IMPACT OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA TASK FORCE ON
DRUG INTERDICTION IN THE GULF COAST AREA

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITY AND TERRORISM
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
ON
THE SCOPE OF THE DRUG PROBLEMS IN ALABAMA
AND OTHER GULF STATES
Mobile, Alabama
OCTOBER 28, 1983
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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1983
U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITY AND TERRORISM,
Mobile, AL.

The subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 9 a.m., at the Riverview Plaza, Senator Jeremiah Denton (chairman of the subcommittees) presiding.
Also present: Senators Cochran and Hawkins.
Staff present: Joel S. LiskeI', chief counsel and staff director; Frances R. Vermuth, chief clerk; and Edward Gatewood, congressional fellow, NSA.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEREMIAH DENTON

Senator Denton. Good morning and welcome.

Before we begin our hearing I'm going to make a presentation to a former staff member, one who gave a great deal to this subcommittee in the way of devotion. He's from Mobile. He's back in Mobile. Bert "T. Milling. Bert, where are you?

Come on up, Bert W. Milling, Jr., joined the staff of the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism soon after it was established in 1981. He totally immersed himself in the work of the subcommittee from the first day he came on board in March of 1981 until the day he left, some 2% years later. His contributions to his work on the subcommittee are highly significant and are reflected in the 34 hearings in which he played a major role. His work took him from Miami to Southern Africa to the Middle East, and the results which he has helped obtain have been dramatic and have been highly significant.

Bert, it's a pleasure to present you with this small token of our appreciation and to finally let Chris, who is here with Maran and Jeremy—Brooks is in school—know that all those nights you were out late working, you really were working. The plaque is inscribed to Bert W. Milling, Jr., for appreciation and loyal service, U.S. Senate, Judiciary Committee, 1981-1983. I want to wish you the best of luck in your new position as assistant to the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama.

This hearing will come to order.

First I want to welcome to the hearing and to the State of Alabama and to my hometown city, Mobile, and to this hearing, my distinguished colleagues to my immediate left and right whom I will introduce later but whom you recognize immediately. I'd like to thank the
Riverview Plaza for the hospitality and many unusual courtesies extended to the subcommittees in making arrangements and accommodations, especially for the use of this large and very well equipped room free of charge to conduct our hearing.

The chairman of the committee which sponsored this hearing is Senator Strom Thurmond, and he is not known for expensive generosity regarding staff and senatorial trips. He's a watchdog for the taxpayers and I'm sure that he would want me to thank the hotel for the gratuitous extension of this room. I want to welcome all of you as we examine drug interdiction efforts on the gulf coast. The hearing will explore the scope of the drug problem in Alabama and other Gulf States, current efforts to halt the traffic including allocation of resources and future plans and programs. We will be taking a closely look at coordination between Federal and local officials and we will try to identify problems susceptible to solution.

We are all sensitive to the drug problem. We know that drugs threaten the basic values, the order, the morality of our society. We are aware that with the success of the Interdiction of new techniques for dealing with the traffic, further, we anticipate that the opportunity to understand better the formidable problems we face us in combating drug traffic. Indeed, we're all committed to the solving of the drug problem. Senator Hawkins-to give you an idea of her energy and work capacity-will have to testify today at 1 p.m. in Miami before the Immigration Subcommittee concerning the impact of Cuban and Haitian refugees. I thought I understood the impact of those refugees until I read the book "Monimo," which is a sequel to "The Spy" which many of you have read and is authored by Robert Moss. It's fictional, but as Senator Hawkins told me as she was reading it, she felt a stark sense of reminder of reality regarding Miami. She must, therefore, depart this hearing early, so we will be introducing her first although the colleague on my right is senior to us both. Her effective efforts in the sponsorship of Senate bill 1149 which passed the Senate the other day by a margin of 96 to 0.

All members of the Senate don't have many things upon which we agree unanimously. She told me recently that the Attorney General asked her why, what happened to the other four, why were they against it? And she said that they were absent that day. So there was no action against it and that's really a great bill. It links our foreign aid program to the individual efforts of the respective nations to which we give aid to efforts to stop drugs, to the drug eradication program which they head up. And it's typical of the kind of resourcefulness she has shown in the field.

I have had to deal with drugs working with the FBI and a number of other areas in security and terrorism and I am most pleased that Senator Hawkins has taken the time and pains to form the caucus which transverses committee assignments and adds more Senators to the field of fighting the drugs, and that's a necessary step. I've done the same thing in the field of family and welfare reform and hope to do the same thing with the caucuses on security and terrorism.

On my subcommittee I have learned that, unfortunately and all too frequently, terrorist activity and drug trafficking go hand in hand.

Indeed, in March 1989, we held hearings on the involvement of the Cuban Government in facilitating the international drug traffic in order to support terrorist activity throughout Central America and to destabilize the United States. The Cuban Intelligence Service makes perfectly clear that whatever they did in Nicaragua or elsewhere and what they were about to do in Grenada in today's news was at their disposal except that they had to keep in mind that the No. 1 target of all of the conquest and spreading the cancer of communism had to have as its No. 1 target the United States of America down the line.

The hearings brought about irrefutable proof that the Cuban Government facilitates drug trafficking to the United States by allowing drug smugglers to use Cuba as a safe harbor for offloading mother ships from Colombia. As payment to the Cuban Government, the smugglers then carry arms shipments back to Central America and give the arms to such units as the M-19, a terrorist unit in Colombia. Following those hearings, U.S. agencies involved in fighting the drug traffic publicly acknowledged for the first time that there was official Cuban Government involvement in drug trafficking, I am very pleased that we were able to make that contribution from the subcommittee.

Senator Cochran and Senator Hawkins recently convened a hearing in Biloxi, MS, on drug interdiction on the gulf coast. That hearing explored the specific law enforcement needs and problems faced by Mississippi. Senator Hawkins and I, along with others, held a similar hearing in Miami earlier at which time the Cuban connection was
again brought out and after which the President of the United States made comments regarding the Cuban connection.

I would now like to recognize my distinguished colleagues starting with the charming one on my left, Senator Paula Hawkins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PAULA HAWKINS

Senator Hawkins, thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a pleasure to be with you in Mobile and I want to thank Senator Denton for convening this hearing. I think it's important to explore and solve the problems associated with illegal drugs. It's crippling this country and the people of Alabama are very fortunate to have a man as sensitive and aware of the problem as Senator Denton. I commend you for the intelligence you had to send him to the Senate. He is really a very valuable colleague. He throws himself at the solution of every problem and I do find but which without men like Senator Cochran and Senator Denton.

We have had hearings in Florida, Washington, DC, New York City, Phoenix, AZ, Gulfport, MS. Senator Cochran asked us to come here. And I'd like to tell you that it raised the awareness of the U.S. Senate to the point where we could hold 50 hearings. Senator Denton was very involved, as you all know, in drug enforcement. I've watched with great interest how it is helping to the point where we could hold 50 hearings. Senator Denton was aware of the problem as was the charming one on my left, Senator Hawkins. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your leadership and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning.

I'd like to tell you the results of the south Florida task force because it shows what can be done. Drug arrests are up 27 percent. Marijuana seizures are up 80 percent. Cocaine seizures are up 44 percent. In the past 16 months the task force seized nearly 8 million pounds of marijuana and more than 17,000 pounds of cocaine. The street value of these drugs is about $2 billion; which would be enough to purchase a warship. As a result of the task force's effectiveness in Florida, drug smuggling, of course, has increased up and down the Atlantic coast, the Gulf of Mexico, across the Mexican border and into California. In response to that threat President Reagan on March 28 announced the establishment of NNIBS, the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System to protect borders throughout the United States. NNIBS will utilize the general principles and most successful interdiction techniques that we learned in south Florida.

And today we're going to be investigating the gulf region which runs from Apalachicola to Brownsville, TX. Recent intelligence reports indicate that major cocaine and marijuana mother ships are entering the Gulf States through the Yucatan Pass between Mexico and Cuba and the Windward Pass between Mexico and the Bahamas. And in an effort to plug these holes, I have proposed to the Vice President that ship-moored radar balloons be permanently placed in the middle of these passages. With their look-down type radar, as Senator Denton and I have discussed, these balloons could identify all suspicious vessels and order immediate interdiction. This would reduce blind searches and make interdiction much easier.

I compliment Senator Denton from the bottom of my heart for having this hearing and I look forward to the testimony that we'll gather. I would like to tell you that when we were in Miami we had the hearing that he reported and as a result of that hearing we have a book available if you'll write my office. It is called, "Castro's Role in Drug Trafficking." We will release it in the next few weeks in Miami. But after that time it will be available to the public and we'll be glad to distribute these copies to you. Senator Denton's record is most impressive and I thank all of you here today, especially those men and women that are involved right on the front line on this war on drugs.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart, Senator Denton.

Senator Denton, thank you for your leadership and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning and for the extra pains you took to attend this hearing this morning.

