

Cato Institute Policy Analysis No. 128: Perilous Panacea: The Military in the Drug War

February 15, 1990

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Executive Summary

Two events in December 1989 indicate that the Bush administration is dramatically escalating the war on drugs in Latin America and intends to have the U.S. military play an extensive role in that effort. The first was the invasion of Panama, which was at least partially motivated by anger at the Noriega regime's alleged drug-trafficking activities. The second was a White House decision to station an aircraft carrier battle group in the waters off Colombia to intercept drug shipments. Both episodes suggest that a hemispheric drug war may become the successor to the cold war--with potentially calamitous consequences for both the United States and its Latin American neighbors.

Enlisting the military in the crusade against drugs is the logical outcome of the hysteria that has been generated in the United States, and it is a confession that all previous methods of fighting drugs have failed. Since the beginning of the 1970s when President Richard M. Nixon first proclaimed America's war on drugs, Washington has employed a variety of strategies in that struggle. At various times it has emphasized vigorous interdiction efforts, directing the Customs Service and the Coast Guard to prevent the flow of illicit drugs into the country.[1] On other occasions, it has waged well-publicized campaigns against domestic drug producers, especially marijuana growers.[2] It has encouraged and helped fund enhanced state and local law enforcement efforts to arrest and imprison street pushers. In recent years it has revived the strategy (largely abandoned in the mid- and late 1970s) of attempting to intimidate casual users. The advocacy of widespread drug testing and mandatory fines and jail terms for casual users, under the theory of "zero tolerance," is the latest manifestation of that approach.

In addition to its domestic campaigns, Washington has sought to curtail the supply of drugs at the source. Most of that effort throughout the 1980s was directed at the Andean countries of South America, where the bulk of the cocaine and marijuana that comes into the United States originates. Washington has pursued its supply-side strategy in diverse ways. It has trained and equipped indigenous anti-drug police and paramilitary forces, assigned agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration to assist the governments of drug-producing countries, and funded crop substitution programs in an attempt to persuade Andean peasants to switch from drug crops to legal alternatives.[3]

Those multifaceted initiatives have had one thing in common: they have had no discernible beneficial effect on the "drug problem" in the United States. Despite an increase of nearly 400 percent in federal spending on anti-drug efforts during the 1980s--from \$1.2 billion in 1981 to more than \$5.7 billion in 1989--usage is actually higher now than it was at the beginning of the decade (although it has declined slightly since 1985).[4] Moreover, the bulk of what little decline has taken place in the last half of the 1980s has occurred among casual marijuana users--certainly the least serious component of the drug problem. Most troubling of all, the violence associated with the black market in drugs has continued to escalate.

As proponents of the war on drugs have seen all of their strategies fail, they have begun to exhibit intense frustration. That frustration is translated into a desperate search for "tougher" measures that will, somehow, achieve the victory that has thus far Proven so elusive.

The Military as a Panacea

It is indicative of the desperation of drug war partisans that their hopes now revolve around an expanded role for the military. The belief that the military can succeed where civilian agencies have failed has gradually but inexorably gained popularity. As early as 1981 Congress passed legislation authorizing the president to employ the military in the drug war, albeit in a limited fashion, by amending the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which prohibited the use of military personnel to enforce civilian laws.[5] In 1981 it appeared that most members of Congress were interested primarily in using troops to bolster the interdiction effort along the coasts and the U.S.-Mexican border.

Some drug war enthusiasts soon began to advocate an even wider role for the military. In May 1984, for example, Sen. Paula Hawkins (R-Fla.) proposed sending American troops to South America; she urged President Ronald Reagan to "offer whatever resources are necessary including U.S. military personnel to the government of Colombia in their war on illegal drugs." [6] A few years later, a Washington Post staff writer suggested deploying the National Guard on the streets of the nation's capital to stem the drug trade and the growing violence associated with it--an idea that was endorsed by some members of the city council.[7]

Until recently, however, most Americans seemed wary about involving the military in the domestic phase of the war on drugs. Critics pointed out that military forces are trained to seek out and destroy an enemy in wartime; they are not trained in the nuances of civilian law enforcement, much less the subtleties of constitutional law. Equally important, uniformed leaders and most civilian officials in the Department of Defense resisted attempts to conscript their institution because they believed that it would divert attention and resources from the military's primary mission--protecting the United States from the Soviet Union and other foreign enemies. As cold war tensions have eased as a result of Mikhail Gorbachev's more conciliatory foreign policy and internal reforms, however, the credibility of that justification for declining to enlist in the war on drugs has diminished.

Drugs Become a Threat to National Security

A crucial step in involving the military in the anti-drug effort came in April 1986 when President Reagan signed a National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) declaring drug trafficking a threat to the security of the United States.[8] From that point on, supporters of the drug war redoubled their calls for the military to play an expanded role. After all, the principal function of the defense establishment is to neutralize serious external threats to American security, and the president had certified that the drug trade posed such a threat. Conservative columnist James J. Kilpatrick exemplified that attitude when he endorsed using the military in the drug fight. "Our soldiers, sailors and airmen are being paid to protect the national security. Let them earn their pay." [9]

Opposition to using the military against drug trafficking on the international front was always less intense than opposition to its use on the home front. Domestic civil liberties issues did not intrude, and even the military bureaucracy seemed more ambivalent. Although the latter recognized the potential for becoming entangled in difficult struggles in Third World countries, such missions offered opportunities to test equipment, personnel, and tactics. Thus it was not surprising that the first significant deployment of the military in the war on drugs was a foreign operation. In the summer of 1986 the United States dispatched six high-performance Black Hawk helicopters and 160 troops to Bolivia to assist the government of that country in its attempt to eradicate a network of cocaine-processing laboratories. American forces participated in the eradication effort--Operation Blast Furnace-- for more than four months before they were withdrawn. It should be noted that their departure was largely the result of intense opposition from important segments of the Bolivian populace, not of opposition at home.[10]

Although administration spokesmen denied that Operation Blast Furnace was meant to be the prototype for similar measures elsewhere in Latin America, reports circulated that the administration had approached the governments of Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru about using U.S. troops.[11] It is striking that the Bush administration's Andean Initiative of the summer of 1989 explicitly included a role for the U.S. military in two of those countries. It was clear that some drug war enthusiasts saw Operation Blast Furnace as the long-awaited first step toward greater use of the military in

the campaign against narcotics. Former DEA administrator Peter Bensinger stated: "Five years ago, when Congress enabled the military to become involved in the fight against drugs, many of us hoped that military equipment, personnel, and technology would be put into the field--as they finally have been in Bolivia. But Bolivia is only one front in this war." [12]

Congressional Mandates

Public and congressional enthusiasm for greater military involvement in the drug war accelerated in the late 1980s. Indicative of the trend were measures passed by the House of Representatives in 1986 and by both chambers in May 1988 directing the Defense Department to secure American borders against illegal drugs. The House version of that legislation --rejected by the Senate in 1986 and softened in conference after passage in 1988--even ordered the president to deploy within 30 days enough military equipment and personnel to halt the penetration of U.S. borders by aircraft or vessels carrying narcotics. The measure gave the secretary of defense 45 days after deployment to "substantially halt" the drug flow.

