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THE DRUG WAR:
THE EFFECTS OF POLICY CHANGE AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

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by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of the paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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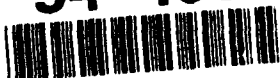
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ABSTRACT

Regardless of its name, "Drug War" or "Domestic Drug Problem," the international drug trade is a threat to the moral fiber of this country as well as its National Security. To combat the growing threat, in 1989 President Bush, through the National Drug Control Strategy, introduced a three pronged approach: Source Country Supply Reduction, Interdiction Operations and Demand Reduction. Each element was designed to attack the drug trade at every phase. From the coca leaf growers in the Huallaga Valley, Peru, to the Cessna 150 pilot smuggling drugs illegally across the Mexican border, to the small time dealer on the corner of a nearby High School.

Used as the "silver bullet," DOD was designated the lead agency for Interdiction Operations. Funding increased and JTF-4, JTF-5 and JTF-6 were stood up to attack drugs through the transit zones to the United States.

In 1993 President Clinton shifted the focus of the Drug War to Demand Reduction. Source Nation and DOD funding were cut as a result of the policy change.

After a review of policies and results, three questions will be addressed: (1) How do we measure success in the Drug War? (2) Was the past policy ineffective or too expensive? (3) Where does this leave the operational commanders? The results will show that the recent policy change was inappropriate and inconsistent with current objectives. Additionally, that a unilateral policy change effecting an international problem may have undesired long term effects.

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CHAPTER I

FACT:

Overshadowed by the immediate international problems of Somalia and the Former Yugoslavia, and domestically with violent crime and public health care, the nation's drug problem has recently evaded the public's attention. However, despite our efforts, the threat to fragile Latin American democracies and the United States National Security are real and continuing.

INTRODUCTION

In 1989, after an unprecedented increase in drug related violence, public outrage and growing national security implications, President Bush elevated the domestic drug problem to an all out "war." Not a war such as Desert Storm, but an unconventional war against a ruthless enemy better equipped, more flexible, and financially driven to win. The stakes at risk were and still are more than a few "coke heads" and thieves. They are the American will and the future of fragile Latin American democracies. Although some may argue that the term "war" is used metaphorically or as a political exaggeration to stir the public opinion and solidify resolve, no one can argue its impact on society and the wake of victims left in its path. President Bush stated clearly in his National Security Strategy of the United States:

"...no threat does more damage to our traditional values and institutions, and the domestic violence generated by the trade in drugs is all too familiar.

Trafficking organizations undermine the sovereign governments of our friends, weaken and distort national economies with a vast debilitating black market and large funding requirements for enforcement, criminal justice, prevention and treatment systems."

With obvious National Security issues and international stability stated, President Bush turned to the Department of Defense (DOD), in 1989, to enter the fight and act as the lead agency for Interdiction Operations in the transit zones. Since then, the effort has grown. For FY89 DOD was funded 1.1% of the total counterdrug budget highlighting the limited role prior to the FY89 Defense Authorization Act. Referred to as the "silver bullet" in the Drug War, DOD funding sharply increased to a high in 1992 of \$1.1B, almost three times that of FY89.² At last count DOD supports over 15 national and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) ranging from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to the U.S. Parks Service. This does not include the numerous National Guard missions in support of local and state authorities.

Having been directly involved in the drug war, on the staff of Task Force 4.1, embarked in the USS HARRY E. YARNELL (CG 17) and USS SAN JACINTO (CG 56), I am familiar with the operational limitations imposed on the combatant commanders. And, realizing the scope of the problem, I will not necessarily debate current or past strategic policies, but try to evaluate the process of change and its direct impact on DOD's involvement in the future. Within the framework of the four fundamental questions proposed in the Doctrinal Statement of Selected Joint Operational Concepts three specific questions will be addressed: (1) How do you measure success in the "Drug War"? (2) Was the past approach ineffective

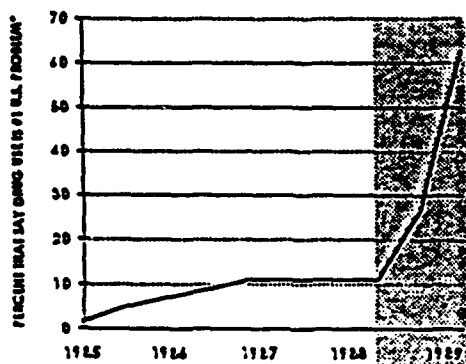
or just too expensive? And lastly, how will the operational commanders be effected by the shift in focus? To answer the above questions, I will briefly examine DOD's past and present policies, and the results, if any, they achieved, then address each question individually. Additionally, in light of downsizing and a redistribution of funds, offer recommendations to DOD's mission in the years to come.

