—and if I can use an analogy here and I would—perhaps people would criticize me for this—but one of the things they do is figure out what is the threat? What

are we trying to do? And what kind of structure do we need to counter the threat? And I don't think that has been done in the international counternarcotics area.

And I think that until that really is taken seriously and we figure out what is the threat, it will be difficult to determine how much resources we need, if we are expecting the Peruvians to really go after the coca plants in their country or go after the locations where they refine them into coca paste, then we have to look at the capabilities they have—they have like 2 aircraft and 10 helicopters for the police in Peru. What is that going to do in a sense of stopping anything?

So it's a requirements type thing; what it is going to cost us and are we ready to fund those kind of things. And, obviously, we have a real problem in this country, we have a problem with our budget being cut, so it is kind of a quandary-type situation.

Mrs. THURMAN. Just—and I have to go to the floor for a minute. But just in your analysis of all of this, who should be in charge?

Mr. KELLEY. Pardon me?

Mrs. THURMAN. Who should be in charge?

Mr. KELLEY. I really haven't grabbed ahold of that issue. It becomes if SOUTHCOM should be in charge or—one of the things you have in the situation down there is like it is a regional situation. If you're gonna focus in one country you're kidding yourselves, because traffickers can move from one country to another and so you have several U.S. Ambassadors involved. So someone is going to have to decide will it be a regional Ambassador, perhaps, or a regional commander coming out of SOUTHCOM. But, you know, there has to be some kind of understanding among the executive branch as to who would be in charge. I don't think I am in a position to give you an answer to that.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Kelley, I appreciate you being here. I've got to run to the floor, but I will be back in a few minutes.

Mr. ZELIFF. You're going to leave all the questioning to me? Thank you.

I read over your report last night and again this morning, and if it's true and accurate, it is pretty damaging to what this so-called drug war is all about in terms of our ability to get our arms around it.

And, really, it gets to the heart of what we're trying to find out. You know, who is in charge? I mean, if we don't have somebody in charge that's effectively in charge, how are we going to have a strategy that's going to work? And it's no wonder that we have conflicting strategies if no one's in charge to send out a clear signal. Then we just end up with all the agencies getting what they think is some kind of a direction and then going off on their own.

If you don't have anybody in charge and a clear strategy, you end up having problems with accountability, resources; and in the end you have all kinds of conflicting problems and you don't end up getting to where you need to go. And I guess that is kind of where we—where we think that the drug war's—war is at.

We see a situation that, frankly, in the ONDCP–U.S. SOUTHCOM Counterdrug Conference After Action Report, key points indicate that we need leadership at the top and that is directed at the President, the Secretary of State, Assistant Secretary

of the State, Members of Congress, certainly the Majority Leader, the Speaker of the House, all Members of Congress. Then we can get into the testimony from those kids that you heard today. Baseball players, basketball players, certainly people shouldn't be given second and third chances if they fail. Maybe we get down to the fact that you get one chance, and that's it. And if you fail, you're out.

Maybe Members of Congress need to do drug testing, and maybe corporate America has to do it. Maybe everybody that gets a government check has to do it.

I mean, if we—if we don't have a very strong strategy from the very beginning at the very top and it's supported all the way down, we are never going to win this thing, and we are just going to misuse resources. And I just—I worry, frankly, about that After Action Report, what, if anything, has been done after everybody got together, talked about it, recognized the deficiencies and the problems. It's 6 or 8 months later and nothing's done to change the problems and the direction that we saw.

In terms of—going back to your report, in terms of our conflicting national strategies, I mean, how can we expect the Coast Guard to fight a battle in Haiti, do the Cuban refugee situation and also do the drug war if we really expect them to do an effective job?

And why would the DOD assign a lot of resources if, in fact, the President is not saying every day to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that that's an important role?

And why wouldn't—as in the previous testimony, why don't we combine crime and drugs as one problem? And when we do, probably nationally everybody will recognize it as the No. 1 problem. And when we do that and we start talking about it, it all of a sudden changes the direction of our priorities.

And if what you are saying, if true, then we don't have that kind of focus. We don't have that kind of leadership. We recognize at the highest levels that it's kind of a problem, but maybe it's 18th or 19th on the priority list and as a result, we don't put the resources together.

In 1992, we were making significant efforts in the transit zones and interdiction efforts. Since 1992, we have taken away 50 percent of the resources. DEA agents on our trip told us that they don't have adequate surveillance and they don't have adequate radar and because of a lack of resources they are just not able to effectively do their job.

In spite of the problem with Mexico, drugs are coming up through Puerto Rico. Once it gets into Puerto Rico, it is on the way to the mainland.

In my case, I picked up a bale of marijuana on the seizure—one of these is worth $88,000. It is no wonder it is corrupting to a police officer that is making $3. We bail out Mexico, and somehow we don't tie that into effective cooperation in terms of an antidrug policy.

It just seems to me that somehow we've got to admit that the direction of where we are right now doesn't seem to be working and that we need to do something different. And it seems to me that we have to put somebody in charge at the very highest level that

reports directly to the President, and the President has to give that person complete support and backing. How do you feel about that?

Mr. KELLEY. I think that is something that has to be done. I think that—I believe your point is on what happened after the conference. I was talking with the staff, and I believe that ONDCP was supposed to pull that thing together, but as I can gather it—I'm not 100 percent on this—I don't think that has happened yet.

Mr. ZELIFF. I didn't hear that full thing yet.

Mr. KELLEY. Excuse me, you mentioned about what happened after the conference——

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. KELLEY [continuing]. That they had in October, and I think that's a legitimate question. I was asking my staff because I wasn't sure myself. And, as I understand it, I believe ONDCP was supposed to try to reactivate the findings of the meeting, but so far as we can tell that hasn't happened yet.

And another thing that—again, it's a resource question, I guess, although it's maybe an intractable problem that people can't grab ahold of. But the—the size of that group, the ONDCP, went from about over 100 in 1993 down to about less than 40 people. And if they are going to have any kind of a capability to coordinate, manage and direct, I just wonder how it is going to happen.

Mr. ZELIFF. The exact number was 100 to 26 and later revised to 40. The question is what kind of a priority is that in addressing the drug problem.

Mr. KELLEY. I agree you have to address that. It indicates not a high priority.

Mr. ZELIFF. You indicated the problem with Burma in terms of heroin. What—how much of the world's production of heroin comes from Burma, do you think?

Mr. KELLEY. I believe I read it's about 80 percent, but I'd have to——

Mr. ZELIFF. Eighty percent.

Mr. KELLEY. I'm not quite sure.

Mr. ZELIFF. I don't remember everything you said, but you indicated to me that the President was awaiting some kind of recommendation, some conflicts in terms of the Department of State?

Mr. KELLEY. No, I don't believe it's reached that point yet. Now, that may be in the heroin strategy that I mentioned that they have been working on for some time. Perhaps—and I am not sure. Perhaps it's included in that strategy; what they are going to do vis-a-vis Burma.

Mr. ZELIFF. Is it right we have seen a tremendous increase in heroin? Is that correct?

Mr. KELLEY. That is my understanding.

Mr. ZELIFF. And 80 percent of that heroin comes from Burma.

Mr. KELLEY. Let me check that number first.

Mr. ZELIFF. And another major chunk must come from Colombia.

Mr. KELLEY. I am corrected on that. Half to two-thirds has come in from Burma that is coming into the United States.

Mr. ZELIFF. Half of two-thirds. Which would be what, 40 percent?

Mr. KELLEY. No, I would say 50 to 66 percent is coming into the United States coming from Burma.

Mr. ZELIFF. A half to two-thirds. Not a half of two-thirds.

Mr. KELLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. And how much is coming from Colombia, would you guess?

Mr. KELLEY. About a third, I believe. I guess that's right.

Mr. ZELIFF. And so from those two areas we probably got a pretty good target——

Mr. KELLEY. Right.

Mr. ZELIFF [continuing]. Where the increased heroin availability is coming from.

Mr. KELLEY. I would think that's where they are coming from.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. And how long do you think it should take to put a priority on that?

Mr. KELLEY. Well, that depends on what your priorities are, I believe. I would think that something is going to have to be done. And this has been going on for several years with Burma. It has been an issue of what our—if we go ahead and work with the Burmean Government as we work with other governments, like in Latin America and Thailand, it is going to be seen as we are condoning the behavior of that government.

Mr. ZELIFF. Actually, haven't we been waiting for a heroin strategy since 1993?

Mr. KELLEY. Pardon me?

Mr. ZELIFF. Haven't we actually been waiting for some kind of heroin strategy since 1993?

Mr. KELLEY. Yes. In my statement, in November 1993, I believe it was, when they announced their cocaine strategy they said within 120 days they would have a strategy on heroin.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would say if drug interdiction or drug strategy was a high priority we seem to be moving fairly slow.

Mr. KELLEY. I would agree.

Mr. ZELIFF. Is that something you could agree to?

Mr. KELLEY. I would agree.

Mr. ZELIFF. When you talk about the U.S. funds not always well managed and talk about lack of accountability, can you give me a little idea of what we are talking about?

Mr. KELLEY. For example, as I said, we had done some work in Colombia two times in the last 4 years or so, and we found that we had provided a lot of parts and aircraft equipment to the Colombians for the police, such as helicopters. This is about 1993. It looked like the U.S. Embassy didn't have a lot of control at their warehouse, and there are examples in my statement.

We raised the issue with the State Department. They went back and did an investigation and found that there was a shortage of about $200,000 of parts, and so now they're claiming that they have cleaned that all up and they have put a modern control system in. Those are the kind of things.

And the—the big thing that's concerned me quite a bit in Colombia, when we put a lot of equipment in there back in about 1990 when they had big drawdowns of military items, was that we really were unable to figure out how this equipment was being used. And I think that's a management issue, too, because they are supposed to be using it for counternarcotics and not for anything else. And they really had problems trying to keep up with where that equipment was. They just didn't have enough folks to get out and mon-

itor the end use of it. So they are relying on the Government of Colombia, the military, to provide reports as to where they use the equipment. Now, as I said, in the Air Force they are not getting those reports.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you see in the budgeting process that many of the resources—some of the resources end up going elsewhere besides what they were originally intended to?

Mr. KELLEY. You mean within the narcotics program?

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. KELLEY. No, not that I can come up with—an example.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you see any resources being diverted to other programs?

Mr. KELLEY. Well, as an example, I gave you here on Haiti, that is an example—perfect example—of what has happened. There may be some other ones. I would have to——

Mr. ZELIFF. In your trip down there, how do you assess the cooperation we've gotten from Mexico?

Mr. KELLEY. The cooperation the U.S. Government has received?

Mr. ZELIFF. Right, relative to the drug effort.

Mr. KELLEY. I'd probably have to get back with my staff on it because they've only been back a week. I haven't had a chance to sit down with them.

Mr. ZELIFF. On a scale of zero to 10, do you think it is about 10 percent effective, 5 percent or is it 100 percent?

Mr. KELLEY. To be honest with you, they just got back about a week ago, and I haven't really had a chance to sit down and go through that with them.

I think, traditionally—I could offer you this. We did some work in Mexico in the late 1980's on the programs there, and there has always been an issue of the Mexican Government being very concerned about the typical type of controls that the United States Government wants to place on the delivery of items, where we want to go out and check to see how it's being used and so forth. So the Government, I believe, as I indicated in my statement, still has that attitude, I believe. I don't know that I can use that as an example, to say it's 10 percent or 20 percent. I would have to look at a whole range of things.

Mr. ZELIFF. I think their attitude is as in the bailout that we just gave them is they wanted very little controls but they still wanted the money. And the question is, you know, we are in a position before we give the money to make a deal on certain things that we need from the process, and I am not so sure we did that. How would you assess the situation in the transit zone relative to our success since 1992 till today?

Mr. KELLEY. We have looked at—we have looked at each transit zone, the three I mentioned. We really haven't looked at the Caribbean. But we have issued a report about a year ago with respect to Central America, and we focused on the efforts in Honduras—excuse me, Guatemala. And we had a fairly active program in Guatemala, because what was happening was a lot of pressure was being exerted in other areas, so the traffickers started coming through Guatemala, and they started coming through at night by air.

And what happened, in our report, what we found was that the U.S. side had equipped up their team with night vision goggles and things like this and kind of surprised the traffickers. They were ready for them. And what happened within probably a month, a couple weeks is the traffickers changed the way they moved their drugs through. They went from land—overland uses and by sea, and the main way they were going through Guatemala at that time was through air. And so we brought down a couple of the aircraft and got some drugs. But, just like that, they shifted their tactics and started going over land in trucks and things like that.

Now, in Mexico, we did some work about 3 years ago on what they call the Northern Border Response Force. Again, this was another interdiction effort that the United States Government set up with the Mexican Government to catch the airplanes that were coming from Guatemala into Mexico. And what the traffickers were doing at that time were flying up into the northern part of the country. And so this strategy was set-up and was funded, and there was equipment down there, helicopters and things like that, to help them. And they again surprised the traffickers with their first attempt to use the strategy. They really caught them and detained quite a bit of drugs. And within, I'd say, a month or so, or a couple weeks they moved to the southern part of the country, the traffickers did. And so this facility was set up in the northern part of the country. So now they are trying to regroup and put their capability in different parts of the country.

But I think it is an example or an illustration of the problems they are facing. These guys, the traffickers, are always about three steps ahead of us—the United States and the host country—and it is just—it is a difficult thing to deal with.

Mr. ZELIFF. The Chair recognizes the very effective gentleman from Massachusetts, Peter Blute, for questions.

Mr. BLUTE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to commend you for these hearings on the counterdrug efforts. It is very important we concentrate on reducing the drug trade on our streets because it has such damaging effects in my district—but not just my district, all over the country. And I think it's very important that we focus attention on our efforts and see if they are working or not. And if they are not, I think it's very important we begin to change that immediately.

I want to thank the gentlemen for their testimony. I just have a couple questions on the source country strategy that you talked about, that your report refers to.

There is some indication, as you have revealed, that this strategy is not working well. I wonder what you would recommend in terms of changes. How would we make it work better in the long term?

Mr. KELLEY. That's the $64,000 question. I believe we discussed that a little bit here this morning.

What you would do—one of the points that we talked about if we are going to switch to the source countries, since the United States recognizes they are not going to be able to stop drugs coming through the transit zones, one of the points that I made earlier was that perhaps what we really need is more of a focus, more of a plan as to how we're going to go about trying to do this in a—rather

than just doing it on a country-by-country basis but do a plan for a country as well as the region itself.

One of the things you find, as we found out years ago, if you clamp down on traffickers going through Colombia they are going to go into Brazil. Or if you clamp down on them in Colombia they are going to move out of the range of the helicopters they have in-country. So I think there needs to be some kind of a plan that the U.S. Government should put together and put someone in charge of it. And one of the things we talked about earlier, with the chairman, was that you have in each country, you have an Ambassador and you have SOUTHCOM helping out, but there are really a lot of questions as to who is in charge of these programs. And so that might be one thing that needs to be done.

And I think that we did talk about the budget situation. The money has been going down that we have been providing to the source countries, and I think that is something that has to be addressed. I don't think you are going to say, let's put $600 million in there and see what happens. Because I think some strategy needs to be worked out to figure out what it is we want to accomplish, and what it will take.

One of the things we found in Colombia a couple years ago was that if we could put another $100 million in this program, the United States side, that we think it would really help; in other words, an expanded program. And one of the questions that we had to ask was, well, if you put that in, what impact is that going to have in the sense of slowing down drugs coming into the United States? Well, they were not sure. No one knew.

Mr. ZELIFF. How do you put money in? You said you needed $100 million. There is no plan. There is no direction. There is no focus.

Mr. KELLEY. That is part of the problem. This is 3 or 4 years ago. This is not current. That is kind of an illustration of the problem. You can put all the money in there, but there ought to be some rationale as to what benefit it is going to have to us.

And the other point is the absorbability, the absorbable capacity of the country to use the aid. We can put a lot of money in there, but there is going to have to be a heck of a lot of assistance going in there for training and equipment. As I said, in both Colombia and Peru, there is only about 10 or 12 helicopters the police are using, so, you know, that's not very resource-intensive.

Mr. BLUTE. My follow-up question on that relates to Mexico. I know many Members of Congress are concerned about our relationship with Mexico, economically and otherwise, and some of the problems down there. I notice there is some discussion of changing the status of Mexico as it relates to our drug control policy from a transit zone to a source country. The fact is, there is increasing evidence to conclude that Mexico is a source country for the drug trade. You also mentioned in your report that foreign policy objectives sometimes get in the way of our antidrug efforts. I wonder if you could describe how that impacted our efforts in Mexico?

Mr. KELLEY. Well, I think in my statements, sir, I point out that they have what they call a mission program plan, and it does indicate that antinarcotics is a fourth priority. So I think when you start figuring out how we are going to divvy up our resources, there

is a feeling of the folks working in that country that it has a lesser priority than commerce and trade and things like that.

Mr. ZELIFF. Are Mr. Al Fleener and Mr. Ron Hughes with you today?

Mr. KELLEY. Pardon me.

Mr. ZELIFF. Are the folks that actually wrote that, are they here today?

Mr. KELLEY. Yes.

Mr. ZELIFF. Are they here?

Mr. KELLEY. Yes.

Mr. ZELIFF. Would you be willing to have them join you? I just want to ask a couple quick questions.

Mr. KELLEY. Sure.

Mr. ZELIFF. First of all, if you would raise your right hand.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. I just wanted to ask, you heard our discussions so far here. Is there anything you would like to add, No. 1? No. 2, my question would be: In terms of Mexico, and in terms of the Caribbean transit zone, and the drug war in general, and the people you interviewed on this report, do you get the feeling that we have got big problems ahead unless we make major changes?

Mr. HUGHES. What we found in our review at SOUTHCOM—and I am sure Al can speak to Mexico—is that, as Mr. Kelly said, one of our big concerns is, there was massive confusion on who was in charge. It became apparent, for example, in Colombia when we asked a very simple statement, which is good management: If you have a committee, could we see their charter? There were no formal charters.

There was great concern down there about how the military folks were being used in terms of who they were reporting to and how they were being used. So I would say that that would be one issue that has to be clarified at least from what we saw in Colombia and in SOUTHCOM.

Mr. FLEENER. I think in Mexico when we were there, one of the questions we asked was, is there a country plan, a concerted country plan for addressing drugs that would outline what each agency was supposed to do and what the overall embassy goal was. There wasn't. The second we were there, we were told they were drafting a plan, so I think that is maybe some progress.

You talked about shifting funds out of the transit zone and how it was impacting interdiction efforts in the transit zone. I don't know if there ever was a study done to see if there was an adverse impact from shifting out of the transit zone to the source country. It is just something that came to mind while you were talking about it, and I was wondering if there has been any evaluation to show that by reducing the transit zone that anything adverse has happened to the interdiction efforts. I know a lot of people will say that, but as far as—you know, quantitative data we found no such study.

Mr. ZELIFF. I don't think we have real hard data except that as we interviewed people, just like you did, we talked to DEA agents, we talked to FBI, we talked to local law enforcement people, we talked to Coast Guard folks, we talked to combined Department of Defense folks, all the different players in the process, and what we

are hearing at the very, very grass-roots level is that we are getting creamed in this thing and this is going nowhere but down.

Mr. HUGHES. One of the points I would like to make——

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you agree with that assessment?

Mr. HUGHES. Yes, as far as we know. But let me clarify. When we talk about the shift, one thing that is important is the absorptive capacity of the host nation. For instance, in SOUTHCOM they fly a lot of detection monitoring missions in support of the police and the military down there, but the ability of the Colombians to really absorb that and use that is highly questionable. So just by shifting resources and putting more resources in, like Mr. Kelley said, may not be cost-effective unless the country can absorb the resources and can effectively utilize them in the end game.

Mr. ZELIFF. Does anybody have any additional comments they would like to make?

Mr. KELLEY. The one thing I would like to clarify—John reminded me, and you asked me about Mexico—they have been certified by the State Department as cooperating.

Mr. ZELIFF. They have, "been certified by the State Department that they are cooperating."

Mr. KELLEY. Right.

Mr. ZELIFF. What does that mean?

Mr. KELLEY. Well, that they are working with the U.S. mission and trying to——

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you really believe that?

Mr. KELLEY. The other part I was going to tell you is that they still recognize there is a lot of corruption in that arrangement, so I think that whether I believe it or not, I don't know if I have the data to say.

Mr. ZELIFF. Does anybody want to take a shot at that?

All right. I understand your reasons probably why you don't, but in your report you certainly indicate an answer to that would be—I mean, I don't see how we can honestly say that we can certify Mexico as cooperating fully in this effort. I think that is a joke. I am sorry, but I just—it doesn't jibe with everything that we have been told and what you indicate in your own report.

Mr. KELLEY. Yes.

Mr. FLEENER. We asked everyone we knew about corruption, and everyone was telling us it is a problem there.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. FLEENER. And the DEA attache went to great lengths to explain that you have two choices, you can deal with it or pack your bag up and go home.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. FLEENER. While they try to deal with people they believe are not corrupt, they are not always as successful at that.

Mr. ZELIFF. What we hear is, 75 percent of the stuff is coming from Colombia, going into Mexico, dropping supplies in the middle of Mexico, it is a free walk to the border, and it comes into the United States. If that is cooperation at the highest level and it is certified to be cooperative, I think we have got real problems.

Mr. KELLEY. I think that is a good question to ask your witnesses coming up this afternoon.

Mr. ZELIFF. I guess we will ask that question, I will reserve it for the next panel.

Thank you all very, very much. I do believe that your report brings up a lot more questions I think for me.

Peter, sorry, I didn't mean to shut you off.

Mr. BLUTE. That is all I have.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you all very much.

Mr. KELLEY. Thank you, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would like to welcome Ambassador Becker. Ambassador Becker was formerly United States Ambassador to the United Nations agencies in Vienna, Austria, and is now Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary at State for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

It is a pleasure to have you with us today, and if you would be willing to stand and be sworn, raise your right hand.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you.

Let the record show that she answered in the affirmative.

If you would like to give us a condensed version of your testimony and submit the balance for the record, or however you are comfortable is fine.

STATEMENT OF JANE E. BECKER, ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. BECKER. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I very much appreciate that offer and would like to take you up on it, if I may.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you. Please proceed.

Ms. BECKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for inviting the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, INL, to discuss the role of interdiction in our international narcotics control policy and strategy.

I have, as I indicated earlier, the written statement which will be submitted separately for the record.

Mr. Chairman, I have been in my position as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for less than a month, but I have already found it to be both an honor and a challenge to be working on what Secretary Christopher has identified as one of our top five foreign policy priorities, curbing international narcotics trafficking and crime.

INL's international narcotics control role is different from the other agencies' testifying today and tomorrow. We are not an interdiction or law enforcement agency. Our budget does not directly fund U.S. Government agents or equipment to seize drugs and apprehend narcotics traffickers, although we support this goal in many ways. Here is how:

We have two broad missions: First, we provide counternarcotics support to those countries that demonstrate a commitment to narcotics control. The goal is for those countries to use this assistance to reduce the supply of illicit drugs destined for the United States. In the process, we also want them to work with us against trafficking organizations that, if not contested, can control their governments and economies, destroy democracies, ruin entire societies, and threaten our fundamental foreign policy interests.

Second, INL leads bilateral and multilateral diplomatic efforts to advance our international narcotics control policies. The importance of diplomacy as a force multiplier should not be discounted, and I will tell you why in a few minutes.

These efforts are conducted by ONDCP Director Lee Brown nationally who, on an international basis, coordinates our programs with other U.S. Government counternarcotics and foreign affairs agencies, particularly DEA, Customs, Coast Guard, Treasury, Department of Defense, CIA, USIA, and AID.

INL Assistant Secretary Gelbard, my boss, chairs the international narcotics control interagency working group to ensure a smooth counternarcotics process. On both fronts, traditional and diplomatic, enhanced interdiction is a central objective of the President's international narcotics control policy.

Interdiction is key to a comprehensive and integrated counternarcotics strategy. It helps reduce the availability of drugs, increases traffickers' operating costs, and demonstrates to the public, both our public and publics overseas, our intolerance of the drug trade.

Interdiction, whether narrowly defined to mean drug seizures or broadly defined to mean a range of law enforcement operations against production and trafficking, hurts the trade wherever it occurs in the trafficking chain. Accordingly, our country program plans, which were mentioned by the previous speakers, and the President's strategy call for enhanced interdiction efforts across the board in source countries, through transit zones, and at arrival areas.

We are not abandoning—we, meaning the U.S. Government collectively—under the strategy, are not abandoning transit zone efforts built and supported for years. Indeed, many transit zone countries are struggling to resist mounting pressure from drug interests, and they are increasingly valuable allies in helping to focus world attention on the narcotics threat.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, I think we all agree that interdiction programs are resource intensive. We must guard against the use of any route by any method, and there are many of both at any time. Meanwhile, the traffickers can choose their routes, methods, and schedules.

Operational costs are a big concern to us, but less so to the traffickers given the trade's enormous profits. We must, therefore, focus our intelligence and technology to ensure that we conduct efficient operations in the transit zone. While the program budget for the INL Bureau at State has been slashed for 2 straight years, we are doing everything we can to hold the line in key transit zone country programs. We have maintained our fiscal year 1994–95 and 1996 budget request for the Bahamas at $700,000 and raised our request for Jamaica and Guatemala in fiscal year 1996. We have increased our regional budgets for the Caribbean and Central America from $3.2 million in fiscal year 1994 to $4.5 million in our fiscal 1996 request.

These are programs which focus primarily on strengthening local law enforcement efforts to detect and seize drug shipments while improving efforts to investigate and prosecute traffickers.

Earlier speakers referred to the absorptive—sometimes questionable absorptive capacity of some of the host government source and transit countries. Our programs directly contribute to increasing the absorptive capacity of governments to accept U.S. assistance and use it in a meaningful way.

There is a good story to tell here, Mr. Chairman. These programs are working. Let me give some examples. Assistant Secretary Gelbard underscored our interest in ensuring effective Caribbean operations by recently visiting the Bahamas where he reviewed and assessed OPBAT operations. We believe OPBAT has been a powerful deterrent, and we encourage the Government of the Bahamas to assume increased responsibility for the operation.

A State Department-led interagency team also traveled to St. Kitts and Nevis earlier this year when it became apparent to both our governments that Colombian-based drug syndicates are gaining increased influence through bribes and intimidation. The visit led to United States provided training, judicial assistance, and other counternarcotics programs to thwart traffickers from gaining this toehold in the Eastern Caribbean.

We have also enhanced the joint information collection centers, JICCs, a low-cost DEA and INL computer program to plug intelligence and operational gaps in the Caribbean Basin. Now present in 16 countries, the JICCs tie into our El Paso Intelligence Center and have been instrumental in supporting a number of significant seizures. Declining seizures in the Caribbean and Central America reflect success, not relaxation of our efforts.

Traffickers are not stupid; they have shifted from these way stations to others; most notably Mexico, as revealed by recent reports of cocaine-laden jet cargo flights from Colombia into Mexico. These were the most brazen smuggling operations we have ever encountered, and stopping them came under our direct control authority in the area.

We responded on several levels. Ambassador Gelbard met with senior officials in Mexico and Colombia to develop solutions. Cooperation has been good. Colombia has seized several traffickers' jets and taken greater control of the San Andreas Island in the Caribbean where flights originated or transited.

Mexico has engaged its Air Force in a restructured and expanded air interdiction program. While we can never be 100 percent sure, I believe our response has shut this operation down for now, but we will have to be on the look out for where it will move next.

I would like to also highlight our promotion of maritime counterdrug agreements. These agreements are designed to get ahead of traffickers' increasing use of maritime operations. They give U.S. law enforcement access to trafficking vessels and encourages involvement of host nation forces. We have recently concluded such agreements with five Caribbean Basin nations and have agreements pending with two others which, when completed, will give us 12 agreements in the region. This is an effort to try to be ahead of the game when we determine which routes the traffickers are going to use next.

Let's remember that while transit interdiction is important to our overall counterdrug effort, it is not the sole solution. To achieve permanent long-term success, we owe the American people a re-

sponse that strikes at the heart of the problem, and the heart lies in the source countries that grow coca and the international criminal organizations that control processing and worldwide distribution.

This is why the President's strategy puts increased funds in interdiction, enforcement, and crop control in the source countries. These are tough targets. There are significant political and security obstacles. However, the source countries have the ability to take them on. Our goal is to bolster their will to do so, and our efforts are working. Witness the recent arrest of Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela in Colombia; the destruction of thousands of hectares of coca and heroin in Colombia, an operation that demonstrates both the vulnerability of the crops and the effectiveness of this technique; attacks on the so-called air bridge in Peru; and a surge eradication operation that has destroyed nearly 2,000 hectares of coca in Bolivia in the past 3 months.

We want to sustain this progress in the source and transit countries with every means available. We will continue to make stringent use of the certification process which imposes economic sanctions on countries that do not cooperate fully in narcotics control.

The President's recent certification decisions sent powerful and effective messages to Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru. We are seeking more involvement by World Bank and other multilateral organizations in alternative development and judicial reform projects in those countries that have demonstrated the political will to attack the drug problem. But as the world's leader in this effort and with the most at stake, we must also retain the ability to implement our own effective programs in the foreign arena, and this brings me to my final point.

The $113 million appropriation for INL to be offered to the House darkens these prospects. It cuts the administration's request, its lowest in years, by $100 million. It is a cut from our fiscal year 1995 appropriated budget of 30 percent. It comes at the worst possible time, just as we see fundamental progress. It will mean across-the-board setbacks in interdiction, enforcement, and eradication.

I know this is not a budget hearing, Mr. Chairman, but I hope you keep in mind, for a program as small as ours—I would like to point out that out of the total U.S. estimated fiscal year 1995 interdiction effort of $13.264 billion, our program represents merely 2.3 percent—sorry, excuse me, that is not even accurate. It is less than that. What is classified as international efforts, including international programs of the law enforcement agencies, amounts to 2.3 percent of the total.

I hope you keep in mind that for a program as small as ours yet so closely linked to the safety and health of the American people, INL has borne its share of budget cuts in recent years. We have done more with ours by paring our programs to the bone. We have not requested an inordinate sum, we requested what we need.

I would welcome your assistance in passing a counternarcotics budget that moves us toward the goals we share.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would be very happy to take questions that you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Becker follows:]

STATEMENT OF ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS
JANE E. BECKER
BEFORE THE
HOUSE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

June 27, 1995

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for inviting the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) to testify on the role of interdiction in our international narcotics control policy and strategy. These hearings, occurring against the backdrop of several new, positive, and exciting developments in international narcotics control, come at an auspicious time. Recently intensified operations against narcotics producers and traffickers, especially in the Andean source countries, show that our policy is moving in the right direction. Indeed, prospects may be better than ever for fundamental and lasting progress against the international narcotics trade if the United States and the key narcotics producing and transit countries stay focused and intensify their efforts.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to start with a brief outline of the President's international narcotics control strategy and an explanation of why we chose this approach. The strategy was developed after extensive assessments of the threats the drug industry poses to our domestic and foreign interests, including democracy, economic growth, and criminal violence and drug addiction; of our past efforts--what has worked, what has not, and why; and our available resources.

The assessments showed that in the post-Cold War environment of tighter budgets, burgeoning democracies, and accelerating international trade and communications, we would have to find new approaches to international narcotics control if we are to make long-term progress against increasingly powerful, rich, and ruthless traffickers as well as disrupt the flow of drugs to our cities and towns. Accordingly, the President concluded that international narcotics trafficking is a national security threat to the United States and Secretary Christopher in his January speech at Harvard and elsewhere has identified the need to attack international narcotics trafficking and crime as one of the five key objectives of our foreign policy.

We owed the American people a response that struck at the heart of the international narcotics production and trafficking problem. Anything less would not result in a reduction in the supply of drugs to the United States, and would be wasteful, disingenuous, and not reflective of the United States' role as the world's international narcotics control leader.

The international heart of the problem lies in the source countries that grow coca and the international organizations that control most cocaine processing and worldwide distribution. The crops and organizations are daunting targets; the political and security risks countries take by attacking them are high. But the price they pay for not confronting them is worse. Drug money, corruption, and violence destroy democratic institutions and their leaders. Drug-related employment and income will undermine economic stability and growth. And drug use will sicken and kill their people. If governments do not address these problems, they risk losing their democracy and economic independence.

Here is what we are doing.

First, we have shifted the focus of our anti-cocaine efforts--both operationally and diplomatically--to the source countries: Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia. With virtually all cocaine manufacturing and global export confined to these three countries, vital targets of the trade are potentially more vulnerable to focused, reduced-cost antinarcotics operations there than elsewhere. We are focusing our efforts in the source countries on interdiction, reducing coca cultivation, and destroying the major trafficking organizations.

This does not mean that we are abandoning efforts in the transit zone. To the contrary, transit zone interdiction and other law enforcement operations aimed at seizing drugs and evidence, thwarting money laundering, and disrupting transportation and distribution elements of the Colombia-based and other major syndicates are important components of our overall strategy. Moreover, many transit zone countries struggling to resist mounting pressure from drug interests are increasingly valuable allies in helping to focus world attention on the consequences of the narcotics threat.

Second, in the source and transit countries we are concentrating our assistance on strengthening indigenous counternarcotics institutions so that these countries can shoulder more of the international narcotics control burden on their own. Strengthening the institutional base starts with enacting good drug control laws, then building the enforcement, judicial, and penal institutions to enforce them. We are providing training, technical, and materiel assistance to countries that demonstrate a commitment to narcotics control.

Let me be perfectly frank. This assistance is intended to produce action. I am convinced that after a sustained period of receiving assistance dating back to the early 1980s

and before, source and transit countries are demonstrating greater will and ability to conduct more sophisticated operations. The operations may not be flawless; antidrug laws may still suffer from loopholes; and not all authorities will be able to resist trafficker corruption and intimidation. There may still be shortages of equipment and intelligence.

There have been a number of positive developments in the past year--

-- Colombia's capture of Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela and its aerial spray program to eradicate coca;
-- the capture of two Peruvian kingpins in Colombia and their expulsion to Peru where one is now serving a 30-year sentence and the other should soon stand trial;
-- Peru's effective attacks on the air bridge that have reduced narcotics flights into Colombia and depressed the coca market in Peru;
-- a surge coca eradication operation in Bolivia;
-- Venezuela's rapid reaction to destroy an emergent poppy crop; and
-- Ecuador's determined effort to keep kingpin Jorge Reyes Torres in jail despite bribes and threats--

To show that political will and counternarcotics capabilities in source and transit countries are growing.

Third, we have made it clear we want more progress in reducing drug crop cultivation. By signing the 1961 UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, we and the Andean coca-producing countries have agreed that the production of crops for the illicit narcotics trade is illegal and should be eliminated. We do not preach a special formula for making this occur, but we do believe that coca-growing countries should fulfill their obligations, including under the Conventions. It would be ideal if modest levels of alternative development assistance, or limited eradication operations, could eventually lead to voluntary destruction of all coca. This, however, is not going to happen, especially in Bolivia and Peru--together the source of over 70 percent of the world's illicit coca.

What is happening, however, is that a combination of pressure from the United States and offers of technical and developmental assistance is moving these countries towards more rigorous crop control. We have signaled through the certification process that we want coca cultivation reduced. We have shown that we can, and will, provide resources needed to conduct swift and effective eradication. We have also

pledged to help countries that are committed to reducing cultivation garner alternative development assistance. This assistance is designed to create alternative income and employment in and outside drug-producing areas to ensure that small producers have viable alternatives for narcotics crops. For the first time, we are enlisting the support of the leading multilateral development banks in this cause. Assistant Secretary Gelbard has met several times with the leadership of the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, and I am pleased to report that they are ready to support these types of projects.

We have made discernible progress against drug crops in the past year, setting the stage for even greater gains. Last year, Colombia, with US technical support, began the first large-scale program ever to eradicate coca cultivation through aerial spraying. The program is now destroying thousands of hectares annually of coca, opium poppy, and marijuana. The operation has been particularly valuable in demonstrating the vulnerability of coca to eradication and the effectiveness of the aerial spray technique. Bolivia and Peru have not yet applied forced eradication of mature plants to their coca control strategies. Both, however, now acknowledge that the objective of alternative development is to eliminate illicit coca. This year we were able to get Bolivia to revitalize a moribund voluntary eradication effort and destroy over 1,750 hectares of coca in three months. We are working with Peru to begin targeting new coca crops as a first step towards more effective crop control.

Finally, we want more effective law enforcement operations against the kingpins and their organizations. The masterminds behind the trade, the kingpins are critical targets because they can keep it running profitably even in the face of other narcotics control successes. Furthermore, their ability to corrupt and intimidate is the most dangerous drug-related threat to democratic political systems. Their reach extends beyond their own countries. Colombian traffickers do not shy away from attempting to woo and corrupt American officials, kill witnesses and informants in our cases, and intimidate and assassinate journalists and other opinion makers. But, as the recent arrest of Colombian kingpin Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela revealed, they have many vulnerabilities: they are known, they live and operate where government authorities hold sway, and their very dealings with legitimate and underground contacts create incriminating evidence. With good intelligence, police work, and judicial institutions, they can be found, caught, and convicted, causing substantial disruption to the trade at a relatively low cost--provided that governments have the will to take them on.

Certification

We are making increasing use of the President's certification powers to achieve these goals. Certification is one of the most effective tools this government has to focus international attention on the narcotics threat and achieve results. The Foreign Assistance Act requires that each year the President identify the major drug-producing and drug-transit countries and determine whether they have fully cooperated with the United States or taken adequate steps on their own in narcotics control. The United States must cut off most foreign assistance to those countries that are not certified and vote against their requests for loans from multilateral development banks. For countries found not to be fully cooperating or taking adequate steps on their own, the President may grant a national interest certification if the vital interests of the United States require continued foreign assistance.

Last year, we reported to Congress that President Clinton issued the toughest certification decision ever: ten of the 26 major producing and transit countries were either denied certification or granted a national interest certification. This year, the process was even tougher. We expanded the majors list to 29 countries and, in his decision on March 1, the President denied certification to five countries and granted a national interest certification to six others--a total of eleven countries, one more than last year.

These were difficult decisions based strictly on the 1994 counternarcotics performance of these countries and our national interests. There were no "rubber stamp" decisions. Indeed, many countries with whom we have strong bilateral relations were affected. For instance, among the eleven, Bolivia and Peru, and, for the first time, Colombia, Paraguay, and Pakistan received national interest certifications; and, for the second year in a row, Nigeria was denied certification. The other affected countries were Afghanistan, Burma, Iran, and Syria, which were denied certification, and Lebanon, which was given a national interest certification.

The message to domestic and foreign audiences alike should be unambiguous: certification is an honest process and is meant to produce concrete results. The pattern is clear: we will recognize and reward those countries that respond positively. Two years of increasingly tough decisions have sent strong signals to countries that doubt our resolve, or believe that piecemeal, misdirected, or last-minute efforts to enhance counternarcotics performance will satisfy us. It will not, and it should not satisfy them either.

Interdiction

That, Mr. Chairman, is the backdrop of our cocaine control policy. Clearly, there are a number of key elements to it, including the very important role of interdiction. Interdiction has been a key element in our broad-based, integrated international narcotics control efforts from the beginning and remains so. The President's policy carves out a specific role for interdiction. While we seek to focus interdiction in the source countries, closer to the production and processing areas, we support an effective effort in the transit zone. Moreover, countries in the transit zone have become strong international narcotics control allies and we want to retain their support.

Accordingly, Mr. Chairman, we are not shutting down our transit zone operations, although we are trying to make them more efficient. I think we all agree that interdiction operations are resource-intensive: we must guard against the use of any route by any method--and there are many of both--at any time, while the traffickers have the luxury of choosing their routes, methods, and schedules. Operational expenses are a big concern to us, less so to them given the enormous profitability of the trade. Still, we have technology and intelligence on our side, and we are increasingly relying on these advantages to conduct more focused and efficient interdiction efforts in the transit zone.

At a time when the State Department's budget for international narcotics control programs continues to face deep, crippling cuts, we are doing everything we can to hold the line in our key transit country programs. We have kept funding for our FY 1994, '95, and '96 programs in the Bahamas level at $700,000, and have actually increased funding for Jamaica from $600,000 in both FY 1994 and '95 to $1 million in our FY '96 request; and for Guatemala from $2 million in 1994 to $2.5 million in '95 and to $2.55 million in our FY '96 request. In addition, we have increased our regional budgets for the Caribbean and Central America from a total of $3.2 million in FY '94 to $4.5 million in our FY '96 request.

In all cases, our programs are focused primarily on strengthening local law enforcement efforts to detect and seize drug shipments, while improving efforts to investigate and prosecute traffickers responsible for these operations. This includes the provision of both materiel and training assistance. The emphasis is on strengthening cooperation with these countries and enhancing their ability to operate on their own. This is working. Let me cite some examples from the Caribbean and Central America.

Assistant Secretary Gelbard recently visited the Bahamas to review our programs and assess needs. OPBAT--Operation Bahamas, Turks, and Caicos--remains a pillar of our Caribbean interdiction strategy. We are encouraging the Government of the Bahamas to assume increased responsibility for the operation. A State Department-led interagency team also travelled to St. Kitts and Nevis earlier this year when it became clear to both our governments that Colombian-based drug syndicates were making serious penetrations of all levels of the government through bribes and intimidation. The visit helped expose the problem and led to training, judicial enhancement, and other assistance programs to thwart the traffickers from gaining this toehold in the eastern Caribbean.

Enhancements in our Caribbean basin-wide JICC (Joint Information Coordination Center) program--a joint DEA, Department of State effort--are also paying dividends. The focus of this low-cost law enforcement computer network is on host nation intelligence collection, analysis, and sharing. We are increasingly stressing the need to respond to actionable intelligence. Over the past two years, the system and training have expanded from 13 to 16 countries. The JICCs tie in with the US Government's El Paso Intelligence Center and are filling intelligence and operational gaps in the Caribbean basin. Trinidad recently employed the system perfectly when it used JICC-developed intelligence on a suspected vessel to coordinate an interagency surveillance operation and used US Coast Guard-taught techniques to board the boat and seize 226 kilograms of cocaine and arrest the traffickers.