Those requirements were so wildly unrealistic that when that amendment cleared the House in 1986 it drew a derisive response from Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Sam Nunn who stated that it would require returning the entire Navy to American waters as well as a massive redeployment of Air Force and Army units. [13] Pentagon spokesmen echoed those comments, noting that any serious attempt to seal the borders against drugs would require at least 90 infantry battalions, 50 helicopter companies, 50,000 Army ground support personnel, 110 AWACS planes, 150 cruisers, and hundreds of combat aircraft. [14] Those estimates were based in large part on a RAND Corporation study for the Department of Defense that concluded that the military would be an ineffective tool for stopping the flow of drugs into the United States. [15] The daunting military logistics impelled journalist Jonathan Marshall to comment that the House "might just as well have demanded that the National Weather Service bring rain to drought-stricken areas of the country within 45 days." [16]

There was undoubtedly a good deal of political posturing in the congressional action (as there is with many other aspects of the war on drugs). It was an easy way to score political points with constituents who were alarmed about the drug "menace" that the media were portraying in increasingly lurid terms. But it also reflected a genuine frustration on the part of members of Congress who could see no meaningful progress in stemming the flow of illegal drugs, and it suggested how serious the drug war hysteria was becoming.

The Galan Assassination: Catalyst or Pretext?

Pressure mounted throughout 1988-89 to use the military, as exasperated members of Congress chastised Pentagon leaders who remained reluctant to entangle their institution in the murky struggle against drugs. [17] Yet U.S. policy appeared to change little until the assassination of Colombian presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan on August 18, 1989, and the subsequent offensive against the Medellin cartel by the Colombian government. Within days of that incident, the Bush administration offered \$65 million in emergency military aid to Bogota, and that step was followed by the announcement of the broader Andean Initiative in early September. The administration was, however, not merely responding to the bloody events in Colombia; it had already decided to escalate the war on drugs by employing the military in the Andean region. President Bush alluded to probable U.S. military involvement when he met with Latin American police officials in the spring of 1989. At that meeting he expressed a willingness to dispatch U.S. military advisers to aid in tracking the drug cartels "to the ends of the earth." [18]

A more significant step was taken during the president's vacation at Kennebunkport, Maine, in August 1989 when he signed a new NSDD that modified the one approved by Reagan in April 1986. The new directive not only outlined a vast expansion of aid--especially military aid--to the Andean countries (it was, in fact, the program that became the Andean Initiative), it also included new rules of engagement for U.S. forces. Previously, members of the U.S. Special Forces from the U.S. Southern Command in Panama who had been training indigenous anti-drug strike forces in Bolivia and Peru had been restricted to their base camps; they were prohibited from accompanying the South American units on patrol. The new NSDD allowed American forces to go out on "routine" patrols in areas considered secure. Although those guidelines still appeared to limit U.S. involvement, in practice they were virtually meaningless, since any patrol could easily come under fire from drug traffickers or, in Peru, from the Maoist Sendero Luminoso

(Shining Path) guerrillas. One senior White House official predicted that the new NSDD would enable the United States to deploy "several hundred" U.S. military trainers, advisers, and support personnel in the Andean countries--a point that was confirmed when Bush announced the Andean Initiative in early September.[19]

It is extremely unlikely that such a comprehensive plan for a drug war offensive was formulated only after the Galan assassination. A more probable scenario is that the basic elements of the plan had been under consideration for weeks or even months and that the administration merely used the assassination as justification for implementing its strategy.

U.S. Military Involvement in the Andean Region

As Operation Blast Furnace and the Andean Initiative demonstrated, Washington is increasingly unwilling to confine the drug war to the United States. Overt steps are being taken to elicit active cooperation among drug-exporting nations, in particular the nations of the Andean region. Although economic aid is a substantial component of the U.S. supply-side strategy, there is growing emphasis on U.S. military participation in drug eradication efforts. When he announced the Andean Initiative, the president explicitly vowed to use U.S. military forces in Latin America--even though he stressed that requests from the host governments are a prerequisite.[20]

That limitation is now open to question in light of events during the final months of 1989. According to a November 3, 1989, legal opinion issued by the Justice Department at the request of the White House, U.S. military forces have the authority to pursue and arrest drug traffickers overseas, even without the consent of the host government. That ruling came some two months after a U.S. Special Forces team was mobilized to apprehend reputed Colombian drug kingpin Pablo Escobar who was reportedly in Panama. The mission was abandoned largely because the Bush administration feared that it might violate U.S. law (specifically the Posse Comitatus Act) as it was then interpreted.[21] The November 3 reinterpretation has apparently removed that obstacle. In addition to the Justice Department's ruling, the Bush administration's tendency to tout the invasion of Panama as a great victory in the drug war and the decision to deploy a carrier battle group off Colombia without bothering to obtain Bogota's consent underscore Washington's willingness to use its military power unilaterally.[22]

It is not surprising that the administration is exploiting the drug cartel violence in Colombia to justify an increased U.S. military presence throughout the Andean region. The universal public revulsion at Galan's assassination provided the perfect opportunity to implement such a policy. The Andean Initiative allocates over \$260 million in military and law enforcement assistance for Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. That amount represents only the first annual installment of monetary and military aid that will exceed \$2 billion over a five-year period and include various weapons systems designed to give the Latin American militaries an edge over the well-armed drug cartels.

Furthermore, additional U.S. Special Forces, along with other military advisers, are being sent to the region to train law enforcement and military personnel. The mere presence of U.S. units in the volatile Andean region creates the prospect of their being caught in the crossfire between the drug lords and the government forces. In that case, U.S. military involvement could easily escalate for "defensive" reasons.

Despite the manifest risks, not only is the use of U.S. troops supported by the administration and Congress, but there is a high degree of public support as well. One national poll indicated that 74 percent of Americans endorsed Bush's plan to send military advisers to Colombia. More ominously, 36 percent favored sending combat forces, even if some of those soldiers might be killed.[23] There was a similar outpouring of support for the intervention in Panama--especially after it was described as a decisive victory in the drug conflict.

Washington's Myopic Strategy

Proposals for involving the military in either the domestic or the international phase of the drug war are dangerously shortsighted. Domestic use would break down the barrier that has prevented the military from engaging in domestic law enforcement activities since the dawn of the Republic. Even using troops in border interdiction efforts sets an unhealthy precedent. More radical schemes to garrison U.S. cities or otherwise use soldiers to combat the drug trade on the streets are utterly reckless.

Military Threats to Domestic Liberty

The Framers of the Constitution did not underestimate the perils of maintaining a large standing army, much less those of allowing it to do anything but defend the nation against foreign enemies. They had seen too many societies lose their liberties to ambitious and unfettered military establishments. Indeed, the heavy-handed tactics of the British army--especially its arrest of civilians--had been one cause of the American Revolution. America's experience during the Civil War, when the military arrested civilians and even tried them before military tribunals instead of civilian courts, validated the fears of the Founders about what might happen were the military not kept on a short leash. The military establishment's abuse of power during the Civil War, and its role during Reconstruction, when the defeated southern states were temporarily placed under direct military rule, finally impelled Congress to enact the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, which explicitly prohibited such uses of the military.

