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U.S. ARMY AVIATION PARTICIPATION  
IN THE COUNTERDRUG EFFORT

BY

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<p>Illicit drugs account for tremendous losses to American society in health, law enforcement, imprisonment, absenteeism, crime, and corruption. Only through a genuine national effort that encompasses every aspect of our society, civilian and military, can we hope to eliminate the scourge of illegal drug use and traffic. The supply and demand sides of the drug issue are equally important. Only through a comprehensive and continuous effort will we make progress. The military's role is not to "fight the war on drugs" but to "support the effort." The military has contributed considerable resources and has enhanced law enforcement operations with useful tactics and techniques. The advanced technology, speed, and flexibility inherent in Army Aviation can support law enforcement agencies in curtailing drug traffic.</p> <p>This study presents an overview of the national drug control strategy, discusses the Department of Defense mission, and describes the U.S. Army's role in the counterdrug effort.</p> <p>(continued on reverse page)</p>					
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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

U.S. ARMY AVIATION PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNTERDRUG EFFORT  
AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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United States Army

Colonel William W. Larson  
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# ABSTRACT

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Illicit drugs account for tremendous losses to American society in health, law enforcement, imprisonment, absenteeism, crime, and corruption. Only through a genuine national effort that encompasses every aspect of our society, civilian and military, can we hope to eliminate the scourge of illegal drug use and traffic. The supply and demand sides of the drug issue are equally important. Only through a comprehensive and continuous effort will we make progress. The military's role is not to "fight the war on drugs" but to "support the effort." The military has contributed considerable resources and has enhanced law enforcement operations with useful tactics and techniques. The advanced technology, speed, and flexibility inherent in Army Aviation can support law enforcement agencies in curtailing drug traffic.

This study presents an overview of the national drug control strategy, discusses the Department of Defense mission, and describes the U.S. Army's role in the counterdrug effort. The study examines the extent of the problem, suggests approaches to the problem, and analyzes the capabilities possessed by the military, with special emphasis on Army Aviation. The study considers the progress we have made, presents a projection of the future, and provides conclusions.

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## INTRODUCTION

President Bush stated "The war on drugs is vital to our country's economy, international competitiveness, and security."<sup>1</sup> No current threat does more damage to our national values and institutions. The domestic violence generated by the trade in drugs is all too familiar. The national drug control strategy is designed to disrupt, dismantle, and ultimately destroy the illegal market for drugs by attacking the supply and demand sides of the drug problem.<sup>2</sup> Former Secretary of Defense Cheney declared "International trafficking of drugs is a national security problem and since protection of the national security is a Department of Defense (DOD) responsibility, then the countering of trafficking efforts is a high priority mission for DOD."<sup>3</sup> Likewise, General Colin Powell, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), concurred by observing in February 1991 that the drug war is "a high priority national security mission for our armed forces...[and we will] deal with this as a clear and present danger." He declared that "We have accepted that mission." He further noted the extent of the mission: "This mission will continue to require deployed, properly trained, and well-equipped forces for the foreseeable future."<sup>4</sup>

This study examines the extent of the problem, discusses our strategy, describes the military capabilities and limitations in the war on drugs, and presents information highlighting U.S. Army

Aviation contributions to the effort. The study considers the progress we have made and presents a projection of the future. The conclusion recommends a balanced approach; confronting the problem simultaneously from the supply and demand sides of the problem.

To be successful, our military forces must be flexible. They must be capable of conducting and winning a number of simultaneous, small, military operations -- all the while retaining the ability to prosecute a major war. "Peacetime engagement" calls for a coordinated combination of political, economic, and military actions aimed primarily at counteracting violence and promoting nation-building. The United States has emerged as the world's only superpower, but our military serves primarily to protect U.S. interests. Defending the homeland and helping shape a favorable world order remain as two vital U.S. interests. Economic well-being and promotion of values are peripheral interests.

The law of land warfare, as outlined in FM 27-10, negates the proposition that the enemy in the war on drugs is a combatant. Hence, prisoner of war status is not applicable. Arguably, some of the following prerequisites do not exist: a chain of command, distinctive uniform or sign, openly carried weapons, and agreement to comply with the law of war. Most assuredly we agree that criminal misconduct is associated with this lucrative, illegal, and destructive commerce.

Perhaps another examination of the situation is appropriate



in terms of Secretary of Defense Weinberger's six point test for use of military force.<sup>5</sup> To use military force, the following conditions must exist: 1. The mission must be vital to our national interests or that of our allies. 2. We must begin the mission with a clear intention of winning. 3. The mission must have clearly defined political and military objectives. 4. We must continually reassess the size, composition, and disposition of the force necessary to win. 5. The mission must have the support of the American people and Congress. 6. Use of military force must be our last resort in attempting to solve the problem.

