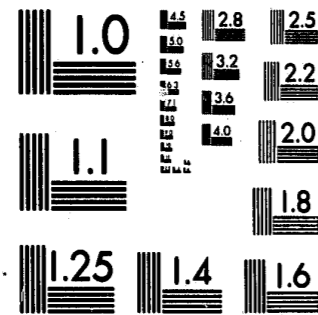


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Washington, D. C. 20531

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THE MEXICAN CONNECTION

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO HALT HEROIN IMPORTATION:
ERADICATION AND ENFORCEMENT IN MEXICO
SOUTHWEST BORDER CONTROL

FEBRUARY 10 AND APRIL 19, 1978

Printed for the use of the Committee on the Judiciary



NCJRS

JUL 23 1979

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

25-024

WASHINGTON : 1978

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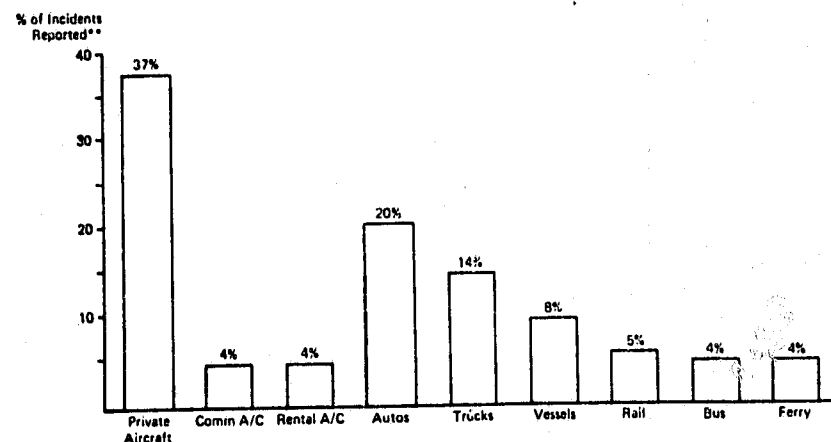
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Heroin Transport within Mexico

January 1975 - August 1976*



*IDIG-M April 1977 Report

**Based on a sample of 58 reported incidents

**STATEMENT OF MATHEA FALCO, SENIOR ADVISER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
AND DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL MATTERS**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I am pleased to appear before you this morning. As you know, this Administration attaches high priority to international narcotics control. Both the President and the Secretary of State have expressed on numerous occasions their strong commitment to work closely with other governments to curtail illicit drug production and traffic. They have used their meetings with foreign leaders to underscore their deep concern with the worldwide drug problem and their belief that concerted international efforts are required to deal with it effectively.

The primary goal of the State Department's international narcotics control program, which I administer, is to curtail the flow of illicit drugs coming into the United States from other countries. During the past year, in conjunction with the White House Office of Drug Abuse Policy, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the U.S. Customs Service, we have been evaluating the many complex and difficult issues involved in developing an effective, coherent global drug control strategy. Because of its devastating impact on the health and welfare of our society, heroin must be our foremost drug of concern. In the international program, our goal is to work with other governments to reduce illicit opium production, destroy heroin refining laboratories, and disrupt international trafficking networks.

At present, our single most important cooperative narcotics control program is with Mexico. Since the disruption of the Turkish-French heroin connection in 1972, Mexico has been the major source of heroin for the illicit market in the United States. Based on drug seizure data, Mexican heroin accounted, by 1975, for 80-90 percent of the total heroin entering the United States. However, during the past several years, the increasingly successful poppy eradication campaign waged by the Mexican Government has resulted in an estimated decrease in that figure to about 65-67 percent.

Last February, President Lopez Portillo of Mexico met with President Carter and affirmed his personal commitment to an intensified effort to curtail illicit heroin production and traffic. President Lopez assigned new narcotics control

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missions to the Mexican Defense Department as well as to other Ministries to provide additional support to Attorney General Flores Sanchez, who is responsible for the overall Mexican narcotics control effort. The Mexican Defense Department, using more than 10,000 troops, is continuing to provide support in the primary poppy growing areas, both to interdict drug traffic and to inhibit replanting of the illicit opium poppies.