Unfortunately, many contemporary Americans seem to be oblivious to those dangers. Typical of the cavalier attitude was former DEA administrator Francis Mullen's dismissal of concerns that involving the military in the drug fight could lead to abuses of civil liberties. "There is sufficient oversight on the part of Congress and others," he stated confidently, "to deter infringement on individual liberties." [24] Rep. Charles Bennett (D-Fla.) even described the Posse Comitatus Act as a "sinful, evil law" and indignantly rejected the notion that the United States had anything to fear from a powerful military. That law, he stated, implied that America had to worry about becoming a "banana republic" in which the military would run the government. [25]

Ironically, some military leaders seem to be more sensitive to the potential dangers than do their civilian counterparts. Marine Major General Stephen G. Olmstead, deputy assistant secretary of defense for drug policy, warned a Senate subcommittee in 1987 that involving the military in the domestic drug war would set an extremely unwise precedent:

One of [America's] greatest strengths is that the military is responsive to civilian authority and that we do not allow the Army, Navy, and the Marines and the Air Force to be a police force. History is replete with countries that allowed that to happen. Disaster is the result. [26]

Coercing the Latin Americans

Equally unfortunate are the Bush administration's plans to have the U.S. military participate in drug eradication efforts in Latin America. To be sure, the administration insists that there are no current plans to use American forces in a combat capacity. [27] But both Bush and Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney have pointedly refused to rule out an eventual combat role. Their refusal understandably disturbs Americans who recall that the massive Vietnam intervention also began with the shipment of hardware and the dispatch of small numbers of military advisers. Nor can they take much comfort from the ambiguous phrasing of Bush's pledge of military aid to the Andean countries:

Our message to the drug cartels is this: The rules have changed. We will help any government that wants our help. When requested, we will for the first time make available the appropriate resources of America's military forces. [28]

In particular, one might ask what is meant by "appropriate resources"?

Administration leaders insist that the United States will provide assistance only on the request of the host governments, implying that this is another limitation on America's military involvement. But those who are familiar with Washington's ability throughout the cold war to pressure small client nations into "requesting" assistance will be skeptical about the effectiveness of that caveat. The president and Congress have already displayed a willingness to use coercive measures to "encourage" nations that produce or export drugs to accede to U.S. demands. One of the weapons that appeal to U.S. officials is the threat of "decertification." The 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act made U.S. economic and military assistance, the granting or continuation of most-favored-nation trade status, and U.S. support for World Bank loans contingent on a government's "certified cooperation" with the United States in drug eradication efforts. The president's 1989 national drug control strategy report affirmed that "in bilateral relationships with illegal drug producing and transit countries," the United States "must emphasize the requirement for cooperation with our anti-drug efforts . . . we must be prepared to decertify countries that willfully permit drug traffickers to continue operations within their national territory." [29] With the United States possessing such vital leverage, many Latin American nations would be hard pressed to decline U.S. "offers" of military assistance in the war on drugs.

Latin American "Requests"

Indeed, one must question whether, in any case, requests for military aid from drug-producing countries would be genuine or merely made in acquiescence to a policy demanded by Washington. For example, more than two months before the Colombian government requested emergency military aid, the Bush administration had signaled its intent to provide increased levels of military as well as economic aid to the Andean countries to combat drug trafficking.[30] In the immediate aftermath of the Galan assassination, Attorney General Richard Thornburgh emphasized that the United States would seriously consider sending troops if the Colombian government requested it to do so. Two weeks later White House Chief of Staff John Sununu stated that the administration would probably approve direct U.S. military involvement if Bogota reversed its position and requested such assistance.[31]

Even the most obtuse officials in Bogota could scarcely have failed to pick up such repeated hints. The Bush administration's none-too-subtle pressure placed the government of Virgilio Barco in a difficult position. Barco responded by asking the United States for military equipment and, as an apparent concession to Washington, a limited number of "advisers" while placating nationalist feelings in his own country by reiterating that there was no need for U.S. combat forces. By pressuring the Andean governments to permit even a limited U.S. military role in the campaign against drug trafficking, the Bush administration is ignoring the long-standing antipathy of Latin American populations to a U.S. troop presence in their countries. Such a visible display of power is likely to reawaken memories of "Yankee imperialism"--memories that are not slumbering too soundly to begin with.

Foreign Policy Implications

Indeed, Latin American populations frequently resent even nonmilitary U.S. pressure. The extradition issue is proving to be a potent source of resentment. Colombians, in particular, have consistently opposed Washington's efforts to extradite accused drug traffickers as an infringement on their nation's sovereignty. President Barco's decision to cooperate with the Bush administration in extraditing suspected traffickers to the United States after the Galan assassination remains unpopular with large segments of the Colombian population. Disapproval of Barco's cooperation is not, as insensitive U.S. officials sometimes allege, confined to those elements involved in the drug trade. Bradley Graham notes that "extradition has been highly unpopular among Colombians as an offense to nationalist sentiments. The sight of fellow citizens being handcuffed and manacled in the United States remains a deeply unsettling image for many Colombians." [32]

If Colombians and other Latin Americans resent heavy-handed U.S. demands for extradition, one can readily imagine their reaction to U.S. troops fighting the war on drugs in their countries. Concern about those issues is not merely theoretical. The issues of extradition and U.S. military coercion in Latin America are beginning to dovetail, as evidenced by the Justice Department's November 1989 ruling authorizing the military to apprehend accused drug traffickers in foreign countries without the consent of the host governments.

Aside from the dubious legality of such a policy under international law, it is politically insensitive and certain to damage U.S. relations with other nations--especially in Latin America. It could also provoke extremely dangerous incidents. Foreign governments are likely to regard uninvited U.S. military incursions as distinctly unfriendly acts and might even use force to repel them. Even normally compliant regimes might find it impossible to resist nationalist pressures to prevent such a blatant attempt to treat their countries like components of a U.S. empire. The hostile reaction of Latin American governments to the invasion of Panama in December 1989 under-scores their sensitivity to U.S. military intervention. Peru's decision to withdraw from the scheduled February 15, 1990, "drug summit" unless all American troops were withdrawn from Panama by that date and to temporarily suspend all cooperation with U.S.-sponsored anti-drug efforts within its territory was especially revealing. It indicated that Lima recognized that the Panama operation was at least partially motivated by the war on drugs. More significant, it reflected Peruvian uneasiness about the direction Washington's drug war is taking.

Washington should not be surprised that many Latin Americans are not only reluctant to enlist in the war on drugs but openly averse to any hint of U.S. military pressure. Evidence of that attitude emerged even before the brouhaha that occurred in the aftermath of the Panamanian invasion. The response of the residents of one small Bolivian town to an American-sponsored drug raid as part of Operation Blast Furnace in 1986 illustrated the explosive possibilities for anti-

Americanism throughout the hemisphere. U.S. and Bolivian anti-drug units that were engaged in a search for traffickers in Santa Ana were forced to flee an angry mob of 3,000 (of the 5,000) townspeople. Shouts of "Kill the Yankees" echoed throughout the crowd.[33]

Some U.S. military officials recognize the potential of the drug war for creating intense anti-American sentiment. Senior officers cautioned long before Washington adopted its present aggressive posture that "more U.S. military activity aimed at stopping drugs, particularly in Central and South America where most illegal drugs are grown, would send the wrong message to nations in this hemisphere. . . ."[34]

U.S. Presence Strengthens Insurgent Movements

The U.S.-directed drug war is being exploited by indigenous left-wing insurgent movements as well as right-wing authoritarian elements in Latin American military establishments to undermine the tenuous hold that those nations have on democracy. Radical leftist groups especially use the U.S. presence as a focal issue to discredit existing regimes. Playing on nationalistic sentiments, those groups call themselves the "true" voice of the people and portray the democratic governments as U.S. lackeys that are willing to implement Washington's policies regardless of their dire effects on Latin Americans.

In Colombia, where the Barco government is waging a renewed war against the drug cartels, anti-American sentiment is on the rise. U.S. actions have created "a mood of anti-imperialism that our guerrillas have failed to achieve in decades," remarked noted Colombian newspaper columnist Enrique Santos.[35] The general population is becoming more responsive to the rhetorical appeals of left-wing insurgent movements.

The Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas, the largest rebel group, controls many of the coca fields. Indeed, its power is so entrenched that it "lev[ies] taxes on coca cultivation and stand[s] guard over cocaine processing facilities." [36] It is not surprising, considering the lucrative nature of the drug trade, that FARC is well financed and extremely well armed. Until its recent "peace accord" with the government in Bogota, another leftist rebel group--the 19th of April Movement (M-19)--engaged in similar coca production activities, allowing drug operations to continue in exchange for weapons or money.[37]

In Peru the situation is even more precarious. The Maoist Shining Path guerrillas have used the U.S.-sponsored coca-crop eradication program in the upper Huallaga valley to solidify their power among the local peasantry. Peruvian officials concede that "efforts to destroy the coca fields have hurt the fight against Shining Path, handing the guerrillas important popular support among peasant growers and a crucial source of funding from fees collected for protecting the drug trade." [38]

The relationship between leftist insurgent movements and trafficking organizations is complex.[39] While conflicting interests generally inhibit the formation of overt alliances--for one thing, the traffickers tend to be politically conservative--there is strong evidence of informal cooperation. Most notably, both factions share the desire to rid their countries of an American presence, as well as prevent extradition to the United States. The primary danger of the U.S.-directed drug war, though, is not that it helps cement an explicit narco-guerrilla alliance but that it enables the leftists to gain popular support from beleaguered peasants.

Strengthening Latin American Militaries

There is also a danger that Washington's assistance to Latin American military establishments may increase the right-wing threat to incumbent democratic governments. Traffickers have significant ties to elements of the military in several drug-producing countries.[40] Moreover, increased military aid will inevitably enhance the power of the military sector vis-a-vis the civilian sector. One especially ominous feature of the emergency aid package to Colombia that Bush announced in August 1989 was that so much of the materiel seemed to have little relevance to the drug war. The Colombian aid measure includes eight Huey helicopters to be used for transportation of troops and equipment, small arms (such as machine guns, anti-tank weapons, and grenade launchers), and \$8.5 million for fixed-wing aircraft.[41] Although Colombian officials might be able to make a plausible case that the Huey could be used in the drug war, there is no similar rationale for fighter planes. When questioned by Congress about the tactical role of the latter in a conflict fought primarily on the ground, William Bennett could provide no concrete justification. The drug

czar apparently believed that the mere fact that Colombia requested the planes was sufficient reason to provide them. Such a policy on the part of the United States gives Latin American militaries carte blanche to fulfill their "wish lists."

Although the trend throughout Latin America in recent years has been toward civilian, democratic governments, the military remains a potent political force in most countries. Given Latin America's history of coups, any action by Washington that strengthens the military is unwise. Indeed, U.S. leaders may be repeating the mistake that they made throughout the cold war when, in the name of fighting communism, the United States sent Latin America large quantities of military aid. The result was a proliferation of military regimes in the hemisphere from the late 1940s to the mid-1970s.

Asking Latin American Governments to Do the Impossible

Both left-wing insurgent groups and anti-democratic military factions are strengthened by Washington's insistence that Latin American governments wage war against an industry that provides jobs for significant portions of their populations and vital contributions to their national economies. According to reliable estimates, as much as \$1.5 billion in drug-trafficking profits circulated in Colombia's economy in 1988, accounting for 20 percent of its total export earnings. By some estimates, as many as 300,000 Colombians may be directly or indirectly employed in the cocaine business and as many as 1.2 million may benefit from the proceeds.[42] Drugs are even more important to the economies of Peru and Bolivia.

By cooperating with the U.S. drug-crop eradication efforts, the Andean governments are drawing increasing fire from citizens who view such cooperation as a threat to their livelihood. When Bolivian president Victor Paz Estenssoro allowed the U.S. Army into that country for Operation Blast Furnace, he encountered intense political opposition from peasant and labor groups who argued that by preventing the export of the nation's number one cash crop, he was causing further deterioration of the already unstable economy.[43] Incumbent leaders in the drug-exporting countries ignore the views of such powerful political constituencies at their peril.

The probable result of the Andean Initiative will be to exacerbate already potent anti-U.S. sentiment and to strengthen indigenous anti-democratic forces. Ironically, by attempting to support beleaguered democratic regimes against the drug cartels, the Bush administration may ultimately undercut, even discredit, those governments. The outcome would be a proliferation of successor regimes dominated by left-wing or right-wing authoritarian elements that would be unresponsive to Washington's wishes not only on the drug war but on many other issues as well.

Swapping the Cold War for the Drug War

Military leaders were initially extremely reluctant to participate in the war on drugs. Pentagon officials as well as field commanders voiced doubts about the wisdom or effectiveness of such a mission. The Joint Chiefs of Staff repeatedly argued that the diversion of military resources and manpower would have adverse effects on readiness and on the Department of Defense's principal mission--defending against the forces of hostile powers. Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci stated that position bluntly in June 1988 when he resisted congressional pressure for a bigger anti-drug role for the military: "The primary role of the Defense Department is to protect and defend this country from armed aggression. Nothing must stand in the way of our readiness or our preparedness to perform this task." [44]

Defense experts openly disagreed with contentions that Latin American drug trafficking should be viewed as a threat to U.S. security. Former secretary of defense Caspar Weinberger, for example, cautioned that "calling for the use of the government's full military resources to put a stop to the drug trade makes for hot and exciting rhetoric. But responding to those calls, as Congress is on the verge of doing, would make for terrible national security policy, poor politics, and guaranteed failure in the campaign against drugs." [45]

Many uniformed officers seemed equally disturbed by the implications of U.S. military involvement--especially in the volatile Andean region. Particularly compelling was the analysis of officials actually stationed in Latin America, who voiced concern about becoming political pawns in a seemingly endless struggle. They were also worried that the drug war would divert resources from their other missions in the region, especially thwarting the spread of radical leftist regimes. One military official stationed in Panama was particularly direct: "They [the U.S. Congress] want us to take it out of our hide. But there's no hide left." [46] Underlying such statements was the fear that the military might get

bogged down in a Vietnam-like conflict.

Despite the manifest reluctance of military leaders, military involvement in the drug war--especially in interdiction efforts--increased gradually but inexorably throughout the 1980s. An estimated \$5 million was earmarked for such purposes in the 1982 defense budget; by 1987 that figure had grown exponentially to more than \$400 million. The Bush administration requested \$567.5 million for the Pentagon's anti-drug activities in FY 1990.[47]

Even as pressure to involve the military mounted in 1988 and 1989, Pentagon officials were still privately attempting to convince Congress and the administration that such a strategy was unworkable and possibly destabilizing--to little avail.[48] Reacting to public pressure to "do something" to win the war on drugs, civilian policymakers sought to enlist the participation of the military regardless of the consequences. The shortsightedness of this approach was acknowledged by a few members of Congress. Rep. Glenn English (D-Okla.), for example, conceded that "the military wants no part of this war, and given their experience in Vietnam I don't blame them." [49] But such caution has become the exception rather than the rule, and military officials have gradually accepted the inevitability of an expanded role in the drug war.

Incentives for the Military to Join the Drug War

The incentives for the military to join the war on drugs have shifted markedly during the past year. As the cold war winds down, members of the national security bureaucracy, those who profit from a large military establishment, and cheerleaders for "inspiring" national crusades all appear to see the drug war as a useful substitute. Using the military to combat drug trafficking both in the United States and in other countries creates a justification (or more accurately a pretext) for maintaining bloated military spending and personnel levels.