During illegal drug production, trafficking, and use, the enemy is engaged in criminal misconduct. Apprehension is appropriately a police or law enforcement action, followed by the commensurate judicial due process of the law. The Department of Defense possesses great professional skills, organizational talent, tactics, and equipment well-suited to support law enforcement agencies in the prosecution of the war on drugs.

Military forces have the flexibility to quickly disengage from the counterdrug effort, so they can respond rapidly to a higher priority warfighting mission if necessary.

The question is not whether the military will participate, but how they will participate and in what ways they will participate. Further, military participation calls for legal considerations and assessment of the impact on military readiness for future combat (warfighting).

## EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

The current world situation is fraught with volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). The disintegration of the USSR, the collapse of the Wall, and the overwhelming success of Operation Desert Storm have served to reduce the likelihood of global conflict. However, the proliferation of sophisticated weapons, the large number of immature emerging nation-states, the frequent conduct of terrorist acts, the reduced number of U.S. military forces, the ongoing curtailment of U.S. military forward presence, and the increased volume of drug trafficking contribute to instability -- both at home and abroad. Regional instability remains fertile ground for violence, corruption, and conflict.

The war on drugs calls for a very complex national effort. The enemy is capable of outspending us several times over. Coordination and efficient planning of resources is vital for success. The drug war battlefield is international as well as domestic. Such a widespread arena requires integrated planning and execution at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

During 1989, an estimated 25 million Americans, about one in ten, used some form of illicit drug. Over 200,000 babies are born each year to mothers who abuse drugs. One-half of all AIDS deaths are drug-related. In various forms, Americans are paying a price of over \$150 billion that annually flows to drug dealers. An additional \$60 to \$80 billion are lost through drug-related absenteeism, inefficiency, embezzlement, nonproductivity, and

medical expenses. Illegal drugs contribute to increased crime, broken families, and higher taxes for law enforcement and prisons. These annual expenses exceed the estimated dollar cost for conducting Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The three principal drugs of abuse in the United States are marijuana, cocaine, and heroin.<sup>6</sup>

U.S. drug users get their drugs from the following sources:

<u>Marijuana</u>		<u>Cocaine</u>		<u>Heroin</u>	
Mexico	79%	Columbia	70%	SE Asia	46%
USA	10%	Bolivia	15%	Mexico	36%
Other	7%	Peru	10%	SW Asia	18%
Columbia	4%	Other	5%		

(Basic data derived from National Narcotics Intelligence Consumers Committee Report - 1989 statistics.)<sup>7</sup>

Particularly disturbing is that 10 percent of marijuana production is from sources in the United States. The five leading states in domestic production are Kentucky, Oklahoma, Hawaii, Tennessee, and Illinois.<sup>8</sup> Since 1990, the trend has been for domestic producers to move from private property to public (state or federal) land. The grower has experienced less probability of conviction and loss of property when utilizing public land. However, this transition permits greater use of law enforcement and Department of Defense (DOD) resources and techniques.

By 1995, American-grown crops are expected to supply half of the demand to U.S. marijuana smokers. High-grade American

sinsemilla is considered of such a quality that the U.S. is now contending as a marijuana exporting nation. By moving indoors and utilizing hydroponics technology, growers have increased productivity.'

International drug trafficking is focused on the tremendous demand in the United States. Infiltration occurs every day by sea, air, and land routes. The magnitude of the interdiction effort is staggering. Small aircraft illegally enter the United States by avoiding surveillance radars, flying low to the earth through canyons, dead spots, or intermingled with legitimate flights and hiding in other aircraft's radar shadows. The rugged terrain along the U.S. borders with Mexico (1,952 miles) and Canada (5,000 miles)<sup>10</sup> provides many opportunities for such tactics to be utilized. Individuals on horseback, cars, trucks, containers, pleasure boats, commercial shipping, and just about any method or means imaginable can be used to infiltrate drugs into the U.S.

Many under-developed countries, generally agrarian, with extremely low annual-income per capita, view farming of drug-producing crops merely as a business venture.

"How can they expect us to grow rice or coffee when those crops earn a fraction of the price? If I grow coca I can make \$2,000 a hectare. With coffee I'd get less than \$400."

-- Coca-growing peasant

Upper Huallaga Valley, Peru<sup>11</sup>

Traditionally, the major consuming nations are infinitely more concerned about drug trade than are the producing nations.

### STRATEGY

The President's fourth edition of the National Drug Control Strategy lays out a comprehensive plan for federally controlled activities for fiscal year 1993 and beyond. Its principal goal is to reduce the level of illegal drug use in America, a demand-side objective. We have made significant progress combating casual drug use, particularly among our nation's youth. However, progress is more difficult and slower in the war against hard core drug abuse. The administration has crafted and Congress has funded a strategy acknowledging that no single tactic pursued alone will effectively win the drug war. Hence, the strategy defines several specific objectives: improve treatment capability, focus on prevention and education, increase international cooperation, support aggressive law enforcement, increase interdiction efforts along our borders, expand drug intelligence information, and expand the use of military.<sup>12</sup> Numerous programs are now underway to help reduce demand for illegal drugs. The most fundamental ones focus on education, community involvement, and a cooperative effort by management and labor to keep drugs from the work-place.

