

# U.S.-Mexico Drug Control in the Age of Free Trade

*More than half the cocaine and a substantial percentage of the heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamines consumed in the United States enters the country through Mexico. U.S. and Mexican efforts to police these drug flows have sharply escalated during the past decade. Though failing to pose a serious deterrent, escalation has helped to project an image of a shared cross-border commitment to drug control. Such image-projection has been an important ingredient in creating and sustaining a new and more intimate cross-border economic relationship. In other words, building more formidable drug control barriers has been an integral part of the process of dismantling economic barriers between the two countries. However, the persistent failures of drug control have made managing the border and bilateral relations over the drug issue increasingly difficult in the post-NAFTA era. And this, in turn, has further reinforced political pressures to escalate. The seemingly paradoxical result has been to build both a borderless economy and a barricaded border.*

By Peter Andreas

## Creating the Problem

Historically, the illegal drug business across the U.S.-Mexico border was dominated by the smuggling of heroin and marijuana. Given that both drugs were domestically produced, Mexican drug trafficking remained primarily a locally and regionally based activity. However, this began to change in the 1980s with the development of a strategic alliance between Colombian cocaine exporters and Mexico-based smuggling organizations. Intense U.S. interdiction pressure on cocaine trafficking routes through the Caribbean and South Florida created incentives for Colombian traffickers to turn to their Mexican counterparts, who had long been enmeshed in a variety of smuggling activities. Thus, while the percentage of cocaine entering the U.S. from Mexico was negligible in the early 1980s, by the early 1990s over half of cocaine exports were routed through Mexican territory. This shift dramatically elevated Mexico's position in the international drug trade and vastly increased the power and influence of the country's major trafficking organizations.

The U.S. interdiction campaign in the Caribbean provided a politically costless mechanism for lawmakers and law enforcers to display their anti-drug resolve at a time when domestic anxiety about drugs was at an all-time high. Focused on their narrow and compartmentalized task of deterring drugs in the southeast, U.S. anti-drug strategists apparently paid little attention to the potential repercussions for Mexico, the border region, and U.S.-Mexico relations. While U.S. law enforcement agencies celebrated the apparent "success" of their interdiction efforts in the Caribbean, Mexican smugglers celebrated their rising position in the drug trade. Mexico's growing stake in the cocaine trade sparked the rise of more sophisticated and organized smuggling organizations along the border's transportation hubs, the most prominent of which were the so-called Gulf, Tijuana, and Juárez cartels.

Awkwardly, however, this shift in cocaine flows from the Southeast to the Southwest came at exactly the same time that the U.S. and Mexico were beginning to forge a new and more intimate economic relationship. As part of the effort to secure the



U.S. Customs Officer searching for drugs at the U.S.-Mexico border.

© David Maung

smooth passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), U.S. and Mexican officials collaborated in a law enforcement build-up across the border that signaled a shared commitment to drug control and an enhanced image of drug control progress. This included new bilateral agreements, rising drug enforcement budgets, and an expanded military role in interdiction. Highly visible but misleading indicators of government resolve—increased

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arrests, seizures, and so on—helped sustain this image and obscured the failings and flaws of the enforcement effort.

The image of cross-border commitment and progress on the drug war front was sustained long enough for the free trade accord to pass, but the feedback effects of both enhanced law enforcement and NAFTA itself soon generated a new and larger set of problems that threatened to undermine the bilateral relationship. First, a perverse consequence of increased Mexican drug enforcement was to create more opportunities for corruption and increased incentives for smugglers to buy off those doing the enforcing, which in turn attracted more intensive U.S. media attention and congressional scrutiny. Second, the implementation of NAFTA simultaneously drew more political attention to the border and made the task of border drug interdiction more complicated. Pressured by law enforcement,

smugglers increasingly turned to commercial trucking as a cover, and the sharp post-NAFTA rise in the volume of trucks crossing the border made the difficulty of weeding out such drug shipments increasingly apparent. The enforcement challenge was the equivalent of looking for a needle in a haystack—and in this case the haystack kept getting bigger and the needle kept getting better at hiding.

## The Policy Response in the Post-NAFTA Era

The U.S. and Mexican response to the continued failures of interdiction has been to further escalations rather than reevaluation. On the Mexican side this has taken the form of a much greater militarization of drug control. In reaction to pervasive corruption within the federal police forces and heightened U.S. pressure and expectations, the Zedillo government has placed the Mexican military in charge of drug control operations in many areas, especially in the northern border region. One result of this, warn activists in Mexico, has been an increase in human rights violations being attributed to members of the armed forces. But despite growing concerns over corruption within the military, the militarization trend in Mexico has been applauded by Washington and has nurtured closer cross-border military links.

On the U.S. side of the border, escalation has primarily translated into more enforcement personnel and new surveillance and detection equipment to harden the border ports of entry. This involves an increased reliance on high-tech interdiction techniques designed to filter out drug shipments without significantly impeding the boom in cross-border commerce. The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) are especially enthusiastic promoters of increased reliance on new interdiction technologies.

Innovative border management methods are creating both a superhighway for business and a more intensive border surveillance system. For example, rather than manually unloading and inspecting cargo containers (a labor- and time-intensive process), there has been a turn toward the use of non-intrusive inspection technologies. This is reflected by the installation of giant x-ray machines resembling a car-wash capable of scanning entire truck cargoes, at each of the 39 official ports of entry by the year 2003. Currently, these machines, which cost \$3.5 million each, are in place at only a handful of the border ports. The U.S.

Customs Service is also testing other non-intrusive devices that can detect cocaine vapors. These improvements in interdiction technologies, in turn, will no doubt prompt further improvements in the methods of drug smuggling. One result is that the least skilled smugglers are the most likely to be weeded out, increasing the market share of the most sophisticated smuggling groups.

The heightened reliance on state-of-the-art, high-tech equipment is also evident between the ports of entry, such as the use of more night-vision goggles, motion sensors, and low-light TV cameras. Reflecting this trend, there has been a five-fold increase since 1995 in the number of heat-detecting infrared scopes along the border, and the number of seismic ground sensors has nearly doubled since 1994. Much of this enhanced enforcement has been directed at immigration control, but it overlaps with the drug control mission as well.

The high-tech escalation option is also increasingly evident on the Mexican side. For example, in February 1999, Mexican officials announced a new \$400-million, three-year anti-drug plan. Much of the funding will be used for new equipment such as infrared cameras for airplane surveillance, x-ray machines at border ports of entry, and encrypted satellite-communications gear. New helicopters, airplanes, and speedboats will also be bought. The February announcement followed an earlier announcement in October 1998 that new resources and technologies would be channeled to cut off drug trafficking routes across the southern borders with Guatemala and Belize and along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

Meanwhile, domestic measures (treatment, education, and prevention) to curb the enormous American appetite for illegal drugs continue to take a distant back seat to supply-focused law enforcement efforts. Of the nearly \$18 billion the U.S. federal government spends to combat drugs, about two-thirds focuses on supply reduction and only one-third on demand. This is certainly not based on cost-effectiveness. A 1994 RAND study found that \$34 million invested in treatment reduces domestic cocaine use to the same degree that \$366 million spent on border interdiction or \$783 million spent on overseas programs does. Efforts to cut off supply have had little impact on the domestic price and availability of drugs, and even dramatic improvements in interdiction are unlikely to change this.



## borderlines

April 2000

Volume 8 ♦ Number 4

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Individual **borderlines** subscriptions are \$12/year in the U.S. and Mexico, \$17/year to other countries. Institutional subscriptions are \$20/year in the U.S. and Mexico, \$25/year to other countries.

Send subscriptions, renewals, and changes of address to the Albuquerque address given below. Postmaster: Send change-of-address information to:

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Box 4506  
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The Interhemispheric Resource Center is a nonprofit, research and policy institute. Publication of **borderlines** is supported by the Ford Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

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The overabundance of supply and the high profits of the illicit trade make drug seizures a relatively small cost of doing business for smugglers.

The heart of the nation's drug problem is chronic drug use; this is first and foremost a public health rather than a law enforcement problem. Roughly four million people in the United States are hard-core drug users. Although representing only about 20% of the drug using population, this user group consumes the bulk of the drug supply. Washington's approach to demand reduction is driven by punitive measures: large numbers of drug users are locked up on drug possession charges, only to find that drugs are easily available in the nation's vast prison system.

### Further militarization?

At least in the short and medium terms, it is difficult to envision a de-escalation of drug control across the U.S.-Mexico border. Even if Mexico's role in the drug trade is reduced or U.S. consumption of imported drugs sharply declines, the Southwest border will likely remain a major smuggling corridor. Continued U.S. media and congressional scrutiny of Mexico and the border region, as well as bureaucratic incentives within the drug control apparatus, inhibit a significant policy shift. Regardless of the fact that current policy continues to fail, any appearance of retreat risks projecting an image of being "soft" on drugs. With the political rewards of a major policy change uncertain and the potential political risks of such a move extremely high, most Washington policymakers are unwilling to publicly promote de-escalation.