Dr. Bourne and I met twice last year with the Mexican Attorney General, the Secretary of Defense, and other Mexican officials to review the efforts of our governments in achieving the common goal of curtailing illicit narcotics production and traffic. At our most recent meeting last December, we discussed specific elements of an expanded national plan for narcotics control in Mexico that will provide an improved structure for an intensified eradication and enforcement effort over the next three years.

Since 1973, approximately \$50 million in international narcotics control assistance has been provided to Mexico. During the past year, we provided \$13.5 million in assistance, approximately 30 percent of our total program budget. We have allocated an additional \$13 million for this fiscal year, and we are requesting a similar amount for fiscal year 1979.

Essential factors that must be taken into consideration with regard to narcotics control efforts in Mexico include:

Opium poppies can be grown in many areas of Mexico in successive crops throughout the year.

The growing areas are extremely remote and are cultivated by people who have no other immediately available cash crop.

The trafficking networks are extremely complex, well developed, and tightly controlled.

Relations between Mexican traffickers and organized criminal networks within the United States increase the problems of effective enforcement and interdiction.

The profits generated by the illicit traffic are so large that the potential for corruption is great and often hard to combat.

The Mexican Attorney General's office presently employs 487 people in the narcotics control effort, which includes enforcement agents, pilots, mechanics, management and administrative personnel. During the spring and fall when the eradication campaign is intensified, 70 percent of the Attorney General's personnel and funds are devoted to the program, although drug abuse responsibilities represent only 7 percent of the total workload assigned to the Attorney General's office. Our Embassy estimates that the Mexican Government spends well over \$40 million a year in its drug control efforts, not including personnel and resources at the state and local level.

Scores of Mexican enforcement officials have lost their lives or been seriously injured during recent years while carrying out drug control activities. Six Mexican Federal Judicial Agents were killed in 1977, and 12 were seriously injured. Twelve pilots and mechanics have also been seriously injured during the 1977 campaign.

Approximately 47,000 fields of opium poppies, comprising about 14,000 acres, were destroyed in 1977, representing an increase of almost 50 percent over the previous year's eradication effort. An additional 3,167 poppy fields were destroyed in January of this year. We recognize that the real success of the Mexican campaign can only be measured in terms of reduced amounts of heroin reaching the United States and an amelioration of our drug abuse problem. The scarcity of heroin supplies in Mexico is now noticeable, with a resulting increase of wholesale prices. DEA data on purity levels indicate that heroin purity on our city streets has dropped to the lowest point in 6 years (5.1 per cent). The increase in heroin retail prices and the decline in heroin overdose deaths in the United States are encouraging signs of progress, but it is obvious that the momentum of the Mexican eradication program must be maintained and intensified. The Mexican Government agrees with this assessment.

Illicit poppy cultivation in Mexico occurs primarily in isolated, mountainous regions. The Mexican Government is presently reviewing economic and social studies designed to encourage income substitution programs for those regions. We do not expect that United States economic assistance will be sought by the Mexican Government for these programs. However, possible international financing of rural development projects for primary producing areas has been discussed informally during the talks that Dr. Bourne and I have had with Mexican officials.

Our major objective is to assure the continuing commitment of the Mexican Government to curtail the illicit drug traffic into the United States and to assist in the development of a long-term capability on the part of the Mexican Government to suppress illicit drug production and traffic. Our immediate efforts are designed to enhance the increasing effectiveness of Mexico's narcotics control program. Both governments agree on the necessity for joint efforts designed to eliminate opium production in Mexico and break up major trafficking networks. The Mexican Government understandably wishes to avoid the development of a domestic heroin drug abuse problem. They are also acutely aware of the corrosive effects that unrestrained illicit drug trafficking can have on the political and economic stability of their country.