CHAPTER II

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

Although, President Bush referred to the international drug trade as the "scourge" attacking the moral fiber and national security of the United States in September 1989, the drug problem has roots back at least 20 years. However, it is only as recent as 1989 that public outrage brought associated atrocities to front-page headlines (Figure 1).

Great Public Concern that Drug Use is #1 US Problem



Source: Office of the Coordinator for Enforcement Policy and Support

Figure 1

As early as 1982 and continuing through 1989, it is estimated that approximately one tenth of the total population or about 25 million Americans used some sort of illicit drug.³ By 1991, 1.9 million Americans were habitual users of cocaine alone and there are over 200,000 babies born annually to mothers addicted to drugs or frequent users.⁴ Furthermore, drug related emergency hospital admissions rose 120% between 1985 and 1989⁵. In 1992 the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) reported 119,800 health consequences associated with drug abuse in terms of drug related deaths and emergency room cases reached 119,800, the highest level since

1988.⁶ All this has an associated cost to the taxpayer as well as the consumer, and in 1991 it was estimated that the financial impact to the United States' economy was in excess of \$200 billion.⁷ Clearly, facts above highlight the economic as well as the social problems caused by this continuing problem, but the problem does not stop there. In 1991, drugs continued to be a major problem for our courts and criminal justice programs as well as over stressing local police efforts. In 1989, a Superior Court Judge in Los Angeles reported that of the 30 cases he reviewed per day, 75 percent were drug related which over the course of an average year totals in excess of 12,500 cases.⁸ As recently as July 1993, The New York Times reported that two Federal Judges refused to take drug cases because they opposed mandatory sentences. Opposed, not because they were "soft" on drugs, but reality that the Federal prison system was already an estimated 41 percent over capacity and mandatory drug sentences led to early outs for the most violent criminal offenders.⁹ As a result of a 33 percent increase in State-sentenced drug offenders, a five-fold increase since 1981, a person convicted of murder in New York can expect (on average) to serve only 1.8 years in a prison.¹⁰

Domestically, as noted above, there is no shortage of facts to substantiate the damage of the drug trade to society. Some may argue the accuracy or methods of collection, but regardless of the statistical model or sample size the impact is huge. As a nation, society and the world leader we can not continue to absorb the devastating effects of the drug problem.

Internationally, the drug trade and its associated corruption

casts a darker shadow for the advancement of democracies, and improvement in human rights. In Latin America, the Andean Ridge region is the focal point of the international drug trade and the origin of its internal problems. As a part of the Andean Region, Peru (60 percent) and Bolivia (30 percent) produce approximately 90 percent of the world's harvested coca leaf, while Colombia acts not only as the operational and financial headquarters, but also the transshipment hub for drug shipments to the United States and abroad. Between them, annual cocaine sales in the United States have been estimated in excess of \$100 billion in the late 1980's more than twice that of all the Fortune 500 companies combined¹¹. While it is estimated that a majority of the profits associated with the drug trade stay in the United States, the impact on the Andean nations can not be overlooked.

Drug money and its associated violence and corruption have created political chaos and economic instability within source nations. In Colombia, despite determined efforts to counter the drug trade, since 1991 there have been more than 1500 Colombian National Police killed in the line of duty and over 200 Judicial Sector Officials killed since the mid 1980's. Although regarded as an underestimate by the U.S. government, findings have shown that drug related profits to the Colombian economy fluctuate between two and five billion dollars per year¹². This is approximately 4 percent of the Colombian Gross National Product and is directly attributable for the well documented local government corruption.

In Peru, the internal drug problem is critical. Concentrated primarily in the Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV), cocaine is the cash

crop. Its annual economic value is approximately four percent of Peru's GDP and generates up to 400,000 to 500,000 jobs for local peasants.¹³ Furthermore, it is well reported that the insurgency group, Sendero Luminoso (spanish for Shining Path), has direct links with the drug traffickers. Funding comes in two forms: money for base camp operations or directly supplied arms such as M-60 machine guns, 81mm mortars and grenade launchers.¹⁴ Additionally, counteroffensives against the insurgents have prompted the human rights group, Americas Watch, to accuse the Peruvian government of having the worst human rights record in Latin America. Although the current President, Alberto Fujimori, has vowed to improve the country's record, time will only tell.