Given this political context, it might be tempting to conclude that the escalation of drug control on the U.S.-Mexico border inevitably leads to further militarization. Indeed, anti-drug operations on the Mexican side are already largely in the hands of the military. And this, in turn, may provide further political ammunition and legitimacy for those who advocate a greater military role on the U.S. side. So far, administration officials and key congressional voices have been able to fend off calls to send in the troops—partly by promising and promoting more law enforcement.

Proposals to deploy the military are especially popular during election season, when the border often becomes a political stage. For example, during the 1996

<b>The Drug War by the Numbers</b>	
Percentage of international drug shipments needed to be intercepted in order to reduce the trade's profitability	75%
Percentage currently being intercepted	30%
Cost of one kilo of raw opium in Pakistan	\$90
Sale price in the U.S.	\$290,000
Cost of achieving a one percent reduction in drug use via treatment programs	\$34 million
Cost to do so via programs in drug producing countries	\$783 million
Percentage increase in federal spending on drug treatment, 1981-1997	+4.3%
Percentage increase in federal spending on overseas drug programs, 1981-1998	+6.5%
Percentage increase in drug spending, criminal justice system, 1981-1997	+17.4%
Total cost of incarcerating drug law violators in 1998	\$8.6 billion
U.S. counter drug aid to Mexico, 1995	\$10 million
U.S. counter-drug aid to Mexico, 1997	\$78 million
Acreage sprayed with herbicides each year by the Colombian government	100,000
Number of acres in Colombia dedicated to coca production in 1994	111,000
Number in 1998	195,000+
Percentage of U.S. 12th graders who reported marijuana as "easy" to obtain in 1985	85.5%
Percentage who did in 1995	89.6%

Sources: Drug War Facts, Common Sense for Drug Policy website ([www.csdp.org](http://www.csdp.org)); U.S. Department of State; White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

presidential race, Bob Dole pledged to significantly expand the National Guard's drug interdiction role along the Southwest border, and promised that, if such measures proved inadequate, he would turn to the military as the lead anti-drug agency on the border. Republican presidential candidate Lamar Alexander even proposed creating a fifth branch of the military that would focus on border control tasks.

Adding to the militarization urge, some military voices have advocated taking on new and expanded law enforcement duties in the post-Cold War era. Writing in the military journal *Parameters*, Major Ralph Peters argues that the "domestic employment of the military appears an inevitable part of our own future, at least on our borders and in some urban environments..." We are living in a "terribly changed and rapidly changing world," he writes, where illegal

immigrants, terrorists, drug lords, and organized crime are among the most serious threats. "The U.S. armed forces," he urges, "must change with that world, and must change in ways that are fundamental."

Some prominent security analysts have even advised that the United States should prepare for full-scale military action not only along but across the border in the not-too-distant future. In his coauthored book, *The Next War*, former U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger provides an account of key potential future conflicts that U.S. national security strategists should be ready for. In the war scenario closest to home, 60,000 U.S. troops are deployed to the Southwest border after a radical nationalist leader has taken power in Mexico with the help of powerful drug trafficking interests. The resulting chaotic situation in Mexico has turned the north-

ward flow of people and drugs into a flood. Unable to plug the border holes, Washington launches a full-scale military invasion. Some six months later, law and order have been restored south of the border. The State Department's post-war strategic assessment of the conflict criticizes the failure of U.S. intelligence to foresee the crisis, but praises the military's readiness to intervene. Fortunately, U.S. and Mexican political leaders—as well as Mexico's drug trafficking organizations—share an interest in keeping this scenario in the realm of fiction.

A full militarization of the border is inhibited by a number of factors. Importantly, a much more expansive U.S. military role is strongly opposed by the law enforcement community. While certainly welcoming various forms of military assistance in a support role (fence construction, road maintenance, surveillance assistance), law enforcement bureaucracies jealously guard their turf. A significantly greater border role for the military is also widely opposed by mainstream political elites and by much of the military establishment itself. Indeed, after a teenage goat herder was fatally shot by U.S. soldiers on a patrol mission along the border in Texas in May 1997, the Pentagon indefinitely suspended such operations and indicated an interest in scaling back some of its border duties.

At the diplomatic level, a more extensive and visible U.S. military pres-

ence on the border would have poisonous consequences for cross-border ties—both in terms of Washington-Mexico City relations as well as for relations between local communities along the border. Full-scale militarization would have a disastrous impact on human rights and would significantly impede the booming cross-border commerce that both countries have so enthusiastically encouraged. Sealing the border by military means may be technically feasible, but is incompatible with maintaining an open, democratic society and sustaining the nation's second-largest trading relationship. It would also be highly destabilizing for Mexico, helping to create the very crisis situations that U.S. national security planners hope to avoid.

Despite the "Fortress America" dreams of some conservative isolationists, the enormous investment that the United States and Mexico have made in the economic integration process necessitates that the border remain highly porous. Trying to tighten controls over the cross-border flow of drugs while loosening controls over the flow of legal commerce will no doubt continue to be a formula for policy frustration. How this frustration is politically managed will significantly shape the future of the border region and the bilateral relationship.

The enduring political challenge is to reduce domestic expectations regarding the effectiveness of drug interdiction efforts along the border. Stepped up

interdiction can influence the methods, organization, and location of smuggling but has (and will most likely continue to have) only a minimal impact in terms of curbing the foreign drug supply. The border is ultimately neither the underlying source of the nation's drug problem nor the most cost-effective location of the policy solution. Recognizing rather than denying this fact is needed to minimize the role of the border as a source of tension and conflict in the U.S.-Mexico relationship. ■

## No *borderlines* in May

Next month *borderlines'* staff will be taking a break from our publishing schedule in order to catch up on other work and prepare future issues. We will resume our normal publication schedule the following month.

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*borderlines* is published by the Interhemispheric Resource Center's Border Information and Outreach Service.

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### Drug War Economics

	1981 Price/Purity (per pure gram)	1997 (1st quarter) Price/Purity (per pure gram)
<b>Cocaine</b>		
Purchase of 5 oz. or less	\$275/48%	\$87/67%
Purchase of 1/8 oz. or less	\$373/47%	\$157/53%
<b>Heroin</b>		
Purchase of 5 g. or less	\$3,374/7%	\$1,175/47%
Purchase of 1/2 g. or less	\$3,853/7%	\$984/56%
<b>Marijuana*</b>		
Purchases of 1 lb. or less	\$2.56	\$4.57
Purchases of 1 oz. or less	\$2.7	\$5.24

\* Purity is unknown for marijuana

Source: White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Fact Sheet: Drug Data Summary*, NCJ-167246, February 1998.

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## Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border

The following list of publications and contacts is part of BIOS's ongoing effort to make useful information available to borderlands residents and policymakers as they strive to create a sustainable future for their communities. This directory is an organic work-in-progress, so please advise us of any necessary additions or corrections. They will be added to our database and used in future publications.

As the U.S. government's "war on drugs" on the border has escalated in recent years, increasing numbers of nongovernmental organizations have become involved in monitoring U.S. Border Patrol and military activities in the region. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has initiated several programs through which border residents and immigrants can become educated about their rights, and has published several reports on abuses of authority by Border Patrol and military personnel. A relatively new coalition of environmentalists, human rights groups, and social justice activists called the SouthWest Alliance to Resist Militarization (SWARM) is working to spotlight the environmental damage and human rights abuses that have resulted from militarization of the border. Other NGOs are focusing on the military build up on the Mexican side of the border. Reynosa-based Centro de Estudios Fronterizos y de Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (CEFPRODHAC) and Chihuahua City-based Comisión de Solidaridad y Defensa de Derechos Humanos (COSYDDHAC) keep constant watch on the activities of the Mexican military in the eastern and central border regions, while Washington, DC-based Working Group on Latin America (WOLA) monitors Mexican military antinarcotics strategies throughout the country.

The World Wide Web is an excellent source of information about current U.S. drug enforcement activities in the borderlands. The Department of Defense report, "Drug Enforcement Policy and Support," describes military involvement with the effort to prevent the entry of undocumented aliens and illegal drugs in the Southwest border region. The Drug Enforcement Agency's "Southwest Border Initiative" site describes the border region narcotics enforcement strategies of various government agencies. You can also find information online regarding the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), a multiagency research center that collects information on drug trafficking, immigration violations, weapons and explosives trafficking, suspected fugitives, and stolen vehicles, aircraft, and vessels. And the website of the Office of National Drug Control Policy provides extensive information on the nation's drug control programs.