The colleague on my right is kind of close up here because we're neighboring State representatives on the Defense Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee which is relevant to the crime committee results which we were able to obtain by which not just the Coast

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but the other military services, the Navy and the Air Force, have been introduced to the fight against drugs. Senator Cochran also has a number of other committee assignments of importance but we're not mentioning any except those relevant to this hearing this morning.

I must say that it's nice to be fighting alongside such a man because I know from experience with him on the tennis court, he is an extremely bitter competitor.

Senator Thad Cochran, welcome to Mobile.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR THAD COCHRAN

Senator Cochran. Thank you very much, Senator Denton. It's really a pleasure to be here in Mobile today with these two distinguished Senators to look into the progress being made in this area in interdiction and drug smuggling. I just happened to notice that all the Senators here are Republican. I was assuming that you knew that the Democrats were in New Hampshire and Iowa, those are the early primary States. We are not involved in that so we can be down here.

We wanted to get an update, really, from the witnesses who will be appearing today on the cooperative efforts that are being made between State, local, and Federal law enforcement officials to try to stop drug smuggling in this Gulf coast area. The tremendous success of the South Florida Task Force has pushed drug smuggling activities up the coast into Mississippi and Alabama. Our hearing showed very clearly over in Harrison County, MS, that Alabama and Mississippi now are prime entry points, second only to South Florida, for illegal drugs. And the fact of the matter is that today illegal narcotics pose to our great country a very grave threat. And statistics show that this threat comes largely from outside of our own borders. And approximately 90 percent of the illegal drugs in the United States are smuggled in from outside our borders. So that's why it's important to look at ways to stem this flow of illegal drugs.

Senator Denton clearly showed in hearings he chaired in Washington back in 1982 that the Cuban Government is directly involved in drug trafficking, that there is a definite link between that activity and international terrorism. He's to be complimented on his initiatives in these areas. Of course, Senator Hawkin's involvement in Miami has brought the attention of the entire Senate to try to make more effective our laws and our procedures on drug smuggling. So it's great to be here with both of you Senators. Thank you for calling the hearing and inviting me to participate in them. I am looking forward to the testimony from the witnesses.

Senator Denton. Thank you very much, Senator Cochran.

Our first witness, as I said, is the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. I'll ask him to come forward. It's a pleasure for me to welcome today as our first witness Francis Mullen, who was recently confirmed by the United States Senate as Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. Having served as acting Administrator for quite some period of time, Mr. Mullen has served long and well in key positions in the Federal Bureau of Investigation which provide him with the background as well as establishing his outstanding reputation. I know that President Reagan and Attorney General Smith have placed special confidence in this man whose job it is to address such formidable tasks. But, I'm very pleased that you could be with us today in my State, my hometown. And I know that my colleagues are anxious to receive your testimony.

TESTIMONY OF FRANCIS M. MULLEN, JR., ADMINISTRATOR, DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. Mullen, Senator Denton, I thank you for the invitation to appear before your subcommittee today. I am personally aware of your deep concern for our country, especially its youth and the relationship to our drug abuse problem.

I have appeared before you on other occasions and have described the nationwide drug problem. On this occasion, I'll concentrate on the Gulf and the States in this particular region. Before I go forward, however, you did mention my confirmation proceedings and the recent confirmation by the entire Senate. I have to say with all due respect that it was not a pleasant experience. The process went on for an especially long time. But it did point out to me the loyalty of individuals such as yourself. You and Senator Hawkins and Senator Cochran were with me at the beginning and you were with me at the end. I assure you that that confidence and trust will not be misplaced as we go forward now with the drug enforcement effort. Thank you for that.

With regard to the Gulf States region, the two drugs most frequently encountered in the illicit traffic in Alabama, as well as throughout the Gulf coast and the Southeast United States are cocaine and marijuana. All of this cocaine and much of the marijuana available in this area and throughout the United States is cultivated and processed from agricultural sources in Latin America or the Caribbean. Colombia continues to be the primary source of marijuana and cocaine destined for the United States. Jamaica has become an increasingly important marijuana source for the United States. Similar to many other countries in the Caribbean, Jamaica is also a transhipment country of illicit narcotics. Numerous islands in the Caribbean provide a series of stepping stones through which traffickers transport drugs en route to the United States.

The indictment in 1989 of high-ranking officials in Cuba and the hearings you and Senator Hawkins held earlier this year in Miami have brought the attention of the public and the international community for that matter, the complicity of Cuban Government officials in the illicit drug trade.

Until present progress is made in eradicating a significant percentage of the coca and marijuana cultivation in Latin America, interdiction and dismantling of the major smuggling and trafficking organizations must be primary strategies in attacking this problem. The present administration has significantly strengthened and improved the resources by which we implement these strategies.

The organized crime drug enforcement task forces are now operational throughout the country to investigate and prosecute major organized criminal groups involved in this traffic. This initiative has brought greatly increased resources into the drug enforcement effort generally and specifically to benefit the Gulf Coast States. I will elaborate further on this in a few minutes.
Additionally, the granting of concurrent jurisdiction to the Federal Bureau of Investigation has substantially enhanced our investigative capabilities. We are now seeing positive results and expect significant achievements in the months ahead. Our divisional office in New Orleans has jurisdictional responsibilities in four Southern States: Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas. All except Arkansas have coastline on the northern Gulf of Mexico. The division encompasses an area of 100,000 plus square miles and has a population of over 20 million. There are a total of 671 airports within the area as well as an estimated 1,000 landing strips which could be used by small aircraft. There are six deepwater ports including New Orleans which in terms of gross tonnage has surpassed New York. Six hundred miles of jagged, irregular coastline makes the State of Louisiana especially attractive to maritime smuggling. Also it appears that some air traffic has been diverted to Florida down, although some vessel traffic has moved up the coast into Georgia and the Carolinas. As you say earlier and points to the success of the interdiction effort presently in south Florida.

I believe that the concentration of resources in south Florida and in the Caribbean passages has opened door to large scale marijuana smuggling into the Gulf area as well as directly into Florida is down, although some vessel traffic has moved up the coast into Georgia and the Carolinas. As you say earlier and points to the success of the interdiction effort presently in south Florida.

Alaska Sara, I want to leave you with a status report on the relationship the DEA has with our counterpart agencies.

In Alabama and throughout this general area we are seeing marijuana smuggling efforts involving smaller vessels and small, private single and twin engine aircraft that are flying either to Jamaica or Colombia bringing back quantities ranging from 500 to 1,500 pounds per load. A notable shift from the use of large fishing vessels which are capable of holding quantities of 55,000 to 40,000 pounds of large military surplus aircraft which could hold 5,000 to 12,000 pounds. I think this particular phenomena relates to what Senator Hawkins said earlier and points to the success of the interdiction effort presently in south Florida.

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While the smuggling of marijuana processed in other countries still provides the bulk of the marijuana abused in this country, I should note that cannabis cultivation in our own country has increased significantly in the past several years. We estimate that as much as 29 percent of the total U.S. supply is provided by domestic production and much of this is on public lands. Together with other Federal and State authorities, DEA has mounted a domestic marijuana eradication and suppression program in this country.

As you are well aware, DEA, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, sprayed paraquat on illicit marijuana cultivation sites on national forest land in Georgia and Kentucky. Our Agents have remarked that the eradication and enforcement actions in the United States are important not only because they reduce the domestic availability of marijuana but also because they demonstrate to other nations that we are willing to take necessary measures to curtail our domestic production. I might say that we are now operating under a restraining order, we are prohibited from using paraquat even though we had 4½ million pounds sprayed on over 1½ million acres throughout this country for agricultural purposes. And we are being prohibited from using this in a domestic eradication program. This will not cause us to stop the domestic eradication program and we plan to go forward and enhance this program next year. In 1984 and 1985, DEA is conducting an environmental impact statement dealing with the use of paraquat.

In closing, Senator, I want to leave you with a status report on the relationship the DEA has with our counterpart agencies in Alabama.

The DEA presently has two separate offices located in the State of Alabama. One office is located in Mobile and is staffed with a resident agent in charge plus four special agents. The Alabama Bureau of In-
Enforcement would lose the value of the assistance DEA has received from the Alabama Bureau of Investigation.

The other office is located in Birmingham and is staffed with a resident agent in charge and one other special agent. Because of the resource enhancements of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force, the Mobile office is being expanded by three special agent positions and the Birmingham office is being augmented by one special agent position.

Close cooperation between DEA and State officials was apparent in the investigation relating to the seizure of approximately 780 pounds of cocaine on an airplane at Dothan, AL. The initial contact was made by one of the 1983 fiscal year DEA agents who was on an airplane at Dothan, AL. The initial contact was by one of the 1983 fiscal year DEA agents who was on an airplane at Dothan, AL. The subsequent investigation was conducted by the Dothan, AL, Police Department and the Dale County Sheriff's Department. After securing the airplane and the cocaine, Chief Kater Williams of the Dothan, AL, Police Department and Sheriff Bryan Mixon of the Dale County Sheriff's Department contacted DEA and requested our participation in the investigation which continues even today.