DOD's role in the war on drugs up to 1989 was minimal. Since that time it has expanded to include extensive involvement in eradication and interdiction efforts. The Defense

Authorization Act of 1989 specified the following responsibilities: DOD will be the lead agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the U.S. DOD will integrate command, control, communications, and intelligence assets into an effective network. Finally, DOD is responsible to approve and fund state governors' plans for expanded use of the National Guard in support of state drug interdiction and enforcement operations.<sup>13</sup>

Increasingly successful demand reduction eases the burden of military support missions in supply reduction. The DOD's mission includes the following points: First, provide forces to assist Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (DLEA). Second, assist DLEAs and foreign governments in developing and executing plans to effectively employ the unique capabilities of DOD forces. Third, provide personnel, operational support, training, and equipment to specified agencies. Fourth, provide military resources, through security assistance to selected foreign governments, to curtail drug production, trafficking, and use.<sup>14</sup> Fifth, demonstrate sensitivity to drug-related problems in the military.

An aggressive attack on international drug trade is one of the main elements in the strategy. The enemy presents several centers of gravity: key individuals, key locations in the distribution system, transportation assets, communications capabilities, and money caches. Trafficking organizations undermine the sovereignty of foreign governments and weaken or distort national economies through a lucrative black market. The

drug problem creates a large funding requirement for enforcement, criminal justice, prevention, and treatment systems. Reducing demand at home and aggressively attacking international drug trade are the main elements in our strategy. They must be pursued together in a balanced approach to the problem. As we educate Americans -- especially our youth -- on the perils of drug use, we must also seek to enhance the effectiveness of host-nation law enforcement and military activities.

Congress has made cooperation on international narcotics control by major illicit drug-producing countries a condition for their eligibility for U.S. foreign aid and U.S. trade benefits. The President and Congress annually review foreign aid recipients' compliance with this condition.

#### MILITARY CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATION IN THE WAR ON DRUGS

More than 33 federal agencies contribute directly to drug law enforcement.<sup>15</sup> The armed services have supported with personnel, equipment, training, services, and operational planning assistance. Most support has taken the form of transportation platforms and intelligence data. In the U.S. proper, the military supports local, state, and federal agencies as permitted by law. A considerable portion of DOD support has historically come from the National Guard; however, active duty forces are becoming more committed. The role of the military is constrained by legal limitations. Active Army forces in accordance with Title 10 (Federal Service) can provide

administrative and logistic support, provide air and ground transportation, conduct reconnaissance of areas such as marijuana cultivation sites, assist law enforcement personnel in navigation and travelling, participate in marijuana eradication, assist in removal and destruction of contraband, and use minimum force in self-defense or defense of law enforcement personnel and civilians.<sup>16</sup>

Provisions of the Posse Comitatus Act, originally passed in 1878, prevent federal troops from enforcing civil law and limit the power of active duty (federalized) military. Active Army forces are prohibited from surveillance of specific civilians; surveillance of civilians to establish probable cause for arrest; chase or pursuit of civilians to slow, stop, or detain; backup or reinforcement of civilian law enforcement agents except in defense to protect them from death or serious injury; positioning themselves where there is likelihood of a law enforcement confrontation; and search of people or places.<sup>17</sup> The Justice Department recently reinterpreted the Posse Comitatus Act to allow the armed forces to arrest drug suspects outside the borders of the U.S.<sup>18</sup> While the Attorney General has determined that the provisions of Posse Comitatus do not apply outside U.S. territory, DOD policy prevents the arrest of civilians by members of the military (exclusive of DOD criminal investigative efforts).

The Defense Authorization Act of 1989 has been interpreted to exempt Army National Guard and Air National Guard members from



federalization while in Title 32 (State) status under the command of the governor. Therefore, members of the National Guard can conduct observation and reporting; film suspected target locations; assist law enforcement agent apprehensions; assist law enforcement agents in the movement of prisoners; possess and use weapons on approval of both the supported state and civilian agency; and maintain intelligence files on suspects, vehicles, and target areas.<sup>19</sup> Provisions of the Posse Comitatus Act do not apply to National Guard forces operating in a Title 32 (State) status in support of the state's counterdrug plan.

In FY91 National Guard marijuana eradication operations eradicated nearly 21 million plants and confiscated over \$47 million in cash.<sup>20</sup> The National Guard expended 875,000 man-days, six times the effort in FY89.<sup>21</sup> National Guard personnel performed marijuana eradication operations in all 54 states and territories, aerial surveillance operations in 45 states, container search assistance in 42 states, and transportation (air/ground) support in 34 states.<sup>22</sup> By law, the National Guard remains the most capable military force to perform the counterdrug mission within the continental U.S.