By all accounts, the air smuggling threat in Central America is also down. Today, narcotics traffickers have virtually abandoned Guatemala's hundreds of uncontrolled landing strips where just a few years ago light smuggling aircraft would land with impunity to off-load drugs for surface transportation to Mexico and on to the United States. The key to this success is Operation Cadence, an air-based interdiction effort by the counterdrug unit of Guatemala's Treasury Police coordinated by DEA with training, transport, and materiel supplied by the Department of State. We are keeping our guard up, however, and will continue to hold the line with our interdiction efforts while enhancing the government's ability to eradicate opium crops and conduct criminal investigations on its own.

Declining seizure statistics in the Bahamas and Central America reflect success, not relaxation, of our efforts. Simply put, traffickers are avoiding these way stations. They are, however, moving increasingly to others, most notably Mexico and the eastern Caribbean.

The shift to Mexico was highlighted earlier this year by the extensive reporting on drug-laden jet cargo planes flying there from Colombia. As evidence of the so-called "carga" flights unfolded, stopping this operation became our top counternarcotics priority in the region.

The United States Government moved immediately on several fronts to shut down this operation and solidify our counternarcotics efforts with Mexico. Assistant Secretary Gelbard has travelled to Mexico and Colombia several times, holding extensive discussions with senior narcotics and other government officials to ensure that they take the strongest possible actions against the "carga" operations. I am pleased to report good cooperation with both governments. After we outlined the situation to the Government of Colombia and pressed it on this matter, it took these actions:

- Defense Minister Botero ordered Colombia's law enforcement agencies to take effective control of access to San Andres Island where many of the carga flights originated or refueled. The Colombian military now controls the only air traffic control tower on the island.

- Colombia has increased coastal surveillance to monitor maritime traffic around San Andres and Providencia islands. The government plans to construct a coast guard base on San Andres to enhance its control of the island.

- President Samper imposed sterner controls over the operations of large aircraft, and Colombian authorities have seized three which were owned by suspected traffickers and used for drug shipments.

In Mexico:

- The government has restructured its air interdiction program and, for the first time, introduced Mexican Air Force air assets into the response system.

- With US assistance, Mexico is enhancing the readiness of its counternarcotics airfleet and adding additional helicopters to improve mobility of its forces.

- Mexico is also exploring ways to expand its southern-based radar system to better detect suspect trafficker aircraft entering Mexican airspace.

Meanwhile, Mexican anti-drug forces have seized over 13.5 metric tons of cocaine thus far in 1995 as well as

trafficker aircraft, boats, cash, properties, and other assets. The government is also working on legislation that would strengthen its ability to enforce legal forfeiture of those assets, an important tool in dismantling organized criminal enterprises. Mexico is also working closely with its neighbors to the south to strengthen border controls to better interdict overland smuggling of drugs, weapons, other contraband, and aliens.

Mr. Chairman, the "carga" flights are among the most challenging smuggling operations we have ever confronted. Our response has been fast, comprehensive, and, we believe, effective. While we can never be 100 percent secure against such operations, we are alert to this and poised to strike.

The Department's programs are also supporting interdiction operations in Peru and Bolivia where the trafficking chain starts. Last year, with our urging and help, Peru issued a comprehensive drug control strategy. It addresses law enforcement, coca cultivation, demand reduction, and outlines specific interdiction roles and responsibilities for the police and military. Interdiction is broadly characterized to include targetting drug shipments for seizure and major traffickers for arrest and prosecution. Peru is achieving unprecedented interdiction successes. The armed forces seized nearly seven tons of cocaine base and refined cocaine in the first three months of 1995, compared to 10.5 tons in all of 1994. The 1994 results were double 1993's. Included in 1995 totals is a single seizure of 3 tons of refined cocaine, the largest such seizure ever in Peru. It resulted from an effective, long-term Peruvian police investigation. The Peruvian Air Force is meanwhile aggressively using US-provided intelligence to intercept trafficker aircraft violating Peruvian airspace.

Bolivia has also been active in attacking laboratories and disrupting trafficking organizations. We have been working with Bolivia to produce a comprehensive drug control strategy. Bolivia's principal interdiction force is UMOPAR--an organization created and funded with State Department assistance. Its primary mission is to seize illegal coca and chemicals in the Chapare--the main coca-growing area--before they can get to processing and shipping centers. We are constantly working to upgrade UMOPAR's capabilities, including its ability to collect and analyze intelligence to target important traffickers and smuggling operations. In 1994, UMOPAR spearheaded a new regional program with neighboring countries to interdict precursor chemicals entering Bolivia.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the State Department is not an "interdiction agency." We do not run large interdiction

operations. As the above examples show, our areas of expertise are enhancing host country capabilities and developing better bilateral and multilateral cooperation. We also want to work with countries to create an environment where US interdiction technology, intelligence, and skill can be fully used. In this regard, I would like to conclude my comments on interdiction by highlighting a recent area of progress that has received little attention but is of increasing importance: international maritime cooperation.

The Department of State, in conjunction with the Department of Defense, the Coast Guard, and the Drug Enforcement Administration, has actively promoted the establishment of maritime counterdrug agreements with several Caribbean island nations. These agreements give US law enforcement entities rapid access to suspected drug trafficking vessels and they encourage and solicit the involvement of host nation forces charged with drug interdiction responsibilities. International training activities, coordinated by my bureau, complement these objectives: while US assets are patrolling Caribbean waters and interdicting suspected vessels, we are simultaneously teaching those nations demonstrating the will to undertake such operations on their own.

Our objective is to create a coalition of cooperating nations who have the ability, technology, and will to deter traffickers from using their territory. We have recently negotiated agreements with St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and Dominica. These follow earlier agreements with the British Virgin Islands, Belize, Panama, Venezuela, and the Bahamas. Negotiations are pending with Jamaica and Honduras. In addition, we routinely and effectively cooperate with the British, Dutch, and French to thwart trafficker operations in Caribbean waters under their jurisdiction.

Conclusion: Funding Concerns

Mr. Chairman, your Subcommittee has always been a strong ally in the fight against international narcotics trafficking. You recognize the need for an effective attack on supplies to disrupt the flow of drugs to the United States. These hearings are occurring because we all want to find the best way to conduct this attack. We know from years of efforts that there are many approaches and many constraints. We have not chosen our international strategy because it is easy, quick, or photogenic. We have chosen it because it attacks the core of the problem and directs the most cost-effective use of our dwindling resources.

I am convinced by our efforts over the past year and a half that our policy will yield across-the-board

progress--from interdiction, to investigations and prosecutions, to crop control. But we clearly need Congress' help in ensuring this success. We must have at least adequate--not inordinate--resources. For international narcotics control, the Administration requested $213 million for FY 1996. This, in fact, was our lowest request in years; it reflects the fiscal restraint Congress and the American people are demanding. But it also reflects the resources we need to push ahead with a program that has as its sole objective to disrupt the flow of illegal drugs to the United States and counter one of the most serious threats to the entire international community.

Quite frankly, the $113 million INL budget in the House Appropriations bill eviscerates this goal. It leaves us with no alternative development and military assistance money--normally supplied by Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and Economic Support Funds (ESF)--that we sought to consolidate into our budget. Consolidation was intended to be a cost-saving move to give us more flexibility and accountability in our counternarcotics spending; it would ensure that what has traditionally been FMF and ESF money would be used specifically for counternarcotics.

Now we face a further cut from our FY '95 budget of about 30 percent. The consequences for both our source and transit country programs will be dire: less interdiction and eradication, reduced efforts against heroin, and fewer opportunities to assist cooperating countries. We know you are attuned to these problems and we welcome your support in seeing that the House and Senate produce a counternarcotics budget that moves us to the narcotics control goals we share.

Thank you.

Mr. BLUTE. Ambassador Becker, thank you very much for your testimony. I have a few questions, and then I will turn it over to the ranking member.

I agree with you that the source countries are critically important, although I would say that Mexico is of rising importance in our antidrug efforts. I would like to ask something about that a little later. But with regard to the source countries, Colombia specifically, how important is it, do you think, that the United States detect and monitor air and maritime traffic out of Colombia?

Ms. BECKER. It is very important. It is part of our overall law enforcement objectives inside of Colombia, trying to strengthen the political will to go after traffickers and the ability of local authorities to capture them and prosecute them.

That involves the kinds of programs that the State Department runs, which are programs designed to help the Colombians rewrite laws to make them stick, to improve judicial procedures to ensure that evidence is properly used and not wasted, and to ensure that convictions carry with them an appropriate sentence.

A very critical part of the strategy involves going after drug trafficking organizations and specifically leaders of those organizations. We are not naive enough to think that by finding a leader here and there that the organizations will cease to exist. However, it is clear—I can't go into a lot of detail in this hearing because it is an open hearing. But it is clear that this is disruptive to the trafficking organizations, and anything that is disruptive ultimately means that their effectiveness is decreased, which means at least for some period of time a reduction in their ability to send narcotics into the United States.

Mr. BLUTE. With regard to Colombia again, what are the major points of departure for air and maritime drug smugglers? I want to pin down exactly what points in Colombia are the problem areas.

Ms. BECKER. As I indicated, I have been on the job approximately 3 weeks. The biggest problem in terms of volume has been San Andreas Island in the Caribbean off Central America. The Colombians have taken effective control of that island, which was being used as either an origination point or transit for the cargo jet loads of cocaine that was going into Mexico.

Other than that, I will have to take the question because I am just not familiar enough where this——

[The information referred to follows:]

Along with San Andres Island, we have asked the Colombian Government to impose stricter controls over all of their international airports and seaports. We view all ports of departure from Colombia as problem areas for the flow of narcotics to the United States.

Available data indicates that a significant amount of illegal drugs is located in containers which depart Colombia by ship from the main ports on the Pacific and the Atlantic coasts, principally among those are the ports of Barranquilla and Buenaventura. These shipments are primarily bound for Mexico for onward shipment of the drugs to the United States. Additionally, trafficking organizations have used the international airports to transport large amounts of narcotics in cargo-type aircraft. Many of Colombia's major airports, such as those in Bogota, Cali and Baranquilla, have cargo operations which make them attractive to narcotics traffickers.

As a result of the Colombian Government's efforts, we have seen a decline in the transportation of large amounts of narcotics by air. We are continuing to evaluate GOC port controls to determine whether the steps the Colombian Government claims to have taken are adequate.

Mr. BLUTE. One of the concerns the committee has is the Barranquilla, known as one of the prime areas of departure, and the word is that the State Department is closing down the consulate there. Are you aware of that at all?

Ms. BECKER. That is actually not entirely correct. The State Department would like to cut back, because, as you know, the State Department overall is in a period of budgetary retrenchment and it has been necessary for the Secretary of State to make very difficult decisions about priorities and reallocation of resources.

The number of State Department Americans at the consulate in Barranquilla and support costs for the consulate are under discussion with the Drug Enforcement Administration. The State Department would like to cut back the number of Americans there and the amount of money it provides for building and other costs, and a number of options have been presented to DEA for DEA shouldering more of the cost, but as of this moment there is no decision to close the consulate.

Mr. BLUTE. Under any reallocation of resources, I would hope they would be concentrated in the source countries which would be consistent with the policy change, and I certainly think that is important.

Let me talk about Mexico again, because I am very concerned about Mexico's rising stature in the international drug flow. Do you believe it is fair to say that Mexico is now a source country for cocaine and heroine?

Ms. BECKER. I think some of these definitions are somewhat clinical. Under the President's strategy, the principal source countries in this hemisphere are identified as Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru because of the large amount of acreage devoted to growth of coca crops.

Mexico did have a problem but, with our assistance, has done a substantial amount, and in fact we are reasonably certain that, with the exception of some marijuana and hashish, Mexico in the sense of that definition is not a source country.

If the question here is simply should Mexico get more resources and if it needs to get more resources, your implication is it needs to be classified as a source country, I am not sure that we necessarily need to fiddle with the definition. I think we need to fiddle with the resource allocation.

I would agree with you that, because of the increasing sophistication of the various trafficking networks in Mexico and what we believe to be the increase in funding available to them, that it would be helpful if more resources could be devoted to this problem right on our border.

Mr. BLUTE. Thank you, Ambassador.

My time is up. I recognize the ranking member, Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador, you mentioned in some of your comments and more appropriately at the end of your comments about the budget being cut probably by more than half. Besides just saying it might be damaging, what kinds of effects do you see happening with this? If you could give a little more detail.

Ms. BECKER. Our budget supports a variety of different kinds of programs, one of which is what we call the INL air wing. It is one

of the areas highlighted as being a problem by some of the earlier witnesses. INL runs helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, which are basically crop duster type aircraft, throughout the region. Many of the countries do not have well-equipped police or air forces. These helicopters—they are fixed-wing aircraft, almost exclusively do spraying, and we and the Colombians, working together, have eradicated dozens of thousands of hectares of cocaine and some opium and poppy in Colombia.

In other countries, these helicopters are used for interdiction to augment the very meager supplies of such aircraft that are available to either the military or the police.

Other programs that we run—in fact well over half of our budget could be loosely categorized as interdiction, because a lot of our work is in assistance to the law enforcement agencies in the host Governments by way of training, by way of strengthening local institutions through changes in the legal framework, through providing technical assistance to the courts and judges, and by rewriting legal procedures in order to ensure that evidence is properly handled, and the people who are detained are in fact convicted, and that sort of thing. Those are very cost-effective programs, and on an annual basis we train thousands of people.

In addition, in areas which have been given over traditionally to the growing of cocaine, there are very few options for local farmers, other than cocaine, that are reasonably lucrative. With our limited funds—and they are very limited, as you heard—we try by giving seed money to the host Government to build roads, to provide an outlet for alternative products besides coca, to assist with electrification, irrigation, and that sort of thing, or to provide incentives for investment in the coca-growing areas from various sources, not only domestic sources in the country but from the international community, again, in order to provide market incentives and encouragement for farmers to move away from coca crops.

So it is a whole variety of interlocking things that we do, and if our money—which is, as I said, very modest, takes the cut that we are currently looking at under the House Appropriations Committee recommendations just as we are beginning to make inroads in a lot of these countries and just as they are beginning to realize more than we have seen before that drugs are damaging to them too, they are undercutting their governments.

There are pockets of corruption in all these governments, no matter what level is involved. But there are pockets of good guys too, and we try to work with the good guys to develop appropriate institutions. Just as our policies are beginning to work, if we don't have the necessary carrot to offer—it is a very modest carrot—I am afraid our credibility will be undermined.

I might also add something on certification which got some—came in for some hits in the previous witnesses. The certification process, which was developed by Congress in fact in 1988, has proved to be a very effective tool. We have State Department and entire interagency community, because I might just clarify for you, the certification decision is made by the President upon the recommendation of an interagency working group consisting of DEA, Customs, all the people I mentioned, it is not a State-Department-only decision, and it is a decision issued by the President.

Mr. ZELIFF. For the record, could you just clarify that certification for Mexico, and what that means?

Ms. BECKER. The certification for Mexico—and I would be happy to share with you, or have put in the record, the actual certification statement which was issued by the President when all the certification decisions were made—sorry; I could read from it if I could find it.

Mr. ZELIFF. While you are looking for it, for the benefit of Mrs. Thurman, this came up in the previous panel, and it was thought it would be better answered by the Ambassador.

Mrs. THURMAN. Right.

Mr. ZELIFF. She brought it up just now, and basically, as I recall—this is probably dangerous on my part, but what was said was that Mexico was being certified as being fully cooperative in terms of the drug effort, and I had some questions about the accuracy of that statement, and then we decided that we would bring it up with this panel.

Ms. BECKER. Just one moment, please.

Mr. ZELIFF. Based on what we have been hearing, I mean, it just didn't seem to jibe.

Ms. BECKER. Yes, I would like, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, to have the explanation of the President's decision on certification for Mexico read into the record; among other things, that it points out that the actions taken by the then newly inaugurated President, Ernesto Zedillo, were very encouraging. This statement was issued in March very shortly after President Zedillo had taken over.

Mr. ZELIFF. We are certifying what?

Ms. BECKER. Sorry. We are certifying the narcotics cooperation of the Government of Mexico in 1994 and the early part of 1995. President Zedillo, very shortly after taking office, announced that the combating of narcotics was Mexico's principal, primary national security threat.

He also appointed an opposition party official as Attorney General, whose name is Lozano, who immediately began—this is before the statement was issued—who immediately began an anticorruption campaign and began to reorganize the Office of the Prosecutor General, which is the equivalent of the Justice Department.

In addition, President Zedillo has given any number of directives that corruption from any source, be it narcotics or whatever, will simply not be tolerated in the government.

Mr. ZELIFF. Well, the——

Ms. BECKER. Sorry.

Mr. ZELIFF. The problem I am having is, the folks we have been talking to on the front lines indicate that Mexico is a major problem. It just doesn't seem to jibe with the comments that—in terms of certification, but that is something we will have to solve on another day.

Ms. BECKER. Narcotics in general is not the kind of problem that will be solved overnight as, unfortunately, we all know too well. The Mexican Government under a new leader has shown very promising signs of being much more serious in this area than his predecessor, and we have had good cooperation. We have a number

of working groups working now to facilitate hitting the traffickers in various areas.

In addition, you should know that, at its own request, because this is a sovereignty issue, the Government of Mexico took over its counternarcotics program in early 1993 and is still learning the ropes. We are providing as much assistance as we can behind the ropes, but they insist on doing certain things themselves, and it is their country after all, and we are limited by that. In any case, we have gotten good cooperation from the Zedillo administration and are looking forward to more of the same in order to be more effective.

Mr. ZELIFF. Would you disagree with the statement that 75 percent of the cocaine that is coming up from Colombia is going through Mexico?

Ms. BECKER. As of the last few months, yes, I would.

Mr. ZELIFF. What would you think it would be?

Ms. BECKER. I really can't go into it in this particular venue, sir, I am sorry.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do we have anything that would be unclassified?

Ms. BECKER. No, aside from earlier statements I made that by extension, maybe, I might be able to.

Mrs. THURMAN. To follow up on that, has Mexico ever not been certified?

Ms. BECKER. I am told by my colleagues it's always been certified.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Souder. We have 5 minutes, and then we will have a recess for 15 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. Do we have agreements on United States-Mexico over flight rights or hot pursuit in international waters?

Ms. BECKER. I will have to take that question. I don't know the details.

There are military-to-military agreements, but I don't know the specifics on that.

[The information referred to follows:]

We have no legally binding bilateral maritime counterdrug international agreement with Mexico that would provide overflight rights, nor do we have a general agreement with Mexico regarding overflight rights. However, in the past, we have worked out arrangements with the Government of Mexico, on a case-by-case basis, for overflight of Mexican territory in specific instances.

Mr. SOUDER. Our concern is that we don't, and some of us are very concerned that that is one sign, and we would like to see progress on that front.

You made the statement that they have taken over their own drug efforts and they are a sovereign country after all. Well, some of us have concerns that while that is true, at the same time we have been bailing out their economy recently through the World Bank and providing American money to stabilize their economy. Through NAFTA, we have given an agreement, and we have more expectations, not less expectations than we had a few years ago.

I, for one, am looking at a number of floor actions regarding certification, because I have grave concerns about their cooperation and lack thereof.

Do we have specific evidence that they are doing anything further besides examples of, how, they are helping here or there? Is not part of the counterevidence the amount of drugs coming in?

Ms. BECKER. Seizures so far under the Zedillo administration are up and running ahead of previous——

Mr. SOUDER. As a proportion of the amount of drugs coming up, are they running up?

Ms. BECKER. Coming in from Mexico or into the United States?

Mr. SOUDER. Into the United States. The amount of drugs coming into Mexico is rising up——

Ms. BECKER. The cargo operations for the traffickers seems to have been shut down. It is not entirely clear how much is coming through Mexico. There is no way to know the overall amount except through projection.

Mr. SOUDER. In your statement a bit ago that Mexico may not be 75 percent, is some of this shifting to Puerto Rico?

Ms. BECKER. It is shifting to various locations, but I don't want to announce here where we think it is going.

Mr. SOUDER. Is there a problem in Puerto Rico because they are not able to investigate as much——

Ms. BECKER. I think I can not——

Mr. SOUDER [continuing]. In that relationship?

Ms. BECKER. I don't know, No. 1, that there is a problem through Puerto Rico that is any different from any other potential entry point in the Caribbean.

Second, I would have to get back to you on the specifics if there is a problem in Puerto Rico.

Mr. SOUDER. One other concern we have is that the GAO suggests that the source country programs have not been very effective, and it would be helpful—I know you don't have much time and we are about to vote, but it would be helpful if you could make a couple comments on that and provide any evidence you have in written form, too, that you believe counters that point, because that is supposed to be a primary effort and we are very concerned about that.

Ms. BECKER. I would be very happy to provide a series of what we believe are serious successes, both in the eradication area, and in local law enforcement, and in improvements in general law enforcement action in the source countries.

One of the biggest problems that we have had is that our source country strategy and in fact the President's drug control strategy promulgated in November 1993 has never been fully funded, so we don't know if it is effective or not.

The President's strategy is based on essentially a triad of actions, all of which need to be pursued with equal vigor, not necessarily equal funding but with equal vigor, in order for the entire strategy to be effective. The three pieces of it are source country, transit zone, and domestic, which includes both law enforcement and demand reduction.

Since none of the pieces has ever been funded fully, no wonder the strategy may not be achieving the success it was designed to. Our piece of it, our little bit which is source country strategy, is potentially only going to be funded at half of what we requested.

[The information referred to follows:]

RECEIVED

SEP 199

Congressman Bill Zeliff
Washington DC 20515

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter is in response to a request made by Representative Mark Souder to Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Jane Becker, during her June 27 testimony before the House Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs and Criminal Justice, regarding drug control progress in the Andean countries.

The record, of course, is mixed, but there have been a number of recent developments which are particularly noteworthy. We have been especially encouraged by the arrests this year in Colombia of the world's most wanted criminals -- the Cali Cartel Kingpins -- and ongoing efforts to prosecute them. Unprecedented police efforts within the last 18 months have also resulted in the arrests of major traffickers in Peru and Mexico.

Crop eradication, which varies from year to year, has improved considerably, in large part, we believe, because of the consistent political pressure which we are applying. Eradication operations in Colombia, Venezuela and Bolivia have been particularly successful, destroying thousands of hectares of coca and opium: statistics are detailed in our last International Narcotics Control Strategy Report.

Thanks to U.S. leadership, drug producing and transiting countries in this hemisphere are more aware than ever of the drug threat and they have resolved to combat it. Domestic legislation was introduced in several countries restricting the spread of precursor chemicals or the use of the nation's financial institutions to launder trafficking proceeds. Most important, the Administration's strong stance on narcotics certification has played an important role in the positive steps these countries are taking to thwart the drug trade. Our serious approach to certification has made them take more effective steps against a problem, which it is, after all, in their own interest to do.

The Honorable
Bill Zeliff, Chairman,
Subcommittee on National Security,
International Affairs and Criminal Justice,
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight,
House of Representatives.

As the budget process works through, we are acutely aware that resources are extremely tight in every sector. Nevertheless, the Administration's commitment and determination to make the best use of funds against narcotics is unswerving. As the President said just a few weeks ago, "our common security mission" is to take on "terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking. These must be the cornerstones of our program to build a safer America at a time when threats to our security have no respect for boundaries, and when boundaries between these threats are disappearing."

If you should require additional information, or believe that we may be of further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Wendy R. Sherman

Wendy R. Sherman
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Mr. ZELIFF. What I would like to do, with your permission, is reconvene in 15 minutes. We have to vote, unfortunately, and I would like to react to your question about Puerto Rico or your answer on Puerto Rico, and perhaps you might want to confer with your staff. If I correctly heard you are not aware of the changes—what did you say about Puerto Rico?

Ms. BECKER. I said that, as far as we were aware, that recently there had been fewer cargo flights to Mexico, and I was asked specifically about alteration of the trafficking pattern through Puerto Rico, and I said I did not know that that was in fact the case.

Mr. ZELIFF. I thought you might want to confer with your staff. Certainly we have been given or led to believe that there are tremendous changes in trafficking through Puerto Rico, and we may have the right information or the wrong information, but we can reconvene on that issue and come right back.

Thank you.

Ms. BECKER. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. We will recess for 15 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Where we left the last question, I asked you to consider, in talking with your staff, the status of drug trafficking in Puerto Rico. Do you have anything new you might want to add?

Ms. BECKER. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to also clarify that when I said that I was not aware of the specifics regarding Puerto Rico, I meant that it was not the United States Government, it was me as a person being so new to my present portfolio. And there was also some confusion on my part because enforcement efforts in Puerto Rico, obviously, are under the jurisdiction of our domestic law enforcement agencies in that territory.

However, I would like to say that one of the main contributions that the State Department has made to the overall law enforcement effort in the eastern Caribbean, including Puerto Rico and all the other areas that are adjacent to our shores, is in negotiating agreements that enable cooperation between our Coast Guard and the Coast Guard or equivalent forces of the independent island nations, particularly in the eastern Caribbean and the U.K. Coast Guard, which serves the U.K. territories in that region, and now increasingly with the Dutch Coast Guard, to ensure that there's a proper hand-off in surveillance or other law enforcement action as narcotrafficking bodies or aircraft go between various national jurisdictions.

We have reason to believe that they have taken full advantage of the overlapping international boundaries and try to hide in one or the other boundary in order to escape law enforcement action.

We are very pleased with the early successes that these agreements have achieved. As I said earlier, we believe we have disrupted fairly significantly the mega jet air cargo flights between Colombia and Mexico, and so traffickers increasingly go to the area where there is less resistance. As we deny one trafficking route, they go elsewhere. And we're trying to shore up our capabilities in the eastern Caribbean, including cutting off Puerto Rico as a destination point.

I would also, Mr. Chairman, with your permission, like to address as I had an opportunity to collect my thoughts during the break, a few other areas that you had expressed interest in earlier—with earlier witnesses. You specifically commented that it appeared as though there was a disconnect between the counternarcotics efforts of the U.S. Government and the law enforcement efforts.

I would like to say that Secretary Christopher also recognized that as a significant disconnect, most likely because of his previous background as a prosecutor and in the legal area. And, in fact, last year he added law enforcement affairs to the mandate of my bureau.

And we are perhaps in the vanguard in the government in that we have unified responsibility for these mandates under a single organization INL. Many other agencies have not yet addressed this institutional divide. And, therefore, there are some difficulties, as you pointed out, in kind of pulling the two things together, which are obviously very much interconnected and interrelated.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you.

In our trip recently we talked a lot to folks about bilateral agreements with various countries and some progress that is definitely being made there. Do we have access to Colombian territorial waters at this point when it comes to hot pursuit of traffickers?

Ms. BECKER. Mr. Chairman, we'll have to get back to you on that. I'm sorry. I don't know the answer.

[The information referred to follows:]

Although we have a number of bilateral maritime counterdrug international agreements with a number of other nations in the Caribbean, we have no agreement that permits United States law enforcement vessels to enter the Colombian territorial sea in pursuit of suspect vessels. Consequently, we seek the specific permission from the Government of Colombia to enter the Colombian territorial sea in instances when the Government of Colombia is unable to take over the pursuit. The right of hot pursuit under international law ends when the pursued vessel enters another nation's territorial sea.

Mr. ZELIFF. How about Cuba? Is there any progress being made? I know we can't violate their air space.

Ms. BECKER. On a case-by-case basis, I'm told the Coast Guard has been able to make arrangements with the Cuban border guard, but it is on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. And how about Mexico? Is there any kinds of a bilateral agreement relative to territorial waters? Any kind of bilateral agreement at all?

Ms. BECKER. I'll have to take that question also, get back to you.

[The information referred to follows:]

Although we have a number of bilateral agreements with Mexico concerning cooperation in combatting narcotic drugs, none of these grant access to Mexican territorial sea.

Mr. ZELIFF. Relative to the new Mexican president cooperating with the United States, is it true that he just refused a United States offer of 24 Blackhawk helicopters with United States pilots under Mexican command? You might want to—I mean this might be a question you might want to get back to us on.

Ms. BECKER. Yes, thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]

Early this year, in discussions with Mexico over the emergent threat of trafficker use of cargo jet aircraft, the U.S. Government offered to assist the GOM enhance its response capabilities. Among the many options discussed for enhancing mobility was the use of a small number (4) of Customs Black Hawk helicopters to transport Mexican police agents to the suspected landing sites. For a variety of operational and safety concerns, this idea was tabled and the Government of Mexico developed a strategy for countering the cargo jet problem through a combination of increased Mexican military participation in interdiction, increase in assets for ground operations (e.g., roadblocks) and through expansion of the fleet of UH-1H helicopters.

While we believed that the Customs Service Black Hawks would have been a useful addition to the air interdiction effort against the fast movers, we do not view the GOM's decision to decline this particular USG offer as unwillingness to cooperate.

It is worth noting as well that, given Mexican and Colombian efforts to thwart trafficker use of cargo jets, we have not detected one of these flights since March. We are, however, continuing to take countermeasures against them.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you know if it is true that the drug war—what priority is the drug war listed in your rankings? I mean, where do you see the drug war in terms of our national scale of priorities?

Ms. BECKER. I think it's a very high priority. And, increasingly, as we go out and talk to the American public we realize that it's a very high priority for them, too. They, perhaps better than some parts of the government, historically realize the nexus between drug trafficking and crime.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let me give you an observation. I think it's a high priority with the American public. And just like in November, you know, where we found out that the budget is also a high priority, I think for those of us that are unwilling to recognize those signs, there are going to be some rough seas ahead.

And I think there are rough seas ahead on the drug war and the drug use and the resources developed to stop it, when the American people fully understand the fact that drug use is up across the board at all age levels in the last 3 years, you and I and the President and Dr. Brown and Admiral Kramek and everybody that's in this thing are going to be forced into putting it up to a higher priority. I don't know whether it is currently No. 19 or 18 or 17, but I don't think that we all have it on our radar screens as the No. 1 priority, and I think eventually we will. It's just a matter of how quickly we get forced into it or whether we take a leadership role.

I know you've only been in your job for 3 weeks, but how do you look at the strategy—well, let me go back. Who do you view as running this whole counternarcotics program?

Ms. BECKER. The authority was vested by the President and Dr. Brown, and he leads a variety of interagency coordination groups, and then there are subsets of those groups. I realize that, to outsiders, it appears rather confusing, but I think that for those of us who are doing this on a day-to-day basis, actually, the lines are pretty clear.

Mr. ZELIFF. So you feel that there is someone totally in control and totally accountable and that person is the President of the United States?

Ms. BECKER. It is the President of the United States and Dr. Brown on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. ZELIFF. Acting on his behalf.

Ms. BECKER. Yes.

I would also like to, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, take this opportunity to explain a bit about how country teams operate under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador overseas.

The U.S. Ambassador, as you know, is the President's personal representative in an individual country. And in all countries around the world the Ambassador, with the assistance of the State Department, operates on the basis of a country team, which includes the head of each agency which operates in that country.

And for some agencies which have been heretofore primarily domestic—and in that category I include the law enforcement agencies, particularly domestically—they operate essentially on their own, so this team concept for them has been a bit of a—has presented some difficulty, some growing pains, as it were, with—over time and with increased experience in using the country team approach, I think a lot of the rough edges have been smoothed off.

In addition, the newest player in the drug enforcement game overseas is the U.S. military, which is used to reporting to a CINC or regional commander, in the case of SOUTHCOM; and it is a new experience for the military to serve under a civilian arrangement where the Ambassador, as the personal representative of the President, is the person in charge. And, again, there have been some growing pains in those relationships because it is a relatively new thing.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let me just read you a comment GAO made. I don't know whether you were in the room when they did it.

But GAO reports the administration source country programs are poorly coordinated among agencies, poorly managed or having trouble gaining cooperation from the source countries, are getting squeezed out by other on the ground priorities.

Since these programs fall chiefly under the State Department's supervision, can you comment on those findings and are they accurate?

Ms. BECKER. I think you have to look at it on a country-by-country basis.

I was here for the GAO testimony, and I would like to hearken back to what the gentleman said, in reference to the mission program plan. The mission program plan is the operating agenda for a given embassy for a coming year. It's actually a 5-year rolling plan, and the greatest detail is in the first of the 5 years.

Those plans are formulated jointly at the country level by all the senior agency representatives at post, including all of the agencies who are involved in the counternarcotics effort. And they are a pretty good indication of the prioritization of U.S. Government objectives governmentwide in that particular country. In the cases of the source countries, counternarcotics is a very high priority.

In the case—I'm not sure which country he was speaking about. I believe it was Mexico. The Ambassador rightly said that, despite the fact that counternarcotics was, I believe he said, the fourth priority, the first—I don't know what the first three are, but he mentioned specifically trade and commerce during the year in which he was addressing being—the year he was addressing we had, as you recall, the NAFTA agreement and the Mexican peso difficulties as well as two major political assassinations in Mexico and the uprising in Chiapas, all of which deflected the attention from narcotics

because a crisis atmosphere deflected some of the attention of the country team as a whole to the counternarcotics effort, understandably so. And I believe he even used those words, something like understandably so.

Which is not to say those do not remain a high priority—counternarcotics efforts do not remain a high priority, but there were other—other crises which threatened the long-term stability of the survival of Mexico which took precedence during that given period which, like I say, is not to say that drugs kind of fell off the radar screen.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK, I now recognize the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Blute.

Mr. BLUTE. Well, thank you, Ambassador Becker, for your testimony. It has been very informative.

I just have a quick question on Mexico once again, because I am concerned about that country as someone who was greatly concerned about the trade agreement and the peso bailout. And to read that the Ambassador in the GAO report has indicated it is lower on the priority scale, how do we get it up the priority scale now that the peso bailout apparently is ongoing and going forward, NAFTA is in place and going forward? How do we move this counterdrug effort up the priority scale?

Ms. BECKER. Certainly by reporting to the country team the very strong feelings of this committee.

And as I had indicated earlier in my prepared statement, the Secretary of State places a very high priority on the overall counternarcotics and countercrime effort around the world, not just in Mexico. And these will be—these very strong views will obviously be factored in.

Mr. BLUTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you. And thank you, Ambassador. We appreciate your testimony. And there will be questions that I think each of us will send you for further clarification, if that's OK. And we appreciate your being here today. Thank you.

Ms. BECKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would like to welcome Brian Sheridan, who is Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Drug Enforcement Policy and Support. He has been closely involved in interdiction decisions for some time.

And we look forward to hearing your testimony.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Let the record show that the question was answered in the affirmative.

If you like, you can either summarize your testimony or give it in full, but certainly all of your testimony will be included in the record.

STATEMENT OF BRIAN SHERIDAN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR DRUG ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND SUPPORT, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. SHERIDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for providing me with this opportunity to come and appear before you today. I do have a written statement which I have submitted for the record.

I will summarize very briefly a couple of the key points. I will focus on our source nation support and our support in the transit zone, as I understand that those are the issues of most importance to you today.

I would start by saying that the Department of Defense has a five-point counterdrug program: our support to source nations, our support in the transit zone, our support to domestic law enforcement, our support for dismantling of drug cartels and demand reduction. And I would like to hit the highlights of each of those very briefly and then be prepared for your questions.

Starting with the source nations, as you well know, Mr. Chairman, the cocaine that is on the streets of America comes from South America, particularly, ultimately, from Colombia. Although two-thirds of it is produced in Peru, about 20 percent in Bolivia and about 10 percent from Colombia, most of it is processed in its final form in Colombia and then is transshipped to the United States.

The Department of Defense's objectives in the source nations are threefold: first, to support the host nation interdiction efforts and help them disrupt the flow of semi-finished cocaine from Peru and Bolivia up to Colombia. That is a major vulnerability for the drug traffickers. They rely on general aviation to move the cocaine. There's a lack of infrastructure by way of roads and rivers, and that represents a key vulnerability, and we help the source nations attack that air bridge.

The second component of our program is support for our law enforcement and for host nation C4I programs, communications equipment, intelligence support.

And, last, we provide a significant amount of training for host nation police and for some military units that are engaged in counternarcotics work.

So it is a three-part program. And I think the results of our efforts really need to be looked at on a country-by-country basis.

And if I could, I would just highlight the three most important countries for a moment.

As you well know, Mr. Chairman, we have been concerned about the commitment of the Government of Colombia for quite some time. And this March, for the first time, the Colombians were given a national interest waiver. In my parlance, we basically gave them a C for their counterdrug performance. Since then, in my view, because of that very clear signal of our displeasure, we have seen very significant efforts on the Colombians' part, highlighted by the recent arrest of Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela.

But also there have been a number of other developments which we are very pleased with which have taken place at a lower level, but maybe don't have quite the same visibility—a very aggressive eradication of coca and poppy—and that has been in the face of some very stern resistance on the part of drug traffickers. They have had 12 eradication helicopters shot at, five seriously damaged, three shot down, four Colombian police killed eradicating coca and poppy. Also the Colombian military has virtually taken over San Andreas Island and denied it to the drug traffickers to use it as a transshipment point.

And, recently, the Colombians arrested Cachique Rivera, the largest Peruvian drug trafficker, who happened to be in Cali. And they grabbed him, extradited him expeditiously to Peru, and he faces judicial process in Peru right now.

In addition to securing San Andreas Island, I met with Defense Minister Botero last weekend in Panama and learned from him that they also have taken—the military has taken control of the 14 largest airports in Colombia, again with the goal of denying them use by the traffickers.

So for the last several months we've been very pleased with the efforts of the Government of Colombia, and we certainly hope that they continue.

In Peru, we are also pleased with the results we've seen down there for quite a while. President Fujimori in January declared drug trafficking the No. 1 threat to Peruvian security. After having fought a pitched battle with the Sendero Luminoso for a number of years, we were very pleased to see him place counterdrug as the No. 1 priority for the military.

In practical fact that means that when you go down to Peru, when you go up to the upper Huallaga Valley or to other parts of the country and you meet with the military there, you will find them very aggressively engaged in counterdrug operations.

We've also seen aggressive action on the part of the Peruvian Air Force. The largest traffickers in Peru, a fellow named Vaticano, was arrested earlier in the year. So when we couple the Vaticano arrest with the Cachique Rivera arrest, we now have the two largest traffickers in Peru somewhere in their judicial system. And, in fact, Vaticano was given a life sentence recently.

And last, on Bolivia, we are disappointed with the efforts of the Government of Bolivia, although recently we have seen some indications that they are going to eradicate coca in a more serious way. But, to date, we have not been satisfied.

To sum up, Mr. Chairman, our last 6 months to a year in the source nations, I would say, as always, the progress tends to be uneven. Progress, in my view, must be measured incrementally. We've been particularly pleased with what we have seen over the last several months; but, as always, it's a question of sustainment. And we hope to work with them and sustain the pressure that has been brought to bear on the Cali cartel, the very significant pressure that has been brought to bear on the air bridge, particularly between Colombia and Peru, has been severely disrupted by not only the Peruvian Air Force but also by some very aggressive action on the part of the Colombian Air Force.

Moving on to the second major element of the DOD program, and I know this is of interest to this committee, our activities in the transit zone. Let me just say a brief word about the trends that we see there, and then I can talk about some of the things we're doing to counter those trends.

We continue to see a decrease in the use of general aviation aircraft by drug traffickers. That is a very important point for us to make. We have, since the late 1970's and early 1980's, between the Customs Service and the Department of Defense, erected a very elaborate detection and monitoring system which you saw down at

JIATF–EAST, Mr. Chairman. That is configured and targeted against general aviation flights.

And our view is that program has been so successful that all of our intelligence tells us that traffickers are doing less and less by way of general aviation, more and more by way of maritime smuggling, use of cargo containers, and, lately, we have seen the use of large jet aircraft from Colombia to Mexico.

DOD programs in the transit zone are very, very heavily focused on the D&M mission. We are moving toward flexible programs. We are moving away from fixed sites, particularly radar sites which are easily evaded by traffickers. And we are bringing on line some impressive new technologies which I'd be happy to talk about.

The results for us in the transit zone, we think, have been quite good. DOD-assisted seizures of cocaine in 1994 marginally exceeded our seizures in 1993—44.4 metric tons in 1994 compared to 41.4 metric tons in 1993.

I would note that seizure performance took place in the context of a $300 million cut to our budget, which was congressionally imposed: in 1994, the Department of Defense requested $1.168 billion for our counterdrug programs, and we were only appropriated $868 million. So we are pleased with that.

I would also note in 1995, fiscal year 1995, while the Congress did fully support our program, there were specific prejudicial cuts to some of our interdiction programs again, and so at a later time I will be happy to answer your questions about those.

So we are looking forward to your support and your help this year in the budget process in helping us make sure that we are fully funded and that we fully fund those programs in the transit zone that we have asked to be supported. That has not been the case in the past, and we hope to be supported this year.

Last, on our support to domestic law enforcement, let me just say quickly that we have a very robust program. We spent over $300 million in this area. About half goes to the National Guard in support of the Governors' State plans. Every Governor in the country submits a plan through the Guard to the Secretary of Defense, and we tailor our support to the drug problems that are being experienced in those States, which tend to vary State-by-State depending on what type of drug problems they're having.

We also provide very significant support along the Southwest border. I'm sure you have heard today at nauseam the factoid which the Intel people use which is approximately 70 percent of the cocaine that enters the United States crosses the Southwest border. Whether that 70 percent is a good number I'm not sure, but certainly law enforcement thinks that is how most of it comes across.

In response to that we have a very aggressive program, both with the Guard which are disproportionately funded on the Southwest border States, and JTF–6, our command in El Paso, which spends about $20 million a year on the Southwest border.