Within the United States Embassy in Mexico, the Deputy Chief of Mission has primary responsibility for coordinating the U.S. effort in the bilateral cooperative narcotics program. Under his direction is a full-time Special Assistant to the Ambassador for Narcotics Matters, who carries out daily coordination among the various parts of the Mission involved in narcotics control. He also provides general direction for the Narcotics Assistance Unit (NAU), which is composed of fourteen direct hire and contract employees supported by international narcotics control funds. This Unit provides overall guidance for a number of employees (37), under contract with the Mexican Government, funded by International Narcotics Control assistance, in the areas of pilot instruction, aircraft systems and maintenance, and technical advisory services. The Narcotics Assistance Unit is the daily point of contact with the Mexican Attorney General's office with regard to U.S. program assistance.

As an indication of the importance of our joint efforts with Mexico, the Drug Enforcement Administration maintains a significant presence in Mexico, where it has a major Regional Office, which provides direction to other DEA offices within Mexico as well as Central America. DEA agents work closely with Mexican Federal Judicial Agents to develop narcotics intelligence and to build cases against major narcotics traffickers. DEA and the Attorney General's office have also developed an important cooperative program, known as "Janus", whereby evidence originating in United States courts can be used in Mexican courts. By this method, Mexican traffickers and financiers can be prosecuted on the basis of evidence generated in the United States.

During the past few years, our international narcotics control funds have supported 20-35 DEA temporary duty (TDY) personnel for two 3-month periods each year. These DEA personnel assist the Mexican Government during the spring and fall campaigns in the eradication of opium poppy fields and with specific interdiction activities. DEA spotters, flying with Mexican Federal Judicial Police, also assist with visual reconnaissance of the opium poppy fields. In 1977 the Mexican Government increased the numbers of their own trained spotters for visual reconnaissance, thereby reducing the level of DEA assistance in this area. In order to maintain the effectiveness of the campaign using optimal levels of United States and Mexican resources, the mode and level of assistance is continually being reassessed. As the detailed planning of the new national plan for expanded narcotics control in Mexico evolves, the allocation of both human and physical resources will be an integral part of its implementation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I will be glad to answer questions.

[The following extract from the INC Congressional Submission for the fiscal year 1979 budget was submitted by Ms. Falco.]

INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM—FISCAL SUMMARY BY APPROPRIATION LIMITATION

(In thousands)

	Actual, fiscal year 1977		Planned, fiscal year 1978	Requested, fiscal year 1979
	Gross Obligations	Prior year adjustments		
I. Country programs	\$25,474	(\$2,394)	\$23,080	\$30,545
II. International organizations	4,100		4,100	3,125
III. Interregional programs	4,872	(578)	4,294	5,030
IV. Program support and development	654	(68)	586	1,300
Total	35,115	3,040	32,075	40,000

INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM—FISCAL SUMMARY

(In thousands)

	Actual, fiscal year 1977 ¹	Planned, fiscal year 1978 ²	Requested, fiscal year 1979
I. Country programs:			
Latin America	\$17,276	\$24,256	\$21,221
Bolivia	2,925	3,391	3,610
Brazil	296		
Colombia	56	1,239	1,446
Costa Rica	38		
Ecuador	456	535	536
Mexico	13,350	16,792	13,500
Paraguay	9		
Peru	28	1,577	1,589
Latin America regional	108	722	540
East Asia	5,804	6,419	7,824
Burma	4,144	4,870	6,050
Indonesia	55		
Philippines	(10)		
Thailand	1,615	1,549	1,674
East Asia regional			100
Near East and South Asia		50	1,500
Afghanistan			500
Pakistan		50	1,000
Total, country programs	23,080	30,725	30,545
II. International organizations:			
Colombo Plan	100	125	125
U.N. Fund for Drug Abuse Control	4,000	3,000	3,000
Total, international organizations	4,100	3,125	3,125
III. Interregional programs:			
Treatment and rehabilitation	258	760	530
Training	4,041	5,000	4,500
Total, interregional	4,299	5,760	5,030
IV. Program support and development	586	2,300	1,300
Program total	32,075	41,910	40,000

¹ Net obligations.