Former Secretary of Defense Cheney directed all U.S. major commands to design plans spelling out their proposals to assist in the reduction of drugs coming into this country. Forces Command (FORSCOM) with the approval of the Secretary of Defense activated Joint Task Force (JTF) 6 at Ft. Bliss, Texas, as a planning and coordinating headquarters to provide Title 10

(Federal) operational support from DOD to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies (LEAs), focusing their efforts along the U.S. southwest border (primarily California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas). JTF-6 is a command and control headquarters commanded by an Army general officer who reports through FORSCOM to JCS.<sup>23</sup> While JTF-6 is responsible for the southwest border, FORSCOM remains the coordinating headquarters for all Title 10 (Federal) forces deployed within the continental U.S. Currently, the FORSCOM commander is authorized to deploy up to 400 soldiers in support of any particular counterdrug mission. Each soldier's tour of duty is not to exceed 179 days.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) established JTF-5 in Alameda, California, and U.S. Atlantic Command (LANTCOM) established JTF-4 in Key West, Florida. U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) in Panama provides data collection from radar and air surveillance platforms. SOUTHCOM also provides logistics, intelligence analysis, and approximately 49 mobile training teams to various countries in Central and South America. North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) provides detection and monitoring of suspected illegal drug-related air traffic information collected by aerostats (air surveillance radar blimps), Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft, and mobile ground radars. U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) are supporting commanders-in-chief (CINC) to the geographic CINCs.<sup>25</sup>

A common question asked by military forces is "Who is in

charge?" The answer is the DLEA. The military commander must advise the DLEA Agent-in-Charge concerning the best use of resources. Operations may require additional training for the military to use nonstandard equipment.

Pre-mission training must include extensive training in Rules of Engagement (ROE) and Rules on the Use of Force (RUF). Such information may be best presented in writing by a Judge Advocate General officer. ROE are written for each particular situation; they are revised and updated as required. The following is an example of active duty military ROE used for a counterdrug support mission. 1. Force may be used to defend yourself and others present. 2. Do not use force if other defensive measures could be effective. 3. Use only minimum force necessary. 4. You may detain any person who poses an imminent threat of serious bodily harm to you or others present; release them to civilian LEA as soon as possible. 5. You may pursue hostile forces only to defend or retrieve military personnel. 6. You may not pursue hostile forces into another nation's territory without command authority.<sup>24</sup>

Many military skills, resources, and techniques are beneficial to assist DLEAs; reconnaissance, listening posts, observation posts, remote sensors, small unit operations, patrolling, communications, medical expertise, logistics, operations planning, intelligence analysis, radars, demolitions, weapons systems, transportation (air and ground), engineer projects, divers, jungle operations, linguists, and civil-

military operations. These subjects are often taught by DOD Mobile Training Teams to DLEA personnel.

Collection of information on private property in the U.S. has been complicated by the laws regarding invasion of privacy, however, these do not apply to public lands. Aerial imagery from U.S. Army and Air Force platforms has been very useful to DLEAs. Photographic and infrared imagery provides data on illegal drug cultivation sites, processing laboratories, and trafficking routes. Intelligence data collected primarily OCONUS by means of imagery, signal, and human intelligence collection methods has assisted in identification of narcotraffick leadership, trans-shipment locations, laboratories, and airfields.

Education and training are important to the success of any effort of this magnitude. The California National Guard has designed, developed, and established an institution, the Department of Defense Interagency Counterdrug Institute, at San Luis Obispo. The program of instruction is presented to active and reserve component military personnel and federal, state, and local law enforcement agents. During 1991, a total of 692 students completed the course. The institute teaches all facets of military assistance, support, and coordination with particular emphasis on training DLEA personnel in DOD operational planning procedures. This results in a better relationship between the DLEA and the military.<sup>27</sup>

## ARMY AVIATION

Drug producers and traffickers have begun employing advanced technology in their tactics; cellular phones, scanners, paging devices, computers, night vision systems, and -- needless to say -- sophisticated aircraft, boats, and vehicles have been used. Cost and legality are of no consequence to the corrupt. The inherent speed, flexibility, and maneuverability of U.S. Army airplanes and helicopters make them well-suited to challenge this new high-tech threat. Flight hours dedicated to the counterdrug mission for DOD totalled over 100,000 during 1990; they are estimated to be 128,000 in 1991, and projected to have been 146,000 in 1992.<sup>28</sup> Army Aviation support is critical because DLEAs lack the resources to perform these missions.

Typical U.S. Army Aviation helicopters and airplanes utilized in support of interdiction and eradication missions include: OH-6 Cayuse, OH-58 Kiowa, UH-1H Iroquois, UH-60 Blackhawk, CH-47D Chinook, AH-64 Apache, AH-1 Cobra, U-21 Ute, C-12 Huron, and OV-1D Mohawk. Assistance is normally organized into a self-sustaining package in the form of mobile training teams, deployments for training, short duration exercises, loans of equipment, or utilization of facilities such as ranges. DLEAs frequently rely on U.S. Army Aviation expertise in the form of mechanics, aviators, instructor pilots, technicians, and fuel service handlers.