We also have an aerostat program which is quite expensive but effective to deny air traffickers the ability to fly across the Southwest border.

And we also have in there a very robust R&D program targeted toward support for the Customs Service and helping them get a

better handle on the cargo containers which enter this country, some of which are carrying cocaine.

There are two other elements to the counterdrug program, Mr. Chairman, and I will defer to you whether you would like me to discuss them.

One is our support for dismantling of cartels, which is predominantly intelligence collection and analysis. Given this is an open hearing, I would prefer not to discuss that beyond a very general description.

And our last element is demand reduction. And, again, if you would like, I can discuss it; or, if you would prefer, I can stop now and take your questions in other areas.

Mr. ZELIFF. Why don't you talk a little bit about demand reduction?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Sure. The key components of our demand reduction program are threefold: first, a very rigorous military drug testing program, which I think many of you are familiar with and has been highly successful.

As you know, during the Vietnam era and shortly thereafter we had a significant drug abuse problem in the military. For the last dozen years or so, we've had a very aggressive zero tolerance program, very frequent drug testing of our soldiers, and drug abuse as a problem in our military has virtually disappeared. We get somewhere around a 1 percent positive rate in our drug testing. So the first piece of the program is our drug testing.

The second piece is prevention and education within the DOD family. This is largely educational materials, the training of some personnel, focusing on our military, our civilian work force and our dependent DOD family at our installations around the world, making sure they are aware of the dangers of drug abuse.

The last component of our program—and it is a very small part of our program—is our community outreach programs. They were mandated by the Congress. We were directed to do a 3-year pilot program, and we were tasked with going out and reaching out beyond the confines of our own community into the areas that are plagued by drug abuse. We were particularly directed to focus on inner cities and develop programs which make use of the military as role models for some of these youth.

We have been very pleased with these programs. Our 1996 request for them is about $8 million or 1 percent of the Department's counterdrug effort, and we think that they are programs that are well worth continuing. I know you had some youngsters here this morning, and I am sure that they would be supportive of some of these programs.

Unfortunately, the House has already taken action to eliminate our authority to continue those programs, and we would ask for your support in providing the ongoing authorization for us to conduct these programs. We think they are vitally important.

I have viewed a number of these. Secretary Perry has viewed a number of these. They directly target the youth who will likely end up abusing drugs if all the other aspects of our programs fail. So we think for a 1 percent investment in our counterdrug program, our outreach programs are a very, very cost-effective initiative, and

we would ask for your support in discussing with your colleagues renewing that authorization.

Those are the highlights of our demand reduction program, Mr. Chairman, and I'm ready for your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sheridan follows:]

BRIAN E. SHERIDAN
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
DRUG ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND SUPPORT

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to speak before you today. As you know, the Nation's drug problem is both enormous and complex. We have seen drugs become increasingly available to our teenagers. The violence and health problems that surround illicit drug use and trafficking continue to have adverse effects on our families and our communities. The subsequent drain on our economy continues to be immense, with estimates ranging from $70-140B a year.

International cooperation in attacking the problem of drug trafficking has had encouraging developments as well as setbacks. The government of Peru is showing renewed political will against narcotrafficking with President Fujimori emphasizing counternarcotics as the Peruvian military's #1 mission. The U.S. government is working closely with the Colombian authorities to improve their counterdrug performance. Most recently, this cooperative effort has led to the arrest of one of the largest Colombian drug traffickers, Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, a leader of the Cali drug mafia. Meanwhile, the new government of Mexico continues to find itself in a time of tremendous uncertainty.

There is no silver bullet for the problem of illicit drug use or trade. While there are no easy solutions, the Government cannot shirk its responsibility to attack the Nation's drug problem on all levels. The flow of cocaine and other illegal drugs through the country continues to constitute a threat to our national security; countering this flow will require a multi-year effort consisting of a comprehensive and integrated supply and demand reduction approach, substantial resources, enormous energy, and creativity. The Department of Defense, with its unique assets and capabilities, plays a critical supporting role in this effort, enhancing the work of law enforcement both domestically and internationally.

In the two years that I have managed the Office of Drug Enforcement Policy and Support at the Department of Defense, we have continuously assessed the effectiveness of our counterdrug program, emphasizing cost-effective, high-impact projects that use unique DoD resources and personnel skills to support the President's National Drug Control Strategy.

In FY93, at my direction, the Department initiated a comprehensive review of its counterdrug program. This review was conducted by a core group consisting of representatives of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff and the Defense Intelligence Agency. Input from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the State Department, Military Services, U.S. Customs Service, FBI, CIA, DEA, and other law enforcement agencies was incorporated into this review. Through this process, the Department evaluated the operational impact and cost-effectiveness of each of DoD's 170 counterdrug projects with respect to national objectives. Those projects that were found to be of limited operational impact were eliminated; the level of funding for numerous other projects was decreased in favor of more cost-effective alternatives.

As a result, approximately $135M in cost savings were identified. Through this review process, the Department also focused and organized its counterdrug efforts around five strategic elements: support to source nations; the detection and monitoring of the transport of drugs; intelligence support to assist in the dismantling of drug cartels; support to domestic drug law enforcement agencies; and demand reduction.

In calendar year 1994, the Department conducted five follow-up evaluations assessing each of the five strategic elements, program element by program element. These extensive evaluations again incorporated input from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the State Department, all of the federal law enforcement agencies as well as other government entities, and resulted in the prioritization of missions, the streamlining of systems, and the establishment of measures of effectiveness for each program element. The Department of Defense is now applying these measures of effectiveness and collecting the information in a database to further assess our counterdrug efforts.

Through aggressive management, the Department has enhanced our support to source nations, maintained an effective presence in the transit zone, augmented our intelligence support for dismantling drug trafficking organizations, refined our support to law enforcement agencies domestically, and continued our internal "zero tolerance" demand reduction program — despite a 26% cut to our FY94 budget (over $300M in Congressional cuts in FY94) and program-specific cuts to our transit zone and source nation programs in FY95. In fact, DoD-assisted cocaine seizures were up in FY94 over FY93 (44.4MT in FY94 versus 41.1MT in FY93).

I would like to spend a few minutes to talk with you about each of the five strategic elements in the Department's counterdrug program.

1. SOURCE NATION SUPPORT

DoD provides training and operational support to host nation police and military, with a focus towards Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru, the primary source nations where cocaine is cultivated and processed. Enhanced counterdrug activity in the source nations is the foundation of the international portion of the President's National Drug Control Strategy and the key element in Presidential Decision Directive 14, which directed a gradual shift in emphasis from the transit zone to source countries.

DoD source nation support falls in three categories: training support; command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence support (C4I); and interdiction support. The goals of these programs are to attack trafficking organizations, disrupt their activities, and imprison their leaders. These efforts also serve to strengthen the democratic institutions in source nations and encourage national resolve and regional cooperation.

The Department provides a continuum of specialized training teams to host nation counterdrug forces both in-country and at military schools in the U.S., providing them with critical professional development that includes a human rights component. This training ranges from aircraft maintenance and operation to small unit tactics and operational planning.

Second, DoD provides extensive C4I support to host nations with such resources as: a Command Management System (CMS), which establishes a command, control, communication, computer and intelligence infrastructure for our embassies and indirectly supports the host nations; Tactical Analysis Teams (TATs), which help fuse intelligence and build tactical information portfolios on key drug traffickers; and Joint Planning Assistance Teams (JPATs), which assist host nation interdiction forces in developing operational plans around intelligence collection activities.

Third, DoD's support helps improve source nation interdiction capabilities. This support centers around three fundamental components: the relocatable-over-the-horizon radar (ROTHR), tracker aircraft, and enhanced ground-based "endgame" (apprehension, arrest, and seizure) capabilities. In FY95, the Department began installation of a third ROTHR in Puerto Rico, which will provide theaterwide radar coverage capable of surveilling nearly all of Colombia and Peru and about three-fourths of Bolivia. DoD is also in the process of procuring five tracker aircraft. Working in tandem with the Puerto Rico ROTHR, the tracker aircraft will provide a critical track-to-ground capability required for successful endgames. An effective ground-based endgame capability is an essential component of the Department's source nation support efforts. Looking ahead to FY96, the Department has initiated actions — including training, maintenance, and minor construction services — to improve the self-sufficiency of Peruvian counterdrug forces and afford these forces an enhanced capability to take decisive action against the drug traffickers.

2. TRANSIT ZONE

In the last two years, DoD has been aggressively engaged in a deliberate and substantive restructuring of our activities in the transit zone. Despite significant cuts to transit zone programs in FY94 and over $29M in program-specific cuts by Congress in FY95, the Department successfully maintained an efficient detection and monitoring capability in the transit zone by phasing out costly, low-impact, fixed systems, which were easily evaded by drug traffickers, in favor of more modern, cost-efficient, flexible and agile assets (e.g., ROTHRs, E-3s, P-3s, E-2s, and refitted TAGOS radar picket ships). The ROTHR in Virginia has demonstrated its effectiveness in the last two years. Working in conjunction with a second ROTHR in Texas, which is scheduled to become operational in the summer of 1995, the two ROTHR systems will provide an unequaled detection and monitoring capability in the transit zone.

Additionally, working closely with the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator, the Department has streamlined interdiction efforts in the transit zone by implementing the National Interdiction Command and Control Plan. This plan resulted in the establishment of three joint interagency task forces (JIATFs): JIATF EAST in Key West, FL; JIATF WEST in Alameda, CA; and JIATF SOUTH in Panama. These interagency task forces have allowed us to coordinate the use of DoD assets with those of drug law enforcement agencies, and maximize the capabilities of these combined resources.

DoD has further expanded our capabilities through international agreements such as the June 1994 memorandum of understanding with the Royal Netherlands Navy. This agreement has Dutch — and occasionally British — assets acting in cooperation with U.S. vessels with U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement detachments embarked. Shiprider agreements with other transit zone nations have also allowed U.S. law enforcement detachments to operate on host nation ships in their territorial waters for counterdrug purposes.

Through the strategic use of assets, investments in modern technologies, reduction of outdated equipment, and the integration of command and control, the Department has maintained an effective operational capability in the transit zone. The current streamlined suite of transit zone assets provides an integrated capability; further reductions to any of the components would have a serious adverse impact on the Nation's supply reduction operations.

3. DISMANTLING CARTELS

Among the most cost-effective and unique contributions DoD makes to cooperative counterdrug efforts are intelligence collection, translation, and analysis. DoD support is focused on analyzing the cocaine cartels and the movement of cocaine and money, and enhancing foreign and domestic law enforcement agencies' efforts to arrest and successfully prosecute drug mafia kingpins and seize their assets. DoD has worked closely with the drug law enforcement agencies to provide the most effective intelligence support possible. The Department has eliminated redundant and/or low-impact intelligence programs, while enhancing efforts that provide high-value results. DoD's intelligence programs are the Department's most cost-effective contribution to the Nation's supply reduction efforts.

4. SUPPORT TO DOMESTIC DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

DoD supports domestic drug law enforcement agencies (DLEAs) through equipment, personnel, training and operations support. Over the last year, the Department has taken several major steps to streamline and focus these efforts.

During my time here, the Department has seen requests for DoD support to domestic DLEAs grow exponentially. As the number of requests increased, DoD saw a need to provide direction for prioritizing our limited assets. This year, through one of our five evaluations, the Department developed priorities, policy and procedural guidelines to streamline our support to domestic DLEAs and to ensure that our efforts were focused primarily on multi-agency task forces in the high-intensity drug trafficking areas. Furthermore, as of October 1, 1995, DoD will centralize support to domestic law enforcement out of the Joint Task Force in El Paso (JTF-6). These actions, combined, will allow the Department to support our customers, the domestic DLEAs, in a coordinated and high-impact manner that reinforces the national strategy.

The National Guard provides a wide array of support to domestic law enforcement. Up until this year, National Guard support was categorized under sixteen missions. The missions

were outdated, did not reflect current requirements, and were not assigned any order of importance. In FY95, the Department narrowed and redefined National Guard support to six counterdrug missions: 1) tighter program management of National Guard counterdrug programs; 2) technical support, which includes linguist support, intelligence analyst support, operational or investigative case support, communications, engineer and diver support; 3) general support, which includes marijuana eradication support, transportation support, maintenance and logistical support, cargo and mail inspection; 4) counterdrug-related training; 5) reconnaissance and observation support; and 6) drug demand reduction support. This management effort has allowed the National Guard to allocate its counterdrug funding and personnel more strategically than it ever has in the past.

Since 1989, DoD has been pursuing a wide variety of counterdrug research and development (R&D) projects focusing on non-intrusive cargo inspection technologies. In FY94, DoD worked with the U.S. Customs Service, our primary customer for the research and development of these technologies, and developed a memorandum of understanding targeting DoD's R&D efforts so that they were responsive to the needs of the Customs Service. Last year, the Department developed and operationally evaluated two non-intrusive cargo container inspection systems using high-energy X-ray and backscatter X-ray techniques. DoD has seen encouraging results at our backscatter X-ray testbed in Otay Mesa (with nearly a ton and a half of marijuana and cocaine seized in four months of operation) and the Customs Service has indicated a desire to install similar systems for use along our southwest border.

In addition to these larger program management undertakings, the Department continues to fine-tune already successful programs such as the one authorized under Section 1208 of the FY90 and FY91 National Defense Authorization Acts, which transfers excess DoD personal property to law enforcement agencies. In FY94 alone, the Department transferred over $262M in excess DoD personal property to law enforcement agencies across the country. Through constant assessment of goals, priorities, and impact, the Department is able to ensure that scarce resources are provided to law enforcement agencies within the U.S. so that maximum impact can be achieved in the areas of greatest need.

5. DEMAND REDUCTION

DoD continues to run a highly-effective zero-tolerance internal demand reduction program that involves drug testing and education for DoD military and civilian personnel. In fact, since 1980, the Department has seen an 88% reduction in reported drug use. In the last year, DoD engaged in a process of automating military drug testing laboratories and establishing new contracting procedures for reagents. These steps will bring about significant cost abatement while maintaining the high standards of the laboratories. Presently, the Department oversees eight service-specific military drug testing laboratories. This year, the Department successfully implemented a pilot program for the regionalization of military drug testing laboratories and is in the process of evaluating the economies of scale achieved through the regionalization of drug testing laboratories as the Military Departments downsize.

Finally, at Congressional direction, DoD has managed twelve pilot outreach programs using volunteer military personnel as role models providing drug awareness education for at-risk youth. Programs such as the Young Marines, the Navy Kids, and others have been well-received by the participants and the community. The Department is encouraged by the results of these program and has requested legislative authority to continue them on a permanent basis.

CONCLUSION

During the past year, the Department of Defense has continued to improve the program management and program effectiveness ensuring that the maximum operational impact is achieved with the funds available. In a time of shrinking budgets, we have been willing to aggressively focus the resources available to us on the critical counterdrug activities while terminating those programs of lesser effectiveness. While DoD's support to law enforcement alone cannot solve the Nation's drug problem, the Department has made steady progress in running a cost-effective, high-impact counterdrug program and has provided the critical and essential support that federal, state, and local law enforcement need. We look forward to working closely with you as we continue to seek high-impact ways to support the work of law enforcement agencies both domestically and internationally.

Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Were you in the room when we talked about the General Accounting Office report?

Mr. SHERIDAN. No, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. Well, what we would like to do, if I could, is see that you get a copy, titled Drug War Observations on the U.S. International Drug Control Strategy; and I'd like to get your response to that, your in-depth response. Because I think it tells a very strong story in that it implies that we really don't have a coordinated strategy, implies that there is a lack of accountability. It implies that there is a lot of mismanagement in the total drug war. On that line of discussion, who do you consider to be in charge of the drug war?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Dr. Brown.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK, so you take your—your marching orders from him.

Mr. SHERIDAN. Yes.

Mr. ZELIFF. And how would you characterize our present drug war strategy in just, say, a minute or so? How would you size it up if you were just telling me, as some outsider on the street—you know, you are talking about America's drug war strategy. How would you characterize that in a minute or less?

Mr. SHERIDAN. In a minute or less? I would say that you have to start with the understanding that the drug problem is a deep-seated and multifaceted one. There has been drug abuse in almost—probably all societies, human societies for thousands of years. If this were an easy problem, somebody would have figured out a way to defeat it a long time ago.

What is required is a multifaceted approach, and you have to have a demand reduction component. You have to have a supply reduction component. We have those. We spend approximately two-thirds of our resources on supply reduction, about one-third on demand reduction. To me, that balance is about right.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let me just stop you a second. In that supply reduction effort, how would you split up those resources between source country and transit zones?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Let me respond by saying you're never going to have total precision on how you divide the numbers. I mean, every time we come to a meeting it is always how you count this program and what it is targeted against.

I will simply provide you with the way that Lee Brown's office divides up those programs, which I would support. About $7.6 billion is spent on domestic law enforcement support. We have about $400 million on the international programs, which I think is largely what they mean by the source nation programs. And we have about $1.3 billion on what they would characterize as interdiction. I would largely call it transit zone operations. To me, those percentages and that degree of effort is about right.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you—in looking at the transit zone effort and looking at the resources we had in there in 1992 and then the 50 percent cut we've had since then, which I think—would you agree it's about a 50 percent cut in resources since 1992 in the transit zone?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Approximately 50 percent. I can only speak for the Department of Defense. And for the Department of Defense, that's correct.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. And what that does is, in terms of the Falcon Guardian jets that are used in interdiction, the number of those jets in the Caribbean dropped from 10 to 6 in the past 2 years. Is that a correct statement?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Which jets, sir?

Mr. ZELIFF. Falcon Guardian jets?

Mr. SHERIDAN. I am not familiar with those. Those must not be Department of Defense.

Mr. ZELIFF. They are the ones the Coast Guard uses.

Mr. SHERIDAN. OK.

Mr. ZELIFF. Or has the number of flight hours for Navy P3s used in the drug interdiction fallen materially over the past 3 years?

Or why did we—I mean, we—we had aerostat technology and resources in play. We've decided not to use those. And we had one AWAC C–130 with a dome was—that was involved in 1992 that has been pulled out.

The complaints that we heard while we were over there is the fact that we have inadequate radar and inadequate ability to detect and complaints that with the AWAC being pulled out, with the aerostats being pulled out, with the P3s, I mean, it's made a marked difference in the ability to do the job that's required. Any comment?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Yeah. I would disagree with that assessment, and I would note that, again, in 1994 our seizure numbers were actually higher than they were in 1993.

There are a couple parts to your question. What we are doing is moving away.

Mr. ZELIFF. You said in 1994—what was your comment?

Mr. SHERIDAN. In 1994, DOD-assisted seizures of cocaine were higher than they were in 1993——

Mr. ZELIFF. OK, OK.

Mr. SHERIDAN [continuing]. Before a $300 million cut to our program.

And, if I could, I would like to talk for a moment about what we've done in implementing those congressional cuts in a way which minimized the impact on our program.

We have moved toward flexible assets which the drug traffickers cannot anticipate where we are covering and have much lower O&M costs, and we have aggressively funded those systems at the expense of others. For example, if you were to look back at our numbers, you would see that in 1993, the counterdrug program spent zero dollars on the relocatable over-the-horizon radar. Next year, we will spend somewhere around $35 million for over-the-horizon radar technology.

So we have invested in those technologies which make sense, which are dramatically effective, and we have eliminated very costly programs which don't work terribly well, which the drug traffickers know where they are—some of the CBRN sites, some of your aerostats—and were simply not effective. Drug traffickers don't know where we are monitoring with the over-the-horizon radar.

Mr. ZELIFF. Over-the-horizon radar is operated out of where?

Mr. SHERIDAN. There is one in Chesapeake, VA, which has been operational, I believe, since April 1993. There is a second over-the-horizon radar which also covers the transit zone which is located in Texas, which gives us another look at the transit zone.

Mr. ZELIFF. What would you say the probability of success in terms of accuracy is there? Do we get 80 percent, 90 percent?

Mr. SHERIDAN. You have to define accuracy.

Mr. ZELIFF. Well, what do we miss with over-the-horizon radar?

Mr. SHERIDAN. The over-the-horizon radar, like all detection monitoring systems, has some strengths and it has some weaknesses. There are clearly some weaknesses with the over-the-horizon technology.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. SHERIDAN. In an open hearing I would prefer not to discuss those.

Let me close on this point regarding the aerostats. The aerostats should have been closed—the Bahamas aerostats, in any case, just as a matter of good government. They did not work. The High Rock site, which was closed, had not been operational since March 1992. The Great Inagua site only had an operational availability of 31.3 percent. The Georgetown Bahamas site only had an operational availability of 47.2 percent.

A, they are very difficult systems to maintain. They are plagued with maintenance problems.

And, second, in the Bahamas, the aerostats—I don't know if you saw them when you were down there on the Southwest border. At the first hint of bad weather, you've got to pull them down.

Mr. ZELIFF. That's true. But while they're up doesn't it act as a deterrent?

Mr. SHERIDAN. It does act as a deterrent. And in our view, the over-the-horizon radar can be tasked to cover the Bahamas.

And I would note since the Bahamas aerostats came down in December 1994, we have not seen an uptick in Bahamas activity. We largely attribute that to the presence of the OPBAT program which has been very highly effective and which we continue to fund and are very pleased with.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would have to agree that that is a very effective program.

How—let me ask you this, and then I have to move on.

Mrs. THURMAN. I am watching.

Mr. ZELIFF. Is there—when you're dealing with all the different agencies, DOD, DEA, all of them, is there any conceivable chance of making headway in the international antinarcotics efforts if the State Department does not prioritize the drug problem as No. 1 in the host countries?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Well, I prefer to let Jane Becker speak for the State Department.

Mr. ZELIFF. But, for example, Burma or Mexico—let me ask you this then. In Mexico, do you agree with the assessment that we're making—that Mexico now is a certified country and effective in terms of working with us in terms of antinarcotic trafficking?

Mr. SHERIDAN. I think we've seen more out of President Zedillo in his first several months than we have seen from other administrations in perhaps their entire tenure. So I think it is too early

to come to close on President Zedillo. But if you look at his courage in pursuing allegations of narcotics corruption, wherever they may lead, and apparently they just led to the former president's brother, so be it.

And I would also say we had the arrest of a major trafficker just several days ago in Mexico, which again highlights an increased willingness on their part to crack down on drug trafficking.

I think that the Government of Mexico understands very well that drug trafficking is a problem for Mexico. It is not a gringo problem only, as had in the past frequently been the refrain which we met all over South America and the world. They understand the viability of their democracy is at stake, and if they don't clean it up they're going to lose their country to drug traffickers. And I think President Zedillo understands that, and we have been very pleased with him and Attorney General Lozano, who has been outstanding.

Mr. ZELIFF. That's encouraging.

Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Sheridan, just for the record so that we understand this, because I think this is a point that keeps being brought up because of the dollar issues, while we've heard some testimony from some other departments and agencies today telling us that cuts are going to have some harmful effects, on the other side what I am hearing you tell us, based on—and I guess it is actually written in the GAO report, too, that you had met what you call full expansion so that—and I guess that we should cap outlays. You met all those. We were meeting what we wanted to do.

More importantly, I think it's—actually, I think this is good public policy. What you've done is actually put into action what everybody else is saying we're having to do with flexibility because we're—there's different routes. There's different things happening out there.

And if I'm understanding you correctly, what you all are doing is trying to meet that need as versus just staying in what might have been territorial issues before. Is that——

Mr. SHERIDAN. The challenge for all of us is to try to be as flexible and move as quickly as the drug traffickers. And it's very hard.

What we have done in the Department of Defense is very rigorously monitor and run our own program. And let me, if I could, spend a moment on that.

In May-June 1993, when I came and assumed this position, we looked at a counterdrug program that probably had 100—it had 179, at that time, different project codes. I did not think the Department had clear priorities. I didn't think we had a clear strategy. We had no measures of effectiveness to speak of.

We took a group of folks from my office, from the Joint Staff, and we sent them to an offsite. We had all of our CINCs come in, we had all of the services come in, and we had all the law enforcement personnel come in and critique the counterdrug performance of the Department of Defense.

We view law enforcement as our customers, and we are there to serve them.

Following that 6- to 8-week offsite study, we issued our first report on the counterdrug program, and that is where we articulated the five elements of the DOD counterdrug program.

In calendar year 1994, we then did a 1-week each additional offsite in each of those areas to better articulate our measures of effectiveness, our goals and objectives, and, again, for the first time—this would now be the second time following our program from the summer before, we actually evaluated counterdrug programs relative to each other in a given area.

So if the job is to detect and monitor aircraft in the transit zone, as we discussed, it was the operators and law enforcement telling us, yes, the over-the-horizon radar is better than CBRN sites.

I have found as a manager that in the abstract to say a program is good or a program is bad doesn't tell you much. You have to force people to force rank programs, this program is better than that program. And that is how we have tried to implement or cut. That is how we have tried to have a very flexible and responsive counterdrug program.

We have more work to do. I think we have a certain amount and the whole Government has a certain amount of bureaucratic inertia. Now we must focus more of our efforts on the maritime threat and keep up with the latest developments in trafficking patterns.

But I think the Department does a very good job in responding to what our customers are asking for and responding to the threat as articulated to us by the intelligence folks.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Sheridan, then, in your opinion, because the GAO seems to think we're in some dismantling or that things are not as clear as you seem to—I mean, do you see—obviously, you see this changed. I mean, it sounds to me like you feel like people are working together, there is a positive effect going on out there. I mean, do you think there are additional steps that need to be taken?

Mr. SHERIDAN. I believe—my personal view is that coordination and cooperation are much, much better than we are ever given credit for. And it's always a very easy observation of an outsider walking in to say boy, it is confusing, it must be broken.

In Washington, the State Department chairs a working group. We get along very well. We set policy. We understand and we set budgetary guidance.

I have been down to Mexico, and repeatedly, to Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, meeting with the country teams, understanding what they're doing. And, sure, you have the occasional bureaucratic rivalry and everything else, of course. But as a broad-brush statement, I think we're doing pretty well, and I think we're making progress.

Is there room for improvement? Sure. But I don't think the system is nearly as broke as others.

Let me also add that over the years we've worked very closely with the GAO. You know, some of the criticism we're getting now is that we cut shipping days and flying hours. It was the GAO who lambasted us about a year and a half ago for excessive flying and steaming, not related to counterdrug routes, patterns or times of day or night that traffickers were actually transshipping cocaine.

So we take that to heart. That's good government. Let's stop flying AWACS at times and places when we know drug traffickers don't fly. And now, you know, and I think this is part of the business, now the criticism is you're not doing enough of that.

So we work closely with the GAO. We usually find them to be well informed. We find that they write good studies. I have testified with Mr. Kelly before.

But on the specific, no one's in charge allegation, I'm just stating a personal view that I've always found that to be over—overhyped. That's my own view.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you.

Mr. BLUTE [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Sheridan. I just have a few questions.

You heard a lot today during the hearing about the corruption in various governments that are source countries and others. You have obviously had a lot of interaction with the military leaders in the governments in those states. I wonder if you could just give us an impression of how big an issue, how extensive is corruption in the military of some of these governments.

Mr. SHERIDAN. Sir, you have to take that on a case-by-case basis. Because we see dramatic differences among the various countries.

I think it's fair to say that corruption is a problem in all of these countries. Corruption of the military is a problem in all of these countries. And when you meet with military officials of those countries and you're not in front of the press and you're not in a hearing, when you're in the privacy of their office, they will freely admit that corruption is a problem.

The critical question is always what does the senior leadership, both military and political—usually at the President's level—what do they do when you present them with evidence of corruption? I mean, to me, that's where the rubber meets the road.

Right now, we have outstanding cooperation from President Fujimori in Peru. You show him evidence that you have a corruption problem in the aspect of the military and those guys are gone. I mean—and it is a very swift response.

In the Government of—in the military in Colombia, we have also been pleased with the cooperation lately, and we have seen some very significant and very hard-hitting action on the part of the military there.

Regarding Mexico, again, you will see a corruption problem, and we have very good cooperation now from President Zedillo.

I am personally not aware—because the military has not played in Mexico the kind of counterdrug role that they play in other places, it does not come to my attention as some of the allegations I see in other areas. So I am a little bit less familiar with Mexico, both because their military plays a lesser role in the drug effort and because we have a very circumscribed relationship with the Government of Mexico. We don't do much with them. Therefore, we don't know much about it.

But, yes, corruption is a problem. And, again, what you're looking for is the political will of the leadership to deal with it when it becomes apparent.

Mr. BLUTE. On another issue, earlier you praised Peru's counterdrug operations. Isn't it true that one of the reasons Peru

has been successful is that recently they have embraced a shoot-down policy? Are you recommending that Colombia, Mexico and even the United States adopt such a policy? Would that be an effective thing to do?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Well, Congressman, I'm not sure if you were around for the great shoot-down debate of about a year ago, but they were not among my happier moments in Government service. Suffice it to say that the Government of Peru has been actively engaging air targets for probably a year and a half, and they have done so very effectively. The Government of Colombia has been engaging air targets for probably the last 6 months or so, and in terms of disrupting the flow of cocaine from Peru to Colombia, it has been effective.

Mr. BLUTE. Let me just ask you a couple more questions and then we'll have a vote. We'll end the hearing. How many DOD interdiction resources are being currently committed to the West Coast of Mexico where these 727s are coming up from Colombia and that we've heard a lot about how that's a problem. Has there been a commitment of resources to combat that?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Congressman, again, in an open hearing I don't want to say too much about what we are doing in that regard other than to say we are keenly aware of this problem, and our performance against those targets has dramatically improved over the last number of months. And, in fact, from a DOD detection monitoring point of view, we've done quite well.

And I could talk to you more about that later and tell you exactly how we're doing it and what we're doing, but we are all very, very aware of the problem posed by these aircraft.

Mr. BLUTE. One last question. According to the Customs Service officials, DOD is phasing out after 8 years a 10-year program of National Guard support to Customs in the State of Florida. My understanding is that this program was of tremendous help to Customs. It had been very effective. Can you tell us why DOD has decided to withdraw this kind of critical support?

Mr. SHERIDAN. Congressman, I'm not sure what program you are referring to, so I can't necessarily say that we are not doing it. I can say that I am not aware of any—I am personally not aware of any particular program in Florida which is being—which is being terminated. We—again, our support tends to go through the State plans submitted by the Governors. I'm not sure how much we give to Florida, but I would imagine it is probably $10 or $15 million a year. And, again, I'm not aware of any particular program that may be being terminated.

Mr. BLUTE. We could follow up on that.

Mr. SHERIDAN. OK.

Mr. BLUTE. Thank you very much for your very informative testimony. We appreciate it.

I want to commend Chairman Zeliff and Ranking Member Thurman for holding these hearings today. And we will adjourn until 10 tomorrow morning.

The committee now stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:58, the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 28, 1995.]

ILLICIT DRUG AVAILABILITY: ARE INTERDICTION EFFORTS HAMPERED BY A LACK OF AGENCY RESOURCES?

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 1995

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:08 a.m., in room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. William H. Zeliff (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Zeliff, Souder, Shadegg, Thurman, Slaughter, Condit and Brewster.

Staff present: Robert B. Charles, staff director and chief counsel; Judy McCoy, chief clerk; Jane Cobb, professional staff member; Michele Lang, special counsel; Sean Littlefield, special assistant; Donald Goldberg, minority assistant to counsel; Cherri Branson, minority professional staff member; and Jean Gosa, minority staff assistant.

Mr. ZELIFF. The subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice will now come to order.

This hearing is to continue our review of the President's national drug control strategy. Yesterday we began and today we will continue to focus on the availability of illegal drugs in our Nation and the effectiveness of current drug interdiction efforts.

I said it yesterday but it bears repeating: No problem is of greater significance to the Nation than illegal drugs. As I think many Americans are beginning to realize, illegal drugs and the drug cartels constitute our No. 1 national security threat.

Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti do not hold a candle to the devastating influence of drugs and the drug cartels on our society. In Administrator Constantine's words, we have a time bomb in our midst and I think he sizes it up and says it well. The influence of illegal drugs is rampant and pervasive. As surely as any foreign enemy, the $100 billion international business is assaulting our Nation. Just look around. The influence of drug cartels is obvious. Street violence, domestic abuse, urban family breakup, drug-related medical costs and, frankly, that's also driving up the cost of health care, and drug-related property crime are all rising out of sight.

Roughly 80 percent of the Nation's prison population is now linked to drugs and our Nation's moral fiber is ripping. The ability

to say no and understand the enormity of the threat posed by drugs seems less and less a priority, at least in some quarters.

I will also say again that the responsibility to lead, to restart the drug war is all of ours, individually, together as a group and especially ours in Congress as much as it is the President's. But with drug availability and drug use increasing sharply, especially among our Nation's children at all levels, we must act now. We must talk about it, we must face up to it as a Nation.

We have to educate, we have to implement a serious antidrug strategy, including a return to the interdiction commitment we saw in the early 1990's. The last 3 years have been marked by backsliding and that trend must be stopped and must be reversed.

We heard testimony from Nancy Reagan in March. Since then I've visited prisons, prevention centers, treatment programs and have gotten down to the interdiction zone itself, down to the front lines. I've also talked with lots of kids. We had some young people in here yesterday.

I again call upon my congressional colleagues and the White House to join me in forging a bipartisan effort to reawaken our great country. We are ready to work with President Clinton to craft a new effective antidrug strategy and get it implemented as quickly as possible.

If we do not do this soon, we may not ever get a second chance. Today we'll hear from the President's Interdiction Coordinator and Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard as well as from the head of the U.S. Customs Service. We will also see state-of-the-art interdiction technology demonstrated.

We heard from kids yesterday who saw the drug threat every day in their lives. In the end, it is for the Nation's children that we are here. If we do not confront this national security threat, their future will be dark indeed and the responsibility for that will be ours.

With that, I would like to welcome the President's Interdiction Coordinator and the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Robert E. Kramek. As part of the Coast Guard's presence today, we will also look at state-of-the-art interdiction technology including the ion scanner and ascending technologies.

It is a great pleasure to have Admiral Kramek with us today. Admiral Kramek is a surface operations specialist with extensive experience in the Atlantic, Pacific, Caribbean and Alaska. He was formerly chief of staff of the Coast Guard and held command in two districts, the Pacific Northwest and the large Seventh District, which we also just visited which covers the Caribbean interdiction zone.

In fact, we recently traveled with the Coast Guard to the front lines in the Seventh District for the interdiction zone. And I want to thank the Commandant for all the Coast Guard's efforts and the top-level briefing on the fact-finding mission. We learned a tremendous amount.

I don't know how we could have ever gotten more into 4 days and the weekend. But my respect was high before I started out for the Coast Guard and it is even higher after that trip.

With that, let me ask you, Admiral, if you will stand, raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to

give this subcommittee will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

Mr. KRAMEK. I do.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Let the record show it was answered in the affirmative.

You can, if you would, summarize your statement, make your entire testimony for the record and we look forward to hearing your remarks.

STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL ROBERT E. KRAMEK, COMMANDANT, U.S. COAST GUARD, U.S. INTERDICTION COORDINATOR

Mr. KRAMEK. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that very nice introduction, and I will submit the written statements for the record.

I have two, one as Commandant of the Coast Guard and the other for my duties as U.S. Interdiction Coordinator. In my opening oral statement, I would also make a distinction between those two duties and I'd like to start off making a few opening remarks on my duties as Commandant of the Coast Guard and then go to my duties as the Interdiction Coordinator and of course they're—they're very much interrelated in some respects, as you know.

The Coast Guard as you know, serves as a multimission agency. We have about eight major missions, one of them being drug law enforcement. Most of our units are designed and operated to do more than one mission at a time.

Normally when they're on patrol, they'll do search and rescue, they will interdict migrants, they will interdict drugs. They might respond to oil spills and some of them do the whole spectrum of missions that we're assigned to do.

But maritime law enforcement, of which drug law enforcement is a portion, is our oldest mission dating back to 1790, the original date of the revenue cutter service. So from smugglers and pirates in those days to the drug war at sea, maritime law enforcement has been an important mission for us.

Today, maritime law enforcement takes about one-third of the entire Coast Guard's operating resources. That maritime law enforcement includes enforcement of the exclusive economic zone, sanctuaries, migrant interdiction, as well as drug interdiction. Drug interdiction now takes about 9 percent of the Coast Guard budget resources.

In the 1996 budget before the Congress now, I've asked for an increase up to 12 percent and that is now going through the various committees. I finished all my testimony before both authorizations and appropriations committees. That's compared with about 23 percent 4 or 5 years ago. And while I'm not here asking for more resources, Mr. Chairman, I will make some distinction because clearly 23 percent is not required anymore to carry out the President's strategy, but 9 percent won't do it, either, which is why I've asked for an increase to 12 percent in the President's budget that's before the Congress now.

The strategy is quite simple for the Coast Guard. We're the lead agency for maritime interdiction and with a co-lead with Customs

for air interdiction. Our tactics are to deter, deny routes and apprehend, and the Coast Guard has the authority to do all of those.

But it can't be done without the help and participation of many, many other agencies, DEA, Customs, DOD, CIA, State Department, host nations, and our in-country teams in those nations. As an example on your trip when you visited the Coast Guard cutter MELLON to see the 5,500 pounds of marijuana that had just been seized, that vessel that was seized was a Honduran motor vessel called the Black Cat. The MELLON was en route to train the Colombian navy and help them to develope a coast guard so that they can patrol their own coasts for drug interdiction and migrants.

And on the way, a United States Navy P–3 aircraft working under the joint command of Joint Interagency Task Force East in Key West sighted a suspect vessel, went through the process to let the MELLON know about it, the MELLON interdicted it and through a very, very quick and intensive process we have here, Presidential Decision Directive 27, an SNO, Statement of No Objection, was granted by the Honduran Government to seize that vessel. You saw the results of that——

Mr. ZELIFF. It was quite impressive.

Mr. KRAMEK [continuing]. Interagency operation happens real fast. It takes a lot of cooperation and coordination. That's why I bring out that example.

I think it's important to note that 4 or 5 years ago things were very expensive to operate in the Caribbean and in the transit zone. We had a lot of aircraft in the air and a lot of ships at sea. We were not using intelligence as well as we could.

It happens that upon the entry of the Department of Defense in 1989 and 1990 into the war on drugs, they were able to fuse intelligence products and now 70 percent of our operations are based on intelligence, which makes for a much more efficient operation.

Also bilateral agreements we have with most of the countries in the transit zone provide a force, a deployed force, everything from shipriders from Venezuela and Belize to at least seven of the nations in the Lesser Antilles right now. The Coast Guard, as you know, is streamlining itself to be responsive to the President's budget.

I'm in the process of reducing 4,000 Coast Guard personnel and $400 million from our operating expense and construction accounts. And I can do the drug strategy job if the President's budget is approved for the Coast Guard in 1996.

But I need to point out to you, Mr. Chairman, that for the last several years, Congress has not given the Coast Guard what the administration has requested, not even for drug interdiction. In fact, the Coast Guard budget has been reduced for drug law enforcement by Congress from 23 percent to 9 percent over the last 5 years.

I've asked to reverse that trend, as I've mentioned to you, but I need to sincerely tell you it doesn't look good right now. The markup that's before the House Appropriations Committee right now reduces the Coast Guard budget significantly below the President's request.

So without the resources, we cannot fully implement the strategy, but we're committed to do the best we can do with what we have. Interdiction is effective, Mr. Chairman.

There are no planes landing in the United States, in Miami or Fort Lauderdale or Key West or St. Petersburg anymore, carrying drugs. There are no fast boats coming to Miami or into the Keys.

Now, however, it's a lot more complicated. Sixty-five percent of all the cocaine that comes from South America ends up in Mexico and comes across our land border with the United States. Twenty percent of it is going to Puerto Rico, which has become a huge transshipment point and then on to the United States. The rest comes in elsewhere through the choke points, sometimes in the Caribbean and through the Lesser Antilles, or through containers.

Now we have really an international threat and a much more complicated threat to face.

In summary, as Commandant of the Coast Guard, I head a multimission service where perhaps only 9 or 10 percent of my total assets are devoted to the war on drugs. We have optimized the effectiveness of these limited assets and I think the transit zone interdiction programs are effective but could be more robust.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to switch and give you my views as the Interdiction Coordinator.

On June 1, 1994, about a year ago, I was appointed by the President to be the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator for the Western Hemisphere up to the borders of the United States. It's very simple as to the duties that I've been assigned to do. They're listed in Presidential Decision Directive 14.

Most of that publication is classified except for my duties. I am to find and meet with agencies that are responsible for carrying out duties in the war on drugs to make sure that they follow the strategy, to make sure that they're asking for sufficient resources to accomplish the strategy, to make sure they're allocating those resources efficiently, and to make sure that their problems or their shortfalls with being able to accomplish that are made known to the head of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Dr. Lee Brown.

I report directly to him. I also have a responsibility for recommending to Dr. Brown and the administration any things that are in the strategy which may not be efficient and if the strategy needs to be changed. Rectifying these problems that the agencies have and coordinating with them, while they're undergoing budget cuts is a major challenge to anyone's coordinating ability.

Because the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator does not have command and control, I am not in charge of the agencies, I am not in charge of their budgets, rather, I work with them in a collegial atmosphere and I coordinate with them. I listen to them. I meet with them frequently.

I have quarterly conferences with them and recently I had a major conference where I brought them all together so that they could report their shortfalls to the drug czar so he would know what they were.

What do I see as the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator?

Are we winning the war on drugs?

I'm asked that everywhere I go. There are editorials all the time of people's views on that. My answer to that is, yes, when we look at the last 7 years.

The total measure is that the use is down but we need to be cautious because we see indications now in the last 1 or 2 years that usage in some portions of our population are up and especially marijuana use with young people. I point out while we are seizing a lot of marijuana and there is some flow in the transit zone, most of the marijuana use in the United States is grown right here in our own country.