² Includes prior year recoveries of \$4,810,000.

INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM BY FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY

(Dollar amounts in thousands)

	Fiscal year 1977 actual	Percent of total	Fiscal year 1978 planned	Percent of total	Fiscal year 1979 proposed	Percent of total
Enforcement and control	\$25,231	78.7	\$32,459	77.4	\$30,518	76.3
Crop replacement	1,700	5.3	3,045	7.3	4,153	10.4
International organizations	4,100	12.8	3,125	7.5	3,125	7.8
Demand reduction	448	1.4	981	2.3	904	2.3
Program development and support	586	1.8	2,300	5.5	1,300	3.2
Total program	32,075		41,910		40,000	

Project Goal.—To develop within the Mexican Government both the capability to eradicate illicit narcotics crops and to interdict trafficking in narcotics, whether produced domestically or transiting Mexico en route to the United States. Complementary to this effort, the project is oriented to develop self-sufficiency in all related technical aspects within a 5-year time frame and eventual total budgetary support by the Government of Mexico.

Owing to an increasingly successful program of opium poppy eradication in Mexico, the flow of Mexican heroin into the United States has fallen to 67 percent of the total, based on seizure data, from a high level of 80-90 percent in

1974-75. The new Mexican administration has intensified the admirable drug control efforts of its predecessor. Its antidrug efforts are substantial in funds expended (\$40 million plus in 1976 and 1977) and in lives lost in enforcement. Approximately 47,000 fields of opium poppy (about 17,000 acres) were destroyed in 1977, representing an increase of almost 50 percent over the previous year's effort. It is estimated that the eradication program has been successful in preventing over ten tons of heroin from potentially entering the United States in 1977.

Progress toward the project goal will involve a series of objectives, outlined individually below. The Mexican Government has reared a new National Plan for achieving the goals of narcotics control. The United States Embassy and the Mexican Attorney General's (A.G.) office are jointly developing the plan which envisions expanded efforts in eradication and interdiction. It will provide for the establishment of additional zones in Mexico that will be designed upon the model of the successful effort in Sinaloa and use the same organization and methods employed in the Sinaloa area, appropriately scaled to meet the eradication and enforcement needs in other areas of Mexico. The following subprojects and objectives are predicated on the need to support an effective development of the new National Plan.

Objective 1 (Aircraft Needs).—To upgrade the airlift capability to support increased military task force operations against narcotics traffickers and conduct spray operations throughout the Republic. The rotary wing fleet now consists of 16 medium-lift helicopters and 19 light helicopters. Fiscal year 1978 program expansion requires the provision of 14 additional light helicopters (\$4.2 million); 4 medium-lift helicopters (\$4 million); and 2 cargo aircraft (\$2.412 million); helicopter pilot training in the U.S. for 25 Mexican fixed-wing pilots (\$500,000). Total in fiscal year 1978, \$11.112 million. Costs in fiscal year 1979 and fiscal year 1980 for aircraft and training: \$2 million each year.

Objective 2 (Aircraft Maintenance).—To continue development of an aviation maintenance sector in the AG's office. An American contractor (E-Systems) began work on a 4-year plan in September 1977. Additional spare parts funding of \$1 million in fiscal year 1978, contract and spare parts funding of \$3 million in fiscal year 1979, and further spare parts funding of \$2 million in fiscal year 1980.

Objective 3 (Telecommunications).—Communications network as increased bases are established and to provide to the AG equipment which can be loaned to other agencies to draw them more effectively into the narcotics control effort. Provision of \$1.5 million in telecommunications equipment including related training in fiscal year 1978, followed by provision of spare parts and ongoing training in fiscal year 1979 and fiscal year 1980 at a cost of \$500,000 each year.