Bolivia, the poorest of the Andean nations, is perhaps the most influenced by the drug trade. Annual estimates have drug trade profits at 30-40 percent of the Gross National Product.¹⁵ Its impact on the political system is obvious and without military and financial assistance, Bolivia's stability is seriously in question.

The numbers above highlight the enormity of the problems directly attributable to the international drug trade. It is a global problem in which only a well balanced long term approach will succeed.

CHAPTER III

DOD'S PAST AND PRESENT POLICIES

Under the National Defense Act of 1989 and in support of the National Drug Control Strategy, DOD, along with the Department of State and U.S. law enforcement agencies, combined ranks to counter the increasing flow of drugs to the United States. Although only a small part of the overall counterdrug strategy and budget, DOD's mission was a force multiplier to DLEAs and essential to the source nation's efforts. The strategy, though simple in concept, was complex in application. It centered around a three prong multi-nation and multi-agency layered defense to attack the flow of drugs at "every phase of the flow: (1) in the countries that are the sources of the drugs, (2) in transit from the source countries to the United States, and (3) in distribution in the United States."¹⁶ Phases one and two are normally grouped together and referred to as Supply Reduction and the third is referred to as Demand Reduction.

Source Country Efforts

Source country Supply Reduction efforts, the first layer, concentrates on reducing the ability of the drug cartels in the source country from either producing or transporting illicit drugs to the United States. This is done with the intent of making it either too difficult for the drugs to reach the United States, or if they do, to make it exceedingly expensive for demand to continue. Additionally, in a further attempt to counter the drug cartels, U.S. assistance is focused on democratic institution-

building of law enforcement and judicial institutions.¹⁷ Moreover, in concert with the National Drug Strategy, the United States will work with "and offer our full support and cooperation to other nations, especially the major source and transit countries, that demonstrate the political will and program commitment to combat the drug trade."¹⁸ Realizing the depth of resources and the volumes produced, in 1989 President Bush targeted the Andean Ridge countries as the priority for USSOUTHCOM's Supply Reduction efforts. Referred to as the Andean Strategy, four short term goals were established.

1. Strengthen the political commitment and institutional capability of the governments of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia to confront the drug trade.
2. Increase effectiveness of law enforcement and military activities against the cocaine industry.
3. Inflict significant damage to or dismantle the trafficking cartels.
4. Strengthen and diversify the legitimate economies of the Andean Nations to enable them to overcome the destabilizing effects of eliminating cocaine - a major source of income.¹⁹

Source country support comes in primarily two forms, economic and military, both attempting to improve the conditions for democracy to flourish while simultaneously dismantling the drug cartels. Economic assistance is normally provided through the Security Assistance and Agricultural Improvement programs, run in coordination with the Department of State. U.S. Armed forces' support is usually provided in the form of, equipment, intelligence, reconnaissance, training assistance, and medical and civil support. Although not directly involved in incountry

operations, U.S. assistance is designed to increase the effectiveness of foreign forces' efforts to destroy drug processing laboratories, cartel infrastructure and transportation routes. Total DOD support to the Andean Region in FY90 and FY91 totaled more than \$203.5 million in equipment, services and planning assistance.²⁰

The results of the source nation Supply Reduction efforts are not easily measured. As will be addressed later in the paper, without an accurate measure of effectiveness (MOE) program successes are subjective and lack benchmark comparisons to justify current and future funding levels. From the program's inception, emphasis was placed on plant eradication, drug confiscation and apprehension, however, since the drugs at this stage are at a minimum cost to the cartels, impact continues to be hard to determine. This does not imply that the strategy was ineffective but that the past MOE was not a true measure of the success of the program. As a result, the current MOE is based on "soft" gains such as an increased resolve of source nation Governments to fight illegal drug cartels and an increase in the source nation's military professionalism. A good indicator of the program's impact throughout the world is the 30 percent increase in countries ratifying the 1988 UN Convention against illicit traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Clearly these impacts and indicators are hard to measure but for current goals to be achieved they are obviously critical. During the recent counterdrug review, conducted in September 1993, the advisory team concluded that "progress to date warrants continued and increased

investment."