Almost one-third of the marijuana grown in the world is now grown in the United States and there's a domestic problem we need to solve. I see a tremendous link to crime, Mr. Chairman. Sixty-five percent, I think, of all crime committed in the United States is linked to drugs. It's a tremendous expense and almost 30 percent or more of violent crime.

If we need to solve the crime problem, we need to solve the drug problem first. I see that the overall strategy is sound. Supply and demand are balanced based on the threat. And we shouldn't be distracted by percentage of resources given to each.

That is, there's always a national debate on what percentage of resources are given to supply, what percentage of the resources are given to demand. Those things have to change based on the threat, based on what's going on, and I would contend if you really analyze the numbers in the back of the national strategy, supply does not get more than demand.

They're about equal when one takes prisons out of the supply side and puts it on the demand side, and of course that's very interpretive. So I think it's in balance as far as total supply and demand attention is given.

I see tremendous cooperation from those agencies working on the supply side. There are no turf battles I know of, Mr. Chairman. That is especially true in the field, and it's especially true here in Washington, DC.

Turf battles are pointed out by many columnists and in the media. They're a thing of the past. I have not experienced any turf battles in the year that I have held this assignment.

But sometimes we all have things that we're responsible for, and this is what makes it seem like there's turf battles. This is what makes it seem like there's lack of coordination, because there's more to coordinate than just the supply side in the war on drugs and the interdiction program.

The administration has responsibilities for putting out strategy, policy, requesting resources and then managing the programs. The agencies have responsibilities on following the strategy, using the resources wisely and making their needs known, and the Congress has responsibility in oversight and resource authorization and appropriation. All this is very carefully put together like a big patchwork quilt.

But changes to any one of these in the administration, the agencies or the Congress, are very disruptive and very profound causing imbalance, perceived lack of will by the Nation to the smugglers and tremendous inefficiencies.

The smugglers are quick to take advantage of that. And here is how they do it. When they see our budget reductions and they see that we're cutting out radars, why they know exactly where to travel so we can't see them. When they see our foreign policy priorities changing and making drug interdiction much lower on the list than other things, they're quick to take advantage of that.

When they see funds being cut back for things like AWACS and radars and ships in the transit zone, they're quick to take advantage of that. When they see it doesn't rate No. 1 on our national security priority list, they're quick to take advantage of that.

And other things happen in the world, like recently with the Coast Guard where we had to place almost all of our resources last year on interdicting Haitian and Cuban migrants, another national security interest which was higher on the list than drug interdiction, then the smugglers were quick to take advantage of that. What do we have to do?

Mr. Chairman, I agree with your opening statement that we need to work together and make this strategy work and work with the President. I think the strategy is good, we need to stand firm on it. It's new. It's starting to work. It's only 2-years-old.

We need to manage the implementation of that strategy better. We need to provide adequate resources to accomplish the strategy. And most of all, we need to work together because this is a national security issue that is No. 1 with Americans, No. 1 with Americans.

It's not a political issue, although we seem to make it so sometimes. And when we make it one, I think we weaken ourselves in the face of the enemy and the threat to drug smugglers and they take advantage of us then.

Interdiction is just one part of the strategy. It's only 9 percent of the total drug control budget. But it returns 25–1 on the dollar in benefits to the public for every dollar spent on drug interdiction.

How should we do interdiction versus how are we doing interdiction? Interdiction should be done based on a concept called defense in-depth.

When you were recently down to the Caribbean and to the Seventh District region looking at that, Mr. Chairman, 4 or 5 years ago the defense in-depth in the transit zone was conceived just like an aircraft carrier battle group would protect a high value unit as far out from the high value unit the aircraft carrier as you can. In this case, the high value unit is the United States of America, in particular Florida and the coast of Florida because that's the closest place to the drug source countries.

That defense in-depth was put together through a very intricate pattern and responsibilities given to various agencies in government called lead agencies. Customs had a piece, DEA had a piece, DOD had a piece, Coast Guard had a piece, State Department, FBI, CIA, all these agencies were given certain responsibilities. If we look at a pie chart, they'd each have a slice of that pie chart.

I can tell you that defense in-depth is no longer what I would call in-depth. While there is still defense there, it's more focused on a sector because of the major budget reductions that have made for all these agencies over the last 4 years. We are now able to focus on a sector threat, such as the cargo flights coming from Colombia

to Mexico, but we're a little weak on our flanks in the eastern Pacific and the Lesser Antilles and through the Mona Pass and the Anagada Pass because the depth is not there as it once was. But that's OK if the strategy works.

And the strategy says that we need to gradually shift from the transit zone to the source countries, because if we're all businessmen and if it was all our money, we want to stop the drugs at the source in the source countries. But what's happened, Mr. Chairman, is that the source country strategy, while it stood up and is starting to take hold, is not robust enough, in my view, for us to reduce assets in the transit zone yet.

And as that source country strategy becomes effective, as the air bridge between Peru and Colombia is destroyed, as eradication takes place in Bolivia and Peru, as Colombia continues to bring kingpins to justice, why then the assets in the transit zone can be reduced because the threat won't be as great. There's a balance here that needs to be achieved and we're working very hard now to try to achieve that balance.

I've reported to Dr. Brown and to the National Security Council all I've reported to you today and all I've analyzed and the views of all the agencies on what their shortfalls and problems are. Many of the recommendations I've made have already been adopted, others are under study.

Just this week Dr. Brown contracted a group to take a look at what I had recommended in increases in the transit zone for resources until this cross country strategy becomes more effective and that group is analyzing the effect of the resource changes that I've recommended there.

We've also totally revised the command, control, communications and intelligence organization in the transit zone. It's much more efficient. It costs less money to operate.

I've held these quarterly conferences. I've recommended certain actions in Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Cuba, Puerto Rico. They're all taking place, Mr. Chairman. And I've recommended different mixes of assets on radars, ships and aircraft and these changes are all taking place.

And I've recommended what to do about our budget problems and there I think I'm the least successful. It's working but we need the support of Congress to be fully effective and to make the President's strategy work, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for the opportunity to make these statements.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kramek follows:]

ADMIRAL ROBERT E. KRAMEK, USCG

UNITED STATES INTERDICTION COORDINATOR

Mr. Chairman, I would now like to figuratively remove my Coast Guard "hat" and say a few words about my role and activities during the past year as the United States Interdiction Coordinator, or "USIC" - as the acronym goes.

A little more than a year ago, under authority vested in him by the President, Dr. Lee Brown, the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy designated me the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator for counterdrug matters in the Western Hemisphere, but outside of the territory of the U.S. According to the President's guidance, my task has been to ensure that the U.S. resources committed to international interdiction are adequate - and that their location and scheduling are optimal. This non-operational oversight coordination of drug interdiction is to be consistent with the objectives of the National Drug Control Strategy. Moreover, under the President's comprehensive and balanced approach to international drug control, coordination of U.S. international interdiction efforts is designed to maximize the disruption of the flow of drugs to the U.S. in direct support of our domestic efforts to reduce the availability of and demand for illicit drugs.

So how do I perform this function, especially on a "collateral duty" basis? To begin with, in full cooperation with the DOD Joint Chiefs of Staff, we have restructured the quarterly J-3 planning conference that has met since 1989. General Estes - the Director for Operations - and I now co-host it as the J-3/USIC Quarterly Counterdrug Conference. This coordinating forum allows us to regularly bring together the interagency staffs in Washington and the operational commander's staffs. I have found this process to be informative, productive, and highly valuable in matching operations and tactics with strategy and policy.

Incorporated into this forum is a new project of ours entitled the Operational Performance Assessment. Briefed quarterly at our conference, this assessment enables us - through operations analysis of a comprehensive multi-agency data base - to examine trafficking patterns, gaps in coverage, the effects of route denial, inconsistencies for further exploration, and assists in matching Detection & Monitoring resources with apprehension resources. Although still in its early stages of development, we hope that this assessment will prove to be a very valuable tool in coordinating the activities of the scarce resources available for international interdiction - and maximizing their impact on the traffickers.

Dr. Brown and I meet regularly and often, so that I may update him on current initiatives, progress, impediments encountered, and future plans of the organizations involved in international interdiction. I also use The Interdiction Committee, chaired by Commissioner Weise of the U.S. Customs Service, as an advisory body for the resolution of interagency issues and to achieve seamless integration with other Federal strategies. We also participate actively in the Counternarcotics Interagency Working Group, which is chaired by Ambassador Robert Gelbard, the Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs. This group's focus is on facilitating implementation of the international drug control strategy and myriad initiatives such as "endgame" enhancements. In addition, we work closely with the operational commanders, participate in their planning conferences and other forums such as the DEA/CNC-sponsored Linear and Linkage committee and working groups.

Last October, Dr. Brown and I hosted a "Senior Level Interdiction Conference" that, for the first time, brought together the counterdrug agency heads (the members of The Interdiction Committee) with the operational commanders and directors from the field. Our primary goal was to assess the

adequacy of interdiction resources and our collective ability to execute the National Drug Control Strategy in this era of fiscal restraint, deficit reduction initiatives, and declining budgets. We took a hard look at the effects of congressional budget cuts on our resources and the national policy of executing a "controlled shift" in emphasis from transit zone interdiction to source country programs and initiatives. We agreed that the term "controlled shift" is used to describe the flexibility needed to preclude exploitation by narcotrafficking organizations of any gaps in our strategy or methodology; exploitation that would require a realignment of resources in theater. Our review determined that due to congressional budget reductions, resources in the transit zone had been reduced without the planned buildup or even sustainment of resources for source country programs, thus delaying full implementation of our Strategy. We need to work very hard to turn this around, to enable us to attack the production and distribution of drugs as close to the source as possible. We need Congress's full support for the administration's budget request for source country initiatives. At the same time, reducing our transit zone capability below the President's budget request, prior to giving new programs in the source countries the opportunity to take hold can overwhelm domestic demand reduction programs by making drugs more readily available and less expensive.

Source country initiatives require a long-term effort. Historical perspective would dictate that these initiatives - which include institution building, judicial reform, development of indigenous military and law enforcement capabilities, crop eradication and alternative development programs, and dismantling the trafficker's organizations and industrial infrastructure - will take many years to develop and come to maturity, especially given the Congress' cuts to the State Department's counter-drug budget. We should be in this for the long haul and I am sure that our combined efforts will be worthwhile. Our National Drug Control

Strategy (and its international component) is a good one. But I must articulate my belief that, for the time being, our demand reduction programs in the United States, source country initiatives, and interdiction programs (in the source countries, in transit, and at the border) and domestic law enforcement efforts are each important. The loss of appropriate emphasis on any one of these areas could defeat the basic premise of the strategy and render it ineffective.

Of some interest to me is that interdiction efforts were characterized some time ago as a very expensive failure because interdiction alone did not seriously reduce the amount of drugs available on the streets. It was never intended to. In fact, international interdiction, while a vital part of a "balanced" strategy, represents just 5-6% of the total drug control budget. Interdiction alone could never "cure" the Nation's drug problem. The transit zone and our borders are too vast. There will never be enough resources to completely seal the borders or blanket the wide expanse of the oceans with surface and aerial patrol coverage. But as an integral, vital component of our strategy, interdiction resources and efforts must remain effective and flexible. No country can afford to have its borders unprotected. In this sense, interdiction makes a major contribution in demonstrating to foreign nations and trafficking organizations that we are committed to combating the drug trade while introducing another level of risk to those who attempt to bring illicit drugs into our country.

Why is this so? Because interdiction is a counterdrug activity that works in "holding the line." It buys us the time required for other, complementary programs to take hold and produce results. Interdiction is a process over which we can exercise the greatest span of control if properly supported. An effective capability gives us the best chance for our Strategy to be fully implemented; it disrupts narcotrafficking at all points along the route, keeping pressure on the

drug mafias, producing valuable intelligence, and increases their risks and costs of doing business. In terms of "political will," the deterrent presence of interdiction forces displays strong U.S. Government resolve for other nations to follow.

So why are illegal drugs still so readily available in our country? The narcotrafficking industry is persevering at the present time because it has the capability to produce its illicit product far in excess of the demand and can - at present, albeit at significant cost - absorb losses from interdiction as part of the cost of doing business. These drug mafias are sophisticated and adaptable; they are privy to exceptional intelligence; they utilize a number of "safe havens" along their routes; they can corrupt officials with huge amounts of money or with threats to their security; they have a decentralized and flexible control structure; they engage in global cooperative ventures with other criminal organizations, and they have one of the largest financial bases in the world.

How do we counter this? I believe that the three components of our strategy will prevail if we:

- Use multi-faceted source country programs to disrupt the narcotraffickers to the point that they can no longer produce sufficient quantity to absorb losses and the risk of arrest becomes unacceptable, and-
- Develop interdiction capability to the point that serious losses can be inflicted on them, i.e., when disruption plus interdiction combine to raise their costs and risks of operation, and-
- Reduce domestic demand to diminish the market and thus, the enormous influence and financial base of the industry.

Our national policy and strategy identify narcotrafficking as a serious threat to the national security of the United States. So let's talk about that for a moment. Even with the end of the "Cold War" and the demise of the former Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, we still live in a potentially unstable world. There are lots of threats out there: nuclear proliferation in developing countries, terrorism, continued instability or regional conflicts in the Balkans, the Middle East, and Africa. However, as serious as these global problems are, on a daily basis narcotrafficking directly impacts the American people, our social structures, societal values, and our economy.

Drug trafficking and drug abuse threaten the human rights of all Americans. These problems are directly linked to violent crime, the incredible growth of our prison population, and they pose a tremendous challenge to national health care. Drug trafficking and drug abuse account for a one-way outflow of tens of billions of dollars from the U.S. annually; money that is laundered and re-invested by criminals. Moreover, when the costs of response programs for crime and health care are added, and an estimate of lost productivity is added to that, a conservative estimate brings the potential loss of as much as $200 billion annually. Some would estimate much higher. To counter this threat, the U.S. invests approximately $13 billion annually, of which only $1 billion is for source country initiatives and international interdiction. Some analysis of the effectiveness of our efforts has been accomplished, specifically regarding interdiction efforts in the Transit Zone. On balance, our investment in interdiction efforts there is weighed against the "disruptive" effect of those efforts resulting in seizure of illicit narcotics and other unrecoverable losses to the narcotrafficking operations. Conservative estimates place our "rate of return" simply in product kept from the marketplace at approximately 25 to 1; 25 dollars worth of cocaine is kept off the streets of the United States for every dollar invested.

As a career Coast Guard officer, I have long believed that the American people expect their government to apprehend drug traffickers and counter emerging threats from criminal activities. Supporting this, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, who conducted a 1995 American public opinion survey on foreign policy, found that stopping the flow of illegal drugs into the United States is the top foreign policy goal of the general public.

Let's discuss a few issues of positive note. We have in fact made some improvements and had some successes in the past year, and I would like to tell you about them. We now have better interagency counterdrug coordination. We have streamlined our interagency command & control systems, prioritized intelligence collection requirements, removed a few operational impediments, and brought some new, cost-effective technology (such as ROTHR and ion scanners) to bear. We have entered into a number of bilateral counterdrug agreements with Caribbean Basin nations, and naval forces from the UK and the Netherlands actively participate in interdiction efforts with us in the Caribbean. They are a valuable force multiplier. We have recently seen significant efforts by Colombia and Peru in denying the traffickers illegal use of their airspace. And as you are aware, the recent arrests by Colombian forces of Cali mafia boss Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela and major Peruvian trafficker Abelardo Cachique Rivera, coupled with the 59 Federal indictments handed out a few weeks ago against the Cali bosses and their infrastructure in the U.S., represent a major step toward the National Strategy goal of dismantling the cartels.

We remain the most powerful country in the world, and with your complete support, I believe that we can capitalize on these positives and ultimately defeat the threat to our people posed by these insidious criminal organizations and their

activities. This concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to answer your questions.

Department of Transportation
Statement of Admiral Robert E. Kramek
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard
Before the
Subcommittee on National Security,
International Affairs, and Criminal Justice
of the
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
United States House of Representatives
June 28, 1995

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. I am Admiral Bob Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard. This morning, I would like to discuss the important role played by the Coast Guard in support of the National Drug Control Strategy, as well as our interaction with other law enforcement agencies and the Department of Defense (DOD).

I would like to make five points.

First, the Coast Guard is a relatively small, multi-mission service. While the focus of this hearing is on our drug interdiction effort, I want to mention our other activities to highlight that law enforcement is just one of many Coast Guard missions, and within law enforcement, drug interdiction is only one of several functions the Coast Guard performs. With rare exceptions, all Coast Guard cutters, boats, and aircraft are multi-mission assets. For example, it is routine for a single cutter to be involved in various combinations of search and rescue, fisheries enforcement, migrant interdiction, and drug interdiction missions in the course of a single 4-10 week patrol, sometimes in a single day.

My second point is that the Coast Guard plays an important role in the National Drug Control Strategy, serving as the lead agency for maritime interdiction, and as co-lead with the U.S. Customs Service for air interdiction. As you will see, we are an effective team player in both the interagency and international arenas, and we continue to develop, implement, and coordinate new initiatives to increase the effectiveness of the counternarcotics effort.

Seizing all drugs in transit, i.e., sealing the borders, would be cost prohibitive and disruptive to legitimate commerce. Because such a goal is not realistic, the stated goals of air and maritime interdiction are to deter smuggling and to deny the smuggler the safe, direct, and economical routes. Through this disruption, we intend to increase the cost to the trafficker, increase the amount of time they are vulnerable to apprehension, and reduce the flow of illicit drugs into the United States. Apprehension is the key to successful deterrence and route denial. It is the law enforcement aspect, the ability to apprehend, that ultimately creates deterrence. The Coast Guard has the statutory authority to do this at sea.

My third point is that Coast Guard drug control efforts are focused on supply reduction. We have a significant role in transit zone interdiction. However, we cannot do the job alone. We rely on the support and assistance of many other agencies involved in counterdrug operations, including: U.S. Customs

Service, Drug Enforcement Administration, Office of National Drug Control Policy, and the Departments of Justice, State, Transportation, Treasury, and Defense. Many additional agencies are involved at the Federal, State, and local levels which also assist in the planning and execution of operations. Clearly, cooperation between DOD, the Coast Guard, and all other U.S. law enforcement agencies is a critical component of the National Drug Control Strategy.

Our high seas boarding program is a key element of Coast Guard operations in the Transit Zone for both deterring and interdicting drug shipments at sea. The Coast Guard may board a U.S. registered vessel almost anywhere except in foreign territorial waters, unless we are working under an arrangement with that coastal nation obtained through the assistance of the Department of State.

The Coast Guard can also board foreign flagged vessels with the consent of either the vessel's master or the vessel's flag state (through bilateral agreements, or on a case by case basis). It is this boarding program which enables the Coast Guard to directly interdict contraband and apprehend suspects, as well as deter future smuggling ventures.

Defense in depth is a major aspect of our interdiction strategy. Our operations in the transit zone rely heavily on the presence of U.S. Coast Guard and Navy ships and aircraft in the

deep Caribbean and eastern Pacific corridor. Royal Navy and Royal Netherlands Navy assets have also become involved. While these units are primarily assigned detection and monitoring duties, we take advantage of their presence by placing Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) aboard to provide a significant interdiction force multiplier at minimal cost.

The impact of such operations can be projected up to, and sometimes even into, the territorial seas of other countries through our participation in bilateral operations. Several agreements have been signed with Caribbean basin countries which allow increased flexibility in interdiction operations close to the source and transit countries, and many more are being actively pursued.

The transit zone strategy also attempts to optimize our exploitation of geographic choke points such as the Windward and Yucatan Passes, which coincide with some major narco-trafficking threat axes. We try to keep a cutter in the vicinity of the passes, both as a barrier and as a forward deployed asset for rapid response to intelligence cuing. We rely heavily on detection and monitoring support from the Department of Defense (DOD), Coast Guard Intelligence, and other agencies to make our interdiction operations more effective.

In the arrival zone, our operations involve a diverse group of participants. Coast Guard Group Commanders coordinate the

operations of our coastal patrol boats, aircraft and stations with shore based local, state, and Federal law enforcement agencies.

As stated previously, the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Customs Service share the lead agency role for air interdiction. Airborne smuggling constitutes a major means by which cocaine is transported toward the United States. Air Interdiction is a fast moving, extremely complicated scenario, but it works due to extraordinary coordination among the many agencies involved. Typically, a DOD asset detects a northbound aircraft which has departed from a clandestine airstrip in Colombia. The target information is passed through DOD channels to the Joint Interagency Task Force East (JIATF-E), located in Key West, which assumes the role of air mission coordinator. JIATF-E immediately notifies the Domestic Air Intercept Coordination Center (DAICC) which performs the sorting function by checking with air traffic control and tactical intelligence databases maintained by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Customs, and other agencies. If the target is determined to be of interest, a DOD, Customs, or USCG aircraft intercepts and identifies the it, and passes the information to JIATF-E for further sorting. If the aircraft is sorted as suspect, constant monitoring continues. As the suspect approaches its destination, apprehension forces are alerted.

Operation Bahamas and Turks and Caicos (OPBAT), a combined DEA, USCG, DOD, Turks/Caicos Islands and Bahamian operation, is

the model air apprehension operation. Utilizing Coast Guard and U.S. Army helicopters, OPBAT assets receive target information and interdict suspect aircraft as they offload contraband in the Bahamas. Because aircraft currently tend to air drop contraband to awaiting vessels, JIATF-E helps coordinate a maritime response, while DEA and Royal Bahamian Defense Force personnel aboard the OPBAT helicopters stand ready to apprehend the suspects if the aircraft lands or the pick-up boats reach land.

My fourth point is that we are optimizing the employment of all our assets. As is occurring throughout the Department and across government, the Coast Guard continuously reevaluates its operations to make them more efficient. To maximize the effectiveness of our assets, we rely heavily on intelligence cuing to help position them in high probability areas. This is especially true in the vast open stretches of the Pacific Ocean, where intelligence cuing is vital. Additionally, operational commanders have developed and applied the concept of Adaptive Force Packaging (AFP), which provides tailored asset packages for pulsed operations in response to specific threats.

The National Drug Control Strategy calls for improved collection, coordination, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence by the various agencies involved in the counternarcotics effort. The Coast Guard makes significant contributions to, and use of, the maritime intelligence program. We routinely support the intelligence and law enforcement

communities through multi-discipline intelligence collection and analysis, as well as post-seizure analysis following the interdiction of vessels. Intelligence is vital to efficient interdiction operations. Our reliance on intelligence is reflected by the fact that about 70 percent of the cocaine and marijuana seized by the Coast Guard in the past few years (1991-1994) was the result of prior intelligence. Today, we search for, intercept, and apprehend suspects based, to a great extent, on information provided by the intelligence community. However, the dynamic nature of the threat dictates that it remains essential to forward deploy assets capable of an effective interdiction response to intelligence cuing, maintaining a visible deterent, and capitalizing on "cold hits" derived from random boardings.

We have also expanded our efforts toward increasing our effectiveness by sharing technological developments. We have made significant progress in the development of equipment which enables us to detect the presence of illegal substances without intrusive or destructive searches. Enhancements to data processing, such as the Law Enforcement Information System II (LEIS II), and increased interoperability and connectivity with other federal agencies have resulted in more rapid sharing of the information required to sort suspect from legitimate traffic. Additionally, the capabilities of both cutters and aircraft to classify and identify targets have been enhanced through electro-optical systems, such as night vision devices. One of our

cutters, USCGC ESCANABA, recently made the largest maritime heroin interdiction ever using electro-optical surveillance equipment to detect and videotape a vessel jettisoning bales of contraband under cover of darkness.

My final point is that interdiction programs are effective. I make this statement based on evaluating how the various air and maritime trafficking routes and methods have changed in response to U.S. interdiction operations. The objective of transit zone interdiction is disruption, or route denial, so the effectiveness of interdiction should be measured against this goal.

Seizure data is a tempting measure of effectiveness, and it is an important factor, but without knowing how much was shipped or what got through, the amount of contraband seized does not yield a meaningful measure of effectiveness. Successful interdiction operations deny routes, so it is logical to expect a decrease in the quantities of drugs seized on these routes. Route denial can be determined from detection and monitoring data, intelligence, and smuggling methods. Using this information, we have observed that trafficking routes have changed in response to apprehension operations.

For air interdiction, the direct narcotrafficking flight into the United States, common a few years ago, is now rare because of effective interagency and international efforts. Air traffickers have shifted from landing and offloading in the

United States to conducting airdrops at transshipment areas. While the Bahamas is an ideal transshipment location because of the many remote islands and proximity to the United States, it is no longer the destination for most air trafficking events due to the impact of the OPBAT program.

The maritime interdiction program is also disrupting the narcotraffickers by denying them their prefered routes. This creates a higher risk of interdiction during transportation. The increased use of aircraft to transport contraband, the practice of concealing contraband in the legitimate cargo of commercial vessels, the increased use of concealed compartments and low profile vessels, and the increased willingness of traffickers to jettison loads prior to Coast Guard boardings, are all costly measures which traffickers have adopted in response to effective maritime interdiction.

In summary:

o The Coast Guard is a multi-mission service. Our multi-mission character makes the Coast Guard unique, always ready to respond to a variety of mission taskings in the maritime environment, including drug interdiction.

o We play an important role in the National Drug Control Strategy. We have, along with all other agencies, worked hard to achieve the level of interagency and international cooperation and effective interdiction and deterrence we have today.

o Coast Guard drug control efforts are focused on supply reduction, both in the air and at sea.

o We have been optimizing the effectiveness of our limited assets for tasks ranging from intelligence collection to interdiction.

o Transit zone interdiction programs are effective, ranging from law enforcement training initiatives in source countries to operations on the borders of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you and the members of this Subcommittee for this opportunity to discuss Coast Guard counterdrug initiatives. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

I yield now to the ranking member who unfortunately did not get a chance to do an opening statement. Maybe you would like to do it after questions.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have no opening statement since this is a continuation of yesterday's hearings. And while I apologize, we had a markup and they count our votes now and since we weren't voting on anything here, I knew I had to be over there, so—but they did it very quickly.

Admiral—and you kind of answered at least one of my questions in what you would consider to be a viable source country program. But let me ask you in the budgetary process part that we're all trying to grapple with because as we decrease funding around and everything else. But if the increases in your funding happen, say you were given additional funding or, you know, looked at, what happens to the implementation of this whole strategic program?

I mean, because somehow you would have to take something from one to give to another and I—and I'm very concerned about that. And maybe you can tell me if you all have had those discussions within your—the task force.

Mr. KRAMEK. Well, in my view, the President's budget to accomplish the strategy, which is somewhat in excess of $14 billion, is probably an adequate amount of money to accomplish the strategy. As I said, there's a balance between supply and demand.

It's very important to treat hard core users because they commit most of the violent crime, just as it's important to keep up your resources in the transit zone. They each have a role in this particular operation.

What happens, though, is the President's budget isn't approved, it hasn't been for drug interdiction, I don't think, in the interdiction area for the last several years and we've seen the interdiction portion of that budget reduced from about 19 percent of the total or 20 percent of the total drug war budget to 9 percent today. It's gone down by half.

And so, therefore, we can't have a robust interdiction. Now, that would be all right if the source country programs were fully implemented, but they've just been conceived, the tactics put together. The funds are just being requested to stand them up and not all those funds are being approved because of the pressure to balance the budget.

And many of these agencies that will testify before you are under budget pressures to streamline, reduce and cut back, so that is going to affect the ability for us to accomplish the strategy in the near term. It might take longer or we might not be able to complete it, to do it 100 percent efficiently.

Mrs. THURMAN. This is a question we asked yesterday as well, but some commentators argue that the success of a transit interdiction effort sets up a paradox. A successful transit zone operation will garner large amounts of illegal narcotics for a while but seizures will then fall off as drug traffickers figure out the existence and location of the transit zone dragnet.

Could you comment on that and give us your observation?

Mr. KRAMEK. I think it measures the effectiveness of interdiction from the standpoint that if we're successful denying tansit routes

and supply routes, the smugglers have to move somewhere else. I guess that's why I start out saying since 1790 the Coast Guard's been in this business, and I have to tell you that smugglers are pretty innovative.

They move to where you're not and sometimes the U.S. Government can be a little slow moving in a particular direction. That's why we have the concept of defense in-depth.

We can't just focus on one exclusive threat. As an example, 65 percent of the drugs are coming into Mexico so we know that both on the eastern Pacific, and in the western Caribbean, on both sides of Central America we need to have some resources there. There are not enough resources now to cover the eastern Pacific.

So something coming out of the west coast of Colombia can go up almost unimpeded to Central America to the coast of California, but rather it's going into Mexico so it can come across the land border. We need to have enough resources to do something about putting things in the choke points, about closing down the air bridges over Cuba, about making Puerto Rico—taking away it's abilities as a transshipment point.

People wonder why as an example so many migrants and so much drugs go to Puerto Rico and that's because if you're in Puerto Rico, you're in New York or you're in St. Louis. There's no immigration, Customs or any other inspections when you're leaving Puerto Rico. And therefore it becomes a target for smugglers to try to get there.

So as we deny them one route, they'll go to another. But we have to make it harder for them to get here. And I think we've done that.

They're not landing in Florida anymore. They're not landing in Key West. The fast boats aren't coming in.

They have to go to Mexico and they have to get through Mexico and they have to go up a thousand miles to the land border. But then they have to get across the land border. We're trying to make it more difficult for them, more expensive for them, continuously disrupt their supply lines in order to give demand programs the time to work.

I think every law enforcement officer in the United States would agree that to totally win the war on drugs we have to reduce demand in the United States. This takes education. This takes tremendous public support. It takes a lot of time.

In order to allow demand to work, we have to keep the supply pressure on to make it tough for them to get it here so we don't flood the streets with cocaine and marijuana and to give the demand programs credibility, because how can we tell our children that it's bad when we we're to open up the flood gates and not put in a good defense to prevent them from being here?

But it's a dynamic situation. And as they move to the Lesser Antilles, we need to move there, too. If they move back to the—to the eastern Pacific and go up the west coast of Central America, we need to move there, too. And so we move along with them and I think that indicates some effective interdiction.

Mrs. THURMAN. We heard from DOD yesterday that they felt like we had that flexibility or that flexibility was available to them now and they were implementing that so that they could move and use

sources for equipment and different things where they could make those changes.

Do you agree with that?

Mr. KRAMEK. I've met with Ambassador Holmes and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Counternarcotics, Brian Sheridan, there many times. I don't totally agree with that. I think the Department of Defense has detection and monitoring responsibility. They're not allowed to apprehend. They don't have law enforcement authority. They do a magnificent job with what they have.

However, it's no longer defense in-depth. The AWACS aren't flying 7 by 24, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. They're just there for part of the time, perhaps 30 days of the year, perhaps one patrol. So you can't detect what you can't see.

The robust forces that we had doing this business back around 1992 and 1993 are no longer in the area. And that would be OK once source countries become robust and become effective. So no, I don't think they have that capability except perhaps in air interdiction.

Air interdiction has become very efficient with our ability to see air smugglers coming up. On the other hand, we don't have any end game in Colombia or Mexico.

We can see them. We can follow them. We can track them. We can't apprehend them. So I believe they're much more efficient than they used to be and they're getting the most out of the resources that they have but I think more can be done.

Mr. ZELIFF. This is a thought. I hear the noise of some very effective technology in the background. I'll leave it up to you. Would you like to introduce that demonstration, come back to questions or would you like to finish the questioning and then move on to that?

Mr. KRAMEK. I think it would be good to do the demo so that I can hear your questions better and perhaps you can hear me better.

Mr. ZELIFF. Would you like to introduce the demo?

Mr. KRAMEK. Yes. We have an IONSCAN and CINDI, I would say that this is part of the budget for the Coast Guard in R&D for counternarcotics. Customs is experimenting with some of the same equipment. ONDCP reports this.

All my boarding officers in the Caribbean want the equipment that you see here. And while some of it looks a bit heavy and unhandy, we're pursuing 24 pound packages and backpacks.

As I talk to the young people in the boarding parties, they say this is really great. Some of this equipment is so sensitive, in fact, it's too sensitive, Mr. Chairman, that it alerts to cocaine for every $20 and $50 bill in south Florida, and I said, well, that is too sensitive but how does it work on a ship? They say it works fast.

We can tell if the crew has touched narcotics, especially cocaine, and then we get stronger and stronger signals wherever we go on the ship to find out where it is sequestered on hidden and, normally we wouldn't even be able to find it. Even where drug-sniffing dogs can't find it, sometimes this technology can.

While this is demonstration equipment, it's already been responsible for over 23 seizures here in the last year. I'd like to ask our officers from Base Miami and the legal office in Miami to demonstrate it to you now.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you.

Mr. KAPLAN. Good morning Mr. Chairman. I'm Lieutenant Junior Grade Kaplan from the Seventh District Law Enforcement Division in Miami. This is Lieutenant Bert from the Seventh District Legal Office. She is our chief legal advisor in the field.

I would like to begin by telling you a little bit about who we are and what we do in order to better explain how we use this equipment. Our Law Enforcement Division is made up of seven personnel, nine if you include our two canines, and we're on standby 24-hours-a-day to conduct narcotics interdiction activity throughout the Caribbean.

Our primary mission, however, is to support the nine patrol boats that work out of Miami. They conduct operations 24-hours-a-day, 7 days a week off the coast of Florida. Our mission is to support them in their boardings when they encounter vessels that they have suspicion about that they would like assistance with.

Where we come in is our secondary mission, and often what takes more of our time is coordinating and operating with other Federal agencies, primarily Customs, and DEA. We work with Customs and Customs inspection crews in Miami on a daily basis inspecting commercial traffic coming into Miami. The equipment that we have here before you today, represents three technologies.

Mr. ZELIFF. Would it be better if we came up and joined you? Or——

Mr. KAPLAN. Your preference, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. Can everybody see? OK.

Mr. KAPLAN. We use primarily three technologies. We use the CINDI, which is this device right here. This entire device here is called the IONSCAN. The third technology we use is canine.

We have two canine teams. We use them extensively. First I'll start with the CINDI, which is an acronym for Compact Integrated Narcotic Detection Instrument, CINDI. The primary purpose and intent behind CINDI is when a boarding team gets on a large commercial vessel, say a 400-foot vessel, the amount of area to hide a shipment of cocaine, which typically we're encountering now shipments between 15 to 20 kilos coming from Haiti—that is a typical size shipment that we find.

And a brick of cocaine is about this large. The areas that you can hide something this large on a 400-foot ship is enormous, just absolutely enormous. So space and accountability is the name of the game for us.

And this is a device that helps us conduct space accountability. Its purpose is to detect organic material.

There have been first generation devices similar to this. But they were density meters. They would read how dense a surface was. It would tell you whether or not there was a possible hidden compartment behind.

This goes one step further by allowing you to scan a surface, say this is a steel bulkhead, allowing you to scan the surface and determine whether or not there is something organic hidden behind. It's extremely useful because the largest problem we encounter in the field is tanks.

You get on a commercial vessel, you go into the engine room and you're surrounded by 1,000, 2,000, 5,000-gallon tanks. Trying to de-

termine whether or not there is something suspicious about these tanks is very difficult. They have something called a sight glass along the tank which is like a fuel gauge, it tells you how much fluid is in there.

You really have no way of determining whether or not that is accurate unless you open up that hatch and dump fuel all over the place, which is hazardous and not very practical. But this allows you to verify the level in the tanks. It's extremely useful. It saves us hours and hours of time. And it also saves the public the inconvenience of intrusive searches, and it's a much more user-friendly way to go about our business.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. How much does that cost?

Mr. KAPLAN. This unit costs $15,700. Currently there are five in operation and I believe there are plans to purchase more and get them out into the field.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I hope so.

Mr. ZELIFF. Sounds almost too practical.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. That's right.

Mr. SHADEGG. If inside the tank there was a package of cocaine, it would tell you that there was some organic material inside the tank?

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes, sir. The way it works, it gives different density readings depending on the makeup—the chemical makeup of the material itself. You can distinguish between fuel and water, cement or wood and cocaine has pretty reasonably distinctive reading.

Its major asset is that it has the ability to tell you whether or not there is a void space. If you have a tank filled with fuel and on the bottom you have a foot of air underneath that fuel, you know there's something wrong.

Also, if you have engine air start tanks which are supposed to be just compressed air which have organic material in them, you know something is wrong.

We've encountered those situations where there is supposedly a compressor tank which only had air yet it was giving us readings of organic material. We opened it up and it was stuffed with cocaine. So it is very useful.

It is very useful in speeding along the space accountability process. The other device that we use extensively is called the IONSCAN. It is made by Barringer Instruments, and its main function is not to detect the contraband itself but rather to pick up the traces—the presence of it.

If—the analogy for cocaine is very similar to radio-activity. Of course, you know, drugs are not radioactive but the analogy is valid. If I were to take a sample of plutonium and place it on the table here and then to remove it, even though the sample is actually long since gone, you can come with a Geiger counter and you can determine that there has been something radioactive here.

Cocaine is very similar. Even though they package the kilos very tightly, everybody who touches it and every place that package touches or is set, it leaves a chemical trace, a residual trace, very, very small. Most people don't even know they're leaving it. But the device is intended to detect that.

Mr. ZELIFF. That's why you reference on even money.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. If they are handling money and cocaine together, the trace.

Mr. KAPLAN. The money issue is not as big a problem for us as you would think because the money, yes, does get contaminated, you know, in urban areas but it does not transmit to people. If you were holding a contaminated bill, you are more than likely not going to get contaminated from that bill.

It holds it very tightly so that is not a very large problem for us. The two ways that we use this device is first in detection when we go onboard, our boarding team gets onboard to assist another boarding team. We take these samples and we'll sample the entire boat to try and find traces of narcotics and then we'll come back to the boarding officer, we'll actually draw a little diagram of the vessel and we'll drop down on the diagram the concentrations to try and look for a pattern.

Sometimes there's a very nice distinct pattern of low concentration getting higher and higher right up to the area to which you find the narcotics but that's the ideal situation. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way all the time. More often than not it's much more confusing, it's more sporadic and our job is to assist the boarding officer in determining the, you know, best places to begin your search because time—time is a factor for us.

You know, holding up a large cutter resource on one boarding is very costly. Additionally, holding up commercial, you know, commerce there is something we want to avoid as well. So that's what we try to do here.

The second use that we have for the machine is after the fact in processing evidence. A classic problem for us has been a go-fast loaded with bales of cocaine sees the Coast Guard unit and throws them over board and pulls into port. You recovered the cocaine but now you are stuck with trying to make the connection of the cocaine to this individual.

And we have had one case where we were successful in prosecuting that type of situation, we recovered the cocaine, the vessel was nowhere near the cocaine at the time we recovered it and we went back and we sampled the crew and sampled the boat and found very large amounts of residue on them using this device and that was enough for a jury to convict the entire crew.

So it's very useful in that respect, as well. The way it works, the nuts and bolts and the device is nothing more than a—a device that distinguishes between different compounds, pure compounds. It can determine—it was actually initially developed for explosive detection.

This unit is capable of detecting explosives, as well. It will give you a graph and I will show you the graph right here which distinguishes each of the different compounds on the sample you insert, and the computer only knows what you tell it.

So I could essentially—I could essentially place peanut butter on here if peanut butter were a pure compound, run it through here, label it as cocaine and the next time I ran somebody's lunch through there it would come up as cocaine. It only knows what you program in it.

That is why before we start we take a sample of cocaine, this is cocaine in methyl alcohol. We place it on here. It is going to be run-

ning across. We do this every time we start and periodically after operating.

This ensures that the computer is identifying cocaine correctly. This red light indicates that it has seen cocaine. This peak right here represents the cocaine that is just sighted.

So now I know that the computer has calibrated. It's operating correctly. It's identifying cocaine correctly. And now I can wipe anything I want to. Just to—I will just wipe down different surfaces on the vessel.

Mr. ZELIFF. Hope you don't find anything here. Especially at the Admiral's table.

Mr. KRAMEK. Especially my table.

Mrs. THURMAN. You like your job, huh?

Mr. KAPLAN. And it's as simple as that.

Five seconds, you get your answer whether or not that particular sample is contaminated. Very low level.

But you can also use this for individuals, give a—when we're working with Customs and we're doing border searches, we will ask the crews to take one of these samples themselves and they can wipe their hands and that gives you another indicator. If somebody on the crew has a very high level of cocaine residue, that raises your articulable suspicion there is something going on on this vessel, even if the rest of the vessel appears normal, if a crew member has a high cocaine residue.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Will there be residue on it? Do you clean that?

Mr. KAPLAN. This residue actually is from the first hit because it is such a high hit. What you normally do after each hit, you run a blank through to ensure that it is run clear. In a field situation, you're absolutely correct, between each major hit when you have a very high hit, there is some residual which can stick in here and then you clear it out.

Mr. CLINGER. The difference is a very low level versus high.

Mr. KAPLAN. Exactly.

Mr. ZELIFF. It is an obvious difference.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. That is not this.

Mr. KAPLAN. This is from the initial calibration.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you for making that perfectly clear. That's great.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes. That is something you always do is make sure that it's clear and reads zero before you run any samples.

Mr. ZELIFF. I think the key here is that as you do an average boarding, which is how long can you board a vessel, depends how big it is.

Mr. KAPLAN. Our average boardings run between 3 to 5 hours. We have gone as long as 7 days.

Mr. ZELIFF. So if you can narrow it down with technology like this, obviously it makes your job quicker, more efficient and can zero right into a part of the ship.

Mr. SHADEGG. You can find what you are looking for.

Mr. KAPLAN. It assists. And the biggest point I would like to make about all this equipment, including the canines, is it's just a tool. It's a tool to help guide the boarding officer. The boarding officer's judgment and experience is still the primary asset out there,

the intelligence that is provided to them ahead of time. This is not a replacement for that.

It's not meant to make that obsolete. It is not magic. You cannot come on board a vessel with this equipment and go right to the drugs. It is meant to just supplement the boarding officer's skills.