A striking correlation appears to exist between the ebbing of the cold war and the military's willingness to participate in the drug war. The Pentagon now faces the prospect of sizable losses in personnel and cherished weapons systems, as well as prestige and power, unless it has an alternative mission. Retired Army chief of staff General Edward Meyer, for example, concedes that "the end of the cold war makes it inevitable that the Army will shrink far below the 772,000 on duty today." [50] The drug war is a plausible alternative mission. To at least a limited extent, a heightened role in attacking Latin American drug trafficking can fill a void--the drug lords can replace the Soviet evil empire as the "necessary enemy."

One sign of a change of attitude among members of the national security bureaucracy is that outright opposition to military involvement in the drug war has been largely replaced by emphasis on increased funding as a condition for involvement. Pentagon spokesman Dan Howard exemplified that position when he stated, "We're prepared to do more. But that requires resources." An analysis by the Joint Chiefs of Staff indicated that \$14 billion is needed to purchase 66 additional surveillance aircraft (AWACS) and that \$6.2 billion is needed for effective operation of border patrol planes and ships.[51]

Another sign of changing sentiment is the attitude of Secretary of Defense Cheney. In marked contrast to his predecessors, he is receptive to the idea of greater military participation in the drug war. He quickly implemented Bush's NSDD in September 1989 by establishing new guidelines for an expanded role. The purpose of his directive, Cheney stressed, was "to make clear to everyone in the Department that this is a high national security mission for us, and therefore it deserves greater allocation of resources in terms of time and energy and perhaps equipment and troops and personnel than has been true in the past." [52]

Shortly thereafter, Admiral William Crowe, the departing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, delivered forceful farewell comments in which he emphasized the military's willingness to do battle against the new threat to national security and asserted that the American people would have to give up some of their liberties if the nation was to win the war on drugs. The willingness of Crowe, generally regarded as the most politically astute JCS member in many years, to explicitly embrace the drug war signaled that the officer corps' resistance to a high-profile role for the military in that struggle was rapidly dissipating.[53]

Institutional Benefits for the Military

The accelerating pace of involvement in the Andean region, as well as a probable role in trying to seal the southern U.S. border, gives the Pentagon an ideal justification for retaining at least some of the troops that are likely to be withdrawn from Central Europe and other cold war frontiers. Already, the Bush administration's drug strategy calls for an "unspecified number of military advisers" and troops to train Latin American authorities and law enforcement personnel, and a senior administration official stated that "several hundred" U.S. personnel may be deployed to Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia. Moreover, there is no assurance that U.S. involvement will be confined to those levels.[54]

Participation in the Andean Initiative also has opened a way for the military and its defense industry allies to justify the procurement of questionable weapons systems. Defense consultant Dov Zakheim, a former deputy undersecretary of defense, touts the V-22 Osprey--a hybrid fixed-wing aircraft and helicopter used to transport troops--as an "innovative response" to demands for military operations "in scenarios where precise measurement of benefits is impossible." Zakheim leaves little doubt about the scenario he has in mind. He notes that the danger of a NATO-Warsaw Pact war is increasingly remote and that the Osprey would make little sense in that setting in any case. Zakheim observes, however, that "the United States finds itself involved in an unanticipated conflict, a drug war that threatens to consume ever greater defense resources for programs whose effectiveness cannot be measured in the old, conventional ways." [55] Coincidentally, the Osprey had been earmarked for extinction by economy-minded officials in the Bush administration, in spite of feverish lobbying on the part of the Marine Corps, and it is ominous that Congress refused to delete it from the military budget. As the military role in fighting drug trafficking expands, requests for superfluous personnel and weapons systems may prevail, despite the easing of cold war tensions.

The drug war offers another, more subtle, potential benefit to the national security bureaucracy. During the latter stages of the cold war, U.S. military doctrine emphasized the need to engage and prevail in low-intensity conflicts. As the Soviet Union withdraws its ground troops from many Third World countries--such as Afghanistan--the U.S. military is hard pressed to make a compelling argument that intervention is needed to counter a Soviet threat. Yet Washington considers Fidel Castro, Daniel Ortega, and other "independent" communist leaders--as well as Libya and other noncommunist terrorist states--a continuing menace to U.S. security, however difficult it might be to convince the American people of that proposition.

The war on drugs in Latin America provides an alternate justification for maintaining an extensive U.S. capability for low-intensity warfare. Operation Blast Furnace proved to be an ideal exercise for honing such skills. The troop deployments connected with the Andean Initiative give the United States an ongoing military presence in a region where low-intensity conflicts are occurring and are likely to continue to occur. By providing technical expertise and equipment to Latin American militaries U.S. officials are able to further yet another objective--strengthening allied forces that might be needed in low-intensity conflicts. That motive may have been the reason so much of the Andean Initiative assistance was directed to the military establishments in the recipient countries even though the police forces have had the primary responsibility for anti-drug efforts.[56]

The Drug War as a Cash Cow

Civilian proponents of the drug war have generally been more candid than government officials in acknowledging the usefulness of that conflict to the U.S. military establishment. It was revealing that most participants in a special seminar conducted at the behest of the House Armed Services Committee stressed that a military role in the war on drugs would require a substantial increase in funding. William J. Taylor, vice president for political and military affairs at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, pointed out to the military the potential advantages of their new mission in a post-cold-war setting:

Defense spending has not only declined recently, it will decline a great deal more in the foreseeable future. This will occur because there is a declining perception of military threat in the Congress and among the American public, and because there will be increasing demands for spending on social programs. There will be new initiatives to reduce U.S. military troop commitments worldwide. If the DOD leadership were smart about the coming environment, they would approach the Congress with a military "social utility" argument which says that military manpower should not be further reduced because the Congress is mandating increased military involvement in the "war on drugs." They should, in fact, argue further that new funds should be appropriated for these expanded missions which are socially useful.[57]

A few months earlier, neoconservative writer Irving Kristol had offered a similar rationale to members of the national security bureaucracy:

If the Pentagon cares about its military budget, as it surely does, it ought to be interested in demonstrating to the American people that this budget is being well spent. It has had--thank goodness--little opportunity for any such demonstration in recent years, which is why its budget is now at risk. The Pentagon should see [the troop] proposal as an opportunity to be seized, not a nuisance to be avoided.[58]

There are indications that the military has begun to act on such advice. The Navy proposal in November 1989 to deploy a carrier battle group in the Caribbean to intercept air- and seaborne drug traffickers is a case in point.[59] The timing of that proposal was striking; it was made within days of widespread speculation that the erosion of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe would soon mean significant cuts in the U.S. defense budget--speculation that was confirmed by Secretary of Defense Cheney. One of the cuts deemed most likely over the next five years was a reduction in the number of carrier battle groups from 14 to 12. The Navy's extraordinary good fortune in discovering a new, important mission for one of those threatened battle groups so quickly is a trifle suspect.

A New "Necessary Enemy"

There has also been a steady escalation of rhetoric from individuals of varying political persuasions emphasizing the drug trade as the new, exceedingly dangerous threat to national security. Typical of the genre is the warning by Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, that if the United States does not thwart the drug traffickers, it could face horrendous consequences. Rangel offers his own version of the "domino theory": "If Colombia falls, the other, smaller, less stable nations in this region would become targets. It is conceivable that we would one day find ourselves an island of democracy in a sea of narco-political rule, a prospect as bad as being surrounded by communist regimes." [60]

Other proponents of the drug war are equally lurid in their portrayals of drug trafficking as a grave threat to national security. Peter Bensinger asserts that "the most important war in this century, certainly in the last 50 years, is the war on drugs." [61] Moreover, his characterization is deliberate: he truly believes that the drug war is more serious than either of the two world wars.