Interdiction Operations

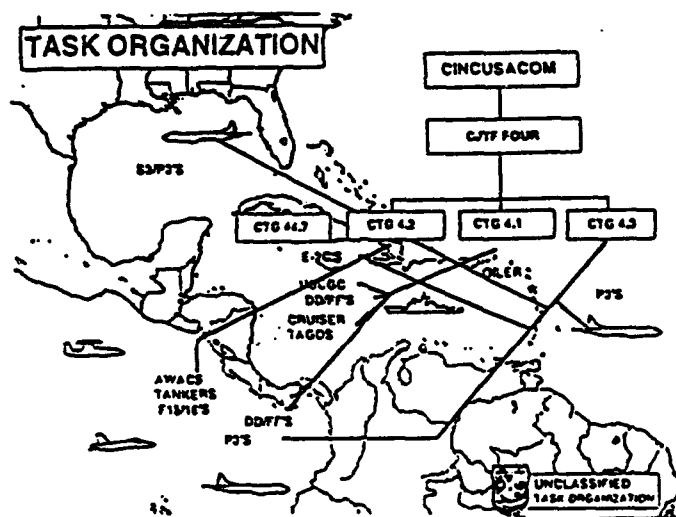
Under the National Defense Authorization Act of 1989 and within a multi-agency effort, the Department of Defense (DOD) was made the lead agency for the detection and monitoring of air and maritime drug shipments to the United States. Prior to this, DOD's involvement in the counterdrug program was specifically limited to the training and equipping of DLEAs and associated Host Nation units. Although only a small part of the overall Supply Reduction assistance effort, DOD forces act in direct support of Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (DLEAs) to deter or interdict drug shipments abroad. As stated by then Secretary of Defense, Richard B. Cheney:

"The Department of Defense will serve as the single lead Federal agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs and will be prepared, with the cooperation of U.S. law enforcement agencies, to integrate expeditiously into an effective network the Federal command, control, communications, and technical intelligence assets that are dedicated to the mission of interdicting illegal drugs from abroad.²¹

Although normally perceived as a military mission, interdiction operations also include efforts in the arrival zones (ports and border crossings) and U.S. National Guard efforts, under Title 32 (State controlled), in crop eradication throughout California.

Caribbean and Eastern Pacific operations, spearheaded by LANTFLT's Joint Task Force 4, headquartered in Key West, Florida

are primarily focused on air and maritime interdiction and account for 20 percent of the DOD counterdrug budget²². This element of the operation is comprised of two primary functions: surveillance (detection and monitoring) and apprehension. Although designated as the lead agency, U.S. Armed forces are precluded from actual law enforcement duties and serve primarily as support and coordination units for DLEAs.²³ Detection and monitoring is conducted by a myriad of service components as shown in Figure 2.



Source: USACOM Command Brief

Figure 2

Joint Task Force 5, headquartered in Alameda, California, is PACFLT's equivalent to JTF 4 and provides a specified number of units under the Operational Control (OPCON) of JTF 4, ensuring coverage throughout the Area of Responsibility (AOR). Like JTF 4, elements provide the mobility, communications connectivity and intelligence gathering capabilities.

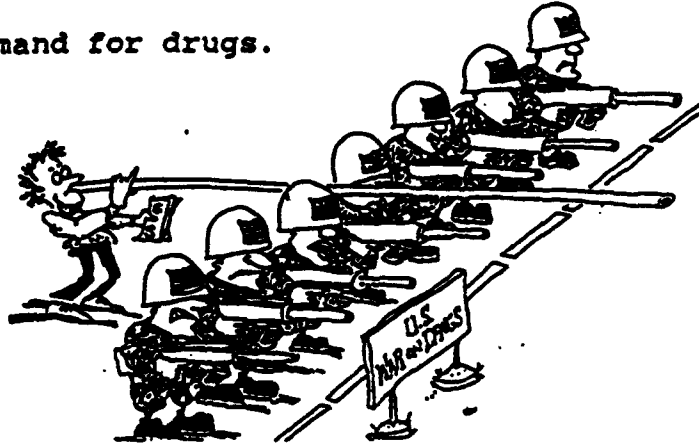
As mentioned above, interdiction is also conducted in the arrival zones. Maritime arrivals will be coordinated through JTF