Mr. ZELIFF. We had a demonstration yesterday of canine, what their capability is. That was pretty dramatic.

Anybody have any questions?

Mrs. THURMAN. Back to the city.

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes.

Mrs. THURMAN. You said you only had five. Is that where you are or for the whole entire country?

Mr. KAPLAN. That is Coast Guard-wide. It is a very new program. It is still exceedingly fast for a development project. This is the very first one. This is the prototype. In less than 2 years, we have gone from prototype stage to operational. So that is extremely fast and I believe the intention is to purchase more.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I hope so.

Mr. KRAMEK. This unit is going to be—this weighs over 100 pounds, I think. This unit is going through a research and development project sponsored by ONDCP to reduce the size to about 25 pounds so we can carry it and our boarding officers can take it aboard ship with them.

It will be much more compact and we can buy a lot of them so each boarding team can have one, rather than keeping it on the Coast Guard cutter and having it going back and forth with samples.

Mr. ZELIFF. That's great. Thank you very, very much. Appreciate it. It was impressive.

Is that true that we've just seen 20 percent of your testing equipment out there?

Mr. KRAMEK. No, I don't think so. Of course we didn't have the opportunity to ask any questions. We had an attorney here with us helping demonstrate that but it isn't—it isn't always as successful as we might think.

Sometimes when we see samples on people's hands or even samples on the ship that has to be linked to a crime being committed and our legal officers are doing much better on that now because there's more acceptable methods of tying that in. But it is quite difficult legally to make that connection unless you find the stash of drugs.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right. I believe you have before you the October 1994 Counterdrug Conference follow-up report on ONDCP and SOUTHCOM. But apparently there was a 2-day conference sponsored by the ONDCP and the U.S. Southern Command to allow interaction between the policymakers in Washington and the operators in the field. The conference was attended by Lee Brown, the Interdiction Coordinator, yourself, and representatives of State Department, DEA, Customs, Coast Guard and DOD.

Apparently from that conference a list of follow-up actions was generated. I believe you have that list in front of you, as well.

The purpose of these follow-up actions was apparently to track the results achieved from the conference and to serve as a starting point for later conferences. I have just a few questions.

If you look at action item 8, require—acquire support from the senior levels of leadership in the administration starting with the President. In the 8 months since your conference, would you—would you say that you achieved results on that action item and what specifically has been done in this regard?

Mr. KRAMEK. I guess I would. First, I would say that in the October or November area when these conferences were held, that I worked together with General Barry McCaffrey from SOUTHCOM, who headed up this particular conference, and preceding this conference by 1 day I had the USIC conference. So we had all the people in town at the same time.

At the first conference we had all those who were responsible for interdiction, the interdiction commander, JIATF East, USACOM, JIATF South, JIATF West, all those folks in, to report to the head of Customs, the head of DEA, the head of the Coast Guard, all those agencies that provide resources, their ability to interdict.

General McCaffrey, then, the next day had all the Ambassadors from the source countries, in country teams and agencies, as well, that DEA attaches, Customs, Coast Guard, et cetera, to report on their ability to carry out the strategy in source countries.

While I have not seen this before, I have not seen the follow-up actions, this certainly represents actions that were recommended as a result of that conference. Pertaining to item 8, shortly thereafter I recommended to Dr. Brown that the President of the United States, when he went to meet with the CINCs in the Department of Defense and with the Joint Chiefs of which there was a conference going on, that the President reaffirm his strategy and where this stood on the threat list.

We had quite an active discussion on that in the Pentagon. It was classified so I can only share that with you in closed session. But I will tell you that all of the commanders were charged with carrying out the strategy. He knew that resources were short. He asked us to renew our effort to do that, and they are in the process of doing that and accomplishing that. When they get together again this summer they will have to report to him on that.

Mrs. THURMAN. Do we have this document?

Mr. ZELIFF. It is the one we talked to Dr. Brown about in the first two hearings. We spent two whole hearings talking about it.

Mrs. THURMAN. I remember that. I wanted to know which document we were working on.

Mr. KRAMEK. Also, as a result of many of the things on this sheet, we asked the National Security Council to look at all these. A meeting was held approximately a month ago, a principals only meeting. Assignments were given out to many of the agencies responsible for accomplishing some of these action items to report back in 30 or 45 days.

At that time, the NSC will take all that and hold a deputies meeting for further recommendations and decisions by the administration on what to do about some of these action items. So the answer to your question is, yes, action is being taken. It is under way on almost every one of these items.

Mr. ZELIFF. You mentioned in your testimony a national security priority list and I don't know whether you can confirm this in public testimony or statements, but is the drug issue—and I assume

it should be combined with the crime issue because they are kind of interrelated—but where does the drug issue stand on the list of national security priorities? Is that a fair question to ask?

Mr. KRAMEK. Well, I can tell you where it stands with the American people based on surveys that were just conducted. I think it stands No. 1. With the administration I would say that it stands very high up on the list. But it is being reassessed and that is the reason the National Security Council is looking at it.

Mr. ZELIFF. I hope, Admiral, that not only your efforts, but ours and what we have done in a very short period of time, are forcing that assessment, and that that, too, will kind of coincide with the American people's views that the drug issue ought to be No. 1.

Mr. KRAMEK. I think you can see a renewal of this interest. There is a recent speech by the President at graduation at the Air Force Academy where he highlighted the connection between crime and drugs and the need to do more for the war on drugs and I think it does have his attention.

I think you can see the results of the Conference of the Americas in Miami where the agreement was made between Mexico and the United States taking the lead together and having all the Latin American countries sign on to doing more in this area. So it is high on the priority list and we need to focus on it together to keep it there.

Mr. ZELIFF. We were hoping that the President would be willing to meet with us, as you have, and others have and we talk about this and then see what role we need to play to support his efforts, assuming he does take a continued leadership role. We have gotten commitments from the Majority Leader in the Senate and the Speaker of the House to focus on drugs as a top priority. If we can get everybody together and then involve Members of Congress from across the country, I think maybe we can get a bit of support for the hard work that the Coast Guard and others are doing as well.

Mr. KRAMEK. I agree with you. On that specific item, on senior levels of leadership in the administration, on requiring support, action item 8, the action and successes that we see taking place today in Bolivia, Peru, Colombia and Mexico are a result of the President's direct action when he directed the administration officials and Assistant Secretaries of State to deliver demarches to those countries, telling them that they ought to be responsible for their actions, to tell them that they were not going to be certified, and in fact, they were given a certification waiver and a list of accomplishments in order to be a certified trading partner and certified nation and cooperative with the United States.

The actions that you are seeing taking place in Colombia, I think, have a lot to do with accomplishing the things on that certification list, including the recent arrests of the kingpin there.

So I think there has been a lot of positive action taken as a result of the President's personal interest in this when he dispatched his Ambassadors to those countries to work with them.

Mr. ZELIFF. I heard you say that 65 percent of the cocaine is coming up through Mexico and going over land. My understanding, as I have traveled through here, is that while we may know that a particular plane comes out of Colombia, and we can track it, it

lands in Mexico unimpeded and moves forward to the border, and 65 percent of the cocaine then gets through to the United States.

I was a little surprised yesterday when we heard Ambassador Becker say, she was talking about how proud she was of Mexico's efforts in the drug effort and how Mexico had been certified as a country who is doing a lot to help us—I don't hear that out in the field and I hear that it is a major problem out in the field. Any comment that you would like to make on that?

Mr. KRAMEK. Yes. I think that the actions that you are seeing Mexico and other countries taking now lag our perceptions and impressions by about 4 to 6 months. I would say that the action was not sufficient 4 to 6 months ago. I will say that they are moving in the right direction now, they are starting to take action.

Ambassador Gelbard just visited there and presented to the Mexican Government the concerns of the President of the United States and I have seen quite a turnaround in Mexico since that time. We are busy training them, providing them with more assets, but we all have to know that all of the countries that we deal with have issues of sovereignty. They are sovereign nations and we need to respect that. So it is very sensitive on how we deal together with them on that. But I would say that perceptions in the field lag actuality by 4 to 6 months and I think Mexico is headed in the right direction now.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you have a bilateral agreement with Mexico and does that affect your ability to go into territorial waters?

Mr. KRAMEK. We do not have an agreement on drug interdiction. However, the Coast Guard works very closely with the Mexican navy in all sorts of law enforcement and we have never had a problem with that. But, no, we do not have a bilateral agreement to enter their air space or their territorial waters. Although some of our agencies, I think you will hear from the Commissioner of Customs later this morning, and he has some authorities for nations where none of our other military aircraft can go where he can work together with those countries and I think he will be able to provide better information on that.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

The gentlelady from New York, Ms. Slaughter.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Admiral. I have an advantage that other members on this committee don't have. I served on this committee 4 or 5 years ago when we were talking about the same subject. We really, at that time, had shortchanged the Coast Guard dreadfully, in one instance, giving you money in the budget to buy more boats to use in the Caribbean, but not giving you enough operating money to put gas in them.

The big interdiction issue at that point loomed along the Mexican border. I remember they told us at a hearing that you could see somebody light a cigarette in a car with that balloon. The only thing was everybody else can see those balloons, too, and I was a little concerned how effective those were in interdiction, since we have far more borders to control than just the United States-Mexican border.

One of the things that concerned me, when we talked about the NAFTA agreement here, I think at that point the percentage that

Charles Rangel's committee gave was 80 percent of cocaine came across the Mexican border. I speak for myself. I have been personally disturbed at the number of Mexican officials very high in the government who have at least been accused of drug trafficking and our seeming inability to deal with that from our side.

One of the things that I don't know if anybody has talked to you about this morning is, we talk about the law enforcement in our country, and I certainly agree that there are two things we have to do. One is to reduce demand in the United States and we have to reduce the source. It seems to me we have made some inroads, fairly significant ones in the last couple of years and finding what everybody identifies as the Cali cartel and the kingpins.

I am sure you are aware that that program we used for that law enforcement help from the United States has been cut in half in the budget this year. And I wonder if you would like to comment on how you think that is going to affect apprehension on in country enforcement in the face of a 50 percent cut.

Mr. KRAMEK. I think a 50 percent cut would be detrimental.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Would it ruin the program?

Mr. KRAMEK. We don't need a dollar-for-dollar replacement of where we were 5 years ago because of things like IONSCAN and things like better radars, Relocatable Over the Horizon Radars [ROTHR]. I think maybe Brian Sheridan briefed you on that.

I recently went down to personally look at the targets in the ROTHR site. When you go into the field, our soldiers and sailors in other countries say you are shutting down the Caribbean radar network and you are taking out these ground-based radars. In a lot of cases we absolutely should. We all know, if you have been on a boat, a radar looks out line of sight 50 or 40 miles. ROTHR looks 2,000 miles. It bounces off the ionosphere. So when you have this type of technology that the United States is famous for, we can make great force multipliers and do things better and less expensively. However, 50 percent is too much.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. What I was asking you about is the support you give in a country where we try to cut down the source. Are you providing these in Colombia? Is that what you are saying to me?

Mr. KRAMEK. We are not providing it to Colombia. This is a research and development project. We have 10 of these right now which will go into production once we get them to the smaller size.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. That is the way I understood it; that this was something you are using yourself. I was asking you about cutting 50 percent in the support that we give law enforcement in source countries.

Mr. KRAMEK. You are talking about the law enforcement support we would give to the Colombian police or to the Peruvian security forces.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Yes.

Mr. KRAMEK. I think that we have to be concerned what we are cutting them and where we are cutting them. I am not familiar that we are cutting Colombia by 50 percent in that particular case.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. We are cutting programs by 50 percent of the support that we give.

Mr. ZELIFF. Hasn't the transit zone been cut 50 percent?

Mr. KRAMEK. It has been over the last 6 years, but my point is that we don't need to restore it back to 19 or 20 percent because we have improved processes and technology. All we need to do is to keep the level of effort up in order for the source country program to work. I think you make a point that source countries are being cut, so how can we ever get there.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I think I am not making myself clear. I want to talk about what you are doing in the United States to interdict drugs coming into the United States. The program that we have through the State Department, which gives support, financial, all sorts to law enforcement in-source countries where the drugs are coming from, that program, and the Appropriations Committee has roughly cut 50 percent.

I am curious as to what kind of effect you think that will have on our ability to cut the cocaine and other drugs coming in from countries where they produce it.

Mr. KRAMEK. It will be detrimental.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I sure thought so.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Shadegg, Arizona.

Mr. SHADEGG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, what efforts has the Coast Guard specifically had with regard to interdiction along the Southwest border, if any?

Mr. KRAMEK. The Coast Guard doesn't do much along the Southwest border at all. Only in my role as Interdiction Coordinator, my responsibilities are up to the borders of the United States. However, there is a transition zone there. I am concerned that 65 percent of the cocaine does come through Mexico.

The Coast Guard's job, along with other law enforcement agencies, is to prevent them from getting to Mexico in the first place, and the source country strategy is to prevent it from ever leaving the source countries. However, when it becomes clear that a nation isn't doing as much as it can, that is a pretty big border surge, as you certainly know, that we can't stand shoulder to shoulder on that border to stop it from coming in. Then the country that it is transiting through has a responsibility to help us do that.

So my responsibility as USIC is to point out that the interdiction in Mexico could be better than it is and they have some responsibilities. That is why Ambassador Gelbard recently went to Mexico to more than remind them of those responsibilities and why we see them taking some very proactive actions right now to participate with us to slow that flow down.

Mr. SHADEGG. Let me ask a follow-up on that. Do we see proactive action or do we see proactive rhetoric and is there more we can be doing to ensure that what President Zedillo is doing in terms of talking about this problem is followed by effective action?

Mr. KRAMEK. We need to keep up the same impetus we have now on proactive action and cooperation. Mexico understands what they need to do. They are working together with us. We have some training we need to give them, some equipment they need to have, whether it is helicopters or night vision goggles, training in how to use the equipment and we need to cooperate and work together with them and resource that properly. If those resources are cut

back, then Mexico won't be able to uphold what they intend to do, which is to help stop cocaine coming across the Southwest border.

Mr. SHADEGG. Let me ask the question differently. Are you satisfied with the level of effort or, if you will, pressure that the American Government is putting on the Mexican Government to assist us in dealing with this problem?

Mr. KRAMEK. I am today, yes.

Mr. SHADEGG. Let me switch to a different area. You have Coast Guard facilities along the coast of California?

Mr. KRAMEK. Yes.

Mr. SHADEGG. Is a part of this interdiction effort, would it include waterborne shipments that leave Mexico and come into the West Coast of the United States?

Mr. KRAMEK. Yes.

Mr. SHADEGG. What is the level of that—is it increasing, decreasing?

Mr. KRAMEK. It is about steady. There is less traffic, but larger loads leaving the West Coast of Colombia in fishing vessels. It is highly classified, but in our joint interagency task force the chairman visited one in Key West, I believe, to see JIATF, East.

We have JIATF, West in San Francisco led by a Coast Guard Admiral, but reports to CINCPAC fleet in the chain of command. While their vision is mostly East-West heroin, it also is North-South marijuana and cocaine from Colombia and from South American countries.

In that case, patrols are conducted there in the eastern Pacific. Intelligence is collected and I have been as captain of a ship in that area on those patrols myself south of Mexico all the way to Central America interdicting based on intelligence. That area of responsibility, there aren't any choke points to catch the smugglers.

Rather, the Pacific is too large. We have to rely almost 100 percent on intelligence. That operation is ongoing and in the last few years has been fairly successful. In fact, the Mexicans have worked with us and about 50 percent of seizures that have taken place have taken place in conjunction with Mexico or by Mexican navy ships once we have turned over that information to them.

Mr. SHADEGG. Has there been any change—your testimony focused on the various roles that you play. Has there been any change within the Coast Guard given it's limited resources and the fact that we are not increasing the resources but rather decreasing them on the priority of the roles of the Coast Guard, drug interdiction versus other roles?

Mr. KRAMEK. We haven't carried out as much drug interdiction because the last 3 years, 1 year specifically, the Congress cut us on specific drug interdiction budget items and required me to decommission ships, decommission aircraft, to put them in the desert, reduce the Caribbean squadron, reduce law enforcement detachments. Those have been real cuts targeted to drug interdiction in the Coast Guard's budget. We are not as capable as we were.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would think that your involvement with Haiti and Cuba and all the rest certainly took resources away.

Mr. KRAMEK. They took the resources away for a period of time. However, as of this morning I only have one ship in the Windward Pass instead of 22. I guess they just interdicted a Haitian sailboat

with 40 folks on the way to Miami. All resources that were involved in migrant interdiction off Haiti are now involved in the war on drugs in the deep Caribbean.

Mr. SHADEGG. One ship in the Windward Pass, as compared to 22?

Mr. KRAMEK. Yes. But that was what we needed for the migrant crisis at the time.

Mr. SHADEGG. How many ships on the West Coast of the United States versus 4 or 5 years ago?

Mr. KRAMEK. The same amount of ships are on the West Coast of the United States as 3 or 4 years ago. What I did for the Haitian and Cuban crisis and to keep up deterrent on the war on drugs is for that crisis I moved ships from the West Coast to the East Coast and I also moved them from the Great Lakes to that area for that 3 or 4-month period of about a year ago. They are all back in place doing their normal missions now.

Mr. SHADEGG. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. The Chair now recognizes a new valuable member of this subcommittee, the gentleman from Oklahoma, Mr. Bill Brewster, a small businessman and a person that is very committed to this effort. Bill.

Mr. BREWSTER. Good to see you, Admiral. As a pharmacist and one who has operated a methadone clinic to try to rid the problem with heroin some years ago I feel I have a pretty good understanding of how drugs can destroy our society. The war has shifted from heroin a few years ago to cocaine, marijuana and many other things.

We were seeing approximately 1,000 heroin addicts a week through our clinic. This was in 1975, after the Vietnam war, when many were addicted in Vietnam and other places. Everyone I ever talked to started on marijuana. That is not to say that everybody who smokes marijuana cigarettes becomes a cocaine addict or cocaine or whatever, but it certainly stresses to me the importance of marijuana interdiction as well as cocaine.

You mentioned the sovereignty of the Mexican Government and others. I think that is important, but these Governments are frequently coming to us for help as well. I would hope that when we agree to help them financially or otherwise that we would stress the importance of them working with us and giving us greater opportunity to intercede in their countries to stop the drug situation.

As one who has hunted along the Mexican border in Texas numerous times, I know it will be difficult to ever stop a single guy carrying a small amount of stuff across the Mexican border. That is where we need their help, to intercede. You mentioned that 65 percent of the cocaine in this country comes through Mexico. What percentage of it is waterborne around the Mexican border and what percentage of it is carried over on a ground basis, or do you have an idea on that?

Mr. KRAMEK. I would say that of the 65 percent at that comes out of Mexico to the United States, more than 90 percent or more comes across the border. Very little comes waterborne.

Mr. BREWSTER. So most is carried across or flown across the border——

Mr. KRAMEK. None of it is flown across the border, to my knowledge. I think Customs has that area sealed off. The Commissioner of Customs could better answer that. Almost all of it comes across the land border and there is very excellent response to that now by Customs and that will be well described later—about what is being done there with more emphasis on container inspections, on automobile inspections and barriers at ports of entry. I think Commissioner Weise will be able to give you a very current update on what is taking place there.

Mr. BREWSTER. It is obvious that budgetarily all agencies will be stressed for the next couple of years. Do you have sufficient power, do you need any other power as far as stop and search of any vessels on the ocean? Do you have adequate power or is there anything else you need?

Mr. KRAMEK. It is always nice to have a shopping list. We put in legislation the last 2 years in a row for increasing our power on boarding and searches just from the standpoint of when someone refuses a consensual boarding for us or causes us problems in boarding that they would be susceptible to some fines. That has never been approved by Congress. It has not been approved by the authorization committees each year. So we have stopped putting that in.

Normally, our powers in the maritime region to board and search, to detect, monitor, and apprehend is sufficient. There is a great debate whether powers are sufficient for air travel or not, and while I am only a co-leader in that responsibility, I can tell you that all we can do now is detect, monitor, track and intercept and then ask the host nation where these aircraft are landing to take action.

If they are not going to land in the United States, we can't do anything about it. However, the agreements we have with some other countries are outstanding. I would use Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos known as OPBAT as the primary example of that. And in fact, it is an operation that we have looked to export to other nations including Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and elsewhere where we have drug-laden planes landing in a foreign country.

In this case, our Ambassador to the Bahamas with agreement of the Bahamian Government runs an operations center manned by DEA and Coast Guard in Nassau. When these flights are detected, they are notified about that and then there is a fleet of helicopters operated by the Coast Guard and by the Army called OPBAT in various places in the Bahamas along with DEA agents and Bahamian national security forces that then intercept the drugs as they are dropped to small boats or as those planes land in the Bahamas.

When I first operated in that region in 1990, I can tell you we had perhaps 10 or 15 incursions a month, a couple of hundred a year flights into the Bahamas with drugs. There is less than two or three a month now. OPBAT has been extremely effective. So there is an example of how that can work.

Mr. BREWSTER. If you decide to, you want to, once again, look at additional powers, I would be interested in working with you on that.

Do you have freedom to move money around in your budget as you need to if you are short on money, to use in foreign countries for intercession?

Mr. KRAMEK. We have no freedom to reprogram between programs without the consent of the administration and the Congress. In fact, any reprogramming of $1 million or even a couple of people takes about 4 months to go through the process that the Congress and the administration have set up. It is very difficult.

Mr. BREWSTER. So freedom to reprogram within your system would probably make you more efficient and most cost-effective as well?

Mr. KRAMEK. It would allow an administrator to carry out his responsibility without the tremendous burden of the process they have to go through now.

Mr. BREWSTER. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Souder.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to first thank you for your continuing interest. This is at least our fourth hearing on drugs and part of our efforts trying to make the American people aware that the problem has not declined and in fact is increasing, and to keep the pressure on.

Many of us, relatively notorious at this point, freshman are in favor of reducing the size of the Federal Government, going to States rights issues and block grants and that sort of thing, but there are some things that overwhelm the States and are clearly the role of the Federal Government. We are being inundated with crack cocaine, heroin, and LSD is rising not only in the city of Ft. Wayne, but they found a 600 percent increase in the city of Ft. Wayne last year from the relatively high base on LSD. And it has led to gang conflicts even in small towns where a teenager was shot in a town of 5,000 people relating to a gang and probably to drugs spinning out from Ft. Wayne. It has even entered rural and suburban areas.

I have a couple of initial questions here to follow up. You can tell we are all pretty interested in the Mexico question. You said you do not have agreement on territorial waters or the airspace. Have we asked them to do that? Have we requested such an agreement?

Mr. KRAMEK. I think from time to time we ask them to cooperate together in the same way we have some other nations. I think we do have some agreements with Customs being able to have some air rights in Mexico from time to time. While that is not my area of expertise, I would reserve that for the Customs Commissioner to describe.

Mr. SOUDER. I will ask that because I don't understand why, if we ask it of other nations we wouldn't ask it of them. And, if we ask it of them and they don't give it to us, I don't understand why we would be completely satisfied with their effort.

Even though they are cooperating in a number of ways, that is a fairly significant thing. We can talk about national sovereignty questions, but we are in the middle of bailing out their economic system.

In NAFTA we are saying they are like America. We are going to have a free trade agreement. Then they have to behave by similar

standards in other areas, as well, if they want our support. They have to give complete cooperation, not just kind of begrudging cooperation. You can tell by the questions here today that many of us are very intense on that question.

I didn't see much in your testimony regarding Puerto Rico. Do you view that as an increasing problem and are you devoting more resources to it? Are you looking at how to address that?

Mr. KRAMEK. Puerto Rico is a major problem. I had mentioned it earlier in my testimony, in that it is a transshipment point. Because of the easability once in Puerto Rico to get into the United States—it is part of the United States and therefore there is no immigration or Customs inspections leaving Puerto Rico unless someone is under suspicion. That is why Puerto Rico is a target for migrants.

Just the other night we interdicted 60 more migrants coming across the Mona Pass from the Dominican Republic, which is the back side of Haiti, if you will, the island of Hispaniola across the Mona Pass to Puerto Rico. Twenty were Chinese. That is why aircraft make airdrops along the Southern Coast of Puerto Rico about 10 or 20 miles out and fast boats come out to pick up loads of 500 to 1,000 kilos of cocaine or even fast boats try to go all the way from Columbia and Venezuela straight shot to Puerto Rico because once the drug is in Puerto Rico, it is much easier to package them and carry them to the United States, whether it is in a container or a person carrying it or in any other conveyance.

I brought that to the attention of the Attorney General. We met recently on that with a group of all law enforcement officers. She is establishing a work group with the Deputy Attorney General to look at that and to find out how we can design a turnstile, if you will, in Puerto Rico to eliminate that or make it less desirable to be a transshipment point so that things could be inspected when they are leaving there and this has to be done with diplomacy and very carefully with the citizens of Puerto Rico. We are working in that direction now to figure out how to do that.

The bottom line is this is straight interdiction. We have to deny that route. In order to deny Puerto Rico as a route, as a transshipment point, we have to make it hard to get the drugs out of Puerto Rico so we need something there to prevent them from leaving so easily.

Mr. SOUDER. Something that may not be of tremendous interest to others here, but certainly perked my ears is you said you diverted resources out of the Great Lakes. In the Great Lakes area, has drug activity increased in the areas you are working with and where would the drugs be coming from?

Mr. KRAMEK. In the Great Lakes I don't see any drugs. Sometimes they suspect drugs are coming down from Canada. We have very little trafficking in that area. I took a ship out of the Great Lakes and people out of the Great Lakes.

One of the ships that you may have seen on television going into Port-au-Prince Harbor to set the aids to navigation for the fleet were buoy tenders from the Great Lakes. It was necessary to use everything we had for that particular crisis for several months and they have gone back there.

Mr. SOUDER. In letters that we sent to Commissioner Brown when he was here and as we talked about his staffing, I have two concerns. One is how much staff do you have in your office if you are in charge of interdiction policy and, second, with the conference that you have, have you talked with the President directly? Are you doing follow-up? Are your action points going through? We are very concerned that there is not an aggressive follow through.

Mr. KRAMEK. I brief Dr. Brown monthly. I give him a robust brief quarterly. I see him more frequently than that. We have open communications whenever need be. I have talked to the President on a couple of occasions. I have reported to him on our readiness to be able to do drug interdiction.

Mr. SOUDER. Have you reported to him on the action points in your conference?

Mr. KRAMEK. No, and I would not. I would report to Dr. Brown on that and Dr. Brown has alerted him on what the problems are and speaks to him frequently on that.

Mr. SOUDER. As Interdiction Coordinator, you wouldn't go in with Dr. Brown on briefings?

Mr. KRAMEK. I have a responsibility to carry out the programs through Dr. Brown, so I report to Dr. Brown.

Mr. SOUDER. How much staff do you have with you to coordinate all the efforts?

Mr. KRAMEK. Six people. For the whole western hemisphere. I am running the interdiction program with six people.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Is that in your personal judgment adequate?

Mr. KRAMEK. They are really working hard.

Mr. ZELIFF. I won't pursue that further. I would have to agree. I think I heard you right and please correct me if I am wrong. You said that drug use was down over the last 7 years; is that correct?

Mr. KRAMEK. I think the total is down over the last several years. I know we have seen some increases in certain parts of our society for certain drugs in the last year or two. But I think if you were to look 7 years ago at what the level of drug use was in the United States, you would see a steady decline in perhaps all areas except perhaps hard-core users in the last couple of years, which is why so much emphasis needs to be put on solving the problem of hard-core users.

Mr. ZELIFF. If I just accepted drug use is down over 7 years when in fact it was down significantly in the first 4 years of the 7 and up significantly in the last 3 in all age categories, so that—we are looking at this thing as something that is out of control. If I looked at it, in 7 years I say that is OK; don't worry about it. But if I look at the last 3 years and look at the assets in 1992 that you had to deal with this thing and then put everything you had—let's say we put an overlay on 1994 and then you put another overlay on 1992, you would see a dramatic difference in terms of the assets that are given to you.

Ms. Slaughter indicated, and I think it is a very important piece, that the President and Secretary of State, I believe, in terms of putting priorities in the State Department's budget, required a 50 percent cut in INL budget, a 50 percent cut in your assets, are we

serious in trying to win this thing? I want to make sure I understand you——

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Excuse me. It was the appropriators that cut it.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let's just say us. I thank you for bringing it up because I think it is an important piece. Do we really expect to win this thing, whether you are Republican or Democrat doesn't matter, but as a Member of Congress we have a responsibility to try to give you what you need.

I was just with your people at the grass roots level. We were on the Coast Guard cutter, MELLON, and I never saw a bale of marijuana before, but it is like a bale of hay. It is worth $88,000. If anybody doesn't think that corrupts people with one bale that you can pick up, 50 pounds is worth $88,000—Sunday morning we talked to Puerto Rican police, to FBI, DEA, to everybody that says this thing is out of control.

We were on some of those remote islands. Not everything is out of control. Some things are working. But it seems to me that somehow we have to start putting this on the front burner.

The National Security Agency needs to make it a No. 1 priority. If we corrupt everything around us eventually we are going to be corrupted ourselves if we aren't already. It seems to me we individually need to start speaking out in our States. We need to get the President to talk about it every day. Even though you talk to Dr. Brown and he talks to the President, we have been dealing with items that needs to be followed up ever since October.

It would seem to me that someone needs to stand next to the President and be given the order so that the Joint Chiefs understand that drug interdiction is a high priority within DOD. I talked to Admiral Granuzzo and he was pretty outspoken on what we need to do.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. May I make a comment? In the years I have been in Congress, we have consistently beaten up on the people that we have asked to do drug interdiction at the same time we have consistently starved them for resources.

Mr. ZELIFF. I don't want to be accused of beating them up.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Why aren't I doing better? At the same time, we are not giving you what you need to do a better job. My point is that violence and crime; as Mr. Constantine said yesterday, violence and crime are the base problems of the United States. We have no way of ever determining or as far as I know nobody has tried to see that if we properly did drug interdiction and source management and eradication how much we could save ourselves in the United States just from the cost of treating people who are killed, wounded and all the property damage, everything else that adds up to so much money in the United States.

I would much rather put that money into agencies that we have asked to control the drug problems coming into the United States. It is the failure that we have of keeping them from coming in here that has caused tremendous problems to us and enormous costs.

Mr. KRAMEK. We have a rate of return of 25 to 1. In my opening statement I gave that figure. Mr. Chairman, I would not agree that it is out of control. It is not. I don't particularly agree with what Admiral Granuzzo told you the other day. I understand his zeal and I meet with him and talk with him frequently.

From where he stands, he would certainly like to have more. I agree it needs to be on the front burner, and that is what we are talking about now, and I certainly have advised Dr. Brown about that and he is discussing that with the President. That is why there is so much activity with the National Security Council and everything going on now. As a result of what they are doing I think it is going to answer a lot of questions that you have now.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you think what we are trying to do here is going to help?

Mr. KRAMEK. I think it is great because you are talking about teamwork in order for us to make the Coast Guard run right. We call it "Team Coast Guard" and this has to be "team counternarcotics."

In my opening statement, I indicated that it takes a partnership between the administration agencies and the Congress to make a winning war on drugs. This Nation has never won a war unless we all stood together on the issues from start to finish. We know all about that.

Many of us have been in wars and are students of war and unless the whole Nation is together on it we are not going to win. This is very complicated, with the administration developing policy and strategy, managing programs, requesting resources, the Congress authorizing and approving those resources and having that debate, and the agencies having to follow that strategy and use the resources wisely, and having 25 entities doing that at the same time.

I can see where the seams are and it should be seamless. I think your hearing is trying to make that seamless and I salute you for that because we all need to work together. It can't be, I don't believe, a political debate. It needs to be a national debate in the national interest in order to win the war on drugs.

When I look at the percentage of money resources, what efforts we spend on it, sometimes it doesn't seem that great for me. It is for the DEA. One hundred percent of their budget is spent on drug law enforcement. For Customs 35 percent, Coast Guard 10 percent of their budget, DOD, .3 of 1 percent of their budget. So there is a great disparity over all these programs and on either side of the aisle on what we should be doing, demand or supply. We need to bring that altogether.

Mr. ZELIFF. If the Joint Chiefs of Staff in their direct daily discussions with the President were aware that drugs are the No. 1 issue facing his agenda, do you think there would be more than one-third of 1 percent of their assets being contributed as far as the DOD is concerned?

Mr. KRAMEK. The defense of the United States is the No. 1 issue for any nation. While certainly drug control is up there, it wouldn't be No. 1. In all the meetings that I have, in order for the DOD to maintain the readiness they have for two major regional conflicts almost simultaneously, it takes every penny of what they have.

When they do other things in operations other than war such as drug enforcement, such as Haiti, Somalia, the readiness to defend the United States isn't there. So it is a resource issue with them as well, even though it is a small percentage of their budget.

Mr. ZELIFF. We are trying to pull more resources in their direction. A GAO report came out yesterday. I would like to have you give us, if you would, a written evaluation of your perceptions as the person that is involved in this on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. KRAMEK. I would be pleased to do that.

[The information referred to follows:]

UNITED STATES INTERDICTION COORDINATOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY
2100 Second St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20593-0001

RECEIVED

SEP [illegible] 99.

Congressman Bill Zeliff
Washington DC 20515

15 September 1995

Honorable William H. Zeliff, Jr.
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6143

Dear Congressman Zeliff,

In recent testimony before the Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice, you asked that I provide a written evaluation of the current GAO conclusions relating to U.S. International Drug Control Efforts. I have reviewed, in detail, the Testimony that was provided you by representatives of the GAO. As I stated when I testified, I feel that they are on track. I am encouraged by the shift in the view presented by GAO and further at the steps undertaken throughout the Interagency to address the issues delineated in their report.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer the following observations. Competing diplomatic and budgetary demands often impact international counternarcotics strategy implementation. Difficult decisions must be made in this very dynamic policy arena. I support continued strong funding for our international and interdiction efforts as a portion of the overall National Counterdrug Budget. Additionally, I feel that the threat to the "human rights" of American citizens presented by the drug trade must remain foremost in the minds of the decision makers as they prioritize foreign policy objectives. The role that the United States plays in international counternarcotics efforts is far more than that of simply supplying resources, assets, training and other assistance. We are the model which host nation governments look to in assessing national and international resolve in combating this threat. Our own demonstrated political will does much to engender like response from those governments whose support we need to win this battle, particularly in the face of other internal priorities and potentially pervasive corruptive elements in these countries, as noted in the GAO report.

Thank you again for your continued support and for the opportunity to address this all important issue.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Kramek
Admiral, USCG

Mr. ZELIFF. An overview. Do you think they are on track?

Mr. KRAMEK. My comments on the GAO report, I just reviewed the testimony that the GAO provided before this committee yesterday. I think they are generally on track. I think they bring up some good points that need to be looked at. I am encouraged because perhaps on 80 percent of the points they bring up I know we are already making progress in those areas that you are not aware of, and I could testify to each and every one of those things today if there was time.

Mr. ZELIFF. You are saying tremendous progress has been made since October, when you outlined some major concerns in that meeting?

Mr. KRAMEK. Yes; not only progress, but some decisions are going to be made on whether to do it or not. In some cases, they have already decided and it has been for the better.

In some cases, we haven't completed the review yet. It will take another 30 to 45 days. I mentioned to you before the hearing that while I agree with what the GAO report said, I am a little troubled when I compare it with previous GAO reports, which recommended reducing assets in the transit zone and reducing interdiction and doing other things. I think these things need to be taken in perspective. I certainly think that what they see now is accurate. We need to work on those type of things. It is a fair representation.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Chairman, based on your comments and us working together and the fact that you are in the majority now, is there any plan for our committee to advise the appropriators—since the authorizing committees have already suggested that we should have kept the funding at $213 million, but it was cut—have we made any attempt to go to the Rules Committee to offer any amendment to give back some of these cuts that the appropriators are making?

Mr. ZELIFF. We are trying to get an appointment with the President to talk about the priorities that he has. We have talked to both the Speaker and the Majority Leader in the Senate, and I think once we have the opportunity to sit down with the President and fully get an evaluation of what his priorities are, then I think it is important that we do what you suggest.

I encourage your help and support.

Mrs. THURMAN. I would be glad to. I was not aware—I knew that we had been working with Secretary Brown and trying to go through that avenue. I don't think I was aware that we are trying to meet with the President.

Mr. ZELIFF. I have decided I am not going to hear through Dr. Brown relative to his success in setting up that appointment.

Mrs. THURMAN. We will try to accommodate that. I think that since we are in the appropriations now that we need to be very careful as we move through here in making those cuts, particularly based on the testimony. These are people on the front line who have made those suggestions.

Mr. ZELIFF. Absolutely. Then we will have our action plan. We waited for 4 months to get an appointment and I decided that maybe with your help we need to go directly. As long as we are

going to put the time and resources into it, yes, we need to work across the board to solve the problems.

Mrs. THURMAN. My concern is that the authorizing committee is the one who said we ought to be doing this so there have been hearings based on what we are hearing and yet we are seeing appropriators make the cuts. I know we are trying to get there. I think we need to keep these lines open and I will do my best to see what we can do with the President.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Shadegg. Mr. Brewster.

I just would like to thank you very, very much Admiral. Again, we want to thank all the folks under your command, particularly the hard-working men and women that we were very lucky to come in contact with on the long weekend that we spent out there. You have a very dedicated group of people and we are very impressed.

Mr. KRAMEK. It was our pleasure, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. The committee will take a 15-minute recess before we get to the next panel. We will vote and be back in 15 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mr. ZELIFF. I would like to reconvene our hearing.

Now I would like to welcome our next witness, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs, Mr. George J. Weise.

Commissioner Weise has been the staff director of the Trade Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee.

I enjoyed our conversation earlier. You certainly do know the workings of this place from top to bottom. You have an in-depth knowledge of international trade issues ranging in diversity from international affairs to the U.S. Customs Service.

It is a pleasure to have you here. If you would be willing to stand and raise your right hand.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Let the record show that the question was answered in the affirmative. We appreciate your being here. If you'd like to give us a summary of your testimony we will submit your entire testimony into the record, but if you would like to condense it, please do so.

STATEMENT OF GEORGE WEISE, COMMISSIONER OF U.S. CUSTOMS

Mr. WEISE. I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. It is a real pleasure to be here, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for inviting me. I think these are very important hearings on a very important subject.

It is difficult, however, to come the second day when we had my star here yesterday, our canines who are doing such an effective job. I understand they gave a very excellent presentation of their work.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, Customs is responsible for the interdiction of drugs at the Nation's border. Narcotics enforcement is one of the most difficult jobs in law enforcement and narcotics interdiction is one of the most difficult and dangerous jobs in narcotics enforcement. In partnership with the Office of National Drug Control Policy, DEA and other enforcement agencies in every level of government, Customs has made a long-term commitment to narcotics enforcement, and Customs has maintained this commitment over decades.

We believe we have made significant progress in the drug interdiction effort. At the same time, we recognize that drug interdiction is a never-ending effort and that drug trafficking, drug abuse and drug-related crime remain at unacceptably high levels.

I would like to direct your attention to two charts on my right here. They show the striking achievements of the U.S. Customs Service with the interdiction of cocaine and heroin between 1985 and 1994.

The total amount of narcotics seized in those 10 years by Customs is staggering: a total of 1.4 million pounds or just over 702 tons of cocaine and a total of 17,000 pounds or almost 8½ tons of heroin. These figures reflect the excellent and continuous work of the men and women of the Customs Service in frustrating the narcotic industry's ever-shifting and sometimes overwhelming attempts to get their products to America's streets.

Skeptics respond to these numbers by arguing that drug usage has not changed appreciably and that the volume of drugs entering our borders continues to be very high. They sometimes draw the conclusion that drug interdiction is a fruitless endeavor. We strongly disagree with this conclusion.

We believe that if we recognize and learn from our shortcomings and build upon our successes, Customs can and will be more effective. But I think the thing that has to be kept in mind is that interdiction alone cannot solve the drug problem.

We cannot stop the drug problem by interdicting all the drugs that enter this country. We have to have a more comprehensive strategy and approach. Interdiction is an essential component of a comprehensive strategy.

But unless you deal with the demand side as well as the supply side, interdiction alone will never be enough. But to put it bluntly, drug trafficking and drug abuse statistics persuade us at the U.S. Customs Service that we should give even more of an effort, not that we should abandon our efforts at interdiction.

I would like to briefly outline for you our approach to drug interdiction over the last 10 years. In the mid-1980's Customs determined that we could make our best contribution to the national supply reduction effort by concentrating on cocaine and specifically the large loads of several hundred kilos of cocaine.

Our approach was to systematically close the door to large loads of cocaine, beginning with the traffickers' favorite means of smuggling. With this in mind, Customs established and maintained the following narcotics interdiction systems. First, the establishment of an air interdiction system. Twenty years ago, the preferred method among drug traffickers of sending cocaine into the United States was by plane.

It was not uncommon for those flights to carry 1,000 pounds or more. Customs responded with a high-tech system based on aerostats, C3I, air interdiction coordination centers, ground-based radar, P3AEW aircraft, interceptor and traffic aircraft and interdiction helicopters. It proved to be an overwhelming success. The smuggling of cocaine by private planes into this country is today almost unheard of.

Second was the establishment of a strong marine program. As Customs succeeded in protecting our air borders, traffickers adopt-

ed a new means of smuggling. Shipments of cocaine were flown in or air dropped into Bahamian or other Gulf and Caribbean locations, picked up by fast boats and raced to south Florida shores.

In response, Customs established a marine program that included a fleet of fast boats and an alliance with State and local law enforcement to put a halt to this method of smuggling. This program, too, was largely successful as air drops and fast boats have receded as a method of entry of cocaine into the United States.