Another example of close cooperation between DEA and State law enforcement officials involved the seizure of approximately 815 pounds of cocaine in Montgomery, AL. Bob Milner of the Alabama State Narcotics Unit contacted DEA for participation in the continuing investigation. Thus far, seven defendants have been arrested and two vehicles and an airplane have been seized in addition to a substantial amount of cocaine. These are but two examples which depict the close cooperation and assistance between DEA and other law enforcement agencies.

There's no question that the current trafficking trends situation present a substantial challenge. But I'm confident we are equipped to meet that challenge. I'm prepared to answer any questions any of the Senators may have.

Senator Denton. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Mullen.

You mentioned the Mobile DEA resident agency as being comprised now of a senior resident agent and four special agents. That they will have their staff increased by three special agents bringing the entire compliment to eight. You further state that the Birmingham resident agency which now consists of two agents will be increasing by one agent bringing that compliment to three. Would you tell us when those increases will take effect?

Mr. Mullen. Those increases have already been ordered and I would anticipate that the agents will be assigned within the next 30 to 60 days if they have not arrived already.

Senator Denton. I would ask you to overexaggerate in terms of the extremely difficult tasks you have. But would you regard that staffing as more or less adequate or would you continue to press for additional manpower?

Mr. Mullen. I would not consider that staffing adequate. But as you indicate, we do have pressing needs and will continue to press for additional agents. I might add that when I came to DEA 9 years ago, we had 1,300 agents and in danger of going below 1,300. At the end of the 1983 fiscal year, we went past 2,000 agents and I anticipate by the end of the 1984 fiscal year we will be close to 3,000 agents.

you add to that total, Senator, the 800 FBI agents now working drug matters throughout the country then we're talking about better than an 80-percent increase in investigative resources at the Federal level. And as we enhance even further, you can expect additional agents in this area.

Senator Hawkins. Excuse me. Do you have any IRS people?

Mr. Mullen. I do not know how many IRS and customs agents are also involved in the drug effort. But that would add substantially to that number.

Senator Denton. As you know, the President, during his formation of the platform and his campaign and during his term in office, expressed his desire and proved his sincerity regarding the effort to raise the number of our armed services. We've tried to, and I think successfully to a degree, to present him with the intelligence organization and our Drug Enforcement Administration should be considered in the same light. They are fighting a battle which has to do with the security and well-being of this country.

Mr. Mullen. I believe we have also. And once Senator, if it might have been Senator Hawkins, who used the term, national defense, as being as important as our national defense. And I agree with that statement.

And as we enhance even further, and at one time DEA would have a substantial number of agents, I believe, for example, in fiscal year 1983 we had better than 12,000 arrests in the drug area. And we are increasing the number of convictions. For example, a higher percentage of those arrested are now being convicted. Of those indicted, 97 percent actually go on to conviction.

Is that the answer you're looking for, Senator, 97 percent conviction on the part of those indicted?

Senator Denton. Is indictment and prosecution always the correct way to go, or should we simply concentrate our efforts on building prosecutable cases?

Mr. Mullen. You have two schools of thought there. There are those who believe we can gather intelligence and be aware of the drug problems from the enforcement perspective. I am convinced that the eventual solution is the investigation, prosecution, and conviction of those responsible, especially those at the highest levels, those who will profit from the drug enforcement effort. And going a step beyond that, we must seize their assets. And in 1983, the DEA and related Federal agencies will have seized assets in excess of $800 million. There will be cases where the prosecution cannot go forward because of the question of sources of methods and the intelligence gathered. But as a general rule, I believe we must seek prosecution.

Senator Denton. I have not finished my questions and Senator Cochran has questions. We normally go about 10 minutes apiece. But in view of Senator Hawkins' need to depart for another hearing, I...
would defer to her with Senator Coda's acquiescence and ask her to ask any questions she has.

Senator Hawkins. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You stated, the DEA agents, in your statement that you have DEA agents in 25 cities and 16 countries. I just have the report back from Bolivia that for the past 4 years we've had one and a half DEA agents. I don't know what that means, one and a half DEA agents in Bolivia.

Mr. Mullen. He wasn't working too hard.

Senator Hawkins. And it's been increased to four under your direction. Of these 25 cities and 16 countries, don't we really get a better payback having the DEA agents stationed in the countries of the source?

Mr. Mullen. We really do. And to explain the Bolivian matter and expand slightly on it, in Bolivia there was a period of time they may have served there for a half a year. I'm sure that's the one-half. But we had a government in Bolivia that was not cooperating, in fact, the former government was actually facilitating drug trafficking, especially coca. An official of that government, Colonel Gomez, has been indicted and is being held in Argentina for possible extradition to the United States. So it didn't pay us to have the agents down there because they could not function without the cooperation of the Government. We now have a new government in Bolivia and the current administration, the current President has taken a hard line against drug trafficking. We now have six agents in Bolivia and my goal is to double that number in the short run. We can only absorb so many. We have to put them in systematically. But I would hope perhaps in the next 12 months, 6 to 12 months.

Senator Hawkins. How about Colombia?

Mr. Mullen. I'm not certain of the number. I believe we have 10 agents there and I understand we've been asked for 16 more.

Senator Hawkins. That's good. Recommend that they have them.

Mr. Mullen. I'm going to have to take them out of Alabama. No. And we will look for ways. I believe that our overseas agents can be more effective in source countries, more so than in the well-developed and industrialized countries, say in western Europe, they can perform more of a liaison function and be more effective in Latin America.

Senator Hawkins. Well, we're on the gulf and on this coast have a deep concern of stopping it at its source, which is the best place.

Now I have to leave and I really apologize because I'm so concerned in the subject and would love to stay all day. But if you could provide for the record, for the Senators here, how many agents we have in the Latin American countries and how many you propose, what you really need. I know we have budget restraints but at the same time when you're talking about apprehension in the United States, the appeal process in the United States, the many, many trials that can be formed magically here through the legal circles, it seems to me that one of the best paybacks for us is to see that you get the number of people that you feel are necessary in the country of the source without displacing anybody from Alabama. I'm not here to displace any from Alabama or from Mississippi.

Mr. Mullen. I said that in jest.

Senator Hawkins. I know you did. The amendment was passed 96 to 0, which denies foreign aid to those countries. I will tell you that I heard prior to its passing from every one of the Latin American countries that it made the front page of the Bolivian newspaper. They are very concerned about that. And also with the eradication efforts they should be making in exchange for any money at any of the multinational banks, world banks, we want to close all those windows including foreign aid from this country. We need somebody there. I think on our team to certify exactly what they are doing. So I think it would be a good exercise for this caucus to know what you need and how soon you need it.

Could you tell me what the El Paso Intelligence Center contributes to the gulf coast drug interdiction effort?

Mr. Mullen. El Paso Intelligence Center makes a substantial contribution to the gulf coast, to all four States I mentioned earlier. We maintain records on the violators, the aircraft that are being used and the vehicles and ships. And we can get an instant response back to the local department or State agency or our Federal agencies should they have a question or a query regarding something they may have seized or a ship or something like that. I think the contribution is substantial. And the El Paso Intelligence Center is perhaps one of the finest programs that the Drug Enforcement Administration has.

Senator Hawkins. I'm glad to hear you say that. I feel very good.

My final question is: What is the principal drug of abuse in Alabama?

Mr. Mullen. Well, Alabama has an abuse problem with all of the drugs.

Senator Hawkins. What's the principal one?

Mr. Mullen. Cocaine. That seems to be the growing drug abused throughout the United States.

Senator Hawkins. Does it stay in Alabama or is that just like Florida, is some being consumed here and then distributed in other States?

Mr. Mullen. It's being distributed in other States, it goes up to other States. As I mentioned in my prepared statement, we're finding that drugs even though they come in other areas, they seem to go back to Florida for distribution. They're still No. 1.

Senator Hawkins. Well, the point I'm trying to make is if it's an Alabama problem, if it's a Mississippi problem, if it's a Florida problem, it's a national problem.

Mr. Mullen. That's right, it certainly is. And that's why we do put a lot of resources in Florida. We have 200-plus agents in Miami. What they're doing in south Florida certainly has an impact on what is happening over here. And as the traffic has moved, we'll move.

Senator Hawkins. Thank you. I think you do a remarkable job and I'm glad you're on the job full time.

Mr. Mullen. Well, I am too. And, Senator, I don't want you to leave without commending you for your work. And please keep it up.

Senator Hawkins. Thank you.

Senator Denton. Thank you, indeed, Senator Hawkins. You'll need to depart now. We will be calling a 10-minute recess in order to permit...
Before we do that and having heard from a delightful lady who, believe it or not, is a grandmother, I would like to introduce another delightful lady, the most important one to me in this room, my mother, Mrs. Irene Denton. Would you please stand, Mother?

The hearing is in recess for approximately 10 minutes.

[A short recess was taken.]

Senator Denton. May I ask our audience to resume their seats, please. The hearing is resumed.

And I defer to my senior colleague and friend from Mississippi, Senator Cochran.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you, Senator Denton. I have just a couple of questions.