4/5 and passed on to the appropriate DLEA at the port of arrival. However, with the recent success of the air and maritime interdiction efforts, a majority of illicit drug trade enters via ground transportation between Brownsville, Texas and San Diego, California. DLEAs estimated that 70 percent of all the cocaine smuggled into the United States enters through the Southwest land border.²⁴ To counter this problem and in direct support of the U.S. Custom Service, U.S. Border Patrol, DEA and individual states, Joint Task Force 6 was established. Headquartered in El Paso, Texas, its purpose was to provide ground radar sensing, ground and airborne reconnaissance and intelligence analysis. This is no easy task. Last year alone it was estimated that 8 million vehicles legally entered the country at established border crossings. With no current method to conduct a non-intrusive search, it is easy to realize the scope of the problem. Results of Interdiction Operations are normally termed in references to metric tons, dollars and equipment seized. In FY91 and FY92, 51.4 and 68.4 metric tons respectively were DOD assisted cocaine seizures.²⁵ The National Guard during FY92 seized approximately 70 metric tons of cocaine.²⁶ At an average street price of \$100 per gram, DOD and National Guard forces seized in excess of \$13 billion worth of illicit drugs bound for or located in the United States. However, despite DOD interdiction efforts, street price and drug purity levels appear to be steady, indicating no apparent reduction in total U.S. cocaine availability. The key to this strategy element is the interpretation of "no apparent reduction" and will be

discussed later.

Demand Reduction

Specifically, Demand Reduction concentrates on reducing the domestic demand for drugs.



It has been said that, without a demand for drugs there would be no drug problem. That remains to be seen. Methods to support the program involve drug awareness education, rehabilitation, counselling, apprehension and improved crime laws. As with Supply Reduction efforts, Demand Reduction is a multi-agency approach in which DOD forces support and assist DLEAs and National Guard units in training, reconnaissance, command and control, logistics and planning. However, within the DOD, Demand Reduction efforts are limited and individual operational commanders receive only a small part of the counterdrug program to reduce demand. Mandatory random urinalysis, rehabilitation and strict punishments are the prime methods to ensure compliance. In FY93, DOD funding for Demand Reduction reached approximately \$101 million. Despite limited funding, results within the U.S. Armed forces indicate illegal drug

use is down 10-fold from past reports.²⁷ As a result, only 3 percent of military personnel continue to use illicit drugs.

Present Policy

In September 1993, the Clinton Administration published its 1993 Interim National Drug Control Strategy. This "new" strategy is not a dramatic shift from the original objectives, outlined in 1989, but a refocus on domestic narcotics Demand Reduction as the long term solution to the continuing problem. As stated by President Clinton: "Our aim is to cut off the demand for drugs through prevention. That means more and better education, more treatment and more rehabilitation." To achieve this Demand Reduction a four step approach was devised.

- Step One: Mount an aggressive drug treatment strategy with hard-core drug use its primary target.
- Step Two: Enact national health care legislation that makes drug treatment part of a basic health care package.
- Step Three: Educate our children about the dangers of illegal drugs and alcohol.
- Step Four: Reduce drug use in the work place.

Additional tenants of the President's Drug Control Strategy are: Reducing drug-related violence; Common sense crime control and prevention; Changing the way we do business: streamlining Government and empowering communities; and, Providing international leadership: support for anti-drug policies around the world.²⁸

With this shift in emphasis, and under the shadows of

downsizing, limited funds were reallocated to combat a "war" now termed a domestic social problem. Although, Supply Reduction efforts are still viewed as critical to the overall success of the strategy, interdiction operations were viewed as not cost effective and financial support has been drastically reduced in future budgets. The rationale being that since Latin American annual cocaine production is approximately 1,100 metric tons and worldwide demand is approximately 750 Metric tons, interdiction operations would have to seize over 350 metric tons, at a minimum, to significantly impact the drug trade. To date we have not been able to reach this figure. This logic and strategy will be debated later in the paper.

CHAPTER IV

Discussion

There is no debate that the illicit drug trade presents a clear and present danger to the national security of the United States. Therefore, DOD's involvement, although debated, is not unreasonable, given the hardware and connectivity required to meet the established strategy. In response to a Presidential Directive, former Secretary of Defense Cheney stated: "The DOD is an enthusiastic participant in the nation's drug control effort. We have significant resources at our disposal. We can make a substantial contribution to our national effort if we use our assets intelligently and efficiently."²⁹ It is this "skillful employment of military force to attain strategic goals"³⁰ that is referred to as operational art and is the keystone of operational level planning in all missions, including the Drug War. Although, operational art normally reflects military operations, it is a "joint" term that can and should be used in any multi-agency effort in which a clear and decisive mission is stated. Unquestionably, the Drug War has a clear and decisive objective, a drug free America. It is the ways and means that are continually contested. Understanding this, several questions need to be answered: (1) How do we measure success in the Drug War? (2) Was the past approach ineffective or just too expensive? (3) How does the recent policy change effect the operational commander? These questions are important, not to target fault, but to improve the operational level of planning and execution. They are based around the second and fourth questions contained in the Doctrinal Statement of

Selected Joint Operational Concepts: What military condition(s) must be produced in the operational area to achieve the strategic goals? and; What is the likely cost/risk to the joint force in performing the sequence of actions? Additionally, the three questions asked are an integral part of the Commanders Estimate and fundamental to the operational level of war. Unfortunately, as discussed below, it appears that they were not addressed adequately in the initial planning stages of the Drug War or prior to its most recent change.