The third system dealt with the problem of cocaine in commercial cargo. As air and marine interdiction programs became more effective, traffickers turned their attention to smuggling in legitimate commercial cargo, primarily from South America. Customs' response was to establish contraband enforcement teams to focus our inspection efforts and improve our enforcement targeting systems, establish partnerships with air and sea carriers, apply x-ray and other technology to improve our inspections and employ the National Guard at ports of entry and use our penalty system as an incentive for carriers and importers to keep their shipments drug-free.

As a result of these and a myriad of other initiatives carried out intensively for over a decade, the nature of cocaine trafficking was altered substantially. Whereas Miami and south Florida had been the primary battleground, traffickers began to shift their business to other locations and means, particularly the Southwest border.

Now, this is not to say that Miami and south Florida are no longer major trafficking locations even today. Customs with DEA cooperation recently concluded an operation we called Operation Cornerstone that the U.S. attorney for southern Florida cited as the single most significant prosecution in the history against the Cali cartel.

Customs and DEA must and will maintain vigilance in south Florida as almost 30 percent of the cocaine for the U.S. market still enters through that geographic area. But the Southwest border has now emerged as the primary entry point for cocaine, and Customs, along with other law enforcement agencies, is strengthening its enforcement capabilities on our border with Mexico.

Please look at the next chart.

It illustrates what we call the windows of opportunity available to smugglers nationwide. I know that's difficult for some of you to see, but it just talks about the large geographic area that Customs is responsible for controlling and the number of air, land and sea passengers, cargo vessels and vehicles that enter our Nation every year.

Now, if you consider just the Southern border, our border with Mexico is almost 2,000 miles long. Last year, 2.7 million trucks, 84 million cars and 232 million people crossed our Southwest border through 38 ports of entry. These numbers are so staggering that if every container that crossed the Southwest border contained only 1 kilo of cocaine, you could meet the annual estimated demand of cocaine used in this country for 6 full years.

I have in my hand a kilo of simulated, not real, cocaine. This is just over 2.2 pounds. Consider the problem for our inspectors as cocaine gets broken down into smaller and smaller shipments. And

our big-load strategy is causing traffickers to do just that, reduce the load size.

Multiton seizures has hurt the traffickers. Customs has not only forced them to move west but they have reduced the size of their shipments.

Please now direct your attention to this chart. Looking back over the past decade, you can see the progression the cartels made to the large loads. The mid-1980's reflect the beginning of our concentration on air and marine interdiction programs. And then the progression to larger and larger shipments in cargo to the peak reached, as you can see, in fiscal year 1992.

In that year, Customs seized a record 240,000—243,365 pounds of cocaine and the average shipment was just over 113 pounds. Now, if you look at 1993 and 1994, the average size decreased 25 to 30 percent, reflecting the moderate decrease of cocaine shipments in cargo.

However, if you look at the figures for this year, to date our seizure size is now averaging just over 55 pounds, reflecting the shift to smaller and smaller shipments, thereby making them harder and harder to detect. Briefly, the current situation on the Southwest border is this: Customs is maintaining its air superiority at our borders.

Despite recent budgetary reductions, the Customs air program continues to maintain a reduced but effective fleet of interdiction and investigative support aircraft within the United States and Puerto Rico. The Border Patrol has substantially increased enforcement between the ports of entry, using the highly and justifiably acclaimed "hold the line" strategy along with newly announced improvements to highway checkpoint operations.

The Border Patrol, in conjunction with DOD and the National Guard, is building fences which substantially improve our enforcement against trafficking between the ports of entry, and Customs is now strengthening its enforcement efforts at the ports of entry through what we call Operation Hard Line.

Smugglers now hard-pressed to get their illegal narcotics into the country have turned to desperate means. This development, a relatively recent phenomenon over the last couple of years we call port-running, became widespread in late 1994 and during the first quarter of 1995.

In fiscal year 1994, largely as a result of border patrols, increased pressure that I talked about earlier between the ports of entry, we saw a tripling of instances of port-running to nearly 800. Port-running involves driving aggressively and recklessly through the port of entry and avoiding capture by any means available.

Port running has resulted in cars full of innocent civilians being rammed by smugglers anxious to escape no matter what the cost. The problem escalated to the point that in January and February of this year, Customs expected two to three instances of port-running per day; even worse, shooting instances began to average one incident per month and injuries to our border officers and civilians related to port-running were increasing at an alarming rate.

It was in response to this increasing level of violence at the ports of entry along the Southwest border that Operation Hard Line was created. After several months of development with Customs person-

nel and the invaluable support of ONDCP, on February 25th of this year, Dr. Lee Brown and I jointly announced a new way of doing business for the Customs Service along the Southwest border.

To address the problems of border violence and narcotics port-running, Customs is strengthening and tightening the ports of entry through facility improvements and the use of technology. Jersey barriers, fixed and pneumatic bollards, speed bumps, gates, stop sticks, which are sticks you throw underneath a tire that would cause it to—to deflate before it could go very far, aviation and narcotics detection dogs are all being used to identify and control suspect vehicles.

Each major cargo crossing along the border has received numerous other high-tech tools such as pallet x-rays, x-ray vans, fiber optic scopes, density meters and laser range finders. Since 1990, $11 million in high-intensity drug-trafficking area-funded initiatives have been allocated to support special operations and the purchase of equipment. In addition to the new cargo examination facilities, Customs is operating a full container x-ray located in the import lot at Otay Mesa, CA.

This is the first x-ray of its kind in any port in the United States. It allows us to examine whole tractors and trailers at one time.

They drive through, almost like you would drive through a car wash with your vehicle. Funding has been received and another container x-ray system will soon be placed in El Paso, TX. Customs is exploring the possibility of placing additional container x-ray machines at cargo locations along the Southwest border as funds become available.

Operation Hard Line is presently relocating 50 Customs agents to the Southwest border to provide investigative support and provide an onsite response at the ports of entry. These moves represent the first stage of a Customs response that will eventually involve a total of 100 Customs agents being moved from elsewhere in the country to the Southwest border where they can be moved more effectively.

At the largest ports, Customs is forming cross functional teams of agents, intelligence analysts and inspectors to research commercial entities and identify high risk targets. Customs has also implemented a system that provides for multiple enforcement screening elements to be conducted across the flow of traffic at passenger and cargo processing areas within our ports to increase narcotics seizures.

During these operations, Customs inspectors and canine teams conduct unannounced and unscheduled intensive examinations on arriving conveyances. Are we achieving success on the Southwest border with Operation Hard Line?

It may be too soon for any sweeping conclusions to be made. However, looking at the statistics from the first months of the operation, I believe that we are showing some successes.

On the Southwest border, the amount of narcotics seized from January through May of this year versus the same period last year is up 42 percent for cocaine, 330 percent for heroin and 13 percent for marijuana. And most importantly, the number of port-running incidents has been reduced by 38 percent.

Customs is justifiably proud of Operation Hard Line. It is a bold, innovative change in the way Customs operates. Customs developed Operation Hard Line using a new technique called problem-oriented policing, again, with the helpful support of ONDCP. This new approach uses multidisciplined, cross-functional teams to address the problems we face rather than the symptoms.

In the case of drug smuggling, the problem solving team is looking for ways to stop smuggling rather than to arrest more smugglers. I believe that this will be successful in the long run. Customs efforts to stop drug smuggling do not end at our borders.

The Customs aviation program which was discussed somewhat earlier is a critical element of the President's international drug control strategy which embraces the philosophy of attacking the narcotics problem at its source. The chart before you now provides an illustration of the level of our air support to the President's source and transit zone drug control initiative.

In the South American source countries, Customs, in cooperation with the U.S. Southern Command, conducts detection and monitoring missions using Customs P–3AEW aircraft and P–3 "Slick" aircraft. Whether flying solo or paired together in a "Double Eagle" formation, these two aircraft account for some 45 percent of the U.S. Government's airborne detection and monitoring effort in South America.

This year, in cooperation with the Department of Defense, Customs is expanding its support—to the President's international drug control strategy by dedicating four Citation II aircraft and five crews to support South American source country counterdrug initiatives. These aircraft, whose operating costs are being funded by the Department of Defense, are being used to augment current air interdiction efforts in the region as well to train South American host nation forces in airborne intercept and tracking tactics.

The Customs strategy outlined is only a summary of a very long-term commitment by this agency to the Nation's drug enforcement effort. We have only highlighted a limited number of initiatives and could also have discussed our pioneer work on drug money laundering issues culminating in a case against BCCI, our cooperative air initiative with Mexico, which I know many members have already expressed interest in, our efforts to attract heroin trafficking through Customs organizations worldwide and other operational issues involving our P–3 aircraft which remain a centerpiece of the international strategy.

We remain committed to working in partnership with ONDCP and DEA in the fight against drug trafficking. We have a Memorandum of Understanding with DEA that has given Title 21 drug investigative authority to about 1,250 Customs special agents. This authority clearly enhances Customs' ability to perform interdiction activities, as well as to develop intelligence information on the criminal organizations responsible for drug smuggling.

Customs has made substantial progress over the decades and is driving the traffickers to new extremes and to new frontiers. The Southwest border we hope may be the last frontier. We will pursue our Hard Line initiative and we are confident that it will produce a substantial measure of success as the U.S. Border Patrol continues to employ their "hold the line" strategy.

Earlier in my testimony, I briefly touched upon Operation Cornerstone. It is perhaps one of the best examples of how the various elements of the Customs Service function as an integrated team whose value is much greater than the sum of its parts.

Operation Cornerstone is one of the most important and wide-ranging investigations in Customs history. This comprehensive investigation began in 1991 when Customs inspectors used a newly developed container targeting strategy, discovered 32,000 pounds of cocaine concealed within a shipment of concrete posts, then 14,400 pounds in a shipment of frozen broccoli, and another 13,600 pounds buried within a shipment of coffee.

The subsequent investigation conducted by our Office of Investigations determined that those seizures were related. At that point, Customs agents initiated a wide-scale investigation, supported by Customs intelligence analysts, import specialists, pilots, air officers and various other support personnel. The investigation resulted in the seizure of over $1 million in outbound currency and led to the just recently announced indictments of 59 individuals, including six attorneys.

Operation Cornerstone represents an insider's look at the Cali cartel's drug distribution network, money laundering system and the organizational support for its members, both here in the United States and in Colombia. Cornerstone was one of Customs' most comprehensive investigations into the operations of the Cali Cartel. It exposed the Cali Cartel's attempts to undermine the Colombian judicial system, their breeding of tyranny throughout their own country and their attempts to export that tyranny across the world.

As a result of this investigation, we have uncovered far-reaching information regarding six major smuggling routes used by the cartel to move hundreds of thousands of pounds of cocaine into the United States since the early 1980's. The investigation also uncovered similar far-reaching information regarding the methods used by cartel-funded attorneys in the United States.

These attorneys assisted cartel associates and took questionable steps to prevent the prosecution of cartel members in Colombia and the United States. Absent any one element of that Customs comprehensive approach, Cornerstone would be something less than what it is today. Without Customs inspectors and canine officers, the original seizure would never have occurred.

Without the investigators, Customs would have been left with only the seizures, leaving in place the individuals and the financial infrastructure. Obviously if left in place, these same individuals and their almost inexhaustible financial resources would have continued to attack our Nation. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the interdiction efforts and the strategy of the Customs Service are essential to the success of the national drug strategy. And as I hope I've illustrated to you today, the Customs Service is playing an important role in attempting to close the avenues of opportunity to drug smugglers at our Nation's borders.

I thank you very much for the opportunity to appear and I welcome any questions you have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Weise follows:]

THE HONORABLE GEORGE WEISE
COMMISSIONER
U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the role of the United States Customs Service in drug interdiction.

THE CUSTOMS NARCOTICS INTERDICTION STRATEGY

As you are aware, as the Nation's principal border agency, the mission of the Customs Service is to ensure that all goods entering and exiting the United States do so in accordance with all United States laws and regulations. It is from this mandate that Customs narcotics interdiction responsibility emanates.

Many years ago, as this nation began to recognize the harm that the narcotics trafficking industry was wreaking on our society, Customs began developing narcotics-specific strategies. While the goal of these strategies - to prevent the smuggling of drugs into the United States by creating an effective interdiction and investigative capability that disrupts and dismantles smuggling organizations - has changed little over the years, the methods that Customs employs to achieve this goal have changed.

Customs current narcotics strategy has eight main objectives:

- To develop and enhance the collection, analysis, and dissemination of actionable intelligence through increased cooperation among all agencies involved in narcotics enforcement.
- To reduce the permeability of the U.S. border through enhanced surveillance and interdiction efforts.
- To focus interdiction efforts to deny the smuggler access to the air space between the source and transit countries and the border of the United States.
- To develop the electronic information systems to more effectively target high-risk cargo, conveyances, and persons at the ports of entry while facilitating the free flow of legitimate travel and trade.
- To develop and implement more efficient, less intrusive technology and techniques to identify smuggled narcotics.
- To conduct a variety of independent and multi-agency investigative programs.
- To increase the level of voluntary compliance through outreach programs to the trade community and general public.
- To work with other nations to disrupt the worldwide smuggling of narcotics.

OPERATION HARD LINE

Today, it is estimated that 70% of our nation's supply of cocaine enters via our border with Mexico. Accordingly, this region is the current focus of Customs narcotics strategy.

On February 25, 1995, Dr. Lee Brown, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy and I jointly announced a new way of doing business for the Customs Service along the Southwest border. The Customs initiative, Operation **Hard Line**, permanently relocates fifty (50) Customs agents to the Southwest border to provide investigative support and provide an on-site response at the ports of entry. These moves represent the first stage of a Customs response that will eventually involve a total of 100 Customs agents being moved to the Southwest border. At the largest ports, Customs is forming cross-functional teams of agents, intelligence analysts, and inspectors to research commercial entities and identify high-risk targets. See Attachment 1 for **Hard Line** specifics.

To address the problems of border violence and narcotics port running, Customs is strengthening and tightening the ports of entry through facility improvements and the use of technology. Jersey barriers, fixed and pneumatic bollards, speed bumps, gates, stop-sticks (controlled deflation of tires), aviation, and canine resources are all being used to identify and control suspect vehicles.

Each major cargo crossing along the border has received numerous other high-tech tools such as pallet x-rays, x-ray vans, fiber-optic scopes, density meters and laser range finders. Since 1990, $11 million in High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) funded initiatives have been allocated to support special operations (STOP, TRUNK, SOUTHBOUND, IMPERIAL VALLEY, etc.) and the purchase of equipment. In addition to the new cargo examination facilities, Customs is operating a full container x-ray located in the import lot at Otay Mesa, California. This is the first x-ray of its kind at any port in the United States. It allows us to examine whole tractors and trailers at one time. Funding has been received and another container x-ray system will be placed in El Paso, Texas. Customs is exploring the possibility of placing additional container x-ray machines at cargo locations along the Southwest border.

As part of our campaign against port runners, our Special Agent In Charge in El Paso led an investigation called Operation *Road Runner*, with the participation of DEA and the El Paso Police Department. This investigation used a full arsenal of investigative techniques, including surveillance, undercover work, source and cooperating defendant debriefings, post seizure analysis, and a Title III wire tap. As a result of this work, it was learned that a smuggling organization based in Juarez, Mexico, was primarily using port runners as a means of transporting their narcotics into the United States. Drivers were recruited and paid $7,000 per load of cocaine and $5,500 per load of marijuana. To increase the chance of success, they used "spotters" to profile the primary vehicle lanes and watch for inspector rotations, blitzes, pre-primary roving, or anything out of the ordinary. Communication was maintained with the spotters through cellular phones, digital pagers, and two-way radios. It is believed that this one organization was responsible for approximately 220 port running incidents and 3

shooting incidents. At present, a total of 26 members of this organization have been arrested, including the head of the organization. This operation has also resulted in the seizure of over 7,000 pounds of cocaine and over 2,500 pounds of marijuana. The dismantling of this organization has been one factor in significantly reducing the number of port runners in El Paso.

Customs has also implemented a system which provides for multiple enforcement screening elements to be conducted across the flow of traffic at passenger and cargo processing areas within our ports to increase narcotics seizures. During these operations, Customs Inspectors and Canine Teams form roving teams to conduct unannounced and unscheduled intensive examinations on arriving conveyances.

In order to improve intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination related to Southwest border smuggling, Customs is proposing to expand the development of a core group of intelligence production units modeled after the multi-discipline approach. Their sole purpose will be to bridge information obstacles and compartmentalization, including foreign intelligence, and assist in interdiction and enforcement operations. The complete implementation of this concept will establish standardization in intelligence collection and targeting.

Are we achieving success along the Southwest border with Operation **Hard Line**? It may be too soon for any sweeping conclusions to be made. However, looking at the statistics from the first months of the operation, I believe that we are showing some successes. On the Southwest border, the amount of narcotics seized from January through May of this year versus the same period last year is up 42 percent for cocaine, 330 percent for heroin, and 13 percent for marijuana. The number of port runners was reduced 38 percent.

Customs is justifiably proud of **Hard Line**. The support we have received from every level of this administration is gratifying, especially the support from Deputy Secretary Frank N. Neuman for his commitment to this program and help in carrying it forward as an important element in a balanced approach to the drug interdiction problem. Operation **Hard Line** is a bold, innovative change in the way Customs operates: Customs developed Operation **Hard Line** using a new technique called problem-oriented policing. This new approach uses multi-disciplined, cross-functional teams to address the problems we face rather than the symptoms. In the case of drug smuggling, the problem solving team is looking for ways to stop smuggling rather than to arrest more smugglers. I believe that this will be successful in the long run.

The smuggler is currently attempting to exploit the southwest border, in part, due to the successes of Customs prior counterdrug strategies and programs in other areas. See Attachment 2 for illustrations of the evolution of the smuggling threat.

SMUGGLING VIA PRIVATE AIRCRAFT AND VESSELS

Eleven years ago, South Florida was becoming inundated with cocaine and the related violence associated with narcotic trafficking. An incident at a Dade County shopping center, where a horrifying shootout killed innocent civilians, focused the nation's attention upon the cocaine problem and the flood of cocaine entering through South Florida.

Narcotics-laden private aircraft were landing with great frequency at clandestine airstrips and deserted areas throughout South Florida. In response, the Customs Aviation Program was expanded in both size and sophistication to enhance our detection, pursuit and apprehension capabilities along the border and within the United States. Downward looking aerostat radar balloons were being deployed in the Caribbean to assist in the detection effort. A Treasury Enforcement Communication System - FAA interface was developed which provided field offices flight plan information and the results of intelligence checks within 30 seconds of receipt by the FAA. System modifications were made to support private aircraft enforcement that included an aircraft tracking system and new aircraft lookout procedures.

By 1982, the Customs Air Program was becoming increasingly effective against the air smuggler in South Florida. Consequently, the smuggler resorted to air dropping loads of cocaine to high speed boats and smaller, seeming innocuous vessels off the coast of South Florida. In order to react to this threat, a comprehensive Marine program was initiated. Marine modules were created utilizing a radar platform and two high-speed interceptor vessels and a tightening of reporting requirements for all vessels was developed and instituted.

Due to Customs interdiction successes in Florida's airways and coastal waterways, smugglers were forced to resort other avenues. In the late 1980's, smugglers began flying the lengthy route from Colombia, over Mexico, and across the Southwest border to land at locations within the Southwestern United States. By this time, Customs had already expanded its Air Program to encompass the entire Southern U.S. border. The network of aerostats were deployed to the Southwest border to provide comprehensive radar coverage, while additional aircraft, specifically configured for the air interdiction mission, were acquired to enhance our ability to intercept and apprehend suspect aircraft. The expansion of the aerostat network along the Southwest Border, the creation of the C3I air interdiction coordination centers, and the enhancement of the Customs fleet of interdiction aircraft - to include the acquisition and deployment of Customs P-3 Airborne Early Warning and long range tracking aircraft - eventually resulted in restricting the smuggler access to the Southwest air bridge as well.

SMUGGLING VIA CARGO AND COMMERCIAL CONVEYANCES

Having restricted access to U.S. airways, the smuggler had to identify and employ alternative, more costly, and more complex methods of transporting contraband into the United States via the ports of entry.

Every conceivable method of concealment was being used to facilitate the smuggling of narcotics in commercial cargo. Contraband Enforcement Teams, made up of inspectional personnel and canine teams, were formed as a dedicated resource to target and inspect high-risk cargo and conveyances. In Miami, 500 pound-plus shipments of cocaine were being discovered in shipments of cut flowers on an almost daily basis. Around the country, multi-ton cocaine loads were being found in shipments of frozen shrimp, frozen orange juice concentrate, textiles, and bags of coffee. No merchandise was immune from use by the Colombian cartels since they were disguising themselves as legitimate businesses. If the cocaine was not in the commodities being shipped, then the container itself was suspect. Containers were modified with false walls, ceilings and floors. By the late 1980's, approximately 7 million containers entered the United States, therefore Customs developed a container specific interdiction strategy.

This strategy, still in national use today, targets suspect shipments prior to arrival using advance manifest information from the carriers. Customs also began to work closely with DEA and with intelligence agencies to place more intelligence emphasis on the use of commercial shipments by narcotics traffickers. Personnel were dedicated to convert this intelligence into tactical targets in our Automated Commercial System. Customs also established Centralized Examination Stations or CESs to perform more intensive, less intrusive examinations of containerized cargo.

As Customs became successful in interdicting cocaine in cargo, smuggling organizations began using carriers themselves as the next means of transporting the contraband. Hundreds of pounds of cocaine were being detected hidden aboard commercial ocean going cargo vessels and aircraft. Cocaine was being located in areas accessible to only company employees or their contract employees. Customs, as provided by law, began to seize in earnest cargo ships and various aircraft since they were repetitively used in the importation of narcotics into the United States. Customs then launched a campaign to form initiatives with sea carriers and the airline industry. These initiatives evolved into agreements in which the carriers agreed to undertake specific security measures to prevent and deter the use of their conveyances for the smuggling of narcotics and other contraband.

To address the ongoing threat, Customs increased the numbers and expanded the location of canine detector teams because of their effectiveness. These teams became an essential component of the newly formed Contraband Enforcement Teams. These teams were comprised of inspectors and canine enforcement officers dedicated to perform a thorough examination of persons, conveyances, and cargo determined to be high risk. In 1986, the first year of national operation, the Contraband Enforcement Teams were responsible for 30 percent of the heroin and 28 percent of the cocaine seized by Customs throughout the United States.

To assist the inspectional staff in their interdiction efforts, various types of high technology inspectional equipment were developed, acquired, and placed in high-risk ports of entry. For example, the world's first automatic currency reader for tracing drug money was developed

and built by Customs. Customs built small parcel x-ray systems which were deployed nationwide. Mobile x-ray systems were delivered to over 40 locations for use in detecting contraband in both incoming/outgoing cargo and baggage.

THE SHIFT TO THE SOUTHWEST BORDER

In 1990, during the course of a Customs investigation, a tunnel was discovered in Arizona that ran from a house on the Mexican side of the border to a warehouse in the United States. A second investigation led to the detection of another tunnel in 1993 near Otay Mesa, California. In both cases, the tunnels were highly sophisticated in their design to simplify the movement of cocaine unto the United States. However, the discovery of these tunnels once again forced the organizations to look for alternate smuggling procedures.

Next, the traffickers resorted to smuggling the narcotics between the ports of entry. This was successful until the Border Patrol began their operations between the ports with Hold the Line and Gatekeeper. The presence of Border Patrol officers, every several hundred feet or so in high traffic areas, forced the traffickers to abandon that course of action and look elsewhere. That "elsewhere" was directly through our ports of entry along the Southwest border.

The smugglers turned to breaking down the multi-ton shipments of narcotics and placing loads of between 500 to 700 pounds within trunks of cars. Intelligence gathered subsequent to the September, 1989 Sylmar, California, seizure of 21 tons of cocaine indicated the use of this method. As we became more proficient in the detection of narcotics in vehicles and in cargo at the ports of entry, another development took place.

Smugglers, pressed to get their illegal narcotics into the country, turned to desperate means. This development, called "port running," became widespread in late 1994 and during the first quarter of 1995. Port running involves driving aggressively through the port of entry and avoiding capture by any means available. Port running has resulted in cars full of innocent civilians being rammed by smugglers anxious to escape no matter what the cost. In 1994, there were 795 instances of known port-running on the Southwest Border. This escalation reached the point that in January and February of this year, Customs expected 2-3 instances a day. Even worse, shooting incidents began to average one incident per month and injuries to our border officers and civilians related to port running were increasing at an alarming rate. It was in response to this increased level of violence at the ports of entry along the Southwest border that Operation Hardline was created and announced by Dr. Brown and I at San Ysidro, California in February 1995.

MONEY LAUNDERING

In addition to our interdiction efforts at and between the ports of entry, Customs supports the National Drug Control Strategy to dismantle narcotic smuggling organizations by playing a major role in money laundering investigations. In the 1980's, South Florida was the major location for money laundering and the exportation of narcotic profits. Armed with provisions incorporated by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986, Customs used the authority to conduct complex, covert, money-laundering investigations. Customs aggressively launched a full-scale program to close down the avenues available to smugglers in exporting their ill-gotten gains. Through a variety of intelligence, interdiction, and investigative strategies, Customs prevented the illegal exportation of millions of dollars of hard currency a year out of South Florida. Customs found cash hidden in freezers, air conditioner parts, engine blocks, rolls of candy, and even teddy bears. A number of these seizures led to major investigations of illicit financial institutions both in our country and abroad. These operations seek to identify and target financial manipulative systems, criminal organizations, and professional money managers who launder illicit proceeds. During the last several years, Customs undercover money laundering projects alone were responsible for the seizure of over $514 million in cash and real property. In addition to these dollar valued seizures, these projects were also directly responsible for the seizure of over 13 tons of cocaine and over 1300 arrests.

Customs initiated Operation CHOZA RICA, an investigation targeting money laundering violations of numerous *Casa De Cambios* or money exchanges that operate on both sides of the U.S.- Mexican border. The first stage of the investigation led to the return of a 63 count indictment issued by a Federal grand jury for both money laundering and currency reporting violations against a *Casa De Cambio* in McAllen, Texas. The second stage of the investigation in 1992, resulted in the issuance of a 25 count money laundering indictment. Cumulatively, the first two stages of investigation resulted in 23 indictments, 15 arrests, 15 convictions, and the seizure of currency and assets totalling about $ 50 million. The third stage of the operation resulted in an 18 count indictment against 7 individuals who were responsible for laundering over $30 million in drug proceeds for an organization based in Matamoros and Monterey, Mexico. This organization is believed to be responsible for the shipment of multi-ton quantities of cocaine into the United States. In total, the Customs Service has seized almost $30 million of the organization's assets. See Attachment 3 for an explanation of Customs Money Laundering authority.

OPERATION CORNERSTONE

Perhaps one of the best examples of how the various elements of the Customs Service function as an integrated team - whose value is greater than the sum of its parts - is Operation *Cornerstone*, one of the most important and wide-ranging investigations in Customs history. This comprehensive investigation began in 1991 when Customs inspectors, using the newly developed container targeting strategy, discovered 32,301 pounds of cocaine concealed within a shipment of concrete posts, then 14,461 pounds in a shipment of frozen broccoli and

another 13,677 pounds buried within a shipment of coffee. The subsequent investigation conducted by our Office of Investigations determined that those seizures were related. At that point Customs agents initiated a wide scale investigation, supported by Customs intelligence analysts, import specialists, pilots, air officers, and various other support personnel. The investigation resulted in the seizure of over a million dollars in outbound currency, and led to the just recently announced indictments of 59 individuals including six attorneys.

Operation *Cornerstone* represents an insider's look at the Cali Cartel's drug distribution network, money laundering system, and the organizational support for its members both here in the United States and Colombia. *Cornerstone* was one of Customs most comprehensive investigations into the operations of the Cali Cartel. It exposed the Cali Cartel's attempts to undermine the Colombian judicial system, their breeding of tyranny throughout their own country, and their attempts to export that tyranny. As a result of this investigation, we have uncovered far-reaching information regarding six major smuggling routes used by the Cartel to move hundreds of thousands of pounds of cocaine into the United States since the early 1980's. The investigation also uncovered similar far-reaching information regarding the methods used by Cartel funded attorneys in the United States. These attorneys assisted Cartel associates and took questionable steps to prevent the prosecution of Cartel members in Colombia and the United States.

Absent any one element of the Customs approach, *Cornerstone* would be something less than what it is today. Without Customs Inspectors and Canine Officers, the original seizure would never have occurred. Without the investigators, Customs would have been left with only the seizure, leaving in place the individuals and financial infrastructure. Obviously, if left in place, these same individuals and their almost inexhaustible financial resources would have continued to attack this nation with their monstrous commodity. Attachment 4 provides additional details on this successful operation.

SUPPORTING THE PRESIDENT'S INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY

Customs long ago realized that the protection of our nation's borders does not begin and end at an imaginary line drawn upon a ground, but extends to a commodity's point of origin. The philosophy of "thickening" the United States border is simple; the most sensitive point to control is the source.

In furtherance of its investigative efforts, Customs Special Agents work in foreign offices throughout the world to uncover schemes to illegally import goods into the United States. In the area of interdiction, Customs Aviation Program, in the late 1980's, adopted the "Defense-in-Depth" strategy in which Customs radar aircraft would patrol north of the South American continent to detect narco-trafficking aircraft departing Colombia in route to the United States.

Of course, combatting illegal activity beyond our traditional borders requires some level of will and cooperation on the part of the foreign governments. Under the leadership of President Clinton and Dr. Brown, this Administration has accomplished much in the area of developing this requisite will and cooperation with many key narcotic source and transit countries.

A critical element of the President's International Drug Control Strategy, which embraces the philosophy of attacking the narcotics problem at its source, is the Customs Aviation Program. In the South American source countries, Customs, in cooperation with the United States Southern Command, conducts detection and monitoring missions utilizing Customs P-3 AEW and P-3 "Slick" aircraft. Whether flying solo or paired together in a "Double Eagle" formation, these two aircraft account for some 45 percent of the U.S. government's airborne detection and monitoring effort in South America and last year fully tracked 80% of the narco-trafficking aircraft they acquired in the source zone.

Because of their extraordinary effectiveness, Customs P-3 aircraft have been praised by the former Commander in Chief of the United States Southern Command, General George Joulwan, as the "workhorses" in our fight against the narco-trafficker. We continue to enjoy similar support from the current Commander in Chief, General Barry McCaffrey. Customs P-3 "Slick" aircraft are currently undergoing modifications to incorporate sensor systems which should greatly enhance the type and quality of support that our P-3 aircraft provide to the President's international and domestic drug control initiatives.

This year, in cooperation with the Department of Defense, Customs is expanding its support to the President's international drug control strategy by dedicating 4 Citation II aircraft and 5 crews to support South American source country counterdrug initiatives. These aircraft, whose operating costs are being funded by the Department of Defense, are being used to augment current air interdiction efforts in the region as well as to train South American host nation forces in airborne intercept and tracking tactics.

In the transit zone, Customs maintains, at locations in Central America and Mexico, 5 Citation II aircraft to assist in intercepting and tracking narco-trafficking aircraft departing South America. These aircraft in Mexico provide training to Mexican air officers in the tactics of airborne intercept and tracking. This Mexican training initiative, which is conducted under the aegis of the DEA Operation HALCON, began in 1991 and has been extraordinarily successful. Today, the Government of Mexico successfully acquires and assumes control over virtually every drug trafficking aircraft that U.S. interdiction forces track to their country.

Customs P-3 aircraft, which conduct regular detection and monitoring missions in the transit zone, have enjoyed similar success. Customs P-3 aircraft, which, in terms of quantity and cost, make up a relatively small percentage of the U.S. government's efforts in the region, last year contributed to some 40 percent of the cocaine seizures made in the transit zone. So far this year, Customs P-3 efforts in the transit zone have resulted in the seizure of 7.6 pounds of

cocaine for every hour the aircraft have flown. Customs aircraft have also been instrumental in achieving some of the recent successes against the jet cargo smuggler in the transit zone.

To further enhance foreign host nations' ability to counter the narcotics production and trafficking threat in their countries, Customs supports a variety of international training programs.

Customs has a well established international money laundering training program. During the course of week-long seminars, Customs instructs participants on the development and refinement of effective legislation to disrupt and dismantle money laundering activities. Participants in these seminars include executive level policy makers in the legislative, enforcement and banking community who are essential to the formulation of effective legislation and enforcement initiatives. Since Customs began these seminars 2 years ago, recipient countries have instituted pertinent legislation and/or reemphasized their efforts.

Other training that Customs offers to the international community include courses in Contraband Enforcement Team (CET) tactics, cargo selectivity, and intelligence analysis procedures.

ENHANCING OUR CAPABILITIES

So as to ensure that Customs remains on the forefront of supporting the National Drug Control Strategy, and will continue to realize successes such as Operation Cornerstone, Customs is in the process of implementing a variety of operational and technological enhancements.

We convened an expert group of Customs employees to review our narcotics interdiction vulnerability in commercial cargo and conveyances. Those systems that need to be improved or refined will be given priority attention. Since our employees are very aware of potential weaknesses in our systems, we are involving them in looking for solutions. A strategic plan to implement the recommendations is now being finalized and will include short- and long-term solutions.

Later this year, we will place a prototype advanced targeting system at a major southern land border crossing. This system will be rule-based with artificial intelligence principles. Each commercial transaction will be compared against 300 rules developed by border inspectors in order to separate high risk shipments from legitimate ones.

The largest Customs elective training initiative in fiscal year 1994 was the training of over 300 southern border officers in cargo narcotic interdiction techniques. This training included inspection techniques, including behavioral analysis and proper utilization of high tech equipment. During fiscal year 1995, an additional 240 officers will complete this training.

Customs is actively promoting interagency cooperation. Collaboration between Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies will bridge any gaps in enforcement along the Southwest border. A coordinated approach among Federal, State, and local entities will ensure that a full range of experience and expertise is applied efficiently across all levels of drug trafficking spectrum. Some multi-agency task force programs, such as the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) and HIDTA bring together Federal, State, and local law enforcement and prosecutorial officers with a commonality of purpose and direction.

Customs has several automated and non-automated cargo processing initiatives in place to identify high-risk shipments. It is the concurrent implementation of all these systems which permits Customs to facilitate legitimate trade through our borders and enforce laws and regulations related to commercial trade violations and narcotic smuggling. Some of our automated programs include Cargo Selectivity within our Automated Commercial System (ACS), the Three-Tier Targeting System, and the Line Release Program.

In support of our automated commercial processing systems, Customs has implemented initiatives to target drivers, carriers, and conveyances.

CUSTOMS REORGANIZATION

While we are changing the way Customs operates externally, we are also making changes internally. Under the Administration's reinvention principles and our own reorganization proposals, we believe we can meet future challenges without continually requesting additional resources if we have the latitude to reduce overhead and reinvest resources into front-line operations at the ports of entry, and in state-of-the-art information systems and technology. We have been greatly encouraged and aided by Treasury Secretary Rubin and former Secretary Bentsen in our efforts to restructure the Customs Service.

Within our budget constraints, our reorganization calls for some major steps:

- A multi-year effort is underway to reduce Headquarters staffing by approximately 600 positions. We have already achieved a reduction in our Headquarters staffing of 153 full-time positions and 20 other-than-full-time positions, or about 29 percent of our goal.

- Reducing management layers from 4 to 3 by eliminating the seven Customs regions and 45 district and area offices, and replacing them with 20 management centers.

- Reinvesting personnel from Headquarters, regions, and districts into operational positions which will enhance our ability to focus our resources on law enforcement efforts.

In other words, by changing the way we manage the Customs Service, we will be able to change the way we do business - to deploy our resources to address the threats. And Customs will work with ONDCP to continually review our enforcement initiatives to ensure the most efficient use of our manpower in narcotic interdiction.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the interdiction efforts and the strategy of the Customs Service are essential to the success of the national drug strategy. And, as I hope to have illustrated to you today, the Customs Service is playing an important role in attempting to close the avenues of opportunity to drug smugglers at our nation's borders.

I welcome any questions that you might have.

Revised 6/26/95 - 1:40 pm

ATTACHMENT 1

o **OPERATION HARD LINE** o

Overview & Status

On February 25, 1995, the White House (Dr. Lee Brown) and the United States Customs Service formally announced the kick-off of a new, long-term initiative to address the problems of border violence and cocaine smuggling across our Southwest Border. Operation **HARD LINE** will focus on permanently hardening Customs anti-smuggling efforts in the ports of entry.

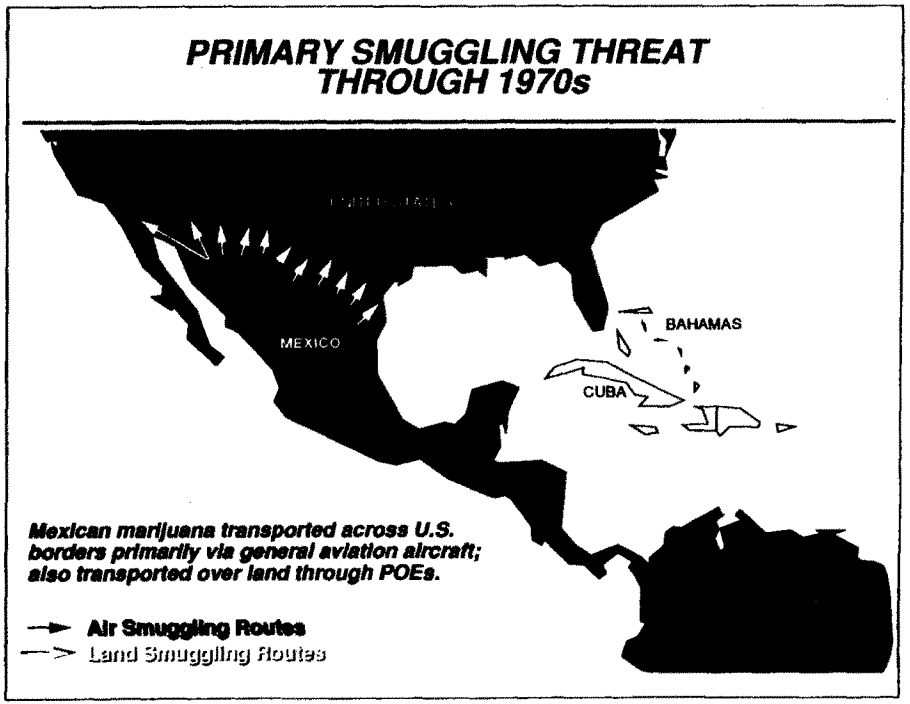
The major operational components of HARD LINE center on techniques to focus on: 1) targeting smuggling in vehicles and cargo; 2) investigations; and 3) intelligence support. Specifically, **HARD LINE** will emphasize pre-primary operations, including opening more trunks and roving inspections; performing more secondary inspections; purchase of additional cargo x-ray machines; performing more cargo searches; installing jersey barriers & bollards to manage traffic flow and serve as a deterrent; and providing a substantial increase in investigative support.

HARD LINE was developed using an innovative new technique called problem-oriented policing and as such will serve as a National Performance Review prototype (focusing on prevention and deterrence rather than increasing the rate of seizures and arrests).

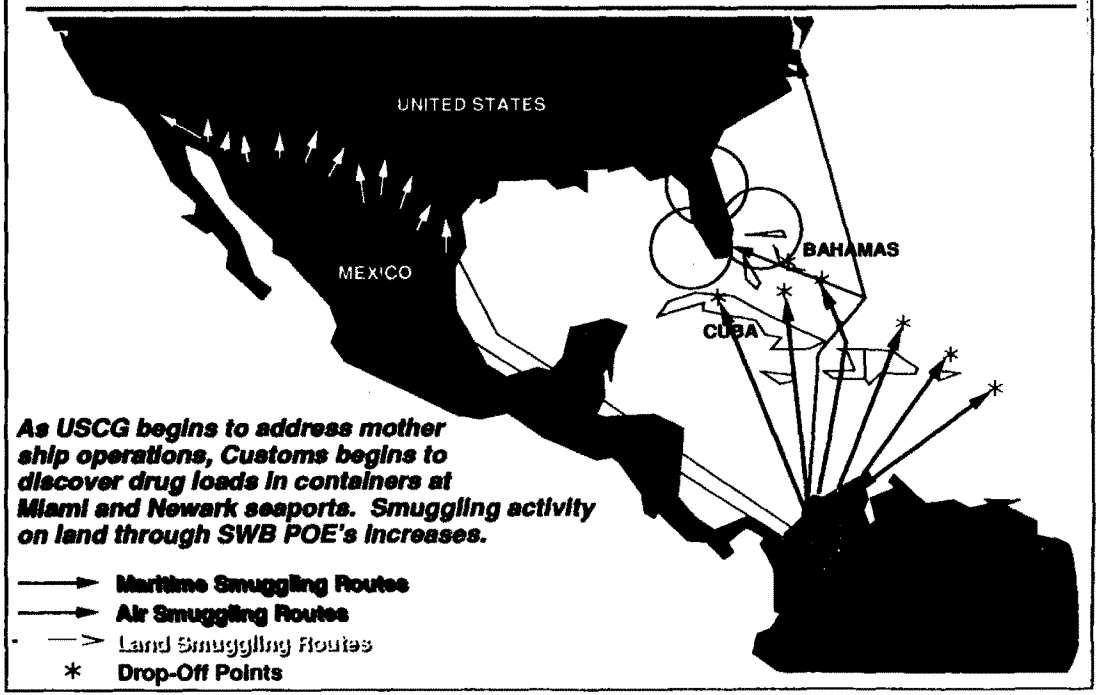
One specific measure of success for **HARD LINE** has been a 38% reduction in the numbers of instances of port-running. Since January, **HARD LINE** has been responsible a drop from 72 instances a month in January to 45 instances in May 1995. This is attributed, in large measure, to the installation of several cement K-rails in a maze-like configuration north of the vehicle primary booths. The maze of barricades considerably slows the speed of cars departing from primary and thus deterring port runners.