**MONETARY CeILING FOR DRUG INVESTIGATION**

First, is there a requirement because of budget constraints for you to impose a monetary ceiling on a drug investigation before DEA will become involved with local officials? I ask this because of an encounter I recently had with local law officials in one of the counties in Mississippi which I visited where they were about to begin an investigation that they thought involved a good deal of marijuana, possibly some cocaine and other illegal drugs. They called the DEA office in Jackson, I think, and they were told—in effect, of course, this is second and third hand kind of information so I don't know how reliable it is—that unless they had really good information that there were a lot of drugs involved that were of high value, DEA just really couldn't allocate personnel to that kind of investigation at that very early stage. Is that a problem all around the country? Are you having to carefully pick and choose which cases you directly become involved in with the local officials because of the lack of resources?

Mr. FULLEN. No. There is not a monetary limit and we do not pick and choose, so to speak. We do at the Federal level try to concentrate on the high-end, those individuals actually controlling a narcotics cartel. What we do try to avoid is having our agents out on the street making buys, relatively minor buy/bust situations, we try to concentrate on groups. But there is no limitation on the amount of money, amount of drugs. But often you have to start at the lower levels and move up the ladder. So I do not believe that is accurate information. If you can get the facts for me, I'll take a look at the specific case.

Senator COCHRAN. OK. I may get with you later and let you know the name of the county and the local law official who confronted me with what they perceived to be a problem of lack of cooperation or lack of interest. They assumed it was because this was small-time business and didn't involve enough money and tons of marijuana.

Is it a problem with agents, too, or agencies, wouldn't they like to have the high profile, high publicity busts rather than a series of smaller, low-profile activities?

Mr. FULLEN. Not really. I was interviewed just this past week by CBS because so many important names in entertainment and the professional athletic areas are becoming involved in drug cases. And the thinking was that perhaps we are concentrating on these areas because of the high publicity it gives you. And it grieves us, we do not like to resort to these type of cases. But they're out there and we must investigate them. We don't shy away from an investigation because of that or shy away because of the lack of stature.

**MARIJUANA ERADICATION PROGRAM**

Senator COCHRAN. That's right. Carlton Turner has, in my opinion, done an outstanding job as adviser to the President, and we're glad he's from Mississippi. He was involved with the University of Mississippi in experimental research projects and was quite successful. And we're glad to see the degree of cooperation between the White House and the DEA. I think that speaks well for both you and Carlton and the fine work that both of you are doing. Thank you very much.

Senator DARROW. Thank you, Senator Cochran.

Mr. Mullen, would you comment on any noticeable differences in the techniques and methods used to smuggle cocaine as opposed to those used to smuggle marijuana and what separate law enforcement strategies you employ for that difference?

Mr. FULLEN. Of course marijuana comes in bulk quantities and we normally see that brought into the country by vessel, ocean-going vessels, rather than aircraft. Although, as I mentioned in my statement, there are occasions where small aircraft and large aircraft are bringing in marijuana.

With regard to cocaine, we see that brought in mostly by air. And we'll see the cocaine concealed in cargo as we had the case in Tampa, FL, involving the Colombiana Airlines where the cocaine was flown in and concealed in a shipment of blue jeans. If I could go one step further, we have heroin coming into the country from Mexico and Southeast Asia and Southwest Asia. And we see that smuggled in a variety of ways. And the most recent one was a shipment of tile that came from Italy. We had to drill into the tile to locate the heroin, and we were able to locate 40 pounds of heroin in that manner. So the means vary and I'm sure the Coast Guard can add to this.

Senator DARROW. Regarding the Cuban safe harbors for offloading and the stories that we have heard of high-ranking Cuban naval officers overseeing these transfers and payments, our interviews resulted in a series of hearings in March 1983 as previously mentioned...
and we had joint hearings, as you know, and you attended with the Foreign Relations Committee and the drug enforcement caucus in Miami in April 1983. I would like to note that we do have Senator Helms' Foreign Relations Committee representative here, and Senator Heinz who was invited as a representative here, Mr. Kruskin. But these interviews and the hearings involved testimony by a number of convicted drug smugglers about their contacts with Cuban Government officials and the assistance which they received. Can you update us at all, is Cuba continuing to assist drug smugglers by availing safe harbors to them for offloading, are the drug smugglers still running weapons in barters, as it were, for the services of drug runners from Colombia who wish to supply the M-19 Guerrilla Organization in Colombia?

Mr. Mullen. Senator, as you are aware, I've testified on several occasions regarding this matter. And being an investigator, I moved very cautiously at first wanting to have evidence before publicly stating that I was convinced that the Cuban Government was involved in facilitating the drug trafficking. I am now convinced, as I have stated in prior sessions, that there is Cuban Government involvement in drug trafficking. And there have been indictments which have occurred of high-level Cuban Government officials and other information which must remain classified and confidential at this time. And, yes, this trafficking is in part to support guerrilla activities, especially in Colombia.

Senator Denton. Just to relate that to current events, the situation in Grenada closely involved our having found that the Cuban workers there were in greater number than we thought and were, indeed, combat engineers politically involved in the takeover. There was a Russian four-star general there whose previous experience indicated that he had an expertise in a history of development of strategic bombing projects for the Soviet Union. He was probably in charge from Grenada of the installation of runways all over the Caribbean which could have done a lot of things, among them, interdict trade. They could also have been used to bomb countries in Latin America. And I hope that the day will come soon when the national media are a lot more receptive to publishing information about the drug terrorist monstrosity. This information has been covered in hearing in our subcommittee, but the American public is not aware of these happenings. The media rarely appeared at that hearing, our hearings, after the first one in which we disclosed the degree to which the Soviet Union is involved in international terrorism. For some reason, they don't want to make that news. But I assure you there's a lot of news there and what we just did in Grenada was to nip off at the bud a very dangerous development in the Caribbean.

Parquat, Mr. Mullen, is a low-yield crop due to weather conditions in Colombia? You mentioned the problem there. But there has been a reduction in the number of seized vessels which is an argument in favor of parquat spraying.

Mr. Mullen. I'm sorry.

Senator Denton. You mentioned the probability that some of the traffic had been cut down from Colombia because of the weather's adverse effects on the crop? Mr. Mullen. Correct.

Senator Denton. Doesn't that constitute a good argument in favor of parquat spraying? And I raise that issue because, for example, in the case of Cuba where they have become heavily involved in the growth of such products, would it be morally justified to spray without permission of the Government?

Mr. Mullen. Well, that's a question I'd probably defer to the State Department.

Senator Denton. I would, too. But I just wondered if it didn't tend in that direction, to at least ask that question.

Mr. Mullen. But with regard to the use of parquat, it is not used in Colombia at this time. It has been used for many years and very effectively in Mexico. In fact, Mexico probably has the best marijuana eradication program in the world. And I believe it's incumbent upon this country to use parquat if we are to demonstrate to the Cubans our willingness to eradicate our crops. And I can recall a press conference held in Washington, it's been almost 5 years ago now at which the Colombian Ambassador to the United States was present and was asked by a reporter: 'When are you going to start using parquat which could be used effectively in Colombia?' And he said, when you do it in California. And that's a difficult argument to counter and that's why I believe we ought to use it on a selective basis where it can be effective in this country.

Senator Denton. Well, we'll be very curious as to the degree to which it may be used in Alabama and we'll be asking Alabama officials about that and other antidrug growing measures that it takes to clean up our own house before we demand it of others.

Do you have any evidence connecting Robert Vesco with drug trafficking?

Mr. Mullen. We have had allegations but we do not have any evidence of Robert Vesco being connected with drug trafficking.

Senator Denton. Are you able to provide local officials with timely intelligence on narcotics or do you have to withhold some information and, if so, do you think that situation needs a look?

Mr. Mullen. No, I believe we are able to provide timely intelligence. I know of no major problem in that area. There may be selected cases where we have people involved in drug trafficking when we do not make certain information available. But in 98 percent and maybe even 99 percent of the cases, we are able to make timely intelligence available and do so.

Senator Denton. How about the cooperation of our designated intelligence agents who have been providing you with timely and comprehensive intelligence information?

Mr. Mullen. The amount of intelligence now being provided by the intelligence community has never been greater. We believe that the agencies with the responsibilities for intelligence gathering are fully on board now. And, as I mentioned earlier, there will be occasions where that type of intelligence cannot be disseminated because of perhaps higher considerations. But those instances should be relatively rare.

Senator Denton. One of the ladies of the press asked me this question, and I will ask you, it amounts to: Can we win the war against drugs and, if so, how, how much more in the way of resources would it take?
Mr. Mullen. My answer to that question is unequivocal, yes, I believe we are winning. I believe we are going to get to a position where we'll have to stabilize this situation first, that is, it's not going to get any worse. And I see that happening right now with regard to marijuana, with regard to heroin. Cocaine remains a serious problem. But I believe that we have to keep on with what we are doing, the cooperative efforts, the increasing resources, the support of every segment, the Congress, the public, and the press that we are getting. The final answer probably is to cut off the demands and the production here and rehabilitate programs are perhaps essential. What we've done in law enforcement with the assistance of the military and Coast Guard efforts is perhaps a holding action until we educate the public, starting right at the elementary school level, and do the things that we are getting. We're seeing the decreasing demand for marijuana, the awareness on the part of the public, especially young people. I think we are winning and I would hate to quit while we're winning.