For those interested in learning more about border drug control policies and activities, BIOS recommends a number of publications. *Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial* by Eva Bertram, et al., is an extremely insightful commentary on the failed logic driving the U.S. drug war. Timothy Dunn's *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border* is a definitive look at the impacts of drug war militarization in the U.S. borderlands. *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide*, forthcoming from this

month's featured author, Peter Andreas, promises to provide a thought provoking and detailed overview of U.S. efforts to control its southern border.

For information regarding contacts or to acquire listed information, please contact BIOS at (505) 388-0208.

### GUIDELINES FOR INTERNATIONAL CALLS

#### To call Mexico from the U.S., dial:

011-52 (city code) + the number

For example, to call Ciudad Juárez from the U.S., dial:

011-52 (16) XX-XX-XX

#### To call the U.S. from Mexico, dial:

001 (area code) + the number

For example, to call El Paso from Mexico, dial:

001 (915) XXX-XXXX

## Contacts

### Academia de Derechos Humanos-Independiente

Bouche 5421, Casa 18

Cd. Juárez, Chih. C.P. 32000

Contact: Eustacio Gutiérrez Corona, Director or Mtra. Rosa

Elena Salgado Guzmán

Voice: (16) 11-27-20

This independent group researches and speaks out against abuses of authority suffered by detained or incarcerated persons.

## BIOS

### Border Information and Outreach Service

BIOS is sponsored by the Interhemispheric Resource Center (IRC) in Silver City, NM. BIOS aims to promote sustainable development in the borderlands by serving as a clearinghouse of information resources. BIOS research can provide you with the specific information you want, based on your needs, according to your requests. Call and put BIOS to work for you.

The Interhemispheric Resource Center is a nonprofit research and policy institute. Funding for BIOS is provided by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

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**Academia Sonorense de Derechos Humanos**

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 or Apdo. Postal 395  
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 Voice: (62) 17-10-34 or 56-57-04 (cellular)  
 Fax: (62) 17-11-24  
 Email: dgtzmen@tiburon.rtn.uson.mx

The academy is dedicated to increasing consciousness regarding human rights in Mexico, particularly in the state of Sonora. Academia Sonorense participates in the legal defense of persons whose rights have been violated and it investigates and provides information on specific cases of human rights abuses.

**American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)**

Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring Project (ILEMP)  
 1129 G St.  
 San Diego, CA 92101  
 Contact: Leticia Jiménez  
 Voice: (619) 233-4114  
 Fax: (619) 233-6247  
 Email: usmexborder@igc.apc.org or afscilemp@igc.apc.org

**Mexico-U.S. Border Program**

1501 Cherry Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19102  
 Voice: (215) 241-7000  
 Fax: (215) 241-7275  
 Email: afscinfo@afsc.org  
 Website: <http://www.afsc.org/>

AFSC established its Mexico-U.S. Border Program to promote public understanding of problems revealed at the border, to foster community participation in economic and social development along the border, and to advocate for public and private policies conducive to sustainable development, demilitarization, and social equality in the border region. AFSC established ILEMP as a component of its border work in 1987. ILEMP supports local communities along the Mexico-U.S. border, as well as national and international organizations in challenging abuses of authority, including violence and other violations of human and civil rights, in the enforcement of immigration law. With offices throughout the border region, ILEMP's goals are to strengthen the capacity of border communities to participate in decisions relating to border control policies and practices; to increase public support for building a nonabusive, demilitarized border environment; and to seek changes in key policies that foster abuse, human suffering, and a militarized border. The group's website provides the full text of the press release "AFSC Calls for National Days of Reflection on Military Violence on Mexico-U.S. Border," which was released in response to the shooting death of Redford, TX-resident Esequiel Hernandez by members of Joint Task Force Six, a unit of Marines assigned to prevent drug smuggling on the border. The document includes links to articles from 1996 and 1997 about militarization of the border and about the Hernandez case.

**Bordercats Working Group**

7017 Sycamore Ave.  
 Takoma Park, MD 20912  
 Contact: Melissa Grigione  
 Voice: (301) 270-1453

This working group is a coalition of biologists concerned for the survival of the border region's big cats, such as the ocelot and jaguarundi. The working group advocates for less environmentally damaging U.S. border control policies.

**Cámara de Diputados**

Avenida Congreso de la Unión, No. 66  
 Col. El Parque  
 México, DF C.P. 15969  
 Contact: Dip. Benito Mirón Lince, Presidente de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos or David Villaroel, Asesor  
 Voice: (5) 4-20-17-22 or 4-20-17-60 ext. 1425  
 The Human Rights Commission of the Chamber of Deputies recently held a forum on "The Military and Militarization in Mexico."

**Center for Biological Diversity (CBD)**

Box 710  
 Tucson, AZ 85702-0710  
 Contact: Brian Segee  
 Voice: (520) 623-5252  
 Fax: (520) 623-9797  
 Email: bsegee@sw-center.org or swcbd@sw-center.org  
 Website: <http://www.sw-center.org/>

CBD combines conservation biology with legal strategies to promote conservation and restoration of Southwest and Mexican rivers, forests, deserts, and wildlife. The center helped form the SouthWest Alliance to Resist Militarization (SWARM), a coalition of environmental, human rights, and labor groups concerned with the environmental degradation and human rights abuses caused by U.S. Border Patrol activities.

**Centro Binacional de Derechos Humanos, A.C. (CBDH)**

Ave. Paseo del Centenario 3B-11  
 Rio Tijuana  
 Tijuana, BC  
 Contact: Victor Clark Alfaro  
 Voice/Fax: (66) 82-85-50

CBDH focuses on human rights issues associated with immigrants, prostitutes, and torture victims. The center investigates charges of human rights abuses and corruption made against federal, state, and municipal police in the Tijuana area. CBDH has also participated in conferences on the theme of militarization.

**Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez A.C. (Prodh)**

Serapio Rendon 57-B  
 Col. San Rafael  
 México, DF C.P. 06470  
 Contact: Armando Hernández  
 Voice: (5) 5-66-78-54 or 5-46-82-17  
 Fax: (5) 5-35-68-92  
 Email: prodh@laneta.apc.org or prodh@sjsocial.org  
 Website: <http://www.sjsocial.org/PRODH/default.htm>

Founded in 1988, Prodh promotes respect for human rights and defends those whose rights have been attacked by the Mexican state. The group analyzes and investigates human rights abuses, publishes information on such abuses, and offers legal assistance to persons and groups whose rights have been violated. Prodh has actively denounced the growing militarization of Mexico, and has documented the existence of government-supported counter-insurgency groups.

**Centro de Estudios Fronterizos y de Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, A.C. (CEFPRODHC)**

Zaragoza No. 650, 3. Piso, Despacho 13  
Zona Centro  
Reynosa, Tamps.  
Contact: Arturo Solís or Omeheira López  
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Email: cefprodh@mail.giga.com  
Website: <http://www.giga.com/~cefprodh/index.html>

In November 1999, CEFPRODHC presented a report to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights regarding the growing militarization of Mexico that has taken place during the last "sexenio" or presidential administration. The report is available online at the group's website. CEFPRODHC has produced numerous reports on human rights abuses and maintains a database that contains information on denouncements against the Mexican government and military for human rights violations.

**Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos, A.C. (CADHAC)**

Zapata No. 4417  
Col. Guadalupe Victoria  
Guadalupe, NL C.P. 64000  
Contact: María Emilia Espejo  
Voice: (8) 3-43-50-58  
Fax: (8) 3-43-66-18  
Email: cadhac@mail.intercable.net

CADHAC represents a group of independent citizens working together to defend human rights in four fundamental ways: education, protection for the dignity of the marginalized of society, legal processes, and the development of better means of communication. The group is part of the human rights network "Todos los Derechos para Todos." CADHAC has been working with Comisión de Solidaridad y Defensa de Derechos Humanos for the past three years as part of a network called the "Red de la Frontera Norte." The goal of this collaborative effort is to provide support to both groups to engage in analysis of and reflection on important themes, including that of militarization.

**Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Chihuahua**

Calle Décima y Mina, No. 1000  
Col. Centro  
Chihuahua, Chih., C.P. 31000  
Contact: Oscar Francisco Yáñez Franco  
Voice/Fax: (14) 10-08-28  
Email: chidh@cndh.org.mx  
Website: <http://www.cndh.org.mx/fmdh/chihua/porta.shtml>  
The commission is a state government-sponsored human rights office in Chihuahua.

**Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Nuevo León**

Ignacio Morones Prieto, No. 2110 Poniente, Local 2  
Edificio Manchester  
Col. Loma Larga  
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Voice: (83) 45-86-45 or 45-86-44  
Fax: (83) 44-91-99  
Email: cndhmt@intercable.net  
Website: <http://www.cndh.org.mx/fmdh/nleon/index.shtml>  
The commission is a state government-sponsored human rights office in Nuevo León.

**Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Tamaulipas**

Calle Zaragoza y Ocampo 14, No. 355 Sur  
Zona Centro  
Cd. Victoria, Tamps., C.P. 87000  
Contact: Rafael Torres Hinojosa, Presidente  
Voice: (131) 2-45-65, 2-46-12  
Fax: (131) 2-46-12  
Email: codhet@tamps1.telmex.net.mx  
Website: <http://www.cndh.org.mx/tamau.htm>  
The commission is the state-level human rights office in Tamaulipas.

**Comisión Estatal de Derechos Humanos de Sonora**

Blvd. Luís Encinas y Periférico Poniente  
Col. El Choyal  
Hermosillo, Son., C.P. 83130  
Voice/Fax: (62) 16-38-84  
Email: cdhson@rtn.uson.mx  
Website: <http://cedhson.uson.mx/>

This independent commission investigates complaints alleging human rights abuses by federal government authorities. Such human rights abuses include acts or failures to act by government officials; the failure of government officials to prevent an act of abuse; and the failure of authorities to take the legal steps to address violations of human rights. The commission has a documentation center and library and an Internet site that contains statistics on complaints received by the Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos.

**Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos**

Periférico Sur, No. 3469  
Col. San Jerónimo Lídice  
México, DF C. P. 10200  
Voice: (5) 4-90-74-00, (5) 6-81-81-25, or toll-free: (800) 7-15-20-00  
Fax: (5) 6-81-92-39  
Email: correo@cndh.org.mx

The Mexican National Human Rights Commission and its state agencies have not given much attention to the issues surrounding the recent militarization of many parts of Mexico, including the northern border. For more information, we recommend "Las Comisiones de Derechos Humanos del Gobierno de México: Una Respuesta Deficiente a las Generalizadas Violaciones a los Derechos Humanos" by Raúl Sánchez.

**Comisión de Solidaridad y Defensa de Derechos Humanos, A.C. (COSYDDHAC)**

Calle 24, No. 3007  
Col. Pacífico  
Chihuahua, Chih.  
Contact: María Teresa Guerrero, Camilo Daniel Pérez  
Voice: (14) 10-77-55

Since 1994, COSYDDHAC has worked on the issue of militarization in northern Mexico. The group publishes bulletins and reports on the subject and has joined other social justice organizations in protesting the human rights abuses that occur during military inspections. COSYDDHAC is a member of the Mexican human rights network "Todos los Derechos para Todos" and collaborates with Ciudadanos en Apoyo a los Derechos Humanos on the "Red de la Frontera Norte" project.

**Comité de Derechos Humanos de la Agrupación Multidisciplinaria de Profesionistas en Ojinaga, A.C.**

Calle La Paz 402  
 Ojinaga, Chih., C.P. 32881  
 U.S. mailing address:  
 Box 1044  
 Presidio, TX 79845  
 Contact: Fernando Gallegos  
 Voice: (14) 53-06-76  
 Fax: (14) 53-03-64  
 Email: gallfam@brooksdata.net

This group promotes the protection of human rights through education and actively reports human rights abuses to local, state, and federal authorities in Mexico. The committee provides human rights training to military personnel in Chihuahua.

**Comité Independiente de Chihuahua Pro Defensa a los Derechos Humanos**

Constitución 611 Sur  
 Col. Barreal  
 Cd. Juárez, Chih.  
 Contact: Judith Galarza Campos  
 Voice: (16) 12-48-90 or 20-46-75  
 Mexico City Office:  
 Congreso Extraordinario Unidad Tlatelolco,  
 Edif. Chiapas, Entrada B, Depto. 307  
 Delegación Cuauhtémoc  
 México, DF, C.P. 06900  
 Contact: Julio Mata Montiel  
 Voice: (5) 5-97-91-62

Comité Independiente offers services for the victims and families of human rights violations. It has organized several roundtable forums to discuss the human costs of violence and militarization of Mexico's northern border. The committee is a member of several coalitions including Coordinación de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales para la Defensa de las Mujeres en México, Asociación de Familias de Detenidos y Desaparecidos, Víctimas de la Violación de Derechos Humanos, and Federación de Asociaciones de Familiares de Detenidos y Desaparecidos (FEDEFAM).

**Common Sense for Drug Policy (CSDP)**

3220 N St. NW, Ste. 141  
 Washington, DC 20007  
 Voice: (703) 354-5694  
 Fax: (703) 354-5695  
 Email: info@cspd.org  
 Website: <http://www.cspd.org/>

CSDP is a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding discussion on drug policy. The group provides advice and technical assistance to individuals and organizations working to reform current policies. CSDP also provides pro bono legal assistance to those adversely affected by current drug policy. The group's website contains the full text of the booklet "Drug War Facts," which includes chapters on drug interdiction and military participation in the war on drugs.

**Defenders of Wildlife**

1101 14th St. NW, Ste. 1400  
 Washington, DC 20005  
 Contact: Chandra Rosenthal  
 Voice: (800) 989-8981, ext. 124

Along with Frontera Audubon and the Sierra Club, Defenders filed a suit against the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Army Corps of Engineers stating that the agencies are violating the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Protection Act through the Operation Rio Grande Border Patrol plan. Defenders has also filed a suit against the INS charging that Border Patrol overflights along the Arizona-Sonora border are endangering the Sonoran pronghorn antelope.

**Drug Policy Forum of Texas (DPFT)**

1425 Blalock, Ste. 109  
 Houston, TX 77055-4446  
 Contact: Dr. G. Alan Robison  
 Voice: (713) 784-3196 or toll-free (888) 511-DPFT  
 Email: galan@prodigy.net  
 Website: <http://www.mapinc.org/DPFT/>

DPFT provides information about drugs and the human rights issues surrounding current U.S. drug policies. The group's website contains a great deal of information regarding the death of Esequiel Hernandez, a U.S. citizen killed by Marines near the Texas-Mexico border. The site provides reprints of and links to a variety of newspaper articles and editorials both about his death and about U.S. drug policy on the border, including the transcript of the *PBS NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* broadcast of August 13, 1997, titled "Casualties of the Drug War."

**Drug Policy Foundation (DPF)**

4455 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. B-500  
 Washington, DC 20008-2328  
 Voice: (202) 537-5005  
 Fax: (202) 537-3007  
 Email: dpf@dpf.org  
 Website: <http://www.dpf.org/>

DPF is a nonprofit organization that promotes alternatives to current U.S. government drug policies. The group favors a shift away from criminal justice policies and a shift toward public health approaches to drug use and abuse.

**Frontera Audubon Society**

Box 8124  
 Weslaco, TX 78599  
 Contact: Mary Lou Campbell or Andy MacDonald  
 Voice/Fax: (956) 514-9321  
 Email: marylou@hiline.com

Last August, Frontera Audubon, Defenders of Wildlife, and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club filed suit against the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Army Corps of Engineers charging that Operation Rio Grande was violating the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act and that the project's environmental impact assessment failed to address possible negative effects. Specifically, the NGOs argue that the miles of stadium flood lighting and chainlink fences, the tripling of border patrol agents, and the construction of roads and boat ramps is negatively impacting a U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS)-proposed wildlife refuge along the southern reaches of the Rio Grande. Since August, the INS has consented to prepare an environmental impact statement and to enter into consultations with the USFWS over the proposed wildlife corridor. USFWS is also preparing a "biological opinion" on whether the operation will put endangered species in the area in danger, which has the potential to halt the operation. USFWS has received correspondence in the past from Texas state senators encouraging the agency not to protect endangered species at the cost of allowing drug smugglers into the United States. Frontera Audubon is seeking both expert witnesses who could address the impacts of the operation on area wildlife and criminologists who could address the operation's impacts on area crime.

**Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)**

425 Eye St. NW  
 Washington, DC 20536  
 Voice: (202) 307-1501 or (800) 375-5283  
 Website: <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/>

**INS Border Region Offices**

*El Paso District Office*  
 1545 Hawkins Boulevard, Suite 167  
 El Paso, TX 79925  
*Harlingen District Office*  
 2102 Teege Avenue  
 Harlingen, TX 78550  
*San Diego District Office*  
 880 Front Street, Suite 1234  
 San Diego, CA 92101  
*Tucson Sub Office, Phoenix District*  
 6431 South Country Club Road  
 Tucson, AZ 85706-5907

The Immigration and Naturalization Service is the federal agency that administers U.S. immigration laws. The INS inspections branch is responsible for inspecting persons seeking to enter the U.S. and is charged with intercepting narcotics smugglers. The Border Patrol (the mobile INS branch) was created to detect and prevent smuggling and illegal entry of aliens into the United States. (Very general information about the Border Patrol is available at: <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/lawenfor/index.htm>) Since the 1980s, the mission of the Border Patrol has been expanded to include preventing entry of drugs into the country. In 1984 for example, elite Border Patrol squads known as Border Patrol Tactical Teams (BORTACS) began receiving special paramilitary training. In 1991, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) designated the Border Patrol as the primary agency for narcotics interdiction between the ports of entry. One example of the Border Patrol's narcotics interdiction efforts is the Harlingen District Office's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Unit, which works with federal, state, and local drug task forces to conduct comprehensive investigations to identify and prosecute members of well-organized drug organizations within the Harlingen District. From 1990 to 1998 the INS budget for Southwest border drug enforcement activities tripled. Although the agency maintains a toll-free telephone number, it is difficult and time-consuming to reach an INS representative to request information.