The Secretary of Defense has directed the armed forces to conduct, when practicable, military training exercises in

proximity to drug interdiction areas where drug smuggling is likely from air, sea, and land.<sup>29</sup> The training exercises are conducted with intentional second-order affects: deny smugglers use of terrain and collect/report information of suspected illegal activity which may benefit DLEA efforts.

Predominantly UH-60 and UH-1, and occasionally CH-47 helicopters, have proven useful for insertion/extraction of eradication teams, sensors, listening posts, observation posts, engineer equipment, and evacuation of large quantities of contraband. The advantage of rotary-wing aircraft is their ability to negotiate terrain otherwise impractical to reach; also they afford the element of timeliness of execution and surprise. Aerial reconnaissance is commonly conducted by observation and utility helicopters. Reconnaissance missions conducted at random times and varying locations provides a deterrent affect.

Medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) helicopters are a precious resource Army-wide. The risk and complexity of missions make it prudent for commanders to ensure aerial MEDEVAC coverage is available during operations. Because many missions are conducted in remote locations, a considerable distance from medical facilities, providing MEDEVAC aircraft on a standby basis is a logical precaution.

The AH-64, Apache, has been utilized on limited occasions with maximum benefit derived from their significant target acquisition capabilities and forward looking infrared sensors (FLIR).<sup>30</sup>

U.S. Army fixed-wing airplanes (U-21 and C-12) have routinely transported captured hardcore drug criminals in the custody of DLEA agents throughout the United States. Missions have been performed as often as once every two weeks moving high profile prisoners to and from prisons and courtrooms.<sup>31</sup>

The OV-1D, Mohawk, provides capabilities for photographic and IR imaging support. IR photographs are able to identify "hot-spots" created by the exceptionally high heat signature produced by laboratories and indoor plant growing nurseries. Unfortunately, logistic supportability for this system will soon come to an end.

Unique equipment has been installed on select helicopters to reduce risk and enhance performance of Army Aviation crews. Extended range fuel systems are mounted internally or externally to provide additional fuel for longer duration missions and long distance flights to remote locations. Omega navigation, doppler, and global positioning systems (GPS) are precision navigation equipment enhancements. High-frequency (HF) radios with encryption capability and satellite communications are beginning to emerge as the next generation of long distance communications equipment. Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs), U.S. Navy life rafts, over-water survival kits, individual crew member life preserver vests and continuous flight following enhance safety on frequent long-distance over-water flights. Radar altimeters equipped with voice-activated low-altitude warning devices provide lead-the-fleet technology for counterdrug missions.

Acquisition of state-of-the-art weather radar will improve safety of flight in areas not adequately serviced by weather forecasting services.<sup>32</sup>

Crew selection and training are critical to success of the mission. The physical and mental challenges are significantly greater than for routine missions. Water survival (Dunker) training, high-altitude mountain flying techniques, desert takeoff/landing techniques, and night vision systems flight modes are examples. Joint operations are frequently conducted with U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force, and many law enforcement agencies, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). International flight rules are practiced when operating within a foreign country's airspace; this is a tremendous training opportunity not typically encountered at home station. The opportunities for organizational teamwork and small unit leadership development extend from air crew, team, platoon, to company-level. Headquarters at the battalion-level and above are generally involved in planning and coordinating. Aviation risk assessment and risk management are conducted to enhance safety of the participants and increase probability of mission success.

Proactive unit commanders enhance soldier readiness by incorporating mission essential task training concurrently with counterdrug operations. Training value is realized by practicing warfighting tasks concurrently with counterdrug support operations. Alert, assemble the force, process for overseas movement, conduct strategic (USAF airlift/USN sealift)



deployment, and/or self-deployment tasks are easily integrated into the mission profile. Employment of forces, intelligence preparation of the battlefield process, operations security, and command and control are well-exercised on events in field environments away from home station. The challenges of performing to established tasks, conditions, standards, and the burden of sustaining the force (resupply and maintenance) are excellent training opportunities for the staff officer and commander. Aviation unit maintenance and intermediate maintenance from remote and generally austere locations presents unique challenges to leaders and maintainers. Refuelling requirements, often using thousands of gallons of fuel, add to the monumental support requirements to sustain aviation operations. Most deployments are at the small unit level; consequently, junior leader development has tremendous potential for practical exercise.

One area unit commanders must aggressively pursue is maintaining the units' weapons qualification training. Although weapon systems may be present, they rarely are exercised during counterdrug operations. Maintaining a combat-ready force requires scheduled familiarization and qualification training, usually at a combined arms live-fire range facility.