Senator Denton. Senator Cochran, do you have any further questions?

Mr. Chairman. No, I don't, Senator. Thank you very much.

Senator Denton. I would like to thank you, Mr. Administrator, for your extremely valuable testimony and observations and ask, before releasing you, if you have any further comments that you think may be relevant to this hearing.

Mr. Mullen. Thank you. I have no further comments. If I do, I'll submit them in writing.

If I may add as regard to Senator Hawkins and to both of you, your efforts have been invaluable and I can only ask you to stay with us as you have in the past.

Senator Denton. Thank you. And as usual, we may be submitting questions to you in writing to which we will require a response. Thank you very much, Mr. Mullen.

Mr. Mullen. Thank you, Senator Denton.

[The following was subsequently received for the record:]

* DTRA RESPONSES TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS OF SENATOR DENTON

EXCEPTED TRAFFIC

Question. Has there been an increase in the sophistication and volume of encrypted radio traffic among drug traffickers?

Response. Drug trafficking organizations are utilizing sophisticated and expensive communication and navigation equipment in their activities. The profits from their illicit operations provide them with the capability of purchasing the latest equipment available. We do not know of any instance in which a drug trafficking organization has employed any type of mechanical encryption devices on their communication equipment. We do know of repeated instances of their monitoring of our radio communications which has been accomplished with equipment that costs less than $200. This is the primary reason for our pursuit of various voice-privacy communication capabilities. Litill encryption devices are also emerging to counter-counter-surveillance and monitoring their facilities and equipment in search of devices used by enforcement authorities.

DRUGS IN PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Question. An account in the New York Times says that half of the players seem to be using drugs in professional sports. Any hard data being made?

Response. There is no segment of society that is immune to the threat posed by drug abuse. The particular circumstances attendant to a career in professional athletics possibly increases the threat of drug abuse to professional athletes as a group. The consequences of involvement, however, in the use or trafficking of illicit drugs have become known, and painfully so, throughout the ranks of professional athletes especially in the last year or two. The various leagues have in many instances adopted stern positive measures. At the same time the leagues are offering counseling and treatment programs. We are hopeful that there will be a significant reduction in the number of instances of illicit involvement with drugs on the part of professional athletes.

DTRA is presently conducting an effort to reach 5.5 million student athletes at 20,000 schools in the nation with a drug abuse prevention program for coaches and athletes. This program involves the development network of the National High School Athletic Coaches Association (NHSHC) that consists of 50,000 members and 23 affiliate state associations reaching 50 states.

Senator Denton. I will ask our next witness to step forward, Rear Adm. William H. Stewart, U.S. Coast Guard.

Admiral Stewart is the commander of the Eighth Coast Guard District and more germane to this hearing today, he is the coordinator of the National Narcotics Board interdiction system, Gulf coast region. It would like to extend a warm welcome to you, Admiral Stewart, and ask if you have an opening statement.

STATEMENT OF REAR ADM. WILLIAM H. STEWART, U.S. COAST GUARD, COORDINATOR, THE NATIONAL NARCOTICS BOARD INTERDICTION SYSTEM, GULF COAST REGION

Admiral Stewart. Good morning, Mister Chairman, Senator Cochran. With your permission, sir, and in the interest of brevity, I am testifying before this committee with two hats, if you will. I will make one prepared statement and I will submit the other for the record.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am Rear Adm. William H. Stewart, regional coordinator for the National Narcotics Board interdiction system, Gulf coast region. I assumed the duty of regional coordinator for the NNBS system on June 17 of this year. I welcome the opportunity to discuss our interdiction effort with this subcommittee.

The Gulf region of NNBS encompasses a very large water area, 111,200 square miles of the Gulf of Mexico, Yucatan Pass, and Caribbean Sea. It includes the border areas of the States of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and part of the State of Florida.

Manning of the New Orleans center on a permanent basis is in full swing. We currently have 30 people on board from the Coast Guard, Customs Service, the Department of Defense, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Border Patrol, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, New Orleans Police Department and the Louisiana State Police. We will be up to full strength soon. And at that point, people from each of the Federal agencies who have a role in drug interdiction, the national intelligence community plus State and local representatives will be actively engaged in a coordinated drug interdiction effort in the Gulf region. The bulk of the manpower is being provided by the Coast Guard, Customs and the Department of Defense.

The construction of the Gulf regional center was essentially completed on September 1. It is currently located on the 18th floor of the Hale Boggs Federal Building in New Orleans.
The center is being divided organizationally into three parts: Operations Information Center or OIC, Intelligence Information Coordination Center or IICC, and the air operation section. The air operations section will be housed at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, FL. All three groups, Mr. Chairman, will report to a staff director and then directly to me. The IICC will look at the total tactical intelligence picture for the region with information from all possible sources and present to the OIC a picture of the criminal activity in the area. The operations information center will coordinate intelligence with resources and recommend action to the command and control element of that particular resource. The air operations section will vector and advise air resources of the location of air targets for further investigation and possible interdiction.

To ensure coordination with the organized crime drug enforcement task forces set up last year by the Attorney General, a strong liaison will be established with each regional task force coordinator. For example, one of the agency task force coordinators assigned to the regional drug task force in this area will be advised of all cases we have in progress and will advise the NNIBIS center of any cases in which an interdiction may arise. It will then be the region's responsibility to brief the noncore cities of the task forces such as New Orleans or Mobile. To strengthen this link, I or my staff have personally visited and talked with the three core city groups in our area: St. Louis, Houston, and Atlanta. The Houston and St. Louis groups are providing personnel to stand watches in the center for a 1-week familiarization with our activities. We have not yet worked out the details of the Atlanta visit. To keep local law enforcement agencies advised of our activities, I have asked each Governor to designate a contact point in the State agency responsible for drug enforcement. In Louisiana this person will work in the center's staff. The person designated will remain in the home State. The State agents designated will also provide us with the State and local intelligence needed to round out the picture. I have talked with the Governor of Louisiana and will meet with the Governor of the State of Texas in early November. Arrangements are in progress to set up meetings with the Governors of Alabama and Mississippi.

Information will be exchanged on a continual basis with both the other NNIBIS regional centers and with the El Paso Intelligence Center. EPIC's role in intelligence will not decrease but will increase as they coordinate the nationwide assessment. They will provide the strategic information necessary to meet the changes in tactics by the opposition. Members of my staff and members of the EPIC staff have exchanged visits to ensure close coordination with this very valuable asset.

The overall NNIBIS effort nationwide is intended to fill a gap in the country's drug enforcement program. Overseas, source country eradication programs under the Department of State are well aware, working to reduce the supply of contraband drugs at the source. As you have heard from Mr. Mullin, within the United States, domestic eradication programs under the DEA in cooperation with the various States are targeted on reducing homegrown marijuana and eliminating illegal chemical production of drugs such as PCP. Domestic enforcement programs under DEA and extensive research and education efforts are working to reduce the demand for illicit drugs. The Attorney General's task forces are aimed at the large organized traffickers in contraband drugs and their complete organizations and finance structures.

All of these programs are producing results. But by their nature, most tend to be long-term efforts and the full effect and benefits may not be realized right away. In the meantime, it is clear that strong, coordinated law enforcement action must be taken to interdict the flow of illegal drugs at or before the point at which these illegal drugs enter the United States. And that basically is the NNIBIS mission: To stop the drugs at the border and to do it by making the maximum effective use of all of our national assets in a fully coordinated, systematic approach to the problem.

We will make extensive use of our national intelligence community and our national defense resources but with the reassurance that will not adversely affect our national defense posture. The key is coordination, taking advantage of available assets without duplicating efforts between agencies and without leaving areas of interest uncovered.

It is not a small task and will require extraordinary coordination not only across the entire Federal community law enforcement agencies and the Defense Department's military services but also across the State and local enforcement agencies and the States' National Guards and Air National Guards. Meetings between Federal, State, and local groups and me and my staff have been held in Houston, Beaumont, Mobile, Meridian, Dothan, Baton Rouge, New Orleans and several other places within the Gulf region in recent weeks. We have met with the adjutant generals of the States of Louisiana and Alabama and I will meet with the adjutant general of the State of Texas in early November. I have discussed coordination at the State level with the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, Alabama Bureau of Investigation, and Louisiana State Police, and my staff has conducted discussions with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Texas Department of Public Safety and State officials in the State of Florida. My staff has met with Air Force officials at Tinker Air Force Base to discuss joint operation, and the director for the Gulf region conducted extensive liaison in behalf of NNIBIS at the colocated conventions of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the State Drug Enforcement Alliance, and the International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts in Detroit. Working together, there is not a doubt in my mind that we can and will make the system work.

To return to the Gulf area, the current intelligence overview for the region is as follows: From December of 1982 until September of this year the Yucatan was the "Pass" of choice for the smugglers for maritime efforts. Thirty-five percent of all mother ships seized during the period were seized in that area. Once in the Gulf, the vessels can very easily pan out to almost any portion of the Gulf coast, from the coast of Florida to the coast of Texas to offload. Aircraft use the Gulf as a primary smuggling route. Once ashore, they proceed to remote airstrips in or north of the Gulf States to refuel or offload.