Several observers see the drug war fast emerging as a substitute for the communist threat. Washington Post columnist Jim Hoagland was perhaps the most perceptive in noting that transition. "Instead of beginning his presidency by dispatching military advisers to Vietnam to contain communism, as John F. Kennedy did more than two decades ago, Bush has dispatched military trainers to Colombia to fight drug traffickers. History may come to record Bush's decision as a symbolic turning point in America's world role." [62] Hoagland's colleague, Stephen S. Rosenfeld, in the course of criticizing Bush for lack of vigor in foreign policy mused that "you would think that combating the drug scourge would be a pretty good surrogate for fighting communism." [63] Proponents of the drug war both inside and outside the administration seem to have made that connection.

The Narco-Communist Threat

The recent obsession with the anti-drug crusade as the moral equivalent of war is a variation on a theme that began to emerge several years ago. Throughout the early and mid- 1980s, various right-wing hawks built elaborate theories of a "narco-terrorist" or "narco-communist" threat to American security. [64] Some of the most outspoken proponents of that view, including analysts Michael Ledeen and Rachel Ehrenfeld, alleged that there was a vast conspiracy directed by the Soviet KGB. Most of their political allies in the Reagan administration never went that far, but they did repeatedly attempt to link the highest levels of the Cuban and Nicaraguan governments with the drug trade, implying that those connections were part of a concerted Leninist strategy to undermine freedom and democracy throughout the Western Hemisphere. [65]

As relations between the United States and the Soviet Union have gradually improved during the Gorbachev era, allegations of Soviet complicity have faded. Indeed, there are now reports of Washington's willingness to share U.S. and Soviet intelligence information on the drug trade. Conversely, more evidence has emerged that the Cuban

government has been deeply implicated in drug trafficking, although it is not certain whether the principal motives were ideological or, as in the case of corrupt officials in noncommunist Latin American governments, largely financial.[66] In any case, the image of a narco-terrorist or narco-communist link has helped to strengthen the impression that the war on drugs is a true war against a serious threat to national security.

The significant change in 1988-89 was that drug trafficking per se was increasingly portrayed as a national security threat rather than as merely a subset of a larger communist threat. One important effect of the drugs-as-a-security-threat image has been to garner support for U.S. military intervention in the Western Hemisphere among political factions that are normally opposed to such conduct. For example, evidence linking Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega to drug trafficking impelled Sens. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) to advocate vigorous U.S. measures to remove him from power.[67]

The Drug War as a Successor to the Cold War

The war against drugs may not be a perfect substitute for the fading cold war, but it has several characteristics that may help sustain a large national security bureaucracy. As did the cold war (and its predecessor World War II) the drug cartels provide the image of an utterly evil adversary, which provokes a visceral response of hostility on the part of most Americans. Lack of enthusiasm for the anti-drug crusade, much less suggestions that the war is unwinnable or that the "drug problem" is largely the product of unrealistic drug laws that have created a flourishing black market, is increasingly denounced as "defeatism" or even "treason." [68] In addition, just as the cold war's ideological component frequently served as a pretext for U.S. intervention in the Third World in pursuit of more mundane political and economic objectives, so too the drug war can become a cover for renewed U.S. activism--especially in the Western Hemisphere.

But the most important similarity between the drug war and the cold war is the lack of a discernible termination point--in marked contrast to earlier conventional conflicts. Indeed, there is no clear concept of what would constitute "victory," and it is likely that those who view the drug war as a new cash cow for the national security bureaucracy prefer such ambiguity; no matter how great the decline in drug trafficking, they can always claim that only a battle has been won, not the war, and that even more vigorous (and expensive) measures are justified since progress is being made and the elusive final victory is just around the corner. Proponents of a more vigorous U.S. military role often emphasize the inherently indeterminate duration of the drug war. As one of them noted, "This is going to be a decades-long war." [69]

The Burgeoning Drug War Hysteria

There is no question that the international drug cartels are odious, violence-prone organizations and that both the United States and the nations of Latin America would be better off if their power could be reduced. The huge black market in drugs has created vast revenues for trafficking organizations, which have enabled them to become strong enough to now pose a threat to fragile democratic systems throughout the Western Hemisphere. The only effective way to weaken the cartels is to take the enormous profit out of the drug trade, and that means either reducing domestic demand or eliminating the huge "risk premium" by legalizing drugs.

Spurning suggestions for legalization, supporters of the war on drugs opt for demand reduction strategies, although they disagree about the relative emphasis that should be placed on the various components. Some stress educational programs that highlight the dangers of drug addiction and the other undesirable consequences of drug use. There is some evidence that such efforts are in fact producing a modest decline in drug use, especially among the young, just as similar efforts over the past two and a half decades have helped reduce the percentage of the population that smokes cigarettes. But the effects of educational programs are notoriously slow, and such programs do not even promise to attain the chimera of the drug-free society sought by zealots. Impatience with the limited and gradual benefits of drug education has led most of them to advocate ever-stronger steps to achieve demand reduction through force, along with tougher measures to interdict the supply.

Most of the strategies that have been suggested in the past few years fall into one of two categories--the bizarre or the draconian. The former category includes a \$2.9 million federal grant to the Texas National Guard, which will be used to have guard members disguise themselves as cactus plants to gather intelligence on drug-trafficking routes across the

Rio Grande border.[70] Despite the egregious waste of taxpayers' money, such initiatives are more amusing than threatening, but the same cannot be said of many other schemes.

Mandatory random drug-testing programs--even though they wreak havoc on the constitutional right to privacy--are actually temperate in comparison with some ideas that have been advanced or implemented. Examples of draconian proposals or practices abound. Former New York mayor Ed Koch suggested establishing massive detention centers in the rural areas of western states so that authorities would have some place to send large numbers of drug offenders. At least one state (Mississippi) has established military-style "boot camps" to re-educate young drug law violators, and federal drug czar William Bennett (among others) has suggested that the federal government consider establishing similar facilities.[71] Law enforcement officials are applying seizure and confiscation statutes in an unprecedentedly aggressive manner to take the property of alleged drug traffickers before they are convicted. Such powers are now routinely used even against individuals accused of purchasing small quantities of drugs for their own use.[72] One might well ask what has become of the venerable legal principle that an individual is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

William von Raab, customs commissioner under the Reagan administration, has been a prolific source of proposals for escalating the war on drugs. For example, he ordered his agency to confiscate the passports of U.S. citizens accused of attempting to bring drugs into the country--a move that was countermanded by the State Department.[73] On another occasion, he even suggested giving authority to military and law enforcement agencies to shoot down aircraft suspected of carrying drugs. The Reagan Justice Department--not generally considered an ardent defender of civil liberties--considered that proposal an "absolutely crazy" idea.[74]

It is a measure of how far the drug war hysteria has escalated that Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) introduced von Raab's "crazy" idea as an amendment to the FY 1990 military spending bill. Moreover, over the vehement objections of Sam Nunn and most other members of the Armed Services Committee, the Senate passed the McConnell amendment. That action was taken despite a GAO study that underscored the danger of victimizing innocent parties. The GAO study found that of the 337 suspected drug-smuggling planes that the Customs Service forced to land over the previous two years, only 134 had drugs on board.[75]