U.S. Army Aviation support in the international arena dates back to Operation Blast Furnace during 1986. Six U.S. Blackhawk helicopters and 160 support personnel deployed to Bolivia to provide air mobility to anti-drug forces.<sup>33</sup> The U.S. has

provided aircraft, equipment, weapons, and training for the "Red Devils" rotary-wing raiding force in this second-ranked cocaine producing country. During 1992, Operation Ghost Zone was supported by U.S. Army, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs, and DEA. The Red Devils operated 22 UH-1 helicopters and five Cessna fixed-wing airplanes throughout the country of Bolivia conducting interdiction and eradication operations.<sup>34</sup>

During 1990, the Peruvian military requested a U.S. Army, Spanish-speaking instructor pilot to get their flight operations started. The U.S. Army drafted an air crew training program to ensure flight standardization and flight safety. The majority of the Peruvian copilots entered the program with little or no experience. The Honorable Dante B. Fascell, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Representatives, remarked that "They have been trained to their present level of expertise through our efforts."<sup>35</sup>

The Mexican government is currently operating a fleet of 21 former U.S. Army UH-1H helicopters conducting drug interdiction operations in their country. Mexican police forces have conducted the operations.<sup>36</sup>

The U.S. Army plans to deploy nine fixed-wing aircraft (Dash-7s) to SOUTHCOM in support of counterdrug operations. The Airborne Reconnaissance Low (ARL) aircraft contain a combination of the former "Grisly Hunter" imagery collection system and an airborne radio direction-finding Electronic Warfare Support Measures (ESM) system. Remote Battle Area Surveillance System

(REMBASS) sensors, as well as various acoustic, magnetic, and seismic sensors, have been emplaced. This offers a significant cost savings over manned observation posts. Fixed and rotary-wing aircraft have been supplemented by the occasional use of Remotely-Piloted-Vehicles (RPVs).<sup>37</sup>

Operation Bahamas, Turks, and Caicos (OPBAT) -- formerly a part of Operation Hat Trick III -- is a long standing mission supported by UH-60 Blackhawks, crews, and support personnel from the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized). This operation attempts to stem the flow of illegal narcotics from the Bahamas into the United States. The requirement is for continuous coverage by one crew and aircraft to be prepared to launch within 30 minutes during the day and 45 minutes at night. The 3rd Battalion, 24th Aviation Regiment, has eight specially equipped aircraft and maintains three helicopters deployed to Georgetown. The mission calls for one aircraft on standby seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Due to the nature of the mission and the fact that Visual Flight Rule (VFR) flights are prohibited in the Bahamas after sunset and before sunrise, all night operations are intended to be conducted with exterior helicopter lights extinguished. Typically, Infra-Red (IR) search lights are illuminated when operating below 200 feet above ground level/above water level. Training and readiness includes written and practical evaluations of crew member proficiency in the following areas: ELT operations, Omega navigation operations, auxiliary fuel transfer procedures, aircraft intercept procedures, HF radio procedures,

flight operations procedures, ROE/RUF conditions, night vision goggle operations, aviation life support equipment and water survival.<sup>38</sup> The tremendous success enjoyed by this unit during Desert Storm is thought to be related to the experience they gained supporting OPBAT missions.<sup>39</sup>

Elements of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) were tasked by FORSCOM to support eradication missions in Jamaica. Three UH-60 Blackhawks, 21 personnel, and support equipment deployed to Kingston in support of Operation Buccaneer VII from 6 December 1991 through 3 April 1992. The detachment supported the DEA, the Jamaican Constabulary and the Jamaican Defense Forces (JDF) during marijuana eradication throughout the island country. Reconnaissance was conducted to locate the marijuana fields and record GPS grid locations. During the following day's operation, several seven man teams were inserted and extracted by helicopter in otherwise inaccessible locations. The team consisted of one DEA agent, one Jamaican Constabulary Force Policemen (law enforcement), two JDF soldiers (security, command, and control), and four Jamaican civilian laborers (two cutters, one burner, and one herbicide sprayer). The aviation detachment strategically deployed on short notice, conducted single-ship, multi-ship, over-water, and confined area operations in mountainous terrain. The coordinated effort of these parties resulted in destruction of 556 tons of marijuana, while expending 448 Blackhawk flight hours.<sup>40</sup>

Aviation Task Force Eagle, California National Guard,

provides support throughout the entire state. Versatile OH-58, Kiowas, perform missions ranging from reconnaissance to area surveillance. UH-60, Blackhawks, and UH-1, Iroquois, transport key leaders and covertly insert scout teams. Additionally, they conduct sling-load operations to move equipment, seized marijuana, and related paraphernalia. CH-47, Chinooks, move large groups of people and bulk equipment. C-12, fixed-wing airplanes, rapidly transport commanders, leaders, and administrators throughout the state. Equipped with advanced thermal imaging systems, more powerful engines, and law enforcement radios the four OH-58s of the Reconnaissance and Interdiction Detachment (RAID) are well-suited to the special demands of counternarcotics operations. The RAID Program will field these aircraft to National Guard units throughout the U.S.<sup>41</sup>