**The Lindesmith Center (TLC)**

400 W. 59th St., 3rd Fl.  
 New York, NY 10019  
 Voice: (212) 548-0695  
 Fax: (212) 548-4670  
 Email: [lindesmith@sorosny.org](mailto:lindesmith@sorosny.org)  
 Website: <http://www.lindesmith.org/>

TLC is a drug policy research institute. The center hosts a drug policy seminar series and produces various publications, including reports on the militarization of U.S. drug policy. TLC's website features a searchable database of thousands of library documents from both academic and popular literature focusing on drug policy from economic, criminal justice, and public health perspectives. The site also includes a subject index of full-text materials online.

**Media Awareness Project**

Box 651  
 Porterville, CA 93258  
 Contact: Mark Greer  
 Voice: (800) 266-5759  
 Email: [mgreer@mapinc.org](mailto:mgreer@mapinc.org)  
 Website: <http://www.mapinc.org/>

MAP is a global network of activists dedicated to drug policy reform. The group aims to disseminate accurate information on all aspects of drug policy and to impact public opinion, especially media coverage, regarding such policy. The group's website contains reviews of articles appearing in newspapers and magazines nationwide on the topic of drugs and drug policy. Information on other groups—such as Drug Sense—that support MAP's work is also available from the website.

**New Mexico Drug Policy Foundation**

Box 6994  
 Albuquerque, NM 87197  
 Contact: Steve Bunch  
 Voice: (505) 344-1932  
 Fax: (505) 344-6716  
 Email: [nmdpf@newmexicodrugpolicy.org](mailto:nmdpf@newmexicodrugpolicy.org)  
 Website: <http://www.newmexicodrugpolicy.org/about.html>

The nonprofit New Mexico Drug Policy Foundation was established to serve as an educational forum to provide accurate information on drugs and drug control social policy to policymakers, political leaders, health and legal professionals, educators, business leaders, families, and young people in New Mexico.

**Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos y Protección Ciudadana del Estado de Baja California**

Blvd. Agua Caliente, No. 10440-7  
 Edif. Barranquita  
 Col. Aviación  
 Tijuana, BC C.P. 22400  
 Voice: (49) 16-87-78  
 Fax: (49) 15-23-80  
 Email: [bcldh@cndh.org.mx](mailto:bcldh@cndh.org.mx)

The commission is a state government-sponsored human rights office in Baja California.

**Seminario Permanente de Estudios Chicanos y de Fronteras**

Exconvento del Carmen  
 Avenida Revolución y Callejon Monasterio  
 Col. San Angel, Del. Alvaro Obregon  
 Mexico, DF C.P. 01000  
 Contact: Juan Manuel Sandoval  
 Voice: (5) 6-16-07-97 or 5-50-80-43  
 Fax: (5) 6-16-20-73  
 Email: [spechf@laneta.apc.org](mailto:spechf@laneta.apc.org)

This research center was formed in 1982 under the direction of the Ethnology and Social Anthropology Section of the Mexican National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH). The seminario has studied the phenomenon of regional integration and its impact on national borders with a particular focus on narco-trafficking, violence, and border militarization.

**Sin Fronteras**

Calle Ortega 27-1  
 Col. Coyoacan  
 Mexico, DF C.P. 04000  
 Contact: Liliane Loya  
 Voice: (5) 5-54-63-35 or 5-54-64-80  
 Fax: (5) 5-54-71-80  
 Email: [sinfronteras@laneta.apc.org](mailto:sinfronteras@laneta.apc.org)  
 Website: <http://www.laneta.apc.org/sinfronteras/>

Sin Fronteras promotes respect for the human rights of refugees and migrants. It recently participated in the conference "Encuentro de Fronteras: Globalización, Migración y Militarización, un Dialogo entre ONG's."

**SouthWest Alliance to Resist Militarization (SWARM)**

Southern Arizona People's Law Center  
 611 N. 4th Avenue  
 Tucson, AZ 85705  
 Contact: Maritza Broce  
 Voice: (520) 623-7306  
 Email: [swarmtucson@hotmail.com](mailto:swarmtucson@hotmail.com)

SWARM is a coalition of human rights, environmental, social justice, and labor activists calling for an end to militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border region. SWARM has focused its attention on the activities of the military counter-narcotics operation known as Joint Task Force Six. The coalition is planning to hold a border-wide conference on the impacts of militarization this fall.

**Washington Office on Latin America**

1630 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. 2  
 Washington, DC 20009  
 Voice: (202) 797-2171  
 Fax: (202) 797-2172  
 Email: wola@wola.org  
 Website: <http://www.wola.org/>

WOLA promotes human rights, democracy, and social and economic justice in Latin America and the Caribbean. WOLA has initiated an International Drug Control Policy Program. The group charges that U.S. policy supports and encourages the Mexican government to involve the military in antidrug efforts both by providing excess military hardware and equipment and by training thousands of Mexican soldiers in counternarcotics techniques. The group also charges that though this strategy has not helped stem the flow of drugs, it has led to serious human rights abuses, including torture, arbitrary detention, and forced disappearances by state agents.

**Websites**

**Arizona's Crisis: Future Border Policy on the Line**

<http://www.heartland-alliance.org/e-news3.htm>  
 This article is from the June 1999 newsletter of the Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network. The network is a binational project dedicated to: (1) improving communication and understanding between Mexican and U.S. NGOs concerned with the human and labor rights aspects of migration policy, and (2) developing vehicles for joint advocacy on those issues. In the article, the network describes the increased law enforcement efforts to curb illegal immigration across the Arizona-Sonoran border.

**Border Control: Revised Strategy is Showing Some Positive Results**

<http://www.fas.org/irp/gao/ggd95030.htm>  
 This General Accounting Office report responds to a congressional request for information on the adequacy of U.S. efforts to secure the Southwest border. Specifically, the report determines the extent of the threat from drug smuggling and illegal immigration and identifies ways to enhance security between the border ports of entry. The report concludes that the Border Patrol's strategy of preventing illegal entry of immigrants and drugs is much more successful than the previous focus on apprehension. The report also recognizes and encourages the desire of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to coordinate their activities with other federal agencies such as the Department of Defense, Customs Service, and the Drug Enforcement Administration as well as state and local law enforcement agencies.

**Collateral Damage: The Wide-Ranging Consequences of America's Drug War**

<http://cato.org/realaudio/drugwar/papers/carpenter.html>  
 This analytical report maintains that the current drug war has badly eroded important liberties and that an escalation of military efforts to control drugs could cause social and political havoc in portions of the Western Hemisphere. The author, Ted Galen Carpenter, states that "the erosion of key civil liberties coincides with the onset of, or with the incremental escalation of, the drug war."

**Coyne Report**

<http://www.metrotimes.com/coynereport.html>  
 This report, written by Marine Corps Major General John T. Coyne in April 1998, describes the investigation into the shooting of Esequiel Hernandez, Jr., by members of Joint Task Force Six (JTF-6) on May 20, 1997.

**The Deconstitutionalized Zone**

<http://www.libertysoft.com/liberty/>  
 This brief report by John Robey is a harsh indictment of the human rights violations and violence that the author argues are a result of increased militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border region.

**Department of Defense (DoD)**

Drug Enforcement Policy and Support  
<http://www.defenselink.mil/>  
 This site describes the active military support that the Department of Defense provides for counternarcotics programs. In addition to personnel, the DoD provides funding, training, equipment, technical support, and coordinated activity planning for many of the federal, state, and local law enforcement groups and agencies working in the U.S.-Mexico border region. For example, National Guardsmen help U.S. Customs Inspectors check cargoes and vehicles coming into the United States, DoD engineers have built roads along the border, and the DoD provides translators to U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies. Excess military helicopters, communications equipment, and even uniforms have gone to foreign, state, and local law enforcement agencies (including the Mexican military).