Such erosions of constitutional liberties are a direct product of viewing the drug problem as a "war." Those who use that analogy have created a war hysteria that has potentially calamitous consequences. The extent of that hysteria can be gauged by the results of a Washington Post/ABC News poll taken immediately after Bush's address to the nation in early September 1989. The survey discovered that

- * 62 percent of respondents were willing to give up "a few" freedoms in order to curb drug use;
- * 67 percent would allow police to stop cars at random to search for drugs;
- * 52 percent would allow the police to search without court order the homes of people suspected of selling drugs, even if some homes were searched by mistake;
- * 71 percent would make it against the law to show the use of illegal drugs in the movies; and
- * 74 percent endorsed Bush's plan to send military advisers to Colombia.[76]

Americans should resist the war hysteria and the dangerous measures being suggested to win the war on drugs. It is possible that if we were willing to convert the United States into a police state, the flow of drugs might be substantially reduced--although when authorities cannot prevent prison inmates from obtaining drugs, even that proposition is questionable. In any case, there is no possibility of achieving something that has never existed in the nation's history: a "drug-free America." A particularly sobering realization is that despite having been one of the most repressed and regimented societies on earth during the pre-Gorbachev period, the Soviet Union now concedes that it has a serious drug problem.[77] That situation suggests that a willingness of Americans to sacrifice their hard-won liberties on the altar of the drug war would be not only shortsighted but ultimately futile. It is time for even hard-core supporters of the war on drugs to ask themselves if they really want a society in which warrantless searches become routine, individuals can be stripped of their property before trial, innocent air travelers can be blown out of the skies

by overzealous officials, privacy scarcely exists, and detention centers and boot camps dot the landscape. That is precisely the direction the drug war is taking America.

A Better Strategy

The United States can weaken the international drug cartels and terrorist organizations (as well as domestic criminal enterprises) without destroying constitutional liberties, making enemies throughout Latin America, or entangling the U.S. military in a dangerous, unwinnable conflict. Legalization of drugs would wreck the now lucrative black market and dramatically reduce the flow of revenue to trafficking organizations. It would undermine the cartels by eroding their enormous profit margins and permitting the entry of honest businesses into the field. The result would be fewer drug-related violent street crimes. Legalizing drugs would have the same impact on criminal drug-trafficking organizations that the repeal of Prohibition had on powerful U.S. bootlegging organizations.[78]

Avoiding Another Unwinnable War

Even those Americans who are not yet prepared to endorse legalization should recoil from the drug war hysteria that is being generated in the United States. Columnist Tom Wicker observes perceptively:

Like any other war, it's sure to produce a dangerous wartime mentality that "anything goes" in pursuit of victory. . . . What will happen to public and Congressional attitudes if a supposed war--like the war in Vietnam--drags on endlessly with marginal achievements and no apparent hope of victory? Some will give up, no doubt; but many, perhaps more, will call for escalation, new weapons, more troops, tougher tactics--victory at any price.[79]

Americans should view with great skepticism the proliferating schemes to use the military to wage that "war." The military is ill-equipped by training and temperament to handle domestic law enforcement functions, especially if a semblance of constitutional freedoms is to be preserved. Nor will it succeed in stopping the importation of drugs. No military establishment, not even one as large and sophisticated as that of the United States, can effectively seal borders across which 355 million people, 635,000 air flights, and 8 million freight containers pass each year.

A military solution in the international phase of the drug war is equally improbable. Coercing the Andean countries to wage a war against the cartels is dangerous and shortsighted, since they must defy powerful domestic political and economic constituencies--as well as well-armed opponents. Even more foolhardy is the idea of having the U.S. military play a direct role in that conflict. Such a course will undermine the legitimacy of fragile democratic governments and damage the reputation of the United States throughout the hemisphere in addition to enhancing the power of the already bloated and expensive U.S. national security bureaucracy.

Contrary to the belief of the drug war enthusiasts, victory will not be achieved by adopting the panacea of military intervention. The proper function of the military in a democratic republic is to protect the liberty and security of the people from the armed forces of threatening states--a daunting enough task in a complex and often volatile international environment. It should not wage moral crusades or become a super law enforcement agency. A society that values individual liberty must oppose any effort to expand the military's power beyond its rightful, constitutionally established sphere.

Despite the hype and alarmist rhetoric, drug trafficking does not constitute a serious threat to national security, nor is the drug problem in the United States the moral equivalent of war. Given the probable consequences of enlisting the military in the war on drugs, and especially of deploying U.S. troops in the source nations of Latin America, it is more likely to be the moral--and operational--equivalent of America's disastrous Vietnam intervention. The outcome will be a dangerous erosion of liberty at home and the return of American soldiers in flag-draped coffins from an unwinnable crusade abroad.

Footnotes

[1] The most notable example of that tactic was the creation of the South Florida Task Force on Drug Addiction under the direction of Vice President Bush. Although it did temporarily reduce the amount of drugs flowing into the United

States through southern Florida, the principal result was to disperse the drug traffic to other areas along the Gulf coast. See U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism, Impact of the South Florida Task Force on Drug Interdiction in the Gulf Coast Area. Hearing, 98th Cong., 1st sess., 1983.

[2] In 1985, for example, Attorney General Edwin Meese personally directed a campaign against the domestic marijuana harvest. Ben A. Franklin, "Meese in Ozarks to Initiate Nation-wide Marijuana Drive," *New York Times*, August 6, 1985. The DEA conducted a similar nationwide blitz against the dire threat of indoor marijuana cultivation in 1989. David Johnston, "119 Seized in Drive to Halt Indoor Marijuana Growing," *New York Times*, October 27, 1989.

[3] For discussions of the international anti-narcotics campaigns, see Ted Galen Carpenter, "The U.S. Campaign against International Narcotics Trafficking: A Cure Worse than the Disease," *Cato Institute Policy Analysis* no. 63, December 9, 1985; Rensselaer W. Lee III, "The Latin American Drug Connection," *Foreign Policy* 61 (Winter 1985-86): 142-59; Ethan Nadelmann, "U.S. Drug Policy: A Bad Export," *Foreign Policy* 70 (Spring 1988): 83-108; and Rensselaer W. Lee III, "Why the U.S. Can't Stop South American Cocaine," *Orbis* 32, no. 4 (Fall 1988): 499-519.

[4] General Accounting Office, *Controlling Drug Abuse: A Status Report*. 1988. For a discussion of those trends, see James Ostrowski, "Thinking about Drug Legalization," *Cato Institute Policy Analysis* no. 121, May 25, 1989, pp. 28-29.

[5] U.S. Congress, House, Committee on the Judiciary, *Posse Comitatus Act Hearing*, 97th Cong., 1st sess., June 3, 1981.

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[7] Linda Wheeler, "A Drug War with Real Troops," *Washington Post*, February 14, 1988.

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[9] James J. Kilpatrick, "It Is a Matter of National Security: Use Every Weapon," *Baltimore Sun*, May 18, 1988.

[10] Rensselaer W. Lee III, *The White Labyrinth: Cocaine and Political Power* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1989), pp. 72, 196; Carla Anne Robbins, "U.S. Mission: Cut Off Drugs at the Source," *U.S. News & World Report*, July 28, 1986, p. 55.

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[12] Peter B. Bensinger, "An Inadequate War against Drugs," *Newsweek*, July 28, 1986, p. 8.

[13] Susan F. Rasky, "Facing a Rising Clamor to Fight Drugs, Congress Crosses a Long-Held Line," *New York Times*, May 16, 1988.

[14] James Longo, "Tempers Rise during Face-Off over Initiatives," *Army Times*, May 23, 1988.