Objective 4 (Field Support).—To establish a network of forward bases in the tactical areas and a system of logistic support at the field level to maximize the utilization of more expensive resources such as aircraft. To support this objective, provision of commodities and contract services for a field support fund amounting to \$700,000 in fiscal year 1978, \$500,000 in fiscal year 1979, and \$500,000 in fiscal year 1980.

Objective 5 (Budgetary Support Campaign).—To recruit and retain qualified personnel for the eradication and interdiction programs. To prevent the loss of these people, to market demand for their scarce skills, it is necessary to continue the salary supplement fund which has worked so effectively during the past year. The project requires additional funding of \$300,000 in fiscal year 1978, \$700,000 in fiscal year 1979, and \$800,000 in fiscal year 1980.

Objective 6 (Mapping).—To assist the A.G.'s office in obtaining adequate quality and quantity of color topographic maps to use for tactical and strategic planning purposes and have accurate maps available for the sophisticated electro-optical scanning system. Through an agreement with the A.C., provide equipment, consumable materials, and funding to Detenal (GOM mapping agency) to produce the priority maps within two years. The mapping project will be incrementally funded at \$1 million in fiscal year 1978 and \$1 million in fiscal year 1979.

Objective 7 (Remote Sensing).—To develop and place into operation a reliable extensive area coverage remote sensing system which can detect narcotic plants at varying stages of maturity in a timely fashion. The A.G. will be tasked to provide field support and ground truth data. The project requires that \$200,000 be budgeted in fiscal year 1978. Development and full implementation of the sophisticated remote sensing system under a USG contract which includes technical support, equipment and spares, related training, and a high performance jet aircraft: \$4.6 million (fiscal year 1979).

Objective 8 (Intelligence Data).—To create in Mexico a computerized narcotics intelligence data system which will permit rapid response to inquiries originating in the United States and other countries and systematize narcotics intelligence collection and dissemination within Mexico. Activity is under way. The A.G. is using GOM computer mainframes and is installing terminals in key areas. Additional key bases will require terminal installations, equipment rental, and system modifications. Additional assistance: \$200,000 in fiscal year 1979 and \$200,000 in fiscal year 1980.

Objective 9 (M.F.J.P. Development).—To upgrade the professionalism of individual Federal Judicial Police (FJP) agents by promoting the initiation of career development courses at the FJP training institute and, if acceptable to the GOM, provide financial assistance to permit increased pay and benefits for individual agents working on narcotics control. This objective is highly important because it assumes an attempt to begin a basic change for the long-term in Mexican narcotics law enforcement through techniques effectively used in the United States. For planning purposes, the project needs \$300,000 in fiscal year 1978 followed by \$500,000 in fiscal year 1979 and \$700,000 in fiscal year 1980.

U.S. FINANCING

(In thousands of dollars)

	Obligations	Expenditures	Unliquidated
Through Sept. 30, 1977.....	\$50,029	\$37,439	\$12,590
Estimated fiscal year 1978.....	16,782	20,486	
Estimated through Sept. 30, 1978.....	66,821	57,925	8,896
	Obligations	Future year obligations	Estimated total cost
Proposed fiscal year 1979.....	13,500	50,000	130,331

Note: Principal contractors or agencies: E-Systems, Evergreen, and Drug Enforcement Administration.

INC BUDGET RECAP BY SUBPROJECTS

(In thousands of dollars)