**DoD Counterdrug Support**

[http://internet.roadrunner.com/~sam1/freedom/dod\\_counter\\_drug.html](http://internet.roadrunner.com/~sam1/freedom/dod_counter_drug.html)  
 This document provides a good overview of legislative support and restrictions on military support for civilian law enforcement agencies in their counterdrug efforts.

**Drug Enforcement Administration**

Southwest Border Initiative  
<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/programs/sbi.htm>  
 The Southwest Border Initiative (SWBI), begun in 1994, is a cooperative effort by federal law enforcement agencies to combat the perceived substantial threat posed by Mexico-based trafficking groups operating along the Southwest border. The SWBI is working with binational task forces in Monterrey, Juárez, and Tijuana to tap into the communication systems of these traffickers.

**El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC)**

<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/programs/epic.htm>  
 The El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) was established in 1974 in response to a Department of Justice study. The study, which detailed drug and border enforcement strategies and programs, proposed the establishment and direction of a Southwest Border Intelligence Service Center to be staffed by representatives from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the U.S. Customs Service, and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). EPIC intelligence analysts collect information on drug trafficking, immigration violations, weapons and explosives trafficking, suspected fugitives, and stolen vehicles, aircraft, and vessels. In addition, a number of EPIC programs are dedicated to postseizure analysis and the establishment of links between recent enforcement actions and ongoing investigations. Initially, EPIC focused on the U.S.-Mexico border, with emphasis on heroin traffickers and illegal alien smugglers from Mexico, but it has now broadened to encompass global drug and alien trafficking. EPIC has grown to include 15 federal agencies and has entered into numerous information gathering agreements with other countries.

### Escalation of U.S. Immigration Control in the Post-NAFTA Era

<http://psqonline.org/andreas3.html>

This theoretical article by Peter Andreas was published in 1999 in the *Political Science Quarterly* and discusses the consequences of open trade on the borders and territorial controls of nation-states. Andreas states that, despite the logical expectation that free trade would lead to a loosening of border controls, in reality increasing free trade has led to an expansion of border policing and an increase in militarization. The U.S.-Mexico border is a good example of a border that is "increasingly protected and monitored, not to deter armies or impose tariffs on trade, but to confront a perceived invasion of 'undesirables,' particularly illegal immigrants, drug traffickers, and other clandestine transnational actors."

### Latin American Federation of Associations for Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared (FEDEFAM)

<http://www.desaparecidos.org/fedefam/eng.html>

FEDEFAM is a nongovernmental organization formed by relatives of people who have disappeared in Latin American and Caribbean countries, including Mexico. The group's website provides information in both English and Spanish about the federation, its mission, and its quarterly newsletter, *Hasta Encontrarlos*.

### Mexico: The Narco General Case

<http://www.tni.org/drugs/folder3/fazio.htm>

This report by Carlos Fazio describes Mexican military involvement in narcotics activities.

### The "Militarization" of the Anti-Drug Effort

<http://ndsn.org/JULY97/MILITARY.html>

This 1997 report by Chad Thevenot reviews the U.S. military's involvement in fighting the national war on drugs. It provides a short overview of legislative actions that have enabled the military to cooperate with civilian law enforcement agencies in combating drug smuggling.

### Militarization of the U.S. Drug Control Program

<http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org/briefs/vol3/v3n27drug.html>

This *Foreign Policy In Focus* brief from September 1998 discusses the negative impact of militarized U.S. counternarcotics efforts.

### The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border: Border Communities Respond to Militarization

<http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/mj1.html>

In this interview published in 1998 by *In Motion Magazine*, María Jiménez describes her work as director of the Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring Project (ILEMP), a program of the American Friends Service Committee. ILEMP's work focuses on reducing the abuse of authority in the enforcement of immigration laws.

### Militarizing our Borders—Our New Immigration Policy

<http://lectlaw.com/files/imm01.htm>

This article by Martin Salvador Rocha of California State University provides a brief overview of U.S.-Mexico border militarization trends.

### Military Support to Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies

<http://ogc4.hq.dla.mil/html/practice/contingency/manual/chap19.htm>

This chapter from a military manual provides a general discussion of the Posse Comitatus Act, counterdrug support operations, civil disturbance operations, and Department of Defense support in combating terrorism.

### Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP)

<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/>

The principal purpose of the ONDCP is to establish policies, priorities, and objectives for the nation's drug control program. The program's current goals include the reduction of illicit drug use, manufacturing, and trafficking; the reduction of drug-related crime and violence; and the reduction of drug-related health problems. The ONDCP also evaluates, coordinates, and oversees both the international and domestic antidrug efforts of executive branch agencies and ensures that such efforts sustain and complement state and local antidrug activities. This website provides the most extensive information on the nation's drug control programs.

### Programa Nacional para el Control de Drogas 1995-2000

<http://www.pgr.gob.mx/>

This website provides information on the Mexican National Drug Control Program, headed by the office of the Procuraduría General de la República (PGR). The site describes the commitments to combat drugs and drug trafficking made by various government agencies including the National Defense Secretariat and the Mexican Armed Marines Secretariat.

### United States of America: Human Rights Concerns in the Border Region with Mexico

<http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aipub/1998/AMR/25100398.htm>

This report describes the findings of Amnesty International's research into alleged human rights abuses along the U.S. border with Mexico.

### U.S.-Mexico Border Security: Civil-Military Cooperation

<http://call.army.mil/call/fmso/fmsopubs/issues/border/border.html>

This report by Graham H. Turbiville of the Foreign Military Studies Office was published in the July-August 1999 issue of *Military Review*. Although it offers a positive perspective on the increased military and law enforcement presence and activities in the border region, it also explains the legislative reasoning behind the increased enforcement and provides background on current military and law enforcement activities for both the U.S. and Mexican sides of the border.

## Publications

Peter Andreas, *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, forthcoming).

Tom Barry, et al., *Crossing the Line* (Albuquerque, NM: Interhemispheric Resource Center, 1994).

Eva Bertram, et al., *Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

Timothy Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996).

Carole Nagengast, "Militarizing the Border Patrol," *NACLA*, vol. XXXII, no. 3, Nov/Dec 1998.

Office of National Drug Control Policy, *National Drug Control Strategy* (Washington: Government Printing Office, February 2000).

José Palafox, "Militarizing the Mexico-U.S. Border," *Covert Action Quarterly*, March 1996.

Sebastian Rotella, *Twilight on the Line* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998).

U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (Washington: U.S. Department of State, forthcoming).

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## *Database Expanded:*

Toxicology Excellence for Risk Assessment (TERA) and Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC) announce a major expansion of the International Toxicity Estimates for Risk (ITER) database, found on the Internet at <http://www.tera.org/iter/>. ITER now contains 545 chemicals, including data and links to all of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) risk values. It also includes all of the Health Canada risk values under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) that are currently available, and many of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)'s chronic minimal risk levels (MRLs). ITER is a "one-stop shopping" source for risk values developed by major risk assessment agencies and by independent, nongovernmental organizations. ITER provides the only online, side-by-side presentation of these values, along with access to the scientific justification for each group's values and an explanation for any differences. The database is provided free of charge. For more information about ITER, contact Jacqueline Patterson, M.En., Toxicology Excellence for Risk Assessment (TERA), 1757 Chase Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45231, phone: (513) 521-7426, fax: (513) 521-7428, or email: [Patterson@tera.org](mailto:Patterson@tera.org)

## *Joint Public Advisory Committee Public Session:*

The Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) will hold its first regular session of the year March 23-24 at the Hotel Camino Real Guadalajara in Zapopan, Jalisco. On March 23, the public is invited to participate in a plenary discussion on the CEC's three-year program plan including the North American Pollutant Release and Transfer Register Program. The remainder of the day's meeting will focus on the development of strategic plans for the Conservation of Biodiversity Project. The public is invited to observe the second day of the regular session, at which JPAC members will address administrative issues. The public may also attend (as observers) a round-table discussion of the JPAC and the Mexican National Advisory Committee on emerging environmental trends in North America. To confirm attendance, receive hard copies of session documents, or submit written comments, please contact Leonor Alvarado at the CEC Secretariat by email at: [lalvarad@ccemtl.org](mailto:lalvarad@ccemtl.org), by phone at: (514) 350-4366, or by fax at: (514) 350-4314 and include your name, organization, address, telephone, fax number, and email address with your comments. Registration forms or comments should be sent before March 14. Please note that the agenda for this regular session, the CEC three-year program plan for 1999-2001, all JPAC documents, and all CEC official publications can be found at the CEC website at <http://www.cec.org/>

## *Position Announcement:*

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is seeking applications for the position of WWF Representative Mexico to be based in Mexico City. The representative will work to further WWF's interests at appropriate national and regional levels with government agencies, international organizations, donors, the media, NGOs, and the public. See the full job description online at <http://members.home.net/grs.shields/page15.htm>. Further information is available by contacting Jill Solomon, Global Recruitment Specialists, by fax at: (973) 379-7325 or by email at: [Jillsolomo@aol.com](mailto:Jillsolomo@aol.com)