During August 1990, Operation Green Sweep was neglected by the news media as Operation Desert Shield captured the headlines. The Bureau of Land Management initiated a short duration eradication effort on federal land in northern California's Humboldt County. Nine helicopters from the 7th Infantry Division provided transportation and MEDEVAC support. The team consisted of 60 DLEA agents, 110 members of the California National Guard, and 60 active duty Army soldiers. Resentment ran deep in the local population. During the operation, a UH-60 Blackhawk was hit by 3 rounds of 22 caliber ground fire. In less than two weeks, the Joint Task Force destroyed 1400 marijuana plants worth

\$2,000 each and removed 12 tons of farming equipment from the forest. An additional 12 tons of equipment were destroyed in place.<sup>42</sup>

Aviation is inherently dangerous. Unfortunately, during 1988, casualties occurred when a California National Guard helicopter crashed. Operation Border Ranger I ended early after the fatalities.<sup>43</sup> The operation included observation post missions aimed at illegal border crossings and surveillance of clandestine airfields.

Regardless of the threat, dangers, and political controversies, most military personnel find great personal satisfaction in supporting what they consider a humanitarian effort. When military training can produce a visible result for the good of society, soldiers feel they are personally making a difference.

#### EFFECTIVENESS MEASURED

To control the production and distribution of illegal drugs, international cooperation is growing stronger, contraband seizures are on the increase, and numerous countries are making progressive changes in their legal and judicial systems. The United Nations has recognized the situation as a world crisis and instituted the United Nations International Drug Control Program. Traffickers are feeling the pinch from intensified eradication and interdiction campaigns.

Even though illicit drug use in the U.S. seems to remain

unacceptably high, one set of statistical data since 1988 reports a 13 percent reduction in the current overall national use of illegal drugs. One million (35 percent) fewer Americans use cocaine, occasional use of cocaine has dropped 22 percent, adolescent cocaine use has dropped 63 percent. Two million (16 percent) fewer Americans use marijuana, and the number of young Americans between 12 and 17 using illicit drugs is down more than 25 percent.<sup>44</sup> Even optimists in this country suggest a 10 percent interception rate is good.<sup>45</sup> Few think a rate much higher is possible, whatever the resources and whatever the role of the military in the field. So the deterrent effect of military support is difficult to measure. Perhaps we will never know the consequences had the military not contributed to the counterdrug effort.

Perhaps the success of our armed forces' support should not be measured by quantitative statistics, but by the quality of the mission as it relates to Mission Essential Task List (METL) training. Success will depend upon close coordination and cooperation with supported civilian agencies. The military has been the guide for establishing coordination, mutual support, communication, and teamwork between participants (DOD and DLEA). The mission has afforded great opportunities to practice joint operations. Purple suit cooperation has dissipated the services of inherent biases and parochial concerns to work together for the common good. Many unique counterdrug opportunities present themselves for joint operations (U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force,

Marines and Coast Guard) and coalition efforts (foreign governments and allied military).

As an example of training benefits, before a mission request from a DLEA is accepted by JTF-6 Headquarters, the request must address METL training for the military unit, provide a benefit to the nation's counterdrug effort, and the requestor must be able to provide the necessary funds for materials.<sup>46</sup> Thus another benefit for DOD is that supporting agencies pay the bill for support provided. With reduced budgets, this enhances training and readiness while supporting other non-DOD agencies.

Counterdrug operations have become highly visible to citizens of the U.S. and foreign countries. Some are curious about this involvement of the military; a few are angry about it. The fear exists, especially on the part of Americans, that the war on drugs could become another Vietnam, that there is no defined end-state, and that we could win the battle yet lose the war. Some are concerned that the military devotes time and taxpayers' dollars to confront the supply-side while the "real" problem is on the demand-side. Others contend the U.S. military is becoming embroiled in law enforcement at a time when the military must be focused on more identifiable threats to national security. Some argue that the U.S. military is interfering with the politics of foreign governments.<sup>47</sup> Drug money is an easy source of revenue for financially strapped regimes or insurgents. Drug money also supports the black market economy in many developing countries, providing a "safety valve" against economic



collapse and widespread revolt. Possibly U.S. military training has educated corrupt criminals of the drug world. Many foreign military soldiers are well-trained by U.S. forces and DLEA agents (to possibly fight against family relatives). But after their required short stint in the military, they may revert to the practice of drug production and trafficking, all the while smarter for what they have learned from the Americans.<sup>48</sup> So the military's efforts to control drug trafficking may not be an unqualified success. However, all things considered, the effort seems to have contributed to a downswing in drug use in the U.S. Without doubt, the military effort has made drug trafficking a more risky and difficult task for the suppliers, runners, and dealers.