Subproject	Fiscal year 1978	Fiscal year 1979
1. Aircraft and pilot training.....	\$11,112	\$2,000
2. Aircraft maintenance (spare parts).....	1,000	3,000
3. Telecommunications (equipment and training).....	1,500	500
4. Field support (commodities and contract services).....	700	500
5. Campaign budgetary support costs.....	300	700
6. Mapping project.....	1,000	1,000
7. Remote sensing.....	200	4,600
8. Intelligence data.....	200	200
9. MFJP (development training and budgetary support).....	300	500
10. Personnel support (United States and contract).....	469	500
Total.....	16,782	13,500
Personnel:		
Direct: Narcotics advisers, program officer, telecommunications adviser, and 2 secretaries.....	250	255
Contract: Aviation operations, pilot training, maintenance, and telecommunications.....	230	235
Commodities:		
Aircraft: 14 light helicopters, 4 transport helicopters, 2 cargo aircraft, related services, and training.....	11,112	2,000
Aircraft spare parts and services.....	1,000	3,000
Telecommunications equipment and parts.....	1,500	500
Field support equipment and services.....	700	500
Intelligence data system: Equipment and services.....	200	200
Other costs:		
Campaign budgetary support.....	300	700
Mapping costs.....	1,000	1,000
Remote sensing system equipment and services.....	200	4,600
MFJP professional development training and budget supplement.....	300	500
Total.....	16,782	13,500

*Includes 3 Americans and 2 locals.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD G. ARELLANO, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me to contribute to your examination of the State Department's role in combatting the flow of illicit drugs from Mexico. The picture which the Senior Advisor has just provided reflects her personal leadership and detailed involvement in developing and monitoring it, as well as narcotics control programs affecting the other American Republics. With this information already before you it seems most appropriate for me to focus my remarks on my Bureau's perspective on narcotics.

As Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, I bear primary responsibility for coordinating narcotics-related activities within the Bureau, and for assuring adequate impetus to these State Department efforts in the American Republics. We coordinate our activities with those of other bureaus of the Department and with other agencies through the Senior Advisor, who is responsible for Department of State international narcotics policy development and program coordination. Within the Bureau, a narcotics coordinator in the Office of Regional Political Programs devotes full time to Bureau narcotics activities. Regional offices and country desks contribute to program planning and implementation for their areas.

International narcotics control is among the top priorities of the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs in all countries of the region where opium or coca is produced or trafficked. We continually emphasize the importance of narcotics control in our diplomatic contacts with foreign government officials, not only those of narcotics producing and trafficking countries but also those of countries which can and should contribute to the international narcotics control efforts. Narcotics control efforts are particularly intense in Mexico, the principal source of illicit heroin in the United States and an important transit center for drugs from other sources bound for the U.S. market.

Next, concerning organization in the field: Our Ambassador or Deputy Chief of Mission in Mexican City chairs a Narcotics Control Committee composed of key mission personnel. It includes the senior representatives of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Customs, AID, the Departments of Agriculture and Defense, the U.S. Information Agency, and others. This Committee meets regularly in order to ensure, through its guidance and leadership, that narcotics programs are carried out in an effective and coordinated way consistent with overall U.S. goals. Its members also take part in weekly country team meetings in which narcotics matters not requiring separate deliberations are regularly discussed. This group considers broad policy questions requiring coordination at the top level among U.S. Government agencies represented in Mexico.

The Special Assistant for Narcotics Matters, a full-time senior foreign service officer, also holds frequent ad hoc meetings of selected key staff to discuss specific issues as they arise. For example, he might form a small working group to consider a Mexican request for additional telecommunications equipment. Such a group would include representatives of the Embassy Commercial and Communications Section, its Narcotics Advisory Unit, and DEA. A problem with financial overtones would bring in representatives of the Embassy Economic Section, the Financial Attache, Customs, the Internal Revenue Service, and DEA. Such ad hoc meetings may occur once a week or twice a day, depending on circumstances.

This is the mechanism whereby the Embassy exercises its traditional responsibility to oversee the activities of all U.S. agencies overseas and to assure conformity with overall policy objectives. In the narcotics program the Embassy is responsible for adherence to agreed-upon guidelines, some of which stem from Congressional directives. Any serious violation of such guidelines could jeopardize our total antinarcotics program or even bilateral cooperation in other areas. The mechanism also assures that the resources of all Government agencies are brought to bear in an appropriate way on this area of priority U.S. concern.