In the investigative area, **HARD LINE** resulted in the dismantling of a major port-running organization in El Paso. The group is reputed to have smuggled drugs in over 2,000 instances through the port of entry. Customs reports that as result of these arrests there was increase in the street price for a kilogram of cocaine from $8,000 to $12,000. Customs plans to move at least 60 additional agents to the Southwest Border this fiscal year in support of **HARD LINE**.

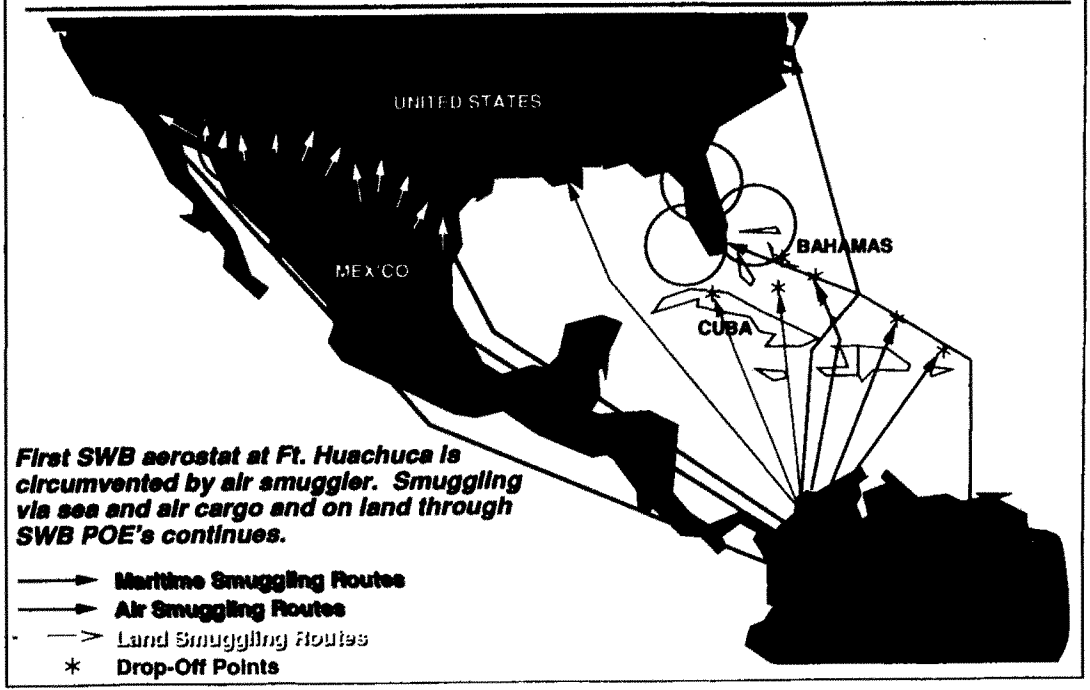
June 19, 1995


PRIMARY SMUGGLING THREAT
THROUGH 1970s
MEXICO
BAHAMAS
CUBA
Mexican marijuana transported across U.S. borders primarily via general aviation aircraft; also transported over land through POEs.
Air Smuggling Routes
Land Smuggling Routes

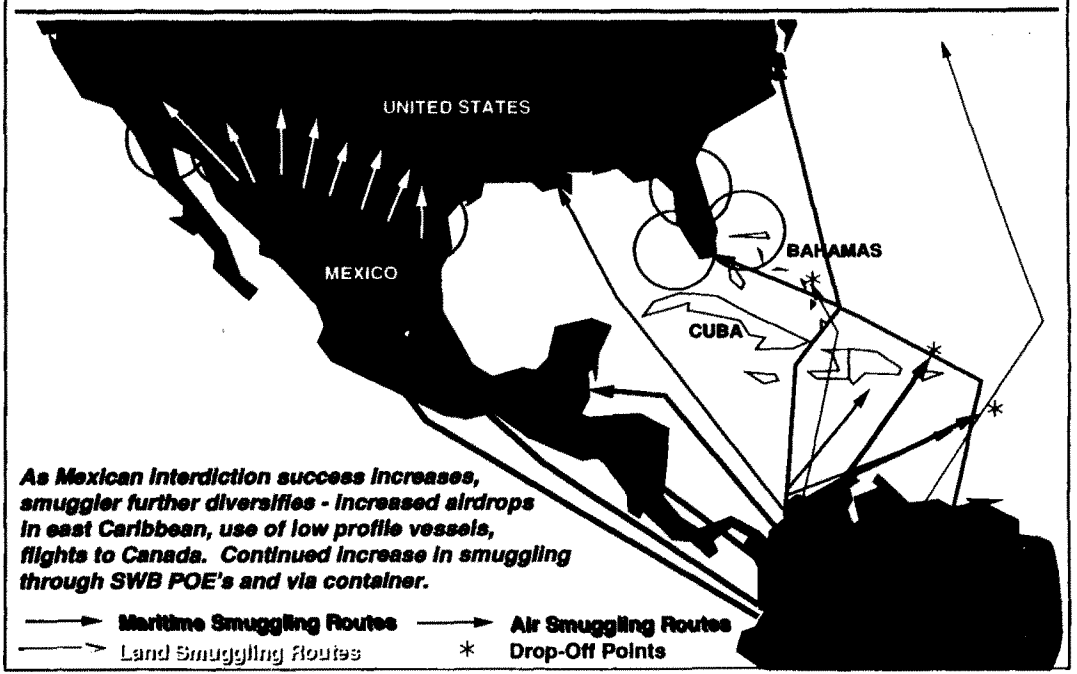
IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL AIR INTERDICTION STRATEGY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF BAHAMIAN ENFORCEMENT TEAMS DISPLACE SMUGGLER TO AIRDROPS IN CARIBBEAN & ROUTES OVER MEXICO MID 1980's



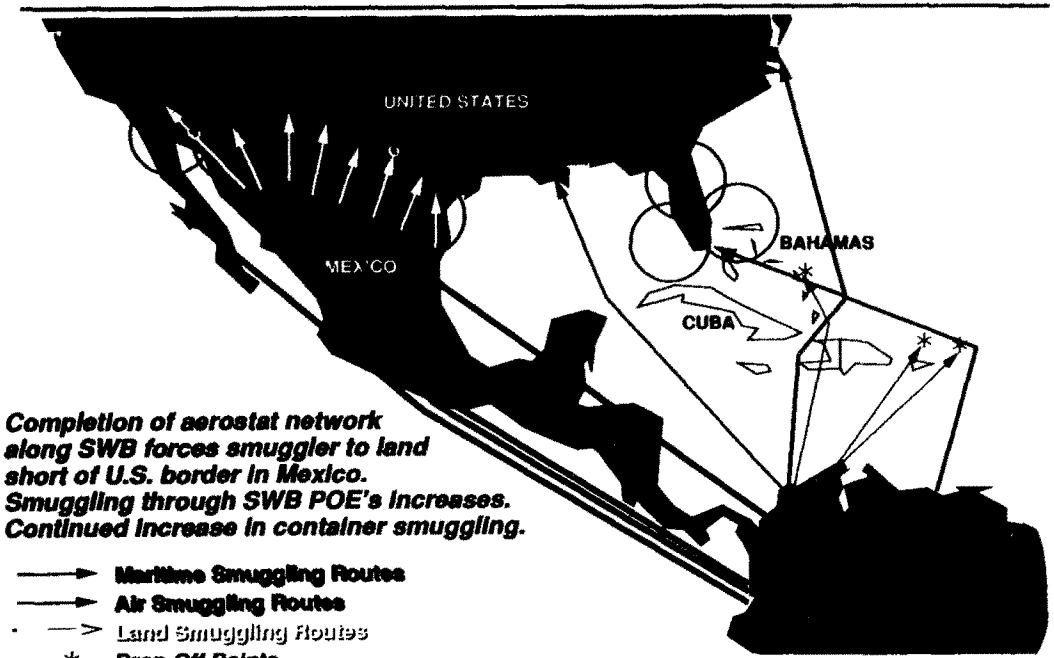
CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL AIR INTERDICTION STRATEGY RESULTS IN INCREASED USE OF AIR ROUTES OVER MEXICO LATE 1980's



NBRF SUCCESS DISPLACES SMUGGLER FURTHER FROM U.S. BORDER TO SOUTHERN MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA AND EASTERN CARIBBEAN EARLY 1990's to PRESENT



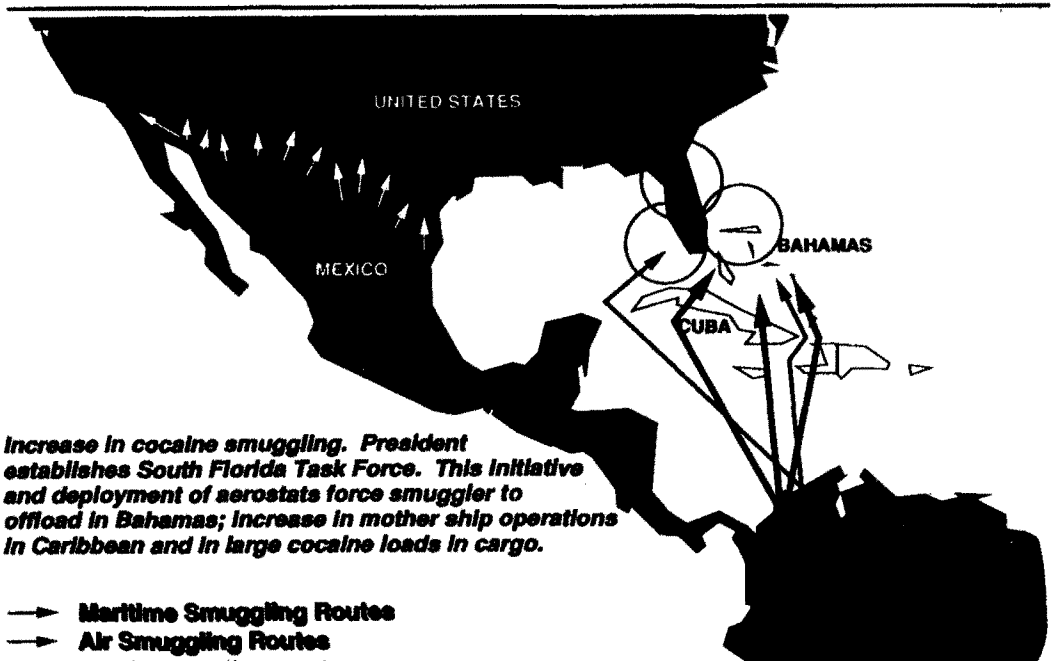
FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL AIR INTERDICTION STRATEGY AND COMPLETION OF SWB AEROSTAT NETWORK FORCE SMUGGLER TO LAND AND OFFLOAD SHORT OF U.S. BORDER EARLY 1990's



PRIMARY AIR SMUGGLING CORRIDOR LATE 1970's to EARLY 1980's

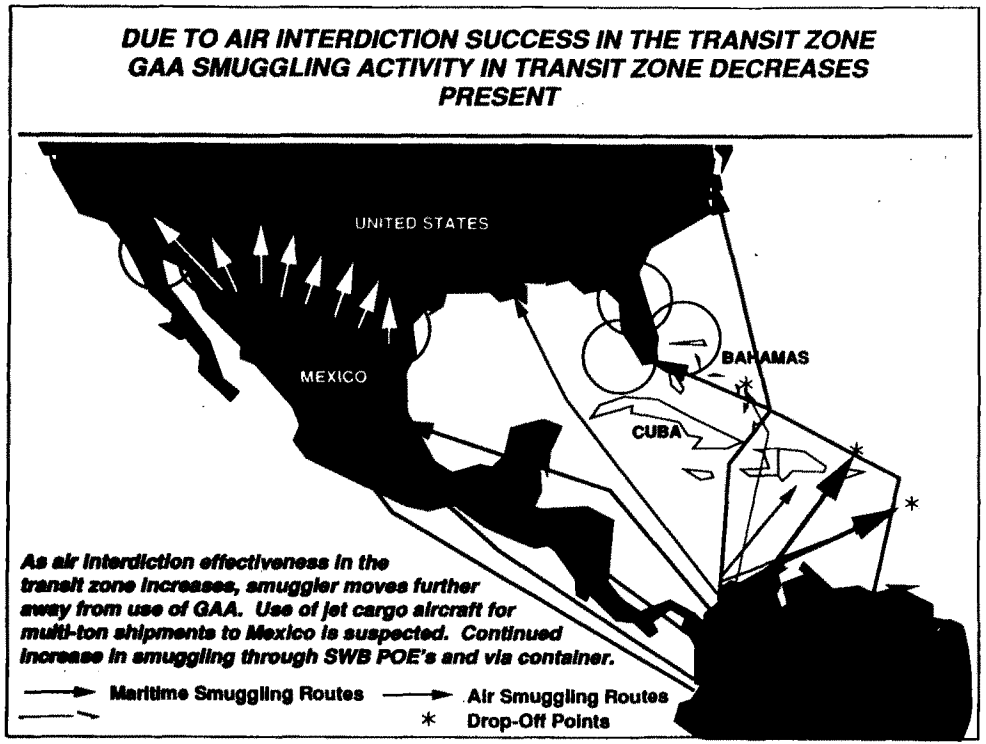
Spraying of paraquat on Mexican marijuana - source shifts to Colombia; Florida becomes primary arrival area; general aviation aircraft primary method.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CUSTOMS AIR INTERDICTION STRATEGY IN EAST FORCES SMUGGLERS TO BAHAMAS EARLY to MID 1980's



Increase in cocaine smuggling. President establishes South Florida Task Force. This initiative and deployment of aerostats force smuggler to offload in Bahamas; increase in mother ship operations in Caribbean and in large cocaine loads in cargo.

→ **Maritime Smuggling Routes**
→ **Air Smuggling Routes**
→ Land Smuggling Routes



Source: U.S. Customs Service

MONEY LAUNDERING AUTHORITY ATTACHMENT :

The Department of the Treasury has primary responsibility for the formulation and execution of domestic and international economic, financial, tax and fiscal policies. These policies impact the supervision and direction of domestic and international finance, banking and related economic matters. It is essential to the effective conduct of fiscal operations that Treasury entities oversee the stability of U.S. monetary systems and that, at the same time, they deny any criminal enterprise access to the same.

The United States Customs Service plays the major role in federal anti-money laundering efforts, a role mandated by jurisdiction, mission, and the enforcement policies of the Service.

Our mandate is to disrupt the international illegal cash flow from crime; to develop covert and overt operations to prevent the "placement" of those funds; and to initiate outreach initiatives to continue our world leadership position in the areas of legislation and compliance.

U.S. Customs Service jurisdiction authority for enforcement of money laundering laws is delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury under 31 CFR 103.23, 103.46 and 103.48, and is codified in Title 31 USC 5316 et seq. These provisions delegate to Customs the sole jurisdictional authority for enforcing those regulations requiring the reporting of the international transportation of currency and monetary instruments in excess of $10,000. In addition, the Customs Service has jurisdictional authority under the Money Laundering Control Act of 1986 and 1988, which are codified in Title 18 USC 1956 & 1957, and also under Title 18 USC 981, 982, 984, and 2314.

Customs is well prepared to assume these responsibilities. A multi-faceted agency comprised of various offices under the auspices of the Commissioner of Customs, the Customs Service enforces over 660 laws for 60 different agencies. All entities within Customs assist in the anti-money laundering mission. Investigations and operations are represented primarily by the Office of Enforcement and the Office of Inspection and Control.

As the primary executor of policies designed by The Department of the Treasury to promote money laundering control programs abroad, the Customs Service has sought to develop standards and laws that of sufficient uniformity and coherence to facilitate international reciprocity. The Customs Service plays a significant role in assisting nations in developing financial enforcement programs. As regards a preferred operational strategy, the U.S. Customs service is committed to conducting worldwide overt and covert enforcement and intelligence operations to combat international money laundering. These operations seek to identify and target financial manipulative systems, criminal organizations and professional money managers who launder illicit proceeds. The Customs Service advocates a strong financial enforcement program as well to address not only

our drug smuggling and interdiction responsibilities, but also our expansive law enforcement and regulatory mission, which is linked to non-narcotics money laundering in the areas of trade, fraud, smuggling and export enforcement (munitions and technology). Investigations are pursued by targeting violators at the highest possible level and dismantling their financial infrastructure and the operational systems used to manipulate illicit proceeds.

At U.S. Customs, our view and vision as regards our law enforcement role has matured, and in the 1990's, the Service believes it has entered a new phase of development. Enforcement actions and accountability standards such as arrest, seizure, indictment, conviction, and criminal/civil penalties for illegal conduct continue to be tools available to us. However, in addition to using these familiar tools, today we also pursue the trail of illicit money and other assets through both conventional banking and non-bank financial institutions; our goal is nothing less than to incapacitate criminal organizations through the dismantling of their economic infrastructure. To this end, we focus on the seizure and forfeiture of any proceeds derived from criminal activities. Most importantly, the Customs Service recognizes that the initial placement stage for criminally derived proceeds represents the greatest point of vulnerability for the violator, and as a result, Customs has targeted this phase in the process as the most critical, and the most deserving of our resources and attention. This working concept is the foundation for the financial strategy of the U.S. Customs Service, as that is directed towards significant conspiracies and criminal organizations.

In the past most international conventions and agreements aimed at money launderers restricted themselves to narcotics money. Now our laws, as well as the laws of several other countries, recognize that money laundering control programs that result in asset identification, seizure and forfeiture are essential tools for deterring many types of criminal or terrorist activity. The Customs Service continues to lead in the development of these initiatives.

That Customs has indeed adopted an increasingly mature view of its enforcement role is demonstrated by methodologies and strategies that are coordinated, multi-disciplined and that focus on the pursuit, seizure and forfeiture of criminal assets rather than on individual instances of criminal activity. Crimes which produce significant criminal assets include international fraud and illegal munitions and technology sales, as well as smuggling and narcotics smuggling violations.

Here is an example: rather than return dollars derived from narcotics smuggling to the source countries, criminal networks use legitimate commercial exportations of goods to the source country or importations of goods into the U.S. as sophisticated methods of laundering illegal gain. The investigation of such

cases may involve violations of undervaluation, overvaluation, double invoicing, commodity transfers, and securities and insurance fraud or other Customs elements.

It is Customs' goal and intention to deny the normal legitimate business and commercial channels and the international payments system to the smuggler, trafficker and other criminal elements through successful investigations and prosecutions. This denial is premised on educating the financial community on the merits of the "Know Your Customer" program, in conjunction with progressive interdictive and investigative techniques.

The Customs Service fully abides by existing intra-agency agreements governing the manner in which Customs coordinates money laundering enforcement activities and operations with other federal and local law enforcement agencies. At the federal level, these cooperative efforts are formally governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, and the Postmaster General. This MOU was recently enhanced as regards the conduct of international money laundering investigations. The bureaus within Treasury which are addressed in the MOU are the U.S. Customs Service , the Internal Revenue Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the U.S. Secret Service. The Justice Department, for the purposes of the MOU, includes the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as well as the Drug Enforcement Administration. The Postal Inspection Service is the investigative arm of the Postmaster General, a MOU signatory.

The MOU, signed in August of 1990 by the respective departments, constitutes an agreement between the agencies as to investigatory authority and procedures as they apply to Title 18 USC 1956 and 1957 of the Money Laundering Control Act. As such, the MOU delineates specific investigative jurisdiction to each agency and addresses other important areas frequently encountered during the conduct of a money laundering investigations. Those areas include seizure and forfeiture, undercover operations, notice, coordination and determination of lead agency, joint investigations, extraterritorial jurisdiction and inter-agency dispute resolution. The supplemental MOU, signed in July of this year by the respective departments, delineated international money laundering investigatory actions, which, in turn, has promoted effective coordination and cooperation, reduced the possibility of duplicate investigations, and enhanced the potential for expeditious and successful prosecutions.

As a matter of policy, the Customs Service adheres to both the letter and spirit of the MOU. A large number of the money laundering investigations and programs Customs is presently conducting depend on intra-agency cooperation within Customs, or represent joint endeavors with other agencies.

Customs also actively participates in the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) initiative. The HIDTA program is a

national anti-drug and money laundering effort which depends on the involvement of multiple Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies. Efforts are concentrated in specific threat areas, including New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Houston and the Southwest border. The goal of HIDTA is to take concerted and comprehensive action in each of the areas to identify and dismantle narcotics and money laundering organizations. The U.S. Customs Service, as the nation's frontline of defense against narcotic smuggling and international money movement activities, plays a vital role in each of the HIDTA areas. These task force approaches, coupled with an aggressive use of the Customs asset sharing program, has returned hundreds of millions of dollars to local municipalities throughout the United States for their use in drug education and demand reduction programs, as well as for direct law enforcement use and support.

The Customs Service provides various logistical, investigative, analytical and administrative support to anti-money laundering programs and intelligence endeavors. These include the International Police (INTERPOL), Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), CIA's Counter-Narcotics Center (CNC), both FBI's Regional Joint Drug Intelligence Groups (JDIG) and the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), as well as to DEA's Multi-Agency Financial Investigation Center (MAFIC).

A series of seizures in Miami demonstrate the interrelated efforts necessary to be effective. An outbound currency interdiction team, consisting of inspectors and canine enforcement officers using currency detector dogs conducted a examinations of cargo in a warehouse near Miami airport. The team discovered bulk currency concealed in air compressors readied for export. The team also discovered a separate shipment of speakers with currency secreted inside. The currency from the two seizures totaled $5.2 million. Investigation by special agents also led to two seizures, worth an additional $5.2 million, at another warehouse location. A further related seizure, worth $2.6 million was made by an inspector who recognized similarities in cargo and shipment methods. The total of all seizures was $13 million.

In addition to drug related money laundering activities, the Customs Service has historically demonstrated expertise in investigating and successfully prosecuting non-narcotic related activities under the money laundering statutes, as well as non-narcotic violations under the Bank Secrecy Act.

One example involves a violator identified through a Miami investigation, and his associates, who through various international corporations, developed, manufactured and supplied an array of conventional weapons and their components to the Iraqi government in violation of U.S. law. The investigation has also revealed that funds and bartered commodities (oil) received from the violator's dealings with Iraq have been laundered

through various Florida land transactions.

Operation Q-TIP, a New York fraud initiative, was developed to investigate entry quota and transhipment practices for shipments from the Peoples Republic of China. The operation resulted in the seizure of several million dollars in bank accounts, the proceeds of illegal activity. Violators laundered their illicit proceeds through misclassification and undervaluation. Last month, a California based target pleaded guilty in federal court as a result of this operation.

The MIZUNO investigation in Las Vegas is based on the fraudulent sale of over 52,000 golf memberships in Japan. Ken Mizuno was principal beneficiary in this scheme to oversell memberships to a golf course in Japan that he was constructing. Although buyers were told that memberships would be limited to no more than about 2000, Mizuno sold over 50,000 memberships at prices of up to $50,000 each, generating hundreds of millions of dollars in income. As word of the overselling began to leak in Japan, Mizuno transferred approximately $242 million to the U.S. through a facade of bogus business loans and fictitious remittances in the belief that he could convince authorities in Japan and the U.S. that he was making legitimate business investments. To date, the U.S. Customs Service has seized assets totaling approximately $108 million. These assets include the Indian Wells Country Club in Palm Springs, California, Royal Kenfield Golf Course near Las Vegas, Nevada; several homes in California, Nevada, and Hawaii; luxury automobiles; and a DC-9 aircraft.

Investigations and intelligence demonstrate that resulting of increasing anti-money laundering efforts, criminal enterprises are turning to the physical transportation of unreported currency from the United States for the placement of illegal proceeds. Operation BUCKSTOP is one of Customs answers to the physical transportation of unreported outbound currency. BUCKSTOP operations are conducted by inspectors and special agents, often with other federal, state and local law enforcement officers. Working together, these officers selectively examine departing persons, cargo and conveyances. These highly successful operations effect seizures of unreported currency at ports of exit all over the United States. In the last three years, BUCKSTOP operations effected over 150 million dollars in currency seizures.

From March 1, 1993 through February 28, 1994 Customs conducted Operation OUTLOOK. The year-long effort specifically emphasized the interdiction of unreported currency from among outbound program areas. Both the number and duration of operations increased nationwide, as did the results. Several enforcement areas across the nation showed dramatic increases: arrests and seizures on the Southwest border; seizures in courier services, i.e., Fed Ex; and seizures of bulk cash in cargo.

From March of 1991 to March of 1992, currency seizures on the

Southwest Border accounted for 7 percent of all seizures nationally. For Operation OUTLOOK, which occurred from March 1, 1993 through February 28, 1994, the SW border currency seizures increased to 15 percent of the national total (210 seizures worth or approximately 8 million dollars). This is more significant than it appears, since in reality, it represents a 312 percent increase in seizures along the SW border, indicating a significant enforcement trend upward.

At one express consignment location in Tennessee, Customs seized over 3 million dollars in 49 seizures. This is an increase from only 5 seizures at that location two years ago.

Customs made thirteen seizures in excess of $100,000 each from cargo shipments. Cargo seizures worth $10 million total were effected during Operation OUTLOOK, primarily in Miami and New York locations. Miami and New York account for half of the amount seized during Operation OUTLOOK.

Outbound enforcement during Operation OUTLOOK and the continuing BUCKSTOP program is conducted by only a small segment of the Customs inspection and enforcement staff. The recently issued Outbound Strategy calls for developing specialized teams and increasing outbound enforcement efforts. These multi-discipline Customs teams will be aided by targeting initiatives such as the Outbound Database now in our national computer system, and the development of the Automated Export System (AES), which will provide advance information of intended exports of cargo. AES is a major initiative of the Customs Service, and will mandate advance automated submission of export data. AES will allow outbound teams to target shipments and it will provide a history of export transactions for investigators.

To compliment this outbound strategy, Customs has developed an outreach program to increase our communication and cooperation with the international financial and trade communities. Under program, Customs agents, both here and abroad, will make contacts with the international export community and the international financial and banking industry. The purpose of these contacts will be to ensure a harmonious cooperative effort and create dialog between Customs and these communities to further enhance our anti-money laundering efforts.

The U.S. Customs Service advocates a strong financial enforcement program to address not only our drug smuggling and interdiction responsibilities, but also our law enforcement and regulatory mission linked to non-narcotics money laundering in the areas of trade, fraud, smuggling, and export enforcement (munitions and technology). Investigations are pursued by targeting violators at the highest possible level and dismantling their financial infrastructure and operational systems used to manipulate the illicit proceeds that are generated by their organizations.

Source: Office of Investigations, Financial Division
U.S. Customs Service

ATTACHMENT 4

OPERATION CORNERSTONE

- For approximately the past four years the United States Customs Service (USCS) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) have been conducting an ongoing investigation entitled Operation Cornerstone, which has targeted the cocaine trafficking and money laundering activities of the Cali Cartel.

- This joint investigation, in which the Customs Service is the **lead** Agency, involves Special Agents and Intelligence Analysts assigned to the Special Agent in Charge, Miami, Florida.

- Operation Cornerstone represents an insider's look at the Cali Cartel's drug distribution network, money laundering system and organizational support for its members in the United States and Colombia.

- In one of the United States (U.S.) government's most comprehensive investigations into the operations of the Cali Cartel, federal agents have uncovered far-reaching information regarding six major smuggling routes used by the Cartel to move **hundreds of thousands of pounds of cocaine** into the U.S. since the early 1980's.

- The investigation has also uncovered similar far-reaching information regarding the methods used by Cartel funded attorneys in the U.S. who assisted Cartel associates and who took steps to prevent the prosecution of Cartel members in Colombia and the United States.

- This case has exposed the Cali Cartel's undermining of the Colombian judicial system, their breeding tyranny throughout their own country, and their attempts to export that tyranny.

- The investigation first led to the December 1991 seizure of 32,000 pounds of cocaine which had been smuggled into the U.S. by the Cali Cartel concealed inside concrete fence posts. That seizure ultimately provided Customs agents with numerous sources of significant evidence and information regarding the smuggling routes and methods used by the Cartel.

- The above referenced 32,000 pound seizure ultimately provided federal agents with additional evidence and information regarding the clandestine inner workings of the Cali Cartel's criminal defense structure in the U.S. and Colombia. This structure used lawyers in the U.S. to accomplish three major objectives: To defend Cartel associates in the U.S., to provide support monies to the families of Cartel associates being prosecuted in the U.S. and to fabricate fraudulent evidence in the U.S. that could be used in the Colombian and U.S. legal system to obstruct prosecutions of Cartel members and the forfeiture of their assets in the U.S. and Colombia.

- Thus far, the Operation Cornerstone investigation has resulted in the indictment of 78 individuals, 19 of whom have already been arrested and convicted.

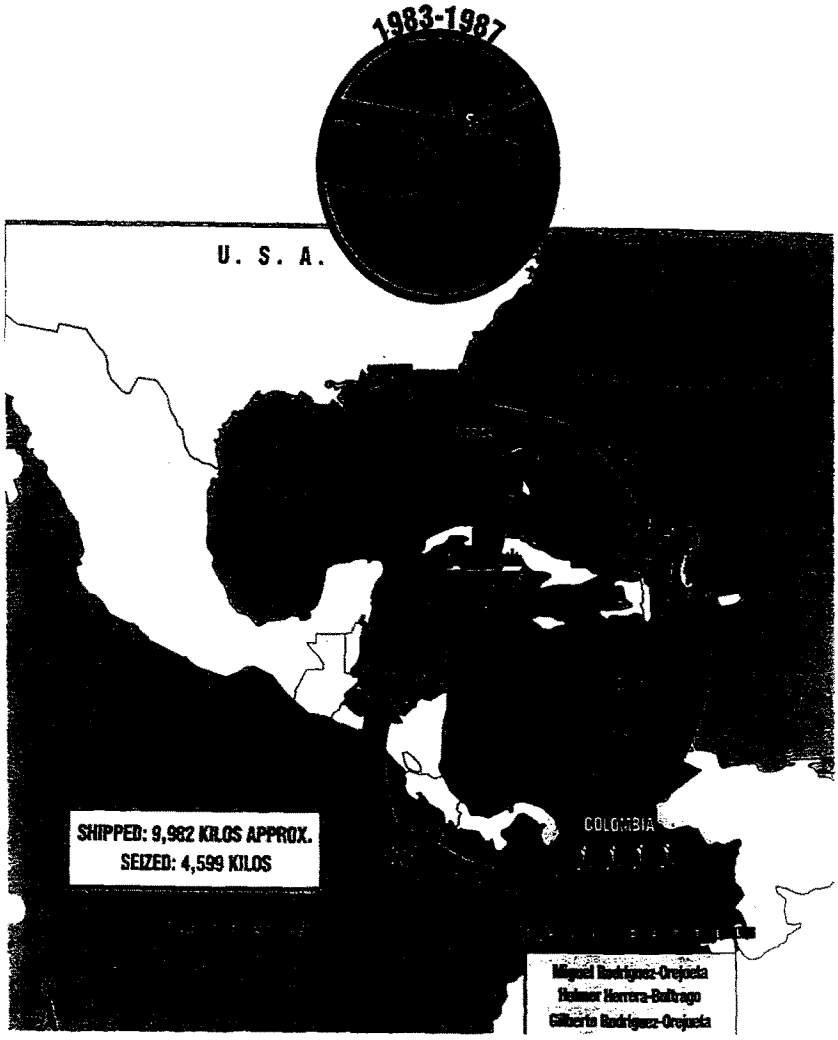
- Implicated in Operation Cornerstone are the four major heads of the Cali Cartel, Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela, Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela, Jose Santacruz-Londono and Helmer Herrera-Buitrago.

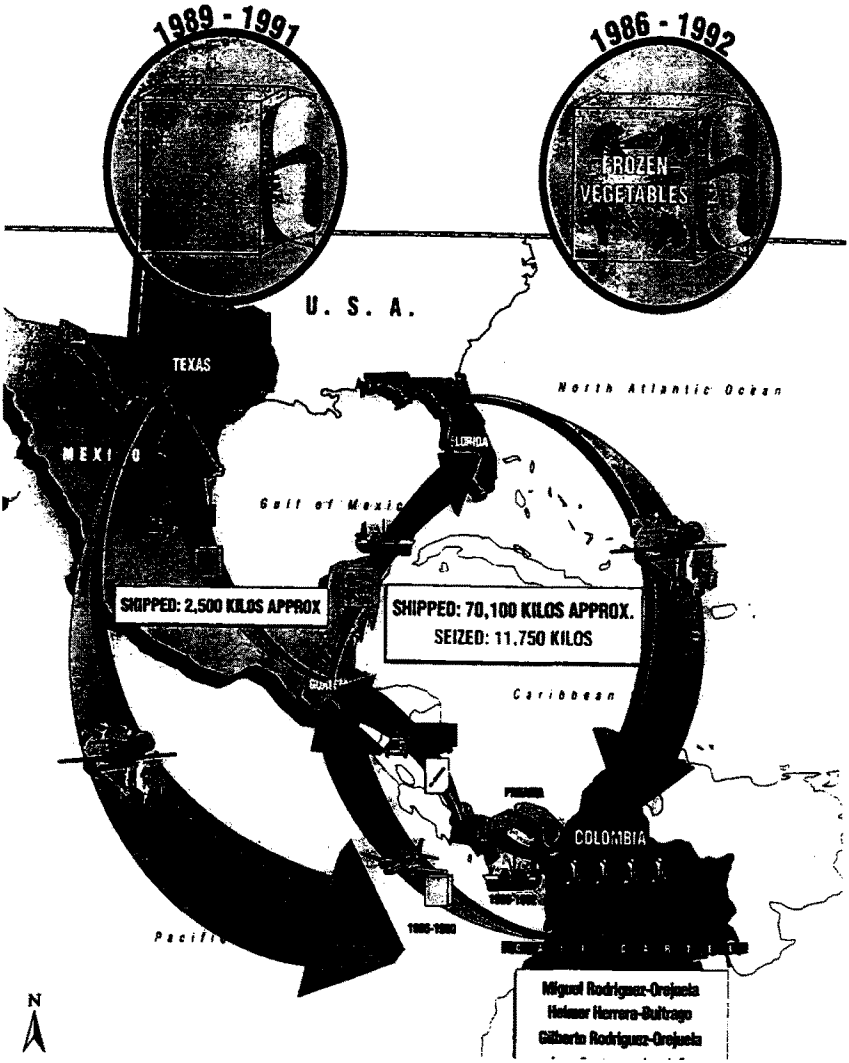
- Also implicated are six attorneys in the U.S., three of whom have already pled guilty to their facilitation of Cartel activities, and three who have surrendered to federal authorities.

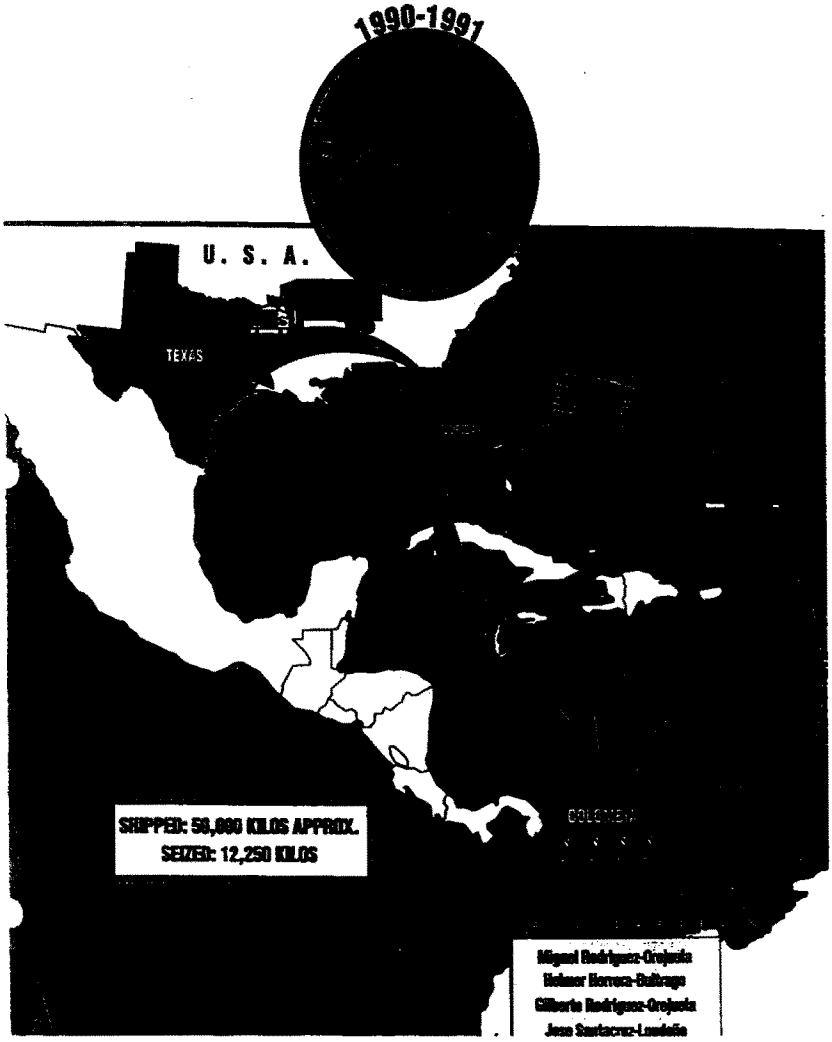
- Operation Cornerstone has provided a unique understanding of how the Cali Cartel conceals their drugs, smuggles them into the U.S., distributes them within the U.S., collects and launders drug monies and provides a sophisticated system of facilitation and support to their operatives in the United States.

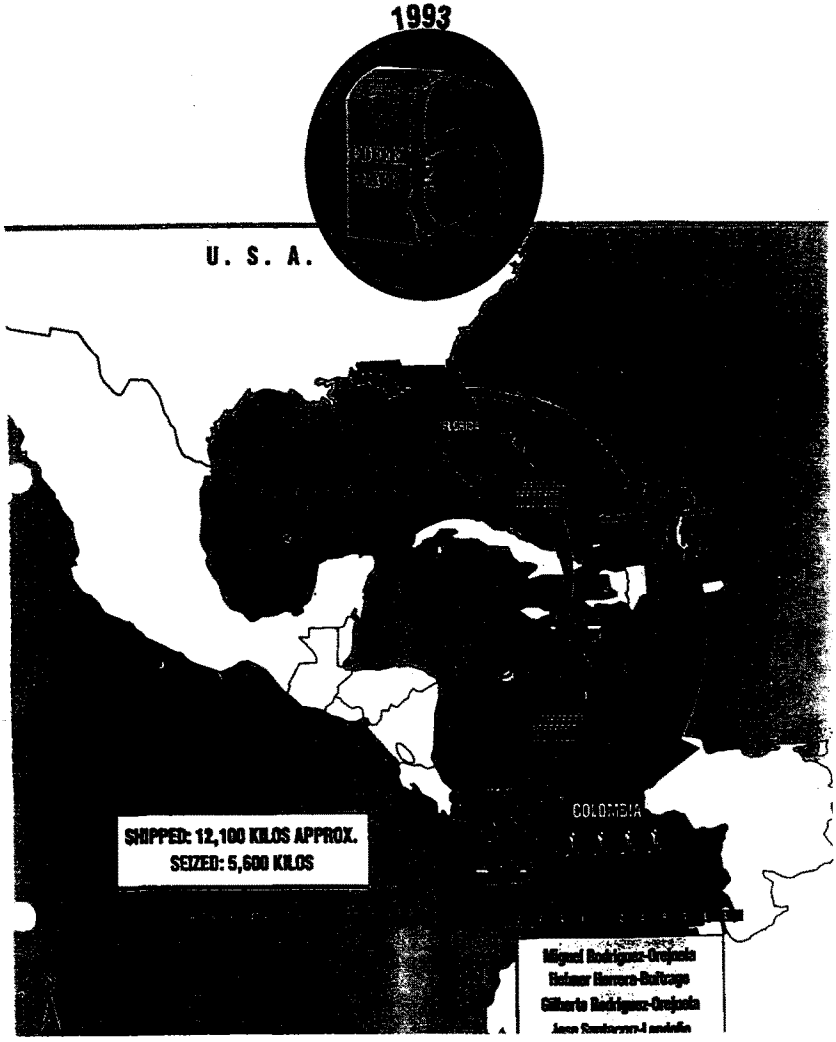
- This support included: Cartel ownership of businesses like car and truck dealerships which assisted in the smuggling and distribution of drugs, assistance in the shipment of arms to the Cartel in Cali, creation of front companies in the U.S. to receive drug shipments and launder drug profits and threats to various individuals within and outside the Cartel who might do anything to interfere with Cartel business.