In recent NNIBIS operations we have successfully interdicted four aircraft with loads of cocaine and marijuana, a container from a commercial vessel, a tug with a large load of marijuana, a fishing
vessel loaded with marijuana, cocaine concealed on a person coming through a commercial airport, and a shipment of cocaine concealed in a water tank of a commercial vessel. Total figures since June 15 reflect the following: 8 seizures, 18 persons arrested, over 40 tons of marijuana seized, and 1,712 pounds of cocaine seized. These statistics do not reflect the extraordinary cooperation between agencies and the extra efforts made by the enforcement personnel involved.

In an aircraft case at Jackson, MS, the Customs Services pilot of the chase helicopter had to land on the top of the suspect aircraft in order to prevent that aircraft from escaping. That same night he performed a vehicle stop on the ramp of the interstate by landing in front of the automobile while other law enforcement agencies closed in behind. In a vessel interdiction case, air resources were required from the Department of Defense to successfully prosecute the mañana. The request was processed promptly and the Air Force aircraft successfully located the target for interdiction later that same day by a Coast Guard cutter. Two citizens from Alabama and the Alabama Bureau of Investigation in cooperation with Customs and the Drug Enforcement Administration played a significant role in interdicting 716 pounds of cocaine in Montgomery, AL. Even before NNBIS, we in the New Orleans area recognized the need for a coordinated effort and were constructing a joint center on a smaller scale. The larger effort may have.

And she told me a very humorous account of her subsequent conversations with the Commandant of the Coast Guard. She asked, shouldn't that boat be taken back to Haiti? And he said, no, ma'am. He said, there were 88 people on that boat and that size boat wouldn't have done it. Well, don't you have bigger boats? Yes, ma'am, we have bigger boats. Well, why didn't you get them to take them back to Haiti? And eventually she got that situation turned around.

Admiral Stewart. Yes, she did, Mr. Chairman. That's why we have the Haitian Migration Interdiction Patrol.

Senator Desroces. Realizing that you're newly appointed to this particular job and with adjustments in the budget or priorities of the Coast Guard, could the Coast Guard justifiably increase its already effective interdiction of drugs on the high seas?

Admiral Stewart. If I understand your question, yes.

W. L. Hubert Cochran, Senator DENTON. Has anyone, Admiral, given you the volume of intelligence information which our IDC is now receiving. I have the pledge of additional support from the national intelligence community. I firmly believe after briefings in a number of those agencies in recent weeks that this will give us the tools we need. We simply have been chasing our own tails, and this has been counterproductive. Each of the participating agencies that serve in the NNBIS Center brings to that center a tremendous wealth of intelligence information. And I think that's the key to it. Are you familiar with the balloon concept, do you have any particular expertise to render more efficient the bulk of commitments we are now aware which, I agree, with Senator Cochran mentioned, the high-speed hydrofoil, etcetera?

Admiral Stewart. I am familiar, sir, to answer your question directed at the tethered balloon concept. The balloon in and of itself is reasonably effective if the operations of my counterpart, Admiral Thompson in Miami, are any indication. It is, of course, susceptible to weather. It does from time to time have to be "cranked down" for maintenance. It plays a part. It's one of the tools in the toolkit, if you will, which can free up some air assets which can be then utilized elsewhere.

Senator Desroces. Has anyone given any thought in the Coast Guard or in the drug-related agencies to the possible employment of the old blimps to the problem?

Admiral Stewart. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think you're well aware that the Coast Guard has an ongoing project to explore the possible utilization of blimps. It is a research development project.
Sen. Denton. Would you as a matter of courtesy send me any kind of papers that now exist that would tend to give the status quo on that?

Adm. Stewart. Be happy to, Mr. Chairman.


DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION

Sen. Cochran. I am very happy that the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on which I serve, as you know, wrote in some language that directs an experiment using hydrofoil craft that were built for the Navy to test their utility in drug interdiction efforts in the gulf coast. I know that we've talked about this possibility before, but it looks like we are going to have this experiment become a reality. There are six of these craft. PFM hydrofoil ships, they've called, And the committee approved this language. It says, these vessels should be periodically detailed to Coast Guard activities on the Mississippi gulf coast. I'm sure the Alabama gulf coast is all right, too. We ought to put that in parentheses. But the point is that up in the northern part of the gulf, these are going to be available periodically. I just wanted to pass that information on to you and say that it looks as though the full committee will retain this language. I don't see any problem on the floor of the Senate, that ought to become a reality.

In addition to that, we also wrote in language authorizing the Navy to use an additional $10 million to fly regular training missions that are programmed to be reconnaissance flights designed to identify drug smuggling activities in the gulf coast area. So these are two events that directly affect military resources that NBIS might be able to utilize in the coming months and years.

COOPERATION OF MILITARY AGENCIES

Up to this point, what has been the degree of cooperation you've been able to get from the military?

Adm. Stewart. Senator, it's been outstanding, it's growing more so everyday. We had to play the game of "getting to know you" and the Department of Defense despite the actions of the Congress and the amendments to the poise constituent law was a little gun-shy, and understandably so. Those rules of engagement have now been clearly laid down at the urging of the Secretary of Defense. And, as a matter of fact, one of my pleasant duties as the NBIS Regional Coordinator is calling on the various military commanders within the region. I can assure you that our Number One Air Force Base forces have been outstanding in their support. As a matter of fact, they were among our early supporters even before the agreement had been made. I think as we grow more used to this kind of coordination, that the Air Guards and the National Guards will be very cooperative. I think we've now in harness and I think the cooperation is growing everyday. I'm also very pleased by something else. Obtaining some of opportunity such as Air Force aircraft or Navy aircraft that are already flying a mission is not particularly difficult. But occasionally, as I'm sure you can appreciate, Mr. Chairman, we want a dedicated aircraft. This re-quires the permission of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower Reserve Affairs and Logistics. We "tried it on for size" one night for a particular case. It took 3 hours to get the permission. Of that time, for 2 1/2 hours the Assistant Secretary was airborne in civilian aircraft and we couldn't reach him. So, in effect, the elapsed time was only 30 minutes. I'm very appreciative of that. I would say we're on and running.

Sen. Cochran. That's a good sign, I would think.

Well, I think you're to be congratulated on the fine work you're doing in coordinating all these activities and the resources that are available. And I congratulate you for a very good start that's being made there in New Orleans. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Sen. Denton. Thank you, Sen. Cochran. I'm glad you raised that. The general difficulty, of course, would be that the Navy like the Marines likes to consider themselves mobile and they have to move around. It is to their own advantage when they are in the area and I knew this when I got into the posse constitutus effort, rather than bore holes with their own radar airplanes, be doing something with them out there when they're coming off the carrier decks or flying from Jacksonville or wherever. But then when they're not there, they would be reluctant to feel that they have the possibility of commitment which would divert from their also important task. And I'm glad to hear that that's being worked out quite well. I knew it would have growing pains but it's gratifying to hear how it's going.

How about foreign navies and coastal forces in the Gulf and Caribbean regions, have you tried to work anything out with them? It's a relatively simple task. The old radar from World War II would be effective in, you know, picking up boats and ships. Do you know of any efforts on the part of our Government. I realize it wouldn't be through you that would necessarily be directed, but do you know of any action in that field?

Adm. Stewart. Two areas that I'm aware of. One which has to do with our relationship with the Bahamian Government where we are cooperating and working with them in connection with drug interdiction. This is a severe problem, as you know, in the Bahamas, because they're used extensively both by air and ship as a transshipment point to the United States. The second one is fairly high-level negotiations with the Government of Mexico in connection with the cooperation and support of the Mexican Navy in drug interdiction.

As a matter of interest, I have also had some very low level, very informal negotiations with one of my counterparts on the northern end of the Mexican Peninsula. He's newly assigned. I had several of my staff officers, a member of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms staff and a couple of other people gone down and just informal­ly worked with him. We've established that relationship and I hope that it will continue.

That's about the limit of my knowledge.

Sen. Denton. The changes in the smuggling in response to the defensive efforts, if you will, on our part from your perspective, how have these been reflected in the shifts of smaller vessels, or was there not a shift to smaller vessels for marijuana smuggling and does that indicate that there are significant numbers of new people, new persons
who are into trafficking, and, if so, what type of profile do such persons have?

Admiral Stewart. Two different types of patterns that I see emerging, sir. One has to do with the activities and with the committee's indulgence I'll be somewhat general to avoid giving away the store. But we see a change in the pattern of mother ship activity. They're using somewhat different tactics in order to offload and get their cargoes aboard than they have in the past.

We also see, as far as the maritime mode is concerned, we see a shift to smaller cargos. We see a decided emphasis on concealed compartmentation. We also see, in effect, a smaller packaging job. The bales are coming in smaller sizes now.

As far as air interdiction, I would defer to the acknowledged experts, the Customs Service.