How do we measure success in the Drug War?

To sustain unity of effort and reach our objective of a "drug free America" we must have a valid measure of effectiveness (MOE). Additionally, a MOE, used extensively in a Commanders Estimate, allows for continued reevaluation of current Courses of Actions (COAs). The MOE must be measurable and quantifiable and related to the mission. "The lack of a benchmark [MOE] means that the results are reported without the context or evaluation needed by the congressional committees and administration officials who make funding decisions for various drug initiatives."³¹ Unfortunately, the drug war is not just a funding problem. Although, in FY93, \$12.7 billion were spent to conduct operations throughout the hemisphere, without an accurate MOE, strategies can not be validated and operations can not be critiqued. To learn from past mistakes, we must know how to recognize our shortcomings. So, how do we measure success in the drug war? The answer is: We don't! "The message is clear; to date no good measure of effectiveness has been identified that will provide a sound reference point from

which to judge the efficiencies of the interdiction effort."³²
This is our key problem.

In the drug war, we need to be able to assess the progress of not just interdiction operations but the entire three pronged approach. In the past, quantities seized and hardware confiscated were used to justify DOD's funding and validate the interdiction strategy. Although this is a MOE, it was not an effective means for comparison. Similar to the "body count" in Vietnam, "drugs on the table" reflects a MOE inconsistent and unrealistic in achieving the established objective.

"[We] must pledge ourselves to avoid the body count syndrome. The media loves statistics on [drug] seizures, but these prove nothing. If air interdiction fails totally or succeeds beyond our wildest expectations, the result either way will be a drop in seizures.... The officers in the field know the statistics mean nothing. But too many people inside the Beltway think we can fight by the numbers. And too many in the media feed this misconception with stories of drug seizures and street prices."³³

Why? Because, there is just too much cocaine available for shipment. As noted earlier, we would have to seize three times as much cocaine annually to begin to impact the drug trade. However, does this mean we cut DOD's funding for source nation assistance and interdiction operations and retreat inside our borders? Absolutely not! This leads us to the second question:

Was the past approach ineffective or just too expensive?

Obviously, without a valid MOE this is a hard question to answer. However, if we look at the three pronged approach as an inter-linked strategy or campaign and not as separate phases, as in the past, I believe we will agree that it was simply too expensive. This is a critical point. If, as I believe is true, current

strategies are too expensive vice ineffective, any policy change may have a direct impact on the operational failure or success of the overall objective. Specifically, an increased focus on Demand Reduction at the expense of source nation and interdiction efforts may have an undesired effect on the overall effort. Returning to the question proposed above, what is the risk/cost of change? Granted, under the current fiscal restraints, cuts are expected, but if they are consistent with established policies, long term operational impacts should be minimized.

Today the exit price of a kilo of cocaine is approximately \$4000, this is 150 percent higher than it was in 1990 when the price was \$1200.³⁴ Total potential cocaine production dropped for the first time between 1991 and 1992.³⁵ Colombia's effort lead to the death of Pablo Escobar and the dismantling of the Medellin Cartel. Fragile South American democracies appear to be strengthening. As a result, economic improvements are visible and international investments are steadily increasing. Additionally, Demand Reduction efforts have had similar success within the United States. Despite the fact that hard core users are essentially stable at 650,000, casual cocaine use has declined approximately 40 percent since 1982.³⁶ These results are more than just quantities and dollar equivalents. They indicate the potential for success in historically corrupt and isolated areas. These results, in and of themselves, do not signify victory but clearly they show promise. Furthermore, whether we like it or not, in 1989 President Bush made a commitment to the Andean Nations. Host Nation efforts and lives lost can not be unilaterally cast aside without reasonable

explanations. As mentioned before, this is an international effort. What signal does this send to the global community; Canada, Netherlands, Great Britain and now Russia? I believe it sends the signal that, similar to times past, the United States is separating itself from the world community and turning back the clock to pre WWII days of isolationism. If true, this could have a long term impact on the global economic and trade agreements as well as military alliances such as NATO. Are we willing to accept this cost/risk?