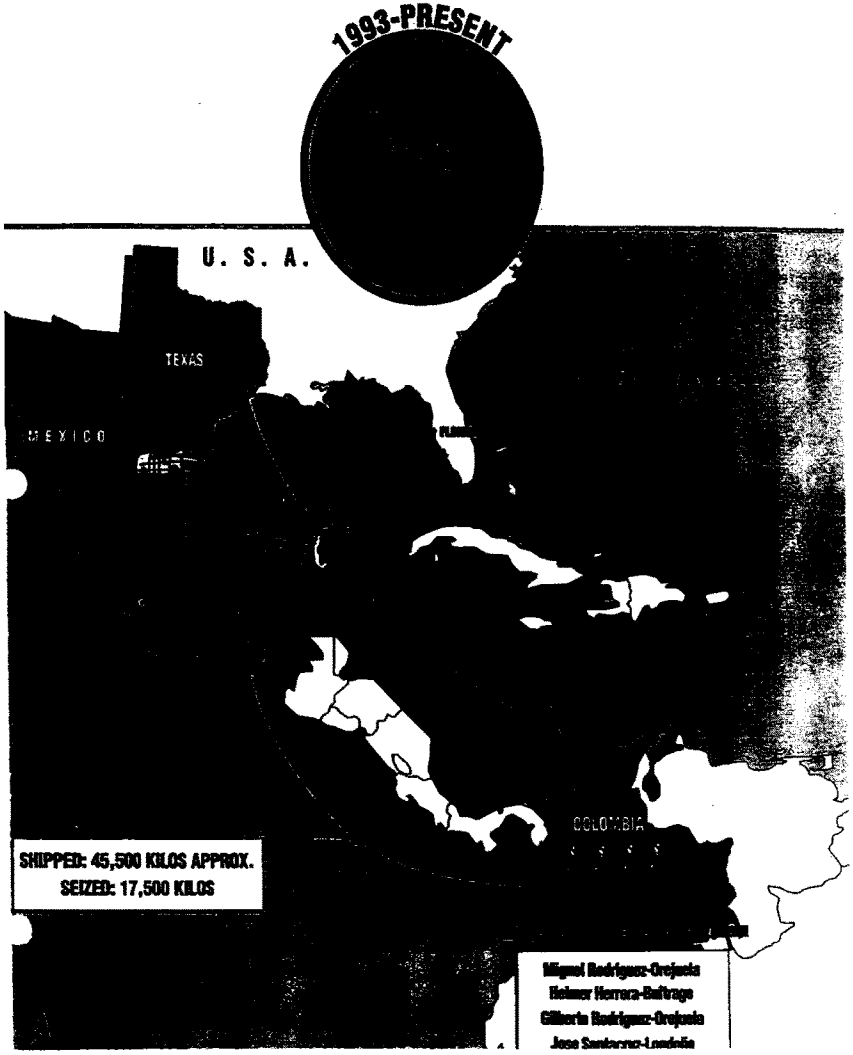
Source: Office of Investigations, Smuggling Division
U.S. Customs Service


1983-1987
U. S. A.
COLOMBIA
SHIPPED: 9,982 KILOS APPROX.
SEIZED: 4,599 KILOS
Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela
Helmer Herrera-Buitrago
Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela


1989 - 1991
1986 - 1992
FROZEN VEGETABLES
U. S. A.
TEXAS
MEXICO
North Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of Mexico
SHIPPED: 2,500 KILOS APPROX
SHIPPED: 70,100 KILOS APPROX.
SEIZED: 11,750 KILOS
Caribbean
COLOMBIA
Pacific
N
Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela
Helmer Herrera-Buitrago
Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela


1990-1991
U. S. A.
TEXAS
SHIPPED: 50,000 KILOS APPROX.
SEIZED: 12,250 KILOS
Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela
Helmer Herrera-Buitrago
Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela
Jose Santacruz-Londoño


1993
U. S. A.
COLOMBIA
SHIPPED: 12,100 KILOS APPROX.
SEIZED: 5,600 KILOS


1993-PRESENT
U. S. A.
TEXAS
MEXICO
COLOMBIA
SHIPPED: 45,500 KILOS APPROX.
SEIZED: 17,500 KILOS
Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela
Helmer Herrera-Buitrago
Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela
Jose Santacruz-Londoño

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

The Chair now recognizes Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Weise, thank you very much for being here.

Just for my own clarification, because I know that we worked because of the illegal immigration issue—so there has been a lot of support, I guess, over the last couple of years in trying to do border patrol increases; how do they fit in with you? I mean, are you all part of it, or I'm just kind of curious?

Mr. WEISE. Well, I think you can say very basically and simply that the Border Patrol's primary responsibility is between the ports of entry. And the ports of entry, which is where you may drive—if you were entering yourself, to enter this country, you would go through a checkpoint. That port of entry is manned by the U.S. Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service's officer. But if you try to go around the port of entry and traveling some place where there isn't an official government entrance, that would be the primary responsibility of the Border Patrol to try to prevent that from occurring.

Mrs. THURMAN. Does that help you in actual manpower? Does it give you an opportunity to do more of what you are supposed to be doing then, trying to look at the whole border?

Mr. WEISE. Well, interesting enough, Congressman, it really illustrates the need for a comprehensive, integrated approach. Because as the Border Patrol announced their new initiative, which is Operation Hold the Line, where they basically around El Paso spread out to stop the flow of illegal immigrants, they did not, perhaps, think through, realize what the implications of that would be at the ports of entry. That's why I believe it was a very significant cause, in the fact that we suddenly saw a tripling in the instances of port-running at the ports of entry, because as it became more difficult to cross around the ports of entry, you found people taking increasing risk and actually trying to drive through the ports of entry. And when they were asked to open their trunks, rather than do that, they just hit the accelerator.

So all of these issues are very closely integrated and it just illustrates the need for close coordination among all the various agencies that are involved in this process.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Weise, I need to ask some other questions as they relate to actually transporting fresh vegetables into the United States, because there has been some conversation and attention brought to me that where the vegetable-producing States are also, in some cases, the largest drug-producing States within Mexico, and so it's come to our attention—and how many trucks does, for example, Customs check now versus what it checked before NAFTA? And do we have more, fewer or what is happening in that?

I mean, I was glad to hear about your x-ray, but obviously that is not happening in every port of entry or every area, so there is a concern there. Are you—what is happening out there in that area?

Mr. WEISE. Well, you raise an excellent point, it's one that illustrates again the difficult balancing act that the U.S. Customs Service has to maintain. We have to ensure that we're doing everything humanly possible to preclude the flow of narcotics into this country,

but do so in a way that is not going to result in legitimate business people having their products spoiled because they've had to wait so long to cross.

We have maintained our systems that we had prior to NAFTA pretty much in the same way in terms of the number, frequency of examinations that we've been doing prior to NAFTA. What NAFTA is going to do in the long-term is have a dramatic impact as the tariffs eventually come down.

But, as you know, NAFTA is being implemented or phased in over a 10-year period. We did not see on the first day of the NAFTA a sudden, dramatic change in the flow of traffic through our ports of entry. There will in time be a need to do that and that is one of the reasons we're trying to take a longer-term perspective. And a lot of what we're doing in Operation Hard Line is attempting to find better, more efficient methods, to use intelligence that we need to gather in a cooperative way with other law enforcement agencies, with DEA and others, which we're working on so that we can more appropriately target higher-risk shipments and allow lower-risk shipments to be able to go through with perhaps a little less scrutiny.

We're also feeling that the technology is essential, and we now have one x-ray machine, a second will soon be purchased with funding we already have. But we have a program which we hope to add 10 additional cargo x-ray machines along that border.

I think those machines will help tremendously with the perishable-type products that you've referred to. That rather than having to strip a container which may take 4 hours, in a matter of 7 minutes, we can drive one through.

Now, it isn't the panacea. It doesn't detect all narcotics. But in certain kinds of products, it certainly picks up cavities and secret compartments that might be in a thing and also in products, that perishables like vegetables and fruits, you can x-ray right through it, it would be very effective in those kinds of situations. So it is a combination of new approaches, new strategies as well as new technology that I think will prepare us for the long-term response of NAFTA.

If you were to find the contraband coming from Mexico, what happens to the goods, the trucks, the drivers and can the shipper/packer trucking company be denied access to the United States if contraband is discovered?

Well, there are a whole range of things that could happen. I could say in a typical situation if we do find contraband, the first instinct would be for us to attempt to deliver that contraband as high up in the organization as we possibly can. And this is where the integrated team approach comes into play.

The individuals who are likely to detect the contraband are Customs inspectors. If they have it, they will soon immediately notify the special agents who will be on the scene. We will attempt to try to preserve everything as best we can to make it appear as if we did not find the contraband.

We will consult with DEA, and then what we will attempt to do is to work with the driver to see if he is willing to turn and cooperate. If not, maybe substitute a driver, but ultimately try to get that contraband delivered as high up in the organization as we can

under surveillance so that we cannot just take the mole down, so to speak, but take it as high up in the organization as possible.

With regard to your question that anybody who is involved in that are subject to severe penalties, there's fines that would be assessed, very significant fines, based—and I don't have the number readily at my fingertips but I'll supply it for the record—of so much per ounce of drugs.

There's a penalty that's assessed on that truck driver, the company that owns the vehicle and a whole series of steps that would be taken to punish and prosecute and obviously arrest the individuals that were involved, and to prosecute them fully.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Weise—and I have to tell you I'm not as familiar with this, but evidently back in the 1980's, there was a situation in Florida where boats that were going back and forth between the Bahamas and Florida actually once they came back over, all they had to do was really call Customs, let them know they were back, that kind of thing. And it's come to our attention—and I understand the reason for it, but just a series of questions to go along with that is that similarly going the happen in Canada now with aircraft——

Mr. ZELIFF. Sorry?

Mrs. THURMAN [continuing]. Because you're implementing the telephonic reporting system for private aircraft arriving from Canada. Under this program all pilots of registered general aviation aircraft with 15 people or less, upon approval of their application to the Customs Service, may land at any airport in the country by simply phoning Customs 24 to 72 hours prior to land; are you familiar with that?

Mr. WEISE. Let me just check. I'm not personally familiar with that right now but let me just—I'm generally familiar with the matter, the subject matter, so let me start with an answer and maybe by the time I'm finished, I'll have a correct answer.

Mrs. THURMAN. OK.

Mr. WEISE. The issue that you deal—that you raise with regard to the boats is a very difficult one, and what you're talking about is not the large vessels. You're talking about the pleasure boats that people that live in Florida, live on the border, live on the lakes are constantly traveling, and it means nothing for them to stop and have lunch or something in this country when they're from Canada. It is a virtually impossible task for the U.S. Customs Service to be able to deal with the many pleasure boats if we attempted to stop and interrogate each and every one of them. It just would overload the system.

We've also been able to determine through a good deal of risk analysis over the years that there is not a substantial smuggling risk in that type of activity and we try to do selective spot checking to make sure that that continues to be the case.

Now the issue on small aircraft, I'm not familiar with that proposal specifically, but I think that the Northern border in general is perceived to be a much lower risk area in terms of narcotics smuggling than the Southern border may be. So it may well be that there is an initiative that we're looking at to recognize the low risk of that and see if we can facilitate legitimate people traveling—but let me just take a moment. And this doesn't tell me much more

than that apparently we are looking at a pilot program to experiment with that and we will provide for the record all the details of that program.

Mrs. THURMAN. The reason that I—one of the reasons I might bring that up—and we've heard testimony over the last day or so of the flexibility of smugglers. They—they are creative and they find ways to—if they want to get it here, they're going to get it here.

Mr. WEISE. Absolutely.

Mrs. THURMAN. Part of our concern is that if you start moving so much down to the Southern border and then we eliminate, what happens at our Northern border, and that is a concern. But with that, we've understood also that Canada is implementing its own program on the Northern border.

I guess it is called CAN Pass, where the Canadian program would actually limit it to seven airports where we are opening up our program to fly into every airport. And I don't know why we're doing that or what the difference is or—and some of it you can give written response to—and there are some other questions. I don't want to put you on the spot today, but I do know this has come to our attention and some concerns that could potentially happen.

Mr. WEISE. Be glad to answer those questions. If you provide them, we will be glad to submit responses.

Mrs. THURMAN. Certainly, we will be glad to do that. OK.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. As I listened to your testimony, I guess I'd have to feel that things are going OK and that we're making progress on the drug war and that you have adequate resources apparently at your disposal to accomplish what has been set out. Who basically is in charge of the drug war, in your judgment?

Mr. WEISE. Dr. Lee Brown, the Director of ONDCP.

Mr. ZELIFF. And so you work with him—and his strategy is very clear to you and you know exactly how you need to react to that strategy?

Mr. WEISE. Yes, I believe we have a very good sense of how we integrate into the overall strategy, what our role is.

Mr. ZELIFF. And yesterday's testimony in terms of Mexico being certified as a country that is then cooperative and helpful in our efforts, do you agree with that?

Mr. WEISE. Well, I'd like to go back to your first point, then answer your third point. I don't want to leave an impression for the record that we're perfectly satisfied, that everything is fine and we have no problems.

Clearly, what I was attempting to indicate is that we are having a number of successes. I think that we are operating very effectively within the resources that we have available to us. But as I strive to point out very clearly in my statement, we are not pretending to suggest that we have done enough to solve the drug problem. I mean, we are embarking upon a number of new initiatives constantly to try to get more effective results and we're not satisfied with the status quo by any stretch of the imagination.

The issue with regard to Mexico I know has come up frequently. It is a difficult issue for everyone because we all recognize again Mexico's a sovereign country. A number of the problems within

Mexico have been alluded to and discussed and certainly we don't feel they have achieved full effectiveness yet, either.

I think there is significant room for improvement on the United States side as well as on the Mexican side. But what I would say is we have been very encouraged, particularly in recent months, about the commitment and the willingness of the leadership of Mexico, in particular President Zedillo, we've seen tangible evidence that they want to respond in an effective way.

A concrete example of that is that they have permitted us, and we're working on a program where United States Customs pilots are training a number of Mexican pilots. We have several aircraft that we had provided to them and several that they have on their own that we're working in conjunction with them on that. They are flying in a cooperative fashion on our P–3 AEW aircraft on sortie missions to work with us in terms of detection.

We've seen a recent announcement by President Zedillo that the military of Mexico is now going to be brought into the arena, which is a dramatic step for Mexico. They haven't done that in the past.

So I would simply want to make clear on the record that we're not satisfied completely that we've achieved perfection. We're far from perfection, but I am pleased with the trends that we're now seeing.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you agree with the fact that 65 percent of the cocaine coming from Colombia is coming through Mexico?

Mr. WEISE. Mr. Chairman, I've heard numbers from 60 to 80 percent, and I would simply say that we are probably in the right ballpark. It is very significant, and that's the front lines of the battle zone are right there in that Southwest border.

Mr. ZELIFF. And you are very much dealing with a tremendous challenge in order to try to prevent that amount from coming across the border.

Tell me about the use of National Guard troops and what effect, if any, they have had on your ability to be as successful as you are?

Mr. WEISE. Mr. Chairman, I just can't say enough about how important the National Guard support to the Customs mission has been in recent years. The National Guard troops that are working side-by-side with many Customs officers all along that border, opening containers, looking in trucks, helping to strip them down, has just been a tremendous benefit to the Customs Service, a great force multiplier for us. And I've traveled numerous times in the 2 years that I've served as Commissioner of Customs, I've made at least a dozen visits to the Southwest border, recognizing the importance of that area of the country. And I always, when I travel there, I take the opportunity to walk among the people that are working. And I see the people in the National Guard with their sleeves rolled up and the sweat pouring off of them and they're working with a great zealousness for what they're doing.

And whenever I talk to them, it seems like it's just a perfect situation where they enjoy what they're doing, they feel that they're being productive, they're being put to a very useful purpose and they're excited about the contribution they're making. And I just can't say enough how important that program is to us.

Mr. ZELIFF. How about the DOD decision that the National Guard would not be any longer supporting Customs by the end of 1996, which is 2 years ahead of schedule?

Mr. WEISE. We are concerned, Mr. Chairman, about any diminution in the support that we get from the National Guard.

Mr. ZELIFF. So they have been a vital part of your success?

Mr. WEISE. Yes, they have.

Mr. ZELIFF. I guess my concern is this. Do you feel that we as a country are putting in terms of our national security threat, are we putting this drug war, at the highest priority, the No. 1 priority? And if not, do you have any thoughts along those lines?

Mr. WEISE. Mr. Chairman, the only thing I can say is that at my level and the meetings I participate in, I see the earnestness of all the people, including Dr. Brown and Admiral Kramek and all the folks that you've had appearing before you, I think that there's a real commitment to this problem.

One of the things that you alluded to in your introduction to me, that my background has not been in law enforcement before becoming the Commissioner of Customs. And I think all of us as citizens always feel that there is much more that we could be doing.

But I have been struck in my 2 years, as I have tried to bring myself up to speed in the law enforcement component of Customs, by the great efforts that are being put forth and how difficult the problem is. There are no easy solutions or I think we would have solved this a long, long time ago.

But I think one thing that this administration has done is recognize that you can't just close the borders. We are a free society and it is one of the things that makes this country great. And because we're a free society, we are not going to be able to, through interdiction alone, solve our drug problem.

I think one thing that this administration has done which is different than others, is taken a full comprehensive approach at looking at the entire drug problem, that education and treatment are essential components of this and we do have limited dollars, and we could always squabble over whether the dollars have been properly allocated between the supply and the demand.

But I think there's a clear recognition in this administration and I think a strong effort is being made, and I think some good successes that we've talked about earlier shows that we're moving in the right direction.

Mr. ZELIFF. Without assessing blame or even giving credit to the administration, taking the politics out of it, are we in fact doing as much as we could be doing? Shouldn't we declare this a national top emergency or priority? If NSA Security Council combined, for example, the drug war and the crime war and put the two together, because they are interrelated, because they affect everything we do. Wouldn't it make sense?

They affect the cost of health care. I can tell you that in New Hampshire, which you probably, you know, compares on a very minute scale to the stuff that you get involved with, but I go out with police force in Manchester on a Friday night or a Saturday night and I start the 6 shift and I stay out till 3 a.m. I know the stuff is coming up from Massachusetts. I know where it is coming from.

I know the problems they're dealing with, the crack houses, we go through that whole process. We go out on our trips with the Coast Guard within the last few weeks and people in Customs, folks that probably work for you, talk about Puerto Rico, talk about the problems that they're having at the front line, that this thing, they're all dedicated people, but we're not doing enough to help them.

And, you know, we can gloss it over, do whatever we want, but until we decide that we're really going to do it—and doing it means that maybe Members of Congress have to be submitting to drug testing like my son does in the Marine Corps, maybe everybody who gets a government check has to do the same. Maybe we need CEOs from across the country to come in here and start talking about it. Maybe the President needs to talk about it every day, maybe we need to do the same.

I mean, we—we know you're out there, but you by yourself, and you, by your own admission, you're not going to be able to do it all by yourself. And we have to have a major, major effort. I'm just saying, listen, this country is not going to tolerate drug use, period.

And we're going to have to start using role models. When baseball players get second and third chances, we've got to change that policy. We have to start looking at the fact that you have a choice to make and if you make the wrong choice, you're going to be dealt with severely.

Any thoughts?

Mr. WEISE. I would agree with virtually all of what you just stated, Mr. Chairman. I think it's clear. I think Admiral Kramek referred to it earlier.

Until we really make the commitment as a Nation across all political lines, as a Congress, as a people, that this is really a war that we intend to win. A lot of people would dispute the war analogy because we haven't really as a Nation—and I'm saying that not as a criticism of anybody in this process, but even to the American people, until they really recognize that we'll say in polls that it's the No. 1 problem—and I think every one of us sees in our daily lives that the crime that's on our streets that is directly related back to drugs, the fact that our children are not safe going out at night, you've got to lock all of this into our society. But until we come to a collective judgment that this is going to be where we're going to wage our war, we're going to go out and win this war, it's very difficult.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you think that there is anything that should come before it if you were on—you know, in terms of the NSA security list, do you think that there is anything that would come before, you know, higher than this issue that you can think of?

Mr. WEISE. Well, I guess I'm not the appropriate person to be making those kinds of judgments, but certainly as a citizen——

Mr. ZELIFF. As a citizen.

Mr. WEISE. I can't think of another issue that impacts our Nation any more dramatically.

Mr. ZELIFF. Would you agree that crime and drugs are interrelated to the degree that they ought to be combined?

Mr. WEISE. Absolutely.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK.

In the GAO report—did you get a copy of that? It was distributed yesterday.

Mr. WEISE. No, I haven't had a chance to review it, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. Well, it was, in my judgment, it was a pretty damaging report. But they indicate in mid-1994, the Drug Enforcement Administration attache in Mexico cautioned that the primary drug interdiction initiative in Mexico, known as the Northern Border Response Force, had been jeopardized by the loss of detection and monitoring coverage in the transit zone.

Admiral Kramek talked about the fact we had cut back 50 percent since 1992 in the transit zone resources, and he agreed with the philosophy. But the problem was is that as we shifted resources to the source country, you know, there was a period in-between that kind of left us very vulnerable. Any comments on that?

Mr. WEISE. No, I think I would just agree with Admiral Kramek's statement. I think that the right strategy, the right approach is to deal with the source country.

I know that General Joulwan who was formerly the head of SOUTHCOM basically always used an analogy, that if you're trying to get the drugs—analogizing to the bees in the bee hive—it is better to get them before they leave the hive because then it is obviously much more difficult.

So we believe firmly that we need to have a comprehensive strategy, one that begins and has an effective program at the source country, which this program is designed to do, but we need to have our defenses at every level. The U.S. Customs Service's primary responsibility is at the borders, at the ports of entry, but we've been able through our air program to expand that into the transit zone and as well as into the source country, and we've tried to be a constructive team player in this overall strategy.

Mr. ZELIFF. In the meeting that we had on Sunday morning down in Puerto Rico, your folks were there, we talked about how much product was coming up through Puerto Rico and was getting in easily to Puerto Rico, then shipped up into the United States, and that, frankly, there was not much that under current law that Customs officials could do to stop that or even set up any kind of a strong monitoring.

Can you give us any suggestions that you have of what we need to do to change the law, change our policies in Puerto Rico so that we can win this war? How would you assess what we need to do to address the problem in Puerto Rico?

Mr. WEISE. Well, Mr. Chairman, it is a serious problem. And one of the things that we've attempted to do is, because it's already been described, once the drugs are into Puerto Rico, it is very difficult for us to apprehend them once they move to the next stop, which is coming into the mainland of the United States.

We try very hard through our air and marine program, working in conjunction with DEA and others to stop it from getting into Puerto Rico. I am aware as of yesterday we had a significant case in Puerto Rico where we arrested five individuals, seized 425 K's of cocaine, 1 K of heroin, machine guns, and we've got a number of cases ongoing. But this is not enough.

I really haven't given it sufficient thought to recommend today what the solution might be, other than, you know, to be more vigi-

lant in keeping the drugs from getting into Puerto Rico in the first place, which we're trying very hard to do.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right. It seemed to me if everybody dealing with our drug problem is saying they've lost control of the situation and there's no way to stop it once it gets into Puerto Rico. It seems like we've got to come up with some creative thinking on how we need to solve that problem, so that it might be a priority, we could look at together.

I have one other quick question, then I'd like to recognize Mr. Condit from California—I noticed on the Coast Guard cutter MELLON when the $9 million worth of marijuana that was seized that we had a chance to observe, Customs officials were ready to proceed, I guess as soon as we got off the deck, to take over. What do you do with that and how is that controlled?

I just look at that bale worth $88,000 in street value and it concerns me. You know, you look at how this stuff hits the street, the value of it, and then you look at law enforcement, you look at all the people that are dealing with the problem. How do we control the process and what happens to the product as it——

Mr. WEISE. In terms of the storage, what happens with it, the actual goods that are seized?

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. WEISE. We have a number of storage facilities, as does DEA, and because the fact that you're dealing with a seizure that is ultimately going to result in a criminal prosecution, it is absolutely essential that this be kept in a controlled environment.

We have, you know, facilities that are designed for that. We have Customs uniformed officers who are armed, who are responsible for controlling, ensuring what goes in, goes out, maintains close inventory.

We've had a number of audits by the General Accounting Office on our seizure program, our fines, penalty, enforcement and the whole system, how we maintain that, and I would be happy to provide for the record all the details on exactly how we do that.

Mr. ZELIFF. I just look at it and I'm not—not accusing. I'm just saying that in talking with DEA, you talk about the interview process they go through, I'm sure FBI does the same, I'm sure you must do the same.

Mr. WEISE. Yes, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. How do you prevent an honest, straightforward, law-abiding citizen to go with the kind of temptation that's out there? I think that's part of the process.

I mean, certainly you have opportunities in the islands where people become corrupt. I would think that that's probably a big challenge for you, as well.

Mr. WEISE. Yes. And there are a number of things that you have to do. You are absolutely right, you have to be constantly vigilant.

With the money you are talking about and the drugs involved, there is that temptation. We have a very stringent security program before a person can become a Customs officer, they go through an intensive prescreening and background investigation, as is true of most law enforcement agencies, every Customs officer is given a drug test and a periodic update on their drug test.

I think the most important thing we attempt to do is create systems that make it very difficult if not impossible, in most instances, to allow a single individual to be able to pull something off like that. We try to put backups and ensure, for example, you cannot have a single individual go into the vault unaccompanied. There has to be two people that go in, and things like that.

And at ports of entry we do try to frequently rotate the assignment of the booth so you don't know in a predictable fashion which booth you're going to be in. We put people out in front of the preprimary to do some blitzing, what we call—so that it's very, very difficult for someone to make an arrangement with a single individual who is going to have enough control that that individual can, you know, partake in one of these kind of events, but that doesn't mean it doesn't happen.

We have an Internal Affairs Office which is very vigilant. We have had the unfortunate situation just this year where we've arrested several Customs officers for corruption. It is something we don't like, but we will seek out and try to make examples of anybody who is caught, we're going to prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law.

Mr. ZELIFF. And I know that you've been dealing with that over the last few years, I believe particularly on the Southwest border, I imagine is a very high priority and a big challenge.

Mr. WEISE. Yes, we have.

Mr. ZELIFF. The Chair now would recognize Mr. Condit from California.

Mr. CONDIT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be brief.

Mr. Weise, I apologize for missing part of your testimony, but I just have a couple brief questions.

For the life of me, I can't understand why we can't put this drug thing to rest in terms of interdiction. I mean, we've got the Department of Defense, we've got the DEA, we've got Customs, Coast Guard. I mean, I just don't understand why we don't coordinate all this together.

My question to you is—and if you touched on this, maybe you can tell me you did, it's in your testimony, and I'll read it later. But what is, as a practical matter, how do all these agencies and departments coordinate together to make sure we're on the same track and that we have a program? I mean, do you guys meet regularly? What is going on?

Mr. WEISE. Yes, we do. And I hope I didn't leave the impression that we all go off on our own and don't have coordination. We have a number of different ways in which we do coordinate.

In the field, Customs, is working hands in glove with DEA, and there's an official memorandum of understanding about cases that I described. For example, when a seizure is made, if we're going to try to do a controlled delivery, we first consult and work with DEA to make sure they are on board, and we work together on it.

But at a policy level, we have Admiral Kramek, who was here earlier, is the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator, designated by Dr. Brown, and he has, in effect, has a group that coordinates with him, a group called the Interdiction Committee, and it is each of the major entities, Customs, DEA, DOD, Coast Guard, State Department. All of the people who are players in this game are on

this committee, and it's a committee of kind of equals. I happen to be the chairman of it this year.

But we meet on a regular basis to talk about policy coordination at various levels under Dr. Brown. We have coordination sessions. It was talked about earlier today, about a session that was held earlier this year, we brought in people from the embassies across—across the country, excuse me, around the world with the drug problem. We continue to try to ensure that we're working in a coordinated fashion. We do it both at the policy level and at the operational level.

Mr. CONDIT. We have a—when we have a skirmish somewhere in the world, we put all kinds of troops from different countries of the United Nations. It seems to me—I don't know why we don't put everybody under one unit until we solve this interdiction problem we have with drugs.

Has there been any discussion about that? I mean, you talk about these meetings. You do these meetings, I take it, once a month or something like that, right? I'm talking day-to-day, how do these people coordinate day-to-day?

Mr. WEISE. Day-to-day, I'd say that each particular agency has a particular area of responsibility that they—they have to carry out. They do it in as close coordination as they can, as I mentioned before.

We as a Customs Service are primarily responsible for the border, for drugs that are crossing the border. DEA has a larger responsibility, they call it a kingpin strategy, where they're attempting to bring down the narcotics smuggling organizations, both in the source country and domestically. So our missions are very related but they don't necessarily overlap too much.

Mr. CONDIT. Is it my understanding that the only agency that actually has, is designated to fight drugs, is the DEA?

Mr. WEISE. DEA is an agency which has that as an exclusive mission.

Mr. CONDIT. And your mission?

Mr. WEISE. Our mission is a combination. It's protecting the borders from contraband crossing the border, whether it be weapons that are not supposed to be coming in, whether it be a food product that could cause harm to Americans, we have a range of different things, but we're the ones at the border to keep the products that are not supposed to enter the country from actually entering the country.

Mr. CONDIT. Let me ask you this; are you satisfied with the coordination, that it's as good as it could be?

Mr. WEISE. No, I would never say it's as good as it can be. I'm satisfied it is as good as it has been and I think it is working well. Clearly, it would be better coordinated perhaps if you had a single agency, but there are other problems that are created by that because the U.S. Customs Service has these other responsibilities that we need to be responsible for. And it may sound like a simple solution, just put them all in one place, but because of the overlapping additional responsibilities of the other agencies and departments, it often doesn't work out quite right.

Mr. CONDIT. I don't want to make it sound simple, because you're absolutely correct. It sounds simple, and it is not simple. But the

point I was making, except for DEA, everybody else has other responsibilities and their priority is set something higher than drug interdiction. They have, DOD has something else, the Coast Guard has something else, and that's my point.

As you get everybody else first, well, that is really not my mission, that's kind of a side interest for us. We're asked to help, and we help when we can. And should it be increased to a higher priority, more visibility from this place should we say, there's a mission here and it ought to be the top priority?

Mr. WEISE. That is I think very much why we have the Director of ONDCP who is the President's, a member of his Cabinet, who is attempting to really pull these various organizations together in a common mission. I think we've been doing a very effective job.

Mr. CONDIT. Let me ask one last question. And with the traffickers' ability to change flights and the technology that they have to evade radars and to use landing facilities discreetly, and their sophistication makes it somewhat difficult for you guys to deal with, can you tell us one, two, three, real simple terms, what you would need from us to enable you to be more efficient and effective?

Mr. WEISE. Well, interesting enough, the example you gave about the flights, I think, is one of the real success stories, because 20 years ago, that was exactly what was happening. The best way to smuggle in drugs was to bring them in by plane. You land and you're out of here before anybody can detect you. You don't have to go through any Federal Government facility to be inspected.

I think that the Customs air program has for all intents and purposes—and we've got good evidence that we could provide for you in private that we've stopped that kind of activity. We have evidence that those planes are not crossing the border and landing here, they're having to cross and land in Mexico because our air detection system has become too effective for them.

Now, it's—it's been reduced somewhat in the budget over the last 2 years, but we still feel we've maintained an effective deterrent. Clearly, a lot of us could come here and say, you know, if we had more resources we could do a more effective job, and that would be a very parochial position to take. Because we also recognize that you as a Congress and this administration are struggling with a very difficult budgetary situation and there really isn't a lot of extra dollars that we can ask for. I think off the top of my head, there isn't anything that I would suggest right now that would be a panacea to make this better, other than additional dollars would certainly help. But those dollars are scarce and they're not available.

Mr. CONDIT. The reason I ask that is we're in the process of putting together an immigration reform proposal that will go to the floor. We will have immigration reform move through the House and there may be ways of dealing with that issue that would be helpful in this area again. So that's the reason I ask that question. And if you—if you have some specifics at a later time, I will encourage you to submit them.

Mr. WEISE. I would like to have an opportunity, Congressman, to provide something for the record, and I appreciate that opportunity.

Just in the resource area before you arrived, we did talk about some of our container x-ray machines that are very effective along the border. We only have 2 of those now, 10 of those additional would help us on the Southwest border.

There are other things from a financial standpoint that would really be tremendously helpful to us to fully implement Operation Hard Line, but I don't want to be put in a position here without going through my administration making an official request. Certainly, if we had additional resources, I can assure you they would be put to use.

Mr. CONDIT. The machines you are talking about, those machines are because traffickers are using commercial cargo?

Mr. WEISE. Yes. These machines would allow us in 7 minutes, much like you drive through a car wash, where a full container would go through this machine, where we would be, in most cases—not all cases—be able to detect the narcotics.

Mr. CONDIT. Is that relatively new?

Mr. WEISE. Yes. We experimented with it in Otay Mesa. We have had tremendous success. I think we've had upwards of 30 seizures already as a direct result of this. We are now putting one in El Paso. As we get additional funds, we are going to put them in other key locations along the border.

Mr. CONDIT. But the commercial cargo, is that relatively new?

Mr. WEISE. It ebbs and flows, Congressman. As we clamp down in one area, they move in another direction. What I think you're seeing happening on the Southwest border, they're taking a lot smaller loads, they're actually putting them in the trunk of their car. They are not even going to the difficulty that they used to in the past of creating secret compartments.

They are loading the trunk up. They come to the inspector, he asks them to open the trunk. They hit the accelerator, run anybody down. They are armed usually and they are very violent.

I think they are doing that at such high numbers it is a clear indication at this point they are not using commercial cargo to a great extent. What we're doing in Operation Hard Line is we're clamping down on that. We are going to put in bollards, much like you have here at the Capitol, that come up from the ground, that won't allow the vehicle an opportunity to run. As we clamp down on that port-running, we feel the very next threat area is likely to be in the commercial cargo.

Mr. CONDIT. Thank you, Mr. Weise.

Mr. WEISE. Thank you, Mr. Condit.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Actually, I think we've gotten most of the questions.

I would like to ask the chairman, are we going to leave the record open long enough for other Members to submit questions to not just today's panel but yesterday's panel as well?

Mr. ZELIFF. Yes. Unfortunately, there are so many markups going on today. Everybody has great interest in the issue. We appreciate the opportunity to be able to send you individual questions. And so the record will be left open.

I have just a few questions. You indicate that Dr. Brown, as the Drug Czar, is doing a very effective job. I guess what I'm going to

ask you is does that mean you feel the job he's doing is going to solve the problem and that we are where we need to be? Or if you were in that role, what would you do different?

Mr. WEISE. Mr. Chairman, I—I can't think of anything that I'd be doing differently, but I also wouldn't say that we're all doing a perfect job. And that's not a criticism of an individual.

As I said before, Dr. Brown—and I've spoken to him about this many times—we all feel we can improve and I think that we're all striving to find ways that we can take the limited resources that are available and put them to the maximum use. But clearly if you could raise the level of resources, that would also raise the effectiveness of the overall program.

Mr. ZELIFF. The reason I ask that is not to go after Dr. Brown. I think he is probably trying very hard to do a good—as good a job as anybody can do.

Mr. WEISE. Yes.

Mr. ZELIFF. And I'm not so sure that it's all on his element in terms of what can be done and can be done. The reason we are getting into as much time and resources to try to figure out where we are here in the Nation's drug war, is that in the last 3 years drug use is up in all categories across the board, so heroin is increasing. And so we're really saying, you know, we can go back and say, well, we're doing all we can, we're trying hard, you know, Customs are great people and, you know, DEA, they're trying and we're all trying. Good old Dr. Brown, he's trying. But the fact that we're losing the war, well, you know, that's the way it is.

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Chairman, may I just interject something here? The House leadership has put together several bipartisan task forces on immigration, primarily. You're probably the only person at this table at this moment who could take back to the leadership, you know, we—if there is a big problem, which indications are that there is, and we're behind, why isn't this a high priority for the House? Why don't we have a task force from the House like we do—or do we have one and I'm unaware of it?

Mr. ZELIFF. Well, as a matter of fact, when I was on the floor, I was just talking to Charlie Rangel, and we're putting a list of people together. Charlie is helping me to do that, of people who we would like to start having—we'll try to have a breakfast meeting, for example, lay out what we need to do in the House here.

And I think your point's well taken. The only way we're going to win this thing is stop kidding ourselves that we're winning it, when we're not. And if we kind of just say, hey, we need help, then we might start doing it. And a lot of the help we can give doesn't cost money. I mean, I think by—I mean, Nancy Reagan's program just saying no to drugs provides a leadership element. The President needs to do this. We're inviting him to do that. We want to work with him.

Bob Dole has committed to it on the Senate side and Speaker Gingrich has committed to it on the House side. Now we need to get across the board.

Mr. CONDIT. I only bring that up because I'm—and I'm thrilled to do it, was appointed by the Speaker to serve on the Immigration Task Force and we put out a report today, a comprehensive immigration reform report, and it's bipartisan. And I'll tell you, a year

ago if you could have told me we would put something that comprehensive together that quick, I would probably have fell down laughing. But we've done it. Mr. Smith, Lamar Smith has put in a bill, and we will do immigration reform which is a very hot item around here and it's quite controversial.

Just seems to me this, Mr. Chairman, ought to take a higher priority. I mean, if we're behind 3 years and we want to move this thing pretty quick and it—apparently, you're on top of this already, you started the discussions, that's—it sounds like a good thing to do.

Mr. ZELIFF. We need your support as well and we'll welcome your support. And if you would like to be a part of that effort, I think we need to move mountains further than what we've done.

Mr. CONDIT. If I'm called on, I will serve.

Mr. ZELIFF. Consider that done. Just a couple little things here; records indicate that agency seized 1,765 pounds of cocaine from commercial vehicles, primarily large tractor-trailers, in fiscal year 1994. That compares with 7,708 pounds seized in fiscal year 1993. Any comment?

Mr. WEISE. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. As to why or——

Mr. WEISE. Yeah. It's very difficult. And I spent a lot of time, when we announced Operation Hard Line on February 25th, I spent the next 6 days, I covered 2,000 miles and I made 19 stops along that border to try to talk to both Customs officers and the people who interface with Customs officers, the commercial community, about the need for us do a more effective job of fighting narcotics in commercial cargo.

Many Customs officers believe that they're not smuggling very much right now in the commercial cargo, and I believe if you can look at instances like the threefold increase in the instances of port-running, like the trends that I talked about of trying to ship in smaller loads—because when you ship in a full container, you get a lot of drugs in, but if you lose that shipment, you have a significant impact on your operations. And what we found is that they were getting so successful in bringing the very small quantities through, that that was a lower-risk strategy. We also saw on two instances in the last 5 years where they built tunnels in—one in Arizona and one in California, where very sophisticated tunnels that went down and across underneath our border—if they could just drive these commercial trucks in without fear of being detected, I don't think they'd be risking their lives port-running, I don't think they would be spending millions of dollars and going through the sophisticated technology to dig these tunnels.

We feel we're doing an effective job there. I'm not satisfied we're doing a good enough job. What I tried to do when I was on the border is reinforce to every Customs inspector I spoke to—and I had the opportunity to work face-to-face with 65 percent of my work force, the small group meetings in those 6 days—and I reinforced to them when you have a commercial truck in your line and one of our systems, including this line release that is getting a lot of notoriety, tells you that the particular shipper and the importer are people that we have a lot of experience with, are ostensibly low risk, if you see anything in the mannerisms of the truck drivers,

see anything in their conveyance that causes you as an inspector to have any suspicion about that stuff, that truck, we require you, we will back you up 100 percent to put that truck into secondary examination.

And I told the trade community, you're going to have to have a little more forbearance and understanding that your shipments may take a little longer, but we've got a war down here, where 70 percent of the narcotics are coming across. We ask for your support and understanding. But we're going to try to drive those numbers up.

The issue is, are we not finding it because we're not doing an effective enough job, or are we not finding it because right now they are not doing as much smuggling in the commercial trucks? I can't answer that. But to say we're not satisfied with the numbers we have, we're going to do better.

Mr. ZELIFF. I understand the number of container search days is down this year. Given the problem with containers at the Southwest border, my last item that we just finished discussing, why would we be reducing container search days?

Mr. WEISE. The challenge is—and clearly the resources have not been able to be maintained exactly at the same level. We have had some reduction of resources along the Southwest border, although we as an organization have been reallocating most of our resources to that Southwest border. So while our cuts have been taken other places in Customs, we have tried to maintain the same level there.

But the point is that the answer to the question of doing a more effective job is not necessarily examining more containers, it's developing systems to ensure that you're examining the right containers. Because, frankly, one of the other difficulties we have—and it's a problem of human nature, it is reinforcement of a Customs inspector. If a Customs inspector goes over to the passenger vehicle lane, he is likely to see at least a seizure a day, maybe sometimes several a day, and clearly many a week.

When you look at the data in terms of our commercial seizures, on a good year, those total numbers are probably either one or maybe two seizures of that port for the entire year. It's difficult to maintain that intensity of really looking for something when you're not likely to get that kind of feedback and very often seeing it. And I think that's one of the challenges.

If you decide to just inspect more trucks, if they don't really feel they're really going after something that is meaningful, they're not going to inspect it with the right vigor that they should. So what we're trying to do is through our intelligence gathering, through a lot of our targeting systems, to really get them to do intense examinations of what we identify through these systems as high-risk shipments and really give them a full examination instead of just trying to get numbers up of the number of trucks you're examining.

Mr. ZELIFF. Again, I just want to recognize that 7,708 pounds seized in 1993 is a pretty dramatic change when it goes down to 1,765, and then when we reduce the days.

Mr. WEISE. The totals were 43—the same amount of cocaine was seized. Roughly, it was 44,000 on the Southwest border in 1993, 43,500 in 1994. There was less in commercial but more in the passenger vehicles. So the numbers in isolation may look like there

has been a real falling off of our job, but we got a lot more in the other conveyances than we did in the old system.

Mr. ZELIFF. Just last question, hasn't Customs lost a major portion of air support from DOD recently?

Mr. WEISE. Well, there have been some reductions in DOD air support. But Customs basically does not receive the report—the support directly. That is the SOUTHCOM mission. We and DOD provide air support to SOUTHCOM and other missions. As DOD has cut, we've tried to hold our own, but it has been difficult.

Mr. ZELIFF. What I commend you for doing is the best you can apparently with what resources you have. What I think we just ended up with here in 2 days of hearings, is that the GAO probably is right, we need to pursue that further, we do need better coordination. We do need a higher priority. And if we have the higher priority, then we don't keep getting cuts. You know, if all of a sudden the DOD gets the message and the Joint Chiefs get the message, then the resources that you need, you get.

And I think somehow we've got to pull this together in a better coordinated effort. I think that's a good place probably to end the hearing.

We thank you very much for appearing. We appreciate your testimony.

Again, we will leave the record open. Many of us have additional questions, and thank you very much for the professional job you're doing.

Mr. WEISE. Thank you for having me, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. The hearing's adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:45 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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