But I see perhaps an increase and I would agree with Mr. Mullen. Increase in the shipment of cocaine, two of the four seizures we had were aircraft with somewhat less than one-half ton of cocaine on board each of these aircraft.

We do find that there are some small air shipments of high-grade marijuana. I suspect personally that there may be the new boy on the block breaking into business. Marijuana is a little cheaper to buy, a little less difficult to handle and sell. And as a result of that, he makes a little money at $600 a pound. Then he can break into the big time later on having established a bankroll, if you will. But those are just the changes that I see.

Admiral Denton. Does the Yucatan Channel and the Windward Pass remain routes as far as shipping?

Admiral Stewart. The Yucatan, sir, as I indicated in my prepared statement is the pass of choice for about 35 percent of the marijuana.

It is a lock-breaking wire method. To support the Coast Guard drug interdiction effort in this area, the following multi-mission assets are available: ten 82-foot patrol boats, two going sixty tenders, eleven helicopters at three locations (Houston, Corpus Christi, New Orleans), seven fixed wing aircraft at Corpus Christi and Mobile, and utility boats at eleven Coast Guard stations along the coast from Panama City, Florida to Port Isabel, Texas. Four medium endurance cutters are homeported in the Eighth District but primarily operate in the Yucatan which is presently under the operational control of the Seventh Coast Guard District headquartered in Miami.

With these assets, the Eighth Coast Guard District carries out an aggressive law enforcement program in support of maritime narcotics interdiction along the gulf coast. Patrol boats, utility boats, and going sixty tenders conduct both coastal and ocean patrols in and off the Yucatan Channel. Aircraft patrols are regularly conducted in the gulf and along the coast, independently or in conjunction with surface craft. Recently, we have begun to extend the range of our patrol boats by conducting multi-unit law enforcement patrols, well offshore, for ten day periods, using going sixty tenders as "motherships", to conduct escorts, to ensure that all the cargo is offloaded and communications relay.

This has worked well in the past and we will be using more extensively in the future.

The Coast Guard also responds in a timely fashion to intelligence information which indicates the presence in eighth district waters of a drug laden vessel or smuggling operation. Our assets are also deployed on joint operations with other agencies at the Federal, State and local governments. We maintain a strong liaison program with the other Federal agencies involved in narcotics activities such as the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Customs Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Liaison officers have been detailed to the organized crime drug enforcement task forces in the core cities of Houston, St. Louis and Atlanta. Each of these task forces is partially in the eighth district. Having liaison officers on site ensures effective coordination with the task forces. To ensure cooperation at the local and state level the Coast Guard is a member of the law enforcement coordinating council established about two years ago under the direction of the Justice Department in the various U.S. Attorney offices. Our local commands coordinate with their local law enforcement counterparts and this effort has borne fruit.

One of our recent notable success occurred on 15 January 1982 at Grand Isle, Louisiana. This case involved 32 tons of marijuana on the fishing vessel Capt. Kurt. The original information came from the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the fall of 1982. Ultimately the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Customs Service, the Louisiana State Police, the Lafourche Parish sheriff's
New Orleans. A local command post was established at the Coast Guard station at Grand Isle Louisiana. With the FBI and DEA providing Coast Guard and customs aircraft, constant surveillance of the boats was maintained. Later that same evening, a contact boat with three persons onboard apparently fell to the Air Force.

The Coast Guard has been making a substantial impact on reducing the flow of drugs into this nation. We have seen the effect the southeastern U.S. task force has had on this area. The Coast Guard made 50 seizures of drug smuggling vessels in the eighth district in 1980. In 1981, 30 were made. In 1982 five vessels were seized and this year three seizures have been made. With the enhanced intelligence picture and the coordination of efforts provided by NNBIS, I expect our seizures to rise again. Less, the drug smuggling problem by vessel in this area has been reduced. I attribute the reduction to the blockade of the Yucatan Pass between Cuba and Mexico, the primary route to Gulf Coast ports, by the S.E. U.S. task force which has forced the maritime smuggler to other areas or other means such as smaller overland routes.

Senator Sessions. Our next witness gets us closer to home. I will ask Jeff Sessions to step forward.

Jeff Sessions. U.S. attorney, Southern District of Alabama. He was recently appointed as U.S. attorney, Burt Milling will be successor, and he has another recently appointed drug task force prosecutor in Charlie Whitehorne who is also present this morning in the front row. So we're looking forward to hearing from Mr. Sessions. And if you have an opening statement, we're ready for it.

STATEMENT OF J.B. SESSIONS III, U.S. ATTORNEY, SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA

Mr. Sessions. Mr. Chairman, I have prepared a written statement which I have submitted. But I would like to make a few general remarks and ask you to feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions as I go forward. I also have with me today my first assistant U.S. attorney, William R. (Ruddy) Favre, who has probably prosecuted more drug smuggling cases from New Orleans to Tampa than any other lawyer in the Gulf coast area. And he's a tremendous asset in the drug fight.

We are particularly pleased to have obtained additional resources that have been given to us by the Department of Justice. And I feel that is an essential need for us in this district.

We found ourselves at the FBI and U.S. attorneys office with five assistants on the front line of a major drug smuggling area. And the cases that we saw and had to prosecute involved boatloads of marijuana with as many as 18 defendants being charged. They would have some of the best lawyers, highest paid lawyers and they would be aggressively defended cases.

The impact of that on an office that has other substantial responsibilities than just drugs was tremendous.

When I came aboard as U.S. attorney, I made drug smuggling the No. 1 priority in our office, and have attempted to be sure that we have not neglected it in favor of other crime. And, in fact, I can say with certainty that we have, more and more, shifted our emphasis to this important matter. And it was said earlier, the drugs that come through, fortunately for us, don't just stay in Mobile. Most of them go to the various cities and areas throughout the country. And, in fact, I would suggest and suspect that most of the drugs we see on the street have probably filtered back into Mobile from other areas.

One of the things I think you are probably asking, Mr. Chairman, when you had this hearing and that concerned you was, are we moving to a situation in this district like that in south Florida? And is Mobile a potential area where violence, corruption, and drug addiction could fester at the very flanks of this community? I think I can tell you with confidence that it is not. We have had some very effective things happen to the situation, and I'll go into it in a little more detail later.

But the situation is developing such that I am confident that it has stabilized, and that we will be able to reduce what level we have, and that it will not get worse.

Senator Sessions. Well, I'm very happy to hear that. But never in my worst nightmares would I have envisioned Mobile becoming another Miami because of the proximity of Miami to Cuba, for example. But we are interested in not only the effect of the South Florida Task Force but with the NNBIS and the other positive efforts which are being made. And we would look forward to hearing how you're coming along, and where you think we're going.
Mr. Sessions. My fear was and it was predicted that we would have a dramatic impact in this district from the South Florida Task Force, that it would dramatically drive narcotics into this district and it would have a serious effect on us.

We are pleased and somewhat surprised to find that we are not having these dramatic increases. It appears to me that there are several reasons for that although it’s difficult to say with certainty.

First of all, the patrol by the Coast Guard in the Yucatan Pass has probably been the most dramatic action that has been taken to affect drugs in this area. We have large numbers of shrimp boats in our district and they would go directly to Colombia, load up and come back to the Yucatan Straits, the most direct way. I think, in view of some successful prosecution, by virtue of the arrests and stops made by the Coast Guard, and by the intimidating effect of the Coast Guard, we have had, despite the success of the South Florida Task Force, a reduction in the individual shrimp boatloads coming in. We are, however, seeing a substantial increase, it appears, in airplane smugglers. Perhaps that is because of the effect in south Florida. Perhaps it’s because of the reduction in the number of boats. Certainly it is caused by the large number of rural airfields in this area that are available for smugglers to use. And, in fact, when I go back home and to the countryside, my friends very frequently will tell me that they hear airplanes flying at night, that they see no reason for that other than drug smugglers. We do not know at this time how substantial the airplane traffic smuggling is. And it is becoming the most significant problem.

Our prosecutive efforts have had some success. I believe, with the addition of the task force, we will have more. One of the questions that was asked was, is it a hopeless situation? Can this drug fight be won?

When I was an assistant U.S. attorney in about 1975, our office had 30 or more heroin cases being prosecuted. The State and city had large numbers of heroin cases. They used those cases and worked them hard, convicted the largest heroin dealer in town, probably been the most dramatic action that we have had, despite the success of the South Florida Task Force, a reduction in the number of herion cases. They used those cases and worked them hard, convicted the largest heroin dealer in town, and they would have a serious effect on us.

That makes me feel as if the question was asked was, is it a hopeless situation?

Mr. Sessions. Excuse me, Jeff. I’m afraid I’ll forget this question.

You mentioned the radar surveillance and people hearing aircraft flying in and not knowing what other reason they could be coming but for drug smuggling. Keeping in mind that sometimes we throw money at things and equipment when we don’t have to, are we working with the F.A.A. and their existing radar and their air-control monitoring to separate out to the degree that we can, planes which might be more suspicious and so on?