In short, the trends are positive. Before we change policy midstream, we must establish valid measures of effectiveness at both the strategic and operational levels. Without it, any and all results will be in nonmeasurable terms and resulting policy changes will appear to be isolationist in nature. Unfortunately, against a flexible and determined enemy whose profit margin is astronomical, the money required to completely stop the flow would be both economically and operationally infeasible. However, the price of being the worlds only "superpower" is the inherent responsibility to guide the international community through international problems. This leads us to the last question:

How does the recent policy change effect the operational commander?

A recent NBC poll registered violent crime as the number one concern of the American people. Since mid 1989, public concern over the drug problem has decreased from 60 percent to a low of 10 percent in 1991. As attention and concern drops, funding disappears. Will this impact operational effectiveness? **Absolutely!** "On any day this year, 24 hours a day, we have about

9 ships, 22 aircraft...and 3,000 military personnel out in the operating theater. We use about 4,000 ship days and 38,000 flight hours... a substantial commitment."³⁷ Current JTF-4 funding is in excess of \$200 million, in FY95 expected funding will drop 70 percent. At today's prices that would fund 1 ship (cruiser with a 3D radar), half an E-2 squadron (3-4 planes) and 1 P-3 squadron (9 planes, optimistically fit with the new Counterdrug package). Even with new improvements such as ROTHAR (Over-the-Horizon Radar) and ADNET (Anti-drug Network) it is unrealistic to expect Interdiction Operations will be as effective as times past. Reducing the budget is not necessarily bad if the problem goes away. However, with respect to the drug trade, the above numbers highlight slow progress and required commitment...not victory. Therefore, current policies and strategies should be maintained until we establish a valid measure of effectiveness to properly weigh the cost benefits versus the risk of terminating elements effecting the entire program.

Realizing the failure of past MOEs, SOUTHCOM and JTF-4, have readdressed Supply Reduction MOEs. Currently, MOEs are based not solely on "drugs on the table" but on the "disruption" and the political stability Supply Reduction efforts have had on slowing the drug trade and aiding flourishing democracies. Is this reasonable and a start in the right direction? Yes! This, over time and in concert with an improved multi-agency Demand Reduction effort, will raise the price of drugs on U.S. streets and reduce the profitability of the illicit drug trade. Only when it is no

longer the cash crop of the Andean Region and demand dwindles will the illegal drug trade end. But are we patient enough to wait? That answer appears to be, no.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

Although it is clear that we have not won the war, it is just as apparent that we have not lost the war. With that in mind, any strategy/policy changes should be well thought out, balanced and not unilateral by design. The first step is to develop a measure of effectiveness that will allow for objective funding, strategic and operational evaluation. Clearly, this MOE must address all elements of the three pronged approach equally. Only after this has been done and in consultation with international partners can a program review be initiated. However, short of strategic changes, there are tactical changes that would reduce the funds required while providing similar results. First, I would increase E-2 participation. With the recent realignment of carrier air wings and USS JOHN F KENNEDY (CV 67) in overhaul, I believe the assets are available to add two or three planes to the current E-2 detachment in Panama. This would reduce AWACS and KC-135 flight hours achieving significant savings (E-2: \$2,350/hr vice AWACS: \$3,600/hr) over life of the program. Second, reduce the number of ships to four and those deployed to be FFGs or DDGs (KIDD Class) vice CGs. This would reduce O&M money required. Third, increase funding to incountry Supply Reduction efforts. In the long run this is essential to stabilizing Host Nation economies while simultaneously countering insurgents. Politically this will strengthen our international image and promote fragile democracies throughout the world. True this is hard to measure, but, the

United States has always staked out the moral high ground and with Lesser Regional Contingencies (LRCs) more likely, this is not the time to stop an international effort. Fourth, continue current demand reduction efforts and be patient. Allow education, increased emphasis on family values, rehabilitation and counselling time to work. The children most effected by the "say no to drugs" campaign are still in elementary school. Lastly, I would recommend increased attention by the President to re-emphasize the correlation between drug abuse and increased crime and rising health care costs. Public opinion has dropped only because the link between illicit drug use and societies problems has been lost. Drugs may not be at the root of the all crime problems, but, statistically it is clearly a major factor in most.

CHAPTER VI

Counter-arguments

Recently highlighted by budget concerns, there have been several arguments concerning the current three pronged approach. First, there are some who believe that results achieved by Interdiction Operations are not cost effective and should be cut from additional funding. Second, some believe that the only way to win the drug war is to concentrate on the Demand Reduction efforts at the expense of all Supply Reduction programs. And lastly, there are those who believe the war is not winnable and drugs should be legalized.