## *Summer Course in Mexico:*

For the sixth year, RORAC, a small foundation dedicated to the education of workers, will offer the summer course "A Third World Consciousness in a Global Society." Course objectives are to exchange information relative to the impacts of globalization on third world workers and peasants, to analyze the dilemmas of the third world within a global reality, to exchange sustainable development alternatives for the first and third worlds, and to build a network of information and mutual support. The course will be held July 24 to August 3, 2000, in Temamatla village near Mexico City. Registration is limited to 18 participants. The program cost is \$1,000 per person including lodging, meals, and materials. For further information, please contact Lic. Aida Moncada or Mtra. Ma. Adela Oliveros, Centro de Educación e Investigación para Adultos RORAC, Baja California No. 26, Temamatla, Edo. de México, C.P. 56650, phone: (5) 9-88-55-97 or 9-88-56-28, fax: 9-88-57-98, or email: [rorac@laneta.apc.org](mailto:rorac@laneta.apc.org)

## *Upcoming Conference:*

On April 13-15, 2000, the AFL-CIO/University and College Labor Education Association (UCLEA) Conference, "Unions and the Global Economy: Labor Education at the Crossroads," will be held in Milwaukee, WI. The conference will bring together union and university labor educators, researchers, and activists from around the world who are committed to strengthening the collective economic and political power of workers and unions by building common alliances, organizations, and actions across borders. For information about the conference, please contact Kate Bronfenbrenner, UCLEA Professional Council Chair, at (607) 254-4749 or email her assistant, Anne Sieverding, at [acs5@cornell.edu](mailto:acs5@cornell.edu). You may also contact Cecelie Counts-Blakey, Assistant Director, AFL-CIO Education Department, at (202) 637-5188. Reservations should be made directly with the Hyatt Regency in Milwaukee at: (800) 233-1234 or (414) 276-1234; indicate that you are attending the AFL-CIO conference to get the conference rate.

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## *Association for Borderlands Studies Meeting:*

The annual meeting of the Association for Borderlands Studies will be held April 26-29 at the Town and Country Resort in San Diego. Reservations must be made before March 29. Please call (800) 854-2608 or (619) 294-5957; mention the Western Social Science Association to receive discounted rates. For further information, contact Edward J. Williams by email at: [edwardw@u.arizona.edu](mailto:edwardw@u.arizona.edu), by phone at: (520) 621-7600, or by fax at: (520) 621-5051.

## *Border Environment Cooperation Commission Meeting:*

The Board of Directors of the BECC will hold a public meeting on March 24 in El Paso, TX, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the El Paso Marriott Hotel. Anyone interested in submitting comments to the Board of Directors on proposed projects for certification must do so 15 days prior to the public meeting. Anyone interested in making a brief statement to the board may do so at the public meeting. For further information, please contact the BECC office at Blvd. Tomás Fernández No. 8069, Fracc. Los Parques, Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, phone: (16) 25-91-60, fax: (16) 25-69-99, email: [becc@cocef.inter-juarez.org](mailto:becc@cocef.inter-juarez.org), website: <http://www.cocef.org/>

## *Border Health Meeting:*

The United States Mexico Border Health Association (USMBHA) will hold its 58th annual meeting May 3-5, 2000, in Hermosillo, Sonora. The theme of this year's meeting is "Health Equity for the Border in the New Millennium," and presentations will follow three tracks: Health and Society; Prevention and Disease Control; and Health, Environment, and Development. For further information, contact Piedad Huerta at USMBHA, 5400 Suncrest Dr., Suite C-6, El Paso, TX 79912, phone: (915) 833-6450 ext. 14, fax: (915) 833-7840, email: [officer@usmbha.org](mailto:officer@usmbha.org)

## *Call for Proposals:*

The Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at the University of California, San Diego, is accepting interdisciplinary research proposals focused on sustainable development and the environment along the U.S.-Mexico border. Successful candidates will participate as visiting research fellows in the center's project "Sustainable Development on the U.S.-Mexican Border: Enhancing Citizen Participation in Water, Land Use, and Environmental Health Policy Making." Each fellow will produce a short "policy brief" assessing the principal implications of her/his research for environmental policy formulation and implementation, as well as a longer research paper suitable for publication. The six-month residential fellowships will begin as early as September 2000 and as late as January 2001. The deadline for receipt of applications is Friday, April 7, 2000. Applications should include a research project statement, curriculum vitae, and a minimum of two letters of recommendation. Applications and inquiries should be addressed to C.R. Hibbs, Program Officer, Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies (0510), University of California, San Diego, 9500 Gilman Dr., La Jolla, CA 92093-0510, phone: (858) 534-4503, fax: (858) 534-6447, email: [chibbs@ucsd.edu](mailto:chibbs@ucsd.edu)

## *Grants Available:*

The North American Fund for Environmental Cooperation (NAFEC) is accepting proposals for the year 2000 grant cycle. Proposals may be submitted until March 31 for community-based projects that focus on (1) linking biodiversity conservation with trade in green goods and services or (2) analyzing pollutants and improving public access to information, decisionmaking, and environmental justice. For details, please see the 2000 Call for Proposals on the Commission for Environmental Cooperation website at <http://www.cec.org/english/nafec/>, or contact NAFEC at [nafec@cceintl.org](mailto:nafec@cceintl.org)

# Border Militarization and Beyond: The Widening War on Drugs

by Tim Dunn and Jose Palafox

The militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border has occurred chiefly as a result of Washington's "war on drugs." Although "militarization" is frequently a code-word for "beefing up" law enforcement efforts, along the border in the 1990s this military metaphor became far too real, involving the actual deployment of troops to assist the Border Patrol and the adoption, by police units, of military equipment as well as military strategies and operating techniques. The militarization process has been largely driven by political grandstanding—politicians trying to look tough in the war on drugs—and institutional opportunism—police agencies taking advantage of congressional largesse for this "war effort" and national security agencies reinventing themselves in order to compete for budgetary resources in the post-cold war era.

Border militarization went largely unnoticed for years, until May 1997, when a U.S. Marine shot and killed a U.S.-born teenager near Redford, Texas, after mistaking him for a drug scout. That tragedy has led to some significant changes in U.S. border security strategy, but has not halted the militarization phenomenon. Meanwhile, and perhaps most disturbingly, the police-military relationship elaborated on the U.S.-Mexico border has now spread to the interior of the country. Here, again, an episode gone wrong—the 1993 Waco Branch Davidian assault and tragedy—means that this strategy is facing new scrutiny and reevaluation. On a different border enforcement "front"—immigration—militarization, broadly speaking, has continued in a much less severe though ultimately more dangerous vein.

## Overview of Border Militarization

Generally speaking, border militarization refers to the ongoing involvement of the U.S. military in lending support to the Border Patrol and other police units engaged in drug enforcement along the southwest border. The process has been unfolding since the early 1980s and was fully enshrined as policy during the 1990s. It represents a stark departure from historical precedent, for U.S. troops have not engaged in such ongoing police activity within the national territory since

the post-Civil War Reconstruction era and the bloody frontier days of the Old West (apart from stemming "civil disorders," most of which have been handled by National Guard units and rarely the regular military). 1879's Posse Comitatus law forbade the use of federal troops in making arrests or conducting searches or seizures within the U.S. and effectively eliminated military participation in domestic law enforcement.

Although Posse Comitatus restrictions still apply today, during the 1980s and 1990s various laws were enacted that first defined instances in which military support to police bodies engaged in drug enforcement were permissible, and which then began to mandate such support. This Pandora's box was opened innocuously enough with loans of military equipment to the police, but ultimately resulted in the mandate that U.S. military forces conduct training exercises, including the use of ground troops, to the "maximum extent practicable" in known drug trafficking zones in border areas in order to support police anti-drug operations.

In late 1989, at the urging of the Bush administration, the military established its beach-head in this new arena when it created Joint Task Force-6, based at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. JTF-6's initial task was to coordinate military support for border police anti-drug efforts, but in 1995 its geographic focus was broadened to encompass the entire continental U.S., especially federally designated "High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas" which include virtually all major cities. The unit is largely administrative, matching police requests for military support with military units to fill the requests. The police are offered free assistance, and military units are offered extra funds (beyond a normal unit's budget) for training exercises as well as an off-base, "real world" training opportunity. JTF-6 is one of the longest lasting joint task forces in U.S. history, has involved more than 72,000 troops on missions in 30 states and has performed some 3,300 missions from 1990 through mid-1997.