#### THE FUTURE

Future U.S. trends for counterdrug operations will involve small actions against centers of gravity and other systemic strengths of narcotraffick organizations. Eradication will focus on reducing the increasing use of indoor cultivation. Overseas initiatives will be closely linked between operations consistent with the host nation's counterdrug campaigns and our national strategy.

There is much to be done within the armed forces; DOD and JCS have not published either a comprehensive written document, commonly referred to as the Military Drug Control Strategy (MDCS), or a written campaign plan for drug control.

Consequently, CINCs have difficulty producing a comprehensive document to project future military support to the counterdrug effort.

We must proceed carefully with the use of military forces in the counterdrug mission. Internationally, foreign military operations have been marred by hostilities, corruption, distortion, and human rights violations. A single unethical act by U.S. forces would certainly be seriously criticized by the American society and blemish the honor of our professional soldiers. One infraction in the international arena could potentially result in friction between the foreign country and the U.S. As military involvement increases, we must be extremely sensitive to misconduct such as alcoholism, indebtedness, former drug-related offenses, emotional and family problems which pose vulnerabilities to bribery or intimidation. The possibilities of corruption are real and very difficult to control.

The drug war will not be won quickly. But we have a moral obligation to preserve the social and economic well-being of our nation. We must curtail the abuse of illicit drugs to a level acceptable to the American public.

Future missions and roles of the military continue to be refined. Senior leadership must constantly reassess the situation and chart the most desirable course. Posse Comitatus requirements and ROE/RUF must be carefully examined by planners and operators. Military commanders must always be subordinate to civilian authority.

While military downsizing is the trend for the next few years, the counterdrug mission offers an opportunity to conduct realistic training and at the same time visibly repay the taxpayer's investment. The military must remain prepared to disengage from counterdrug operations so they can quickly transition to other more pressing warfighting missions if required.

### CONCLUSIONS

The corruption created by drugs, narcotrafficking, and narcoterrorism is a serious problem facing our society today. Drugs attack the physical, social, and economic health of our nation. Our nation's senior leadership must make calculated decisions prior to commitment of military forces. Each new administration must provide direction, guidance, and priority on how our military will be structured and utilized. It appears that the President Clinton Administration will focus on domestic issues and be less likely to utilize military resources in the counterdrug effort. An ability to articulate the military objective and a well-defined end-state are crucial to the success of armed forces. Our soldiers must be carefully organized, well-trained, properly equipped, ready on short notice, and flexibly prepared for a wide range of missions.

Counterdrug operations require the same thorough mission analysis and well-defined concepts of operation as outlined in FM 100-5, Operations. Counterdrug mission taskings present unique

and challenging training requirements; they also offer realistic mission-related training for participating units. Concurrent training must maximize the opportunities to conduct relevant warfighting skills while supporting the counterdrug mission.

The U.S. uses considerable resources and a good deal of sophisticated technology in its military effort against the traffickers. As the military performs more missions in support of the drug war, it frees up the DLEAs to devote their time and resources to more pressing police related anti-drug tasks.

The military must remain subordinate to civil authority in the prosecution of the drug war. The military is not permitted direct participation in search, seizure, arrest, and similar activities within the U.S.

The military stands to gain from substantial training and procurement funds (over \$1 billion in FY 91) that are provided by Congress to DOD for support of the counterdrug effort.<sup>49</sup>

The precedents and doctrine that guide DOD activities are in flux. Therefore, units must constantly explore new ways to use their resources and capabilities in support of the counterdrug mission. Military participation with law enforcement carries great potential consequences; it affects readiness, budgetary matters, public relations, and hopefully leads to reduced availability of drugs in this country. U.S. military forces possess capabilities and have resources that can contribute to the war on drugs. Military participation in this real-world mission actually contributes to readiness.

The problem remains that we still have no clear strategy for war termination and conflict resolution. We need a written Military Drug Control Strategy and supporting campaign plans. Small units participating for short duration offer the most useful method of employment. Limiting the missions to a maximum of 400 personnel for 179 days appears to be the correct policy. The Army must refrain from being in charge and dominating the effort; it must provide support and assistance, but not assume a lead role. The military draw-down may present spinoff benefits in the war on drugs. Military personnel departing active duty have a wealth of skills and experience beneficial to law enforcement and counterdrug agencies. Soldiers, equipment, and facilities being drawn-down may have utility for DLEAs as headquarters, training facilities, rehabilitation facilities, jails, or hospitals.

We need to move decisively, harshly if necessary, within the judicial system against those in this country responsible for the problem -- the users and traffickers.

"We will do all we can, but in the end, it is our families, neighborhoods, and communities that must nurture critical values like self-discipline, personal responsibility, and service to others."

-- George Bush<sup>50</sup>

We must attack the problem with a balanced approach of efforts directed against the supply and demand sides.

Interagency and DOD jointness enhances the effort with synergistic results. The military will continue to be actively engaged in counterdrug operations which do not violate provisions of the law or reduce combat readiness. Despite the complexity of the task, the U.S. military can make substantial contributions to the war on drugs.

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