Apart from its coordinating role, the State Department has under its direct control assistance programs in the field authorized under Section 482 of the Foreign Assistance Act as amended. The goal of our program in Mexico is to develop within the Mexican Government the capability to eradicate illicit crops, and to interdict trafficking in narcotics, whether produced domestically or transiting Mexico en route to the United States.

The principal forms of State Department-administered support to the Mexican drug effort have included the furnishing of aircraft and telecommunications equipment, together with the requisite training to enable the Mexicans to use them in modern applications to drug detection, poppy eradication, and enforcement work. Our technical assistance, together with certain commodities, is also helping them to establish and administer a network of forward bases in the important eradication areas and to improve intelligence collection, retrieval, and analysis. Training and salary supplements are provided to aid the Federal Judicial Police to develop and hold a cadre of qualified narcotics agents.

I should like also to mention certain diplomatic initiatives in support of the narcotics program:

Secretary Vance and the Mexican Foreign Minister have agreed to establish a separate Joint Subcommittee on Drug Abuse under the Special Working Group of the Bilateral Consultative Mechanism. This will increase the priority of narcotics control among the many related bilateral issues under continuing discussion and will include legislative representatives on the Committee from each country. Your colleagues from the other chamber, Congressmen Wolff and Gilman, were instrumental in initiating this proposal and we have just received word of their appointment to the Subcommittee. We do not, as yet, have the names of the Senators who will serve on the Subcommittee.

We support recent efforts by the Treasury and Justice Departments to bring about treaties with Mexico, the Bahamas, Panama, and the Cayman Islands which would provide for mutual judicial assistance in obtaining financial data and identifying major drug traffickers for prosecution. Exploratory discussions toward such a treaty with Mexico have taken place within the framework of the U.S./Mexican consultative mechanism.

The Bureau has endorsed the establishment of a special telecommunications link between the Embassy and the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC). This system is now being installed and should facilitate the development of narcotics intelligence of common interest to the two countries.

Now a few words about factors that condition the prospects for our Mexican narcotics control effort: Mexico is the major producer of opium, heroin, and marijuana. It alone can produce more than enough heroin to supply the total U.S. market. It is a principal transit country for cocaine and, according to recent intelligence, is beginning to be used as a transit point for heroin produced in Southeast Asia. Because of Mexico's proximity to the United States and the large volume of contraband of all kinds that crosses our common border in both directions no United States effort to curb the entry of drugs from Mexico can be effective without parallel efforts in Mexico, requiring the energetic cooperation of the Mexican authorities.

With the disruption of the Turkish and French heroin trafficking in 1972 illicit drug activity began migrating to Mexico. Soon the new resources thrown into opium production overwhelmed traditional Mexican drug control programs. By mid-1974 the "Mexican connection" began to generate extensive unfavorable publicity for Mexico both in the U.S. press and Congress.

In November 1975 Mexico made the politically difficult decision to begin destroying poppy fields with herbicide to replace the generally ineffective earlier system of manual destruction. This decision was responsible for a quantum leap in Mexican narcotics control efforts, a major legacy of the former Mexican administration. Once the decision was made the Mexicans requested our support and the United States responded rapidly, expediting delivery of needed equipment, providing instructor helicopter pilots, and expanding technical advisory services. The Mexican Government procured and paid for all herbicides used in the program—and still does so. The new Mexican Administration of President Lopez Portillo has intensified the drug control efforts of its predecessor, and has worked closely with this U.S. Administration at all levels to curb illicit drug production and trafficking.

Miss Falco has mentioned the achievements of the drug enforcement program which the Mexican authorities are operating with our support. As she pointed out, the equivalent of \$40 million from the national budget is dedicated to it annually, and the Attorney General's Office now employs 487 people in the narcotics control effort. The seriousness of the Mexican commitment can also be measured in injuries and lives lost in the course of duty by those associated with the program—in the 1977 campaign alone, 24 serious injuries and six deaths.

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