It is important to note that full data on JTF-6 is not available; there is no regular public reporting of its activities outside the Pentagon, not even to Congress. Just establishing such an oversight mechanism would be a very meaningful initial

step toward imposing democratic public accountability on this military body, which is operating on U.S. soil and has a troubled track record.

JTF-6 offers the Border Patrol and other regional police bodies at least 19 types of support. On the less militaristic end of the continuum, JTF-6 coordinates military aid in the form of transport, aerial surveillance, equipment loans, construction activities (e.g., border walls and road building), and—more ominously—intelligence support and military training. The latter involves a broad range of training, from small unit tactics, raid planning and execution, interrogation tactics, use of pyrotechnics, target selection, and booby trap techniques to database management, data analysis, rappelling, staff planning, foreign language translation, and vehicle maintenance.

On the most militaristic end of the spectrum, JTF-6 support has involved the actual deployment of armed ground troops for patrolling and reconnaissance-surveillance purposes, such as ground patrols and staffing listening and observation posts (LP/OP). The Border Patrol has been the recipient of virtually all JTF-6 LP/OP missions (an average of 117 per year during the mid 1990s) and other uses of armed ground troops on the border. (This does not include anti-drug efforts of National Guard units, which are handled at the state level, not by JTF-6.)

## Teen's Death Temporarily Halts Ground Patrols

The 1997 Esequiel Hernández killing led to what is, ultimately, an ill-defined effort to rein in the use of armed ground troops along the border for anti-drug work. The event was the first killing of a civilian by military troops engaged in border drug control on U.S. soil—although there have been at least four other non-lethal firings on suspects during earlier missions—and illustrates the grave dangers of using armed military troops in law enforcement. The Marines were on a LP/OP clandestine surveillance mission for the Border Patrol when Hernández allegedly shot twice at them with a .22 rifle. The Marine team was in full camouflage in bushes over 200 hundred yards away from the boy, who was herding his family's goats, likely thought the distant



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movement was made by wild dogs. Military officials were less than fully cooperative with the Texas Rangers and other investigators looking into the incident, and JTF-6 supervisors maintained that the Marines acted lawfully and had followed military "rules of engagement." A later internal Marine investigation, however, revealed a series of serious errors and mission procedural violations, including inadequate mission training, poor and inaccurate prior intelligence briefings, improper authorization to return fire, gross misinterpretation of the situation by the team's leader, failure to exhaust lesser degrees of self-defense (such as verbal warnings), and failure to render medical aid, among others, which it summarized as "systemic failures at every level of command."

In the wake of the shooting, the political winds shifted, or at least slackened. For the very first time, civilian prosecution of military soldiers on a drug mission was attempted, but three grand juries (two state and one federal) refused to indict the Marine team on any charge. Defense lawyers successfully maintained that the Marines were "performing appropriately...in defense of national interests." (The federal government later settled a civil lawsuit brought by the Hernández family for \$1.9 million.) Nonetheless, the prospect of the possibility of such prosecution led the military to suspend the use of armed ground troops along the border for a year and a half, while the policy was reviewed. Meanwhile, all the other forms of JTF-6 support for the Border Patrol (e.g., construction, aerial surveillance, training, intelligence support, etc.) continued.

In January 1999, the Pentagon announced a new policy stating that the use of armed ground troops for domestic anti-drug efforts must be explicitly authorized by the secretary of defense or the deputy secretary. This does not rule out such troop involvement, then, but rather pegs it to internal bureaucratic discretion, albeit with a high level of authorization required and, presumably, greater oversight and, hopefully, accountability.

## **Anti-immigration Policies have Militaristic Tenor as Well**

Military support for the Border Patrol's anti-drug work also spills over into immigration enforcement. For example, the nine border walls built with military aid in California and Arizona mainly

inhibit undocumented immigrants, not drug couriers. Similarly, a 1997 military intelligence drug enforcement support mission for the San Diego Border Patrol designed a "threat assessment" for illegal aliens. And at a higher level, the Pentagon's Center for the Study of Low Intensity Conflict aided in the design of the *Border Patrol Strategic Plan: 1994 and Beyond*, which is almost entirely devoted to immigration enforcement, with the border blockades being the first of a four-phase national strategy. In a more severe vein, Sandia National Labs in Albuquerque, NM (Dept. of Energy nuclear research facility) assessed "border security" for the INS in 1993 and

assist with ground surveillance in east San Diego County until mid-1997). However, they have been deadly, most notably in San Diego and Imperial counties along the California-Mexico border, where as of November 1999 some 455 persons attempting to cross the border had perished since the start of "Operation Gatekeeper" in San Diego, most dying of exposure in the mountains and scorching deserts or drowning in irrigation canals. A landmark study by researchers at the University of Houston estimates that some 1,600 migrants died while trying to cross the blockade-littered borderlands from 1993-1997. And instances of Border Patrol officers shooting would-be crossers

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*JTF-6's initial task was to coordinate military support for border police anti-drug efforts, but in 1995 its geographic focus was broadened to encompass the entire continental U.S., especially federally designated "High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas" which include virtually all major cities.*

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characterized all unauthorized crossers as "adversaries."

A series of Border Patrol "blockade" operations initiated since 1993 in or near four mainly urban border sites has taken the lives of hundreds of would-be unauthorized border crossers shunted from heavily patrolled cities into more remote and dangerous areas. Forcing illegal immigrant flows into isolated, difficult terrain was indeed the intention of the new INS strategy from its inception, according to internal documents, though spokespersons stressed deterrence in public statements. The Border Patrol blockades have entailed the deployment of hundreds of agents (in the San Diego sector, more than 2,000) and an assortment of equipment (trucks, walls, fences, helicopters with search lights, etc.) in a show of force at previously popular border crossing zones. As a result of a concurrent staff doubling the Border Patrol is now the largest federal police force, with approximately 10,000 officers.

Admittedly, these operations are much less severe than the posting of military troops (though troops were used to

appear to be on the rise. In late November 1999, the UN Secretary for Human Rights criticized U.S. immigration policy for the deadly effects of the INS blockades.

## **The War at Home**

Since 1995, JTF-6 military support has been available to virtually any police body in the U.S., not just in the border area, and in recent years well over half of all JTF-6 missions have been devoted to police forces outside the Southwest. A disturbing indication of the potential consequences of this trend was provided by the notorious 1993 Waco siege, during which JTF-6 lent aid to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) and FBI. The task force arranged for military equipment and for Army Special Forces troops to provide assistance in the raid's preparatory stages, and it organized the use of tank-like Army combat construction vehicles that were employed in the tragic final assault. In fact, JTF-6 was eager to provide even more support at

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Waco, but the Army Special Forces refused, citing legal restrictions that JTF-6 had not interpreted as an inhibiting factor. (JTF-6 was only able to be involved at all as a result of flimsy drug allegations against the Branch Davidians, for which no evidence was ever found).

Current investigations into the Waco debacle have found evidence of further military participation (the presence of a Special Forces soldier as an "observer," as well as the FBI's use of military tear gas incendiary devices) and there are allegations of even deeper military involvement. There may be congressional hearings on the new evidence, which could provide an opportunity to challenge laws allowing extreme forms of military support of domestic drug law enforcement. However, the earlier Esequiel Hernandez tragedy had no such effect, nor did it even lead to congressional hearings, and just three months later the House overwhelmingly passed a measure allowing the placement of up to 10,000 troops on the border. The Senate never took it up—thankfully.

## Conclusion

So where do things stand today in terms of the use of the military along the border? We don't fully know, because there is no public reporting requirement for the military on this issue, and the Border Patrol and sibling police bodies are less than fully forthcoming on the topic. It is clear that apart from the use of armed ground troops, military-Border Patrol collaboration has continued, resulting in a less severe militarization. However, the Secretary of Defense can authorize the reintroduction of ground troops at any time—and, for all we know, he may have already, since there is no requirement that he notify congress or the public when doing so. We do know that National Guard activities have not been restricted, and could fill any ground-troop void. At any rate, the interagency relationship continues; last year the Border Patrol and JTF-6 completed an environmental impact study outlining a list of potential future activities identical to those listed prior to 1997, including the use of ground troops.

JTF-6 officials are not as enthusiastic as they perhaps once were, however. One

task force official admitted in 1998 that JTF-6's efforts have had little impact on drug flows. Moreover, a former JTF-6 military intelligence officer is now actively speaking out against militarization and has even returned medals he was awarded for his efforts. The fallout from recent Waco investigations may provide the best chance yet to change the laws allowing the use of troops in domestic law enforcement, but hopefully there will not be a "border exception" for any such potential limits. ■

*Tim Dunn is an assistant professor of sociology at Salisbury State University, Maryland. He is the author of The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border (Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies and University of Texas Press, 1996). Jose Palafox is a graduate student in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California-Berkeley. He has authored several articles on border militarization.*

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