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SO/LIC & The War on Drugs: The Question of Strategy

Dr. Kenneth Allard
NDIA Presentation
February 14, 2001

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Major Point.....

American SO/LIC forces are the finest in the world. But as good as they are, they are not enough *by themselves* to win the war on drugs. And if employed as the principal instrument of US policy in that war, they will fight bravely and fail gloriously.
Facing Up to The Problem....

- Colombia....the immediate challenge
  - Rapid social and economic disintegration
  - Escalating social violence: left, right, and drug cartels
  - Civil war overlaid on drug war
  - Escalating US commitment
  - Clear possibilities for spillover effects in the region.
Facing Up To Failure....

- US Efforts Have Been Handicapped By....
  - Too many agencies and agendas - usually the wrong ones
  - No unity of command
  - The exclusive focus on law enforcement
  - The mismatch between resources, threats and US policy
  - Most important: A domestic US culture that continues to tolerate drug abuse!
Some Organizational Considerations...

- Unity of Effort and Unity of Command
  - US Ambassadors versus the CINC
  - Unified action versus national sovereignty
  - Interagency frictions
- Regional coalition and cooperation are key
- Our C3I must defeat a highly networked adaptive, entrepreneurial adversary

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Some Strategic Considerations...

- Coalescing of US National Will and international opinion
- Recognize history of US intervention in Latin America
- Interdiction in depth versus potential for mistakes and collateral damage
- Reinforce security and integrity of US borders

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However........

There is no conceivable strategy for defeating drugs that does not depend upon a fundamental change in American domestic culture...one that will realign rights and responsibilities while clarifying for a new generation the difference between liberty and license.

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“The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius understands limits....”

Anonymous
- M/V SHANDY EXPRESS - Left (HO) 6 JUN 00: 600 lbs cocaine
- M/V HARDNESS (HO) Bottom Left, 29 OCT 00: 2000 lbs cocaine
- Stateless Go-Fast - Below, 28 OCT 00: 1000 lbs marijuana
GO-FASTS

• Go-fasts - elusive, agile, & responsible for 80% of non-commercial maritime cocaine flow - 30 to 50 ft - 30 to 50 knots

• Caribbean: North Coast of Colombia to PR Hispaniola, Jamaica and Mexico/CENTAM, Carry 700-1100 kilos, Mostly overnight trips

• EPAC: West Coast of Colombia to Mexico/CENTAM, Carry 1000-3000 kilos, 3-5 day trips, Employ fishing vessels as Logistics Supply Vessels (LSVs) for fuel along route
Keys to Interdiction Success

- Intelligence Cueing
- Coordinated Operations
- Maritime Surveillance
- Endgame Capabilities
Operation NEW FRONTIER

The use of force from aircraft and cutter boats
Six Go-Fast vessels seized in six opportunities
Arrested/detained 20 suspects
Interdicted 3,014 lbs of cocaine
Interdicted 11,710 lbs of marijuana
Street Value over $134 Million

NEW FRONTIER works!
Deployable Pursuit Boat (DPB)

- High-performance & long range
- Superior sensors, navigation, communications, non-lethal technologies
- Future includes plans to forward-deploy from shore facilities

T-AGOS ship

- CG TACLET DPB Detachment
- MSC civilian crew
- Mission Operations Center with full C3 suite, air and surface search radar
- Special davit and DPB cradle system
ENDGAME INITIATIVES: The Future

Establish permanent HITRON Squadron:

Procure new armed helicopters

Additional Cutter Boats

Deployable Pursuit Boats
Coast Guard is thinking "out of the box."

Initiatives are fully field tested and thoroughly vetted.

Building upon early success to improve deterrence.

Other initiatives still being evaluated show great promise.