[15] Peter Reuter et al., "Sealing the Borders: The Effects of Increased Military Participation in Drug Interdiction," RAND Report R-3594-USDP (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, January 1988).

[16] Jonathan Marshall, "A New Scare, a New Assault on Liberties," *Baltimore Sun*, May 18, 1988.

[17] Longo.

[18] Elaine Shannon, "Attacking the Source," *Time*, August 28, 1989, p. 10.

[19] Michael Isikoff, "Drug Plan Allows Use of Military," *Washington Post*, September 10, 1989.

[20] Paul Bedard, "Bush to Widen Military Role in Drug War," *Washington Times*, August 16, 1989.

- [21] Washington's failure to even consult the Colombian government produced a furious reaction in that country and throughout Latin America, eventually compelling the Bush administration to postpone implementation. See Bernard E. Trainor, "Colombians Balk at a Crucial Part of U.S. Drug Plans," *New York Times*, January 7, 1990, and Michael Isikoff, "U.S. Defers Antidrug Naval Plan," *Washington Post*, January 9, 1990. For a discussion of the growing sensitivity of Latin Americans to a U.S. military role in the drug war, see Eugene Robinson, "Latins Leery of Any U.S. Military," *Washington Post*, January 9, 1990.
- [22] Michael Isikoff and Patrick E. Tyler, "U.S. Military Given Foreign Arrest Powers," *Washington Post*, December 16, 1989.
- [23] George C. Wilson, "Experts Doubt Military Can Stop Flow of Drugs," *Washington Post*, September 8, 1989.
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- [25] Quoted in Longo.
- [26] Quoted in George C. Wilson, "Agencies Intensify Battle to Secure Key Roles in Antidrug Effort," *Washington Post*, April 28, 1987.
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- [38] Michael Gettler and Eugene Robinson, "Peru's Rebels Muddy Drug Drive," *Washington Post*, November 3, 1989. See also Cynthia McClintock, "The War on Drugs: The Peruvian Case," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 30 (Summer- Fall 1988): 127-42.
- [39] For a detailed discussion of that complex relationship, see Lee, *White Labyrinth*, pp. 155-84.
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[63] Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Our Ossified National Security Budget," Washington Post, September 8, 1989.

[64] For examples see Michael Ledeen, "K.G.B. Connections: Guns and Terrorists," New Republic, February 23, 1983, pp. 9-10, and Rachel Ehrenfeld, "Narco-Terrorism: The Kremlin Connection," Heritage Foundation Lecture no. 89, December 4, 1986.

[65] James A. Michel, "Cuban Involvement in Narcotics Trafficking," U.S. Department of State Bulletin 83 (August 1983): 86; see also Brian Crozier, "Terror, New Style," National Review, August 9, 1985, p. 24, and Scott B. MacDonald, *Dancing on a Volcano: The Latin American Drug Trade* (New York: Praeger, 1988). For critiques of such conspiratorial theories, see Carpenter, pp. 8-10, and Lee, *White Labvrinth*, pp. 178-84.

[66] The trial and confession of General Arnaldo Ochoa in the summer of 1989 is the most impressive evidence to date of high-level Cuban governmental involvement in the drug trade. Robert Pear, "Cuba Arrests Top General on Corruption Charges," New York Times, June 16, 1989; Mark A. Uhlig, "Cuban General Fully Confesses and Declares 'I Deserve to Die,'" New York Times, June 28, 1989. It is entirely possible, however, that Ochoa's real crime was being perceived as a potential rival to Fidel Castro.

[67] See, for example, John Kerry, "Fighting Drug Lords Is Not Imperialism," Washington Post, March 19, 1988.

[68] For example, Jesse Jackson charged that "treason abounds" in the war on drugs. "Drug pushers are terrorists, and those who consume drugs are engaged in treason." Quoted in William Raspberry, "And Don't Play at War," Washington Post, September 9, 1989. Similar in tone was William Bennett's reaction to an article by Jefferson Morley in the New Republic in which Morley accused the government of overstating both the addictive properties and the unpleasant consequences of crack. For Bennett's comments and New Republic editor Michael Kinsley's response that the drug czar's attitude was distressingly similar to the intolerance that had silenced critics of previous wars, see Michael Kinsley, "Lying about Crack: Bennett's Call for Self-Censorship on Drugs," Washington Post, September 21, 1989. Bennett is hardly the only one to imply that First Amendment freedoms should be curtailed in the name of the war on drugs. See, for example, the comments of conservative activist Reed Irvine that drug war critics in the media are "a serious obstacle" to the adoption of the "harsh measures" needed to win that struggle. Reed Irvine, "Comfort for the Cartel?" Washington Times, September 26, 1989. Ronald Reagan once condemned the favorable portrayal of drugs in films and music and concluded with the ominous comment that no one "has a constitutional right to sell pro-drug propaganda to minors." Steven B. Roberts, "Reagan Says Films and Music Must Stop Glorifying Drugs," New York Times, May 20, 1987.

[69] Bruce Bagley, "MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour," transcript, p. 7. Bagley presents a detailed discussion of his strategy for fighting the international phase of the drug war--including an extensive U.S. developmental aid program for the Andean region--in "Colombia: The Wrong Strategy," *Foreign Policy* 77 (Winter 1989-90): 154-71.

[70] "Pete Stark's Drug Test," Washington Post, October 4, 1989.

[71] "The Boot Camp Alternative," Washington Post, May 10, 1989. For a withering critique of that proposal, see Tom Wicker, "Bennett Boots It," New York Times, May 12, 1989.

[72] Elsa Walsh, "Car Impoundment Law Hits Innocent Owners," Washington Post, June 5, 1987. See also Jon Nordheimer, "Controversy Surrounds Policy of Seizing Boats in Drug Hunt," New York Times, May 22, 1988. Such measures were enthusiastically endorsed by such armchair drug warriors as James J. Kilpatrick, "Confiscate the Cars of Drug Users," Washington Post, August 20, 1989. Customs Commissioner William von Raab even defended his agency's seizure of the \$2.5 million yacht *Ark Royal* when only microscopic traces of marijuana seeds were found. For von Raab's bizarre definition of due process, see his comments in "Zero Tolerance: Who's Getting Hurt?" "ABC News Nightline," transcript of the May 16, 1988, broadcast, pp. 3-4.

[73] Neil A. Lewis, "Passport Seizures Ordered by U.S. for Illicit Drugs," New York Times, March 3, 1988.

[74] Quoted in Michael Isikoff, "Suspect Planes May Become Targets," Washington Post, September 17, 1989.

[75] Ibid. McConnell conceded that mistakes might be made but added, "Mistakes are a part of living." More accurately, for the victims of McConnell's scheme, mistakes would be a part of dying.

[76] Washinaton Post, September 8, 1989.

[77] Celestine Bohlen, "Soviet Media Acknowledges Drug Problems," Washington Post, April 23, 1986; Michael Isikoff, "Soviets Suggest Trading Facts on Drug Traffic," Washington Post, July 20, 1988.

[78] The case for drug legalization cannot be discussed fully here. Useful studies include Nadelmann; Ostrowski; Trebach; Jeff Rigenbach, "The Drug Prohibition Problem," in *An American Vision: Policies for the '90s*, ed. Edward H. Crane and David Boaz (Washington: Cato Institute, 1989); and Ronald Hamowy, ed., *Dealing with Drugs: Consequences of Government Control* (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1987).

[79] Tom Wicker, "The Wartime Spirit," New York Times, October 3, 1989.