Last year the Government Accounting Office conducted a comprehensive review of DOD's participation in Interdiction Operations. Titled: "DRUG CONTROL: Heavy Investment in Military Surveillance is Not Paying Off," it concentrates on the cost comparison of steaming/flying hours to training achieved and drugs seized. Although the report makes some valid points, in my opinion, its opening statement, addressing the lack of a MOE, invalidates the conclusion achieved. It states: "DOD's OPTEMPO funding has increased by about 300 percent since 1989 despite the fact that neither the DOD Drug Coordinator nor ONDCP has established quantified goals of effective measure for the mission." Compared to what? By who's measure? The report concludes with recommendations to establish valid MOEs while, "in light of the negligible contribution that the military surveillance has made to the drug war.... reduce funding in 1994 by at least \$72 million."

As mentioned earlier this is just wrong. How can a well developed balanced strategy be discarded midstream without a valid MOE? In addition to the reasons stated earlier, it is very difficult to judge "effective" training and steaming hours. My own experience, embarked in the USS HARRY E. YARNELL, would lead me to believe there is considerable training obtained during interdiction operations. First, the air intercepts conducted on low slow flyers is a challenging scenario, and it is currently practiced during carrier work-up cycles to counter terrorist threats and third world littoral countries. Second, the fusion of intelligence information at the Task Force and Joint Task Force level can only help refine the connectivity problems associated in a multi-agency/multi-service prosecution. Third, Maritime Interdiction Operations, although not as frequent, parallel "interception" operations around the world. And lastly, ships will continue to steam and planes will continue to fly to remain current. Whether they do it in the Caribbean or off the East Coast is not as important as the training/readiness achieved.

There is little debate that when demand for drugs is gone so will be the drug problem. But, is this a reasonable expectation? Over the past years there has been a dramatic increase in rehabilitation and education programs. Still the hard core users, which only account for 20 percent of all cocaine users and create 70 percent of the demand, have remained steady at approximately 650,000. According to the New York Office of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, in excess of 80 percent of all

hard core users receive multiple rehabilitation treatments. Indicating that once hooked, a majority of hard core users remained addicted throughout their lifetime. It can only be assumed that if the Supply Reduction efforts are cut, more drugs would be available on the street and the relative price would go down. Drugs once unaffordable or difficult to obtain, now would be easier and cheaper to find.

As with most "wars," single phases or campaigns do not normally lead to victory. We saw this with heavy bombing in Vietnam and Desert Storm, a well balanced aggressive approach is needed to achieve victory. Despite political rhetoric and new thinking, the drug war is no different.

Recently there has been a renewed interest in the legalization of drugs. However, this is not a new idea, as early as 1970 there has been a continued "silent" call for the legalization of drugs, most recently vocalized by Attorney General Janet Reno. The argument maintains that if all the money used to combat the problem was redirected to education and treatment, the demand would "be cut off at the knees" and go away. However, the reality, as stated above, does not support this assumption. What we have proved is that we can continue to pay for rehabilitation over and over and over again on the same individual.

If we look at alcohol and its transition through prohibition as a reasonable model, legalization of drugs is hard to accept. As reported by the National Council for Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, 98,413,000 Americans used alcohol in the past month.

Alcohol abuse alone costs the United States \$119 billion annually in lost work, hospitalization and social problems, almost twice that of illicit drugs. Today the street price for a gram of cocaine is roughly \$100. Is there any doubt that drug abuse would dramatically increase if a gram of cocaine was as cheap or obtainable as a six pack of beer? No, legalization is not the solution, only a step backwards in the campaign against drug abuse.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusions

Have we won the Drug War? Clearly, the numbers show that, despite our efforts, we have not. But a more important question appears to be: Have we lost the Drug War? Fortunately, that answer appears to be, no. So, where do we go from here? Well, as this paper has tried to show, the National Drug Control Policy should aim for a program with a balanced strategy consistent with our national objectives and stick with it. Specifically, Demand Reduction efforts should not be increased at the expense of Supply Reduction funding. The results (using current MOEs) are there and more importantly the trends are positive. Additionally, we have a responsibility as the world leader to do what is right, not what is affordable, when facing global problems. Unfortunately, history is full of examples where a policy/strategy mismatch has lead to defeat. In the Drug War we have the means to achieve our objective. What we lack is the determination and patience to see the three pronged approach through. The drug war is not Desert Storm or Grenada, it is an unconventional war that will most likely be around for a long time.

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