Mr. Sessions. Mr. Chairman, the exact capabilities of the radar system in the area I think are classified. But I have talked to Mr. Charles S. White-Spunner, Jr., our Drug Task Force attorney, and instructed him to evaluate that situation in the district to see what we can determine with regard to our radar capabilities. We want to see if we have some weaknesses, and there has been some suggestion that there might be some weaknesses in this area, in our area, gaps.

Mr. Sessions. There are gaps, I can tell you, all over the United States. We have deprecilated our air-defense radar in favor of missile systems. But there is substantial capability without getting into anything classified, with respect to what exists at, say Bates Field and other fields around the country.

Am I to understand that you all are looking into that and will be trying to work out what you can from that system before you ask for other radars or whatever?

Mr. Sessions. ...
since that does not imply prosecution. It seems to me that we should prosecute the growers of marijuana and not just pull up their plants.

There are a number of things that might be helpful in that area, just brainstorming and dreaming a bit. And, Mr. Chairman, you would be more familiar than I with the actual mechanics of it, but I know that the military has detection devices that would detect moving equipment or moving personnel.

What is happening is that a sheriff, who has a small number of deputies in a big country to cover, finds a number of marijuana fields. They were planted in, say, the spring, and harvested in the fall and the planters may not go back to that field more than two or three times. If it's difficult to see when they might come in and harvest it, the sheriff simply cannot put a deputy out there all night every night to watch those fields and attempt to catch the person who might show up. And so, he then sprays the field with a herbicide like paraquat. Or he has just rung them up by hand.

I don't know how expensive it would be, but would suggest that there may be a possibility for our detection devices that could not just be the sheriff that some movement was taking place in the area of the field, and that they could respond and perhaps arrest the growers.

There's a matter that has involved us in this district a good bit. It is a matter that we feel strongly, and I know Mr. Enrare feels very strongly about this from his experience in prosecuting cases. It's the need for the reform of the Bail Reform Act. I believe, of 1966. We are having an excessive number of fugitives from these drug cases. Presently we have 11 fugitives who have been arrested and placed on bond and have skipped bond. Of these 11, 10 of them are dopers. We took testimony concerning one and we discovered that the Government had spent $40,000 to apprehend him.

The Marshal Service is committing a substantial portion of its resources and doing a good job to help in the apprehension of fugitives. But it is an expensive problem.

In addition to that, when a fugitive skips prior to his trial, you have to go forward with the trial of those who were originally charged. When he's apprehended you have to have a separate trial for him. It's a very expensive process. As a matter of fact, in today's paper I noticed that there were three fugitives mentioned in the Crime Stoppers Program. Two of these were dope smugglers who are.

Another matter that we think might be addressed and will probably be addressed with the entire crime package, but in particular I would suggest that there needs to be an increased penalty for marijuana importation.

Presently an individual charged with possessing 1,000 pounds of marijuana is subject to a 15-year penalty. If it's less than 1,000 pounds, it is a 5-year penalty. Professor Bart used to suggest that importation of marijuana of amounts of 500 pounds or more should at least carry a 12-year penalty.

Mr. Chairman, those conclude my prepared remarks. And if you have any questions, I would be glad to try to answer them.

Senator Daves. As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I participated in last year's crime package and the one this year.

It is now in the form in which it will pass the Senate easily. It will have a number of provisions for alleviating some of these problems that you have brought up. My own staff and I have introduced some 127 amendments to toughen up the drug bill. And for any pains, I was quoted in the newspaper as saying something on the subject, that it was a small percentage of my concern. I was unquoted and remarks were taken out of context. But I wish you to know that we're working hard on that, Mr. Sessions. And I think you're going to see an improved bill come out very soon.

I have to remark that I think it's extremely commendable that you have been able to knock the heroin use just about out.

Given the resources that you now have at your disposal, do you adequately address the drug smuggling problem in your district? In other words, is there any progress made? I think you've answered that in the affirmative.

What about corruption of public officials? It's a problem all over the world. There are no professions that have been exempt from that corruption, because of the high rewards, if you will, financial, to be received to come into drugs. Is that a problem in the Southern District, to your knowledge?

Mr. Sessions. Senator, we have some of the finest law enforcement officers in the country in this district. They are dedicated to their job.

But we have seen isolated cases, really too frequently, of law enforcement officers and even a district attorney becoming involved. In Baldwin County, the former district attorney for 16 years was charged and convicted in a conspiracy to import marijuana. He was at that time a supernumerary district attorney.

In that county the chief investigator for the sheriff's department was convicted. We have had former deputy sheriffs in Mobile, former State troopers convicted of actual participation in drug smuggling activities. It is a matter of concern to us. We try to give it the highest priority. If a sheriff's department has a corrupt member, that whole department is affected. The whole drug effort in that area is affected.

So it is a matter of highest priority.

I do not believe that we have any broad-scale law enforcement involvement in narcotics. But there are individuals who do succumb to the moneys involved.

Senator Daves. Considering the possible ecological problem which, as I understand it, is unresolved at this point, could you give us the benefit of your views on the use of paraquat in domestic eradication of marijuana?

Mr. Sessions. I was listening to a talk show the other day and an individual called in, I hope tongue in cheek, and said that he didn't see any reason for spraying those paraquats, they were nice little birds. And the talk show host said, what they're talking about is spraying marijuana. He said, oh, I'm for that. Spray that stuff.

I don't think there is any substantial danger from the use of paraquat. I think that's a brouhaha over nothing. I have personally talked to Dr. Carlton Turner and Senator Cochran recently. You claim he's from Mississippi. I don't blame you. He is a superior public servant. But he's actually from Choctaw County in Alabama.
Senator Cochran. I'm sure that theCoast Guard could not install the moving-target indicator equipment which you previously alluded to, since you have the power of the purse at your disposal. And I think that we should do it.

Senator Sessions. Well, it would certainly be a cheaper way than installing a moving-target indicator equipment which you previously alluded to, since you have the power of the purse at your disposal. And I think that we should do it.

Senator Cochran. I think that's one of the greatest things that's come from communications such as this. They have brought people together who are all involved in the same effort. And I think that it's provided a basis for communications and cooperation that we may not have seen before. That's very important as you so well have pointed out.

I was talking to one of our Federal judges in Mississippi last week, and he observed that much of the Federal criminal caseload in the courts now involves drug cases. This is another indication I think, Mr. Chairman, of the emphasis that's being placed on prosecution and investigation of these drug crimes. And I think that that's an encouraging sign, that we are seeing more and more effort placed in that area.

Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee

Senator Cochran. Thank you. Over in the Southern District of Mississippi, U.S. Attorney Phillips who is your counterpart there, has organized and coordinated a committee involving local law enforcement officials and others. You're talking about getting the Customs Service more involved in the prosecution. I don't know whether you're aware of what he is doing over there, but you may be doing the same thing here. I've heard good reports about the success of communications. This LEOC is really opening up the line of communications, and they meet from time to time to share information about how they are working and how they can work together in a better way. This involves Coast Guard people and Federal, State, and local officials in that Southern District area. But you might consider talking with him about it or seeing how that has worked.

Mr. Sessions. We do have that. Senator. We've had a number of meetings. I think Mr. Phillips has had one of the most successful operations probably in the country. And I'm not sure ours is as aggressive as his. But we've had a number of meetings. We've developed personal relationships between all the local officials and all the Federal officials. My door is open. I know the FBI, the DEA, and the Customs' doors are open. And there is a real new day in communication. I think because the Federal and the local—well, Sheriff Purvis is here and he has been very supportive of it, and is going to host a meeting at one of his ranches for us in the near future.
Do you feel as though you have enough resources in your office, enough assistants and personnel, to handle the case workload because of this increased drug activity in the Gulf area?

Mr. Sessions. Well, I'm one of those who believes in doing more with less. I feel like that our five assistant U.S. attorneys have worked so hard these past 5 years that they have done the work of seven. We've now gotten two more. And I think that's going to be a great help to us.

We really need another attorney and perhaps we're going to get that.

Senator Cochran. I know that your office has responsibility for things other than criminal prosecution. You have a civil side in your office where you are involved in civil litigation in Federal Government. And that I know has been on the increase in recent years.

My question is, because of these responsibilities that you have, are people going free from prosecution who ought to be behind bars because of a lack of resources in your office?

Mr. Sessions. Senator, I think I have told Moss Stack of the FBI that if there has been a weak link, and I would say again, that our lawyers are doing a magnificent job, they are five of the hardest-working lawyers, skilled, and know how to prosecute cases. I do not feel that anybody has gone free, but cases have not come into the system as rapidly as they should. There has been a slight backlog. I believe the new manpower we are getting reflects an understanding on the Department of Justice that our office did, in fact, need more manpower and I believe it will allow us to meet our needs.

Senator Cochran. The reason I asked the question about the coordination, and investigators, and communications, is if we get the goods on people and we've got evidence that ought to be presented to the grand jury and people ought to be indicted, prosecuted, and put away, and if we don't have the lawyers and prosecutors there and the judges to hear the cases, nothing happens after all this wonderful work has been done. We have a military force, we have surveillance of law enforcement on all the rest of it. But if you don't get the guy prosecuted, it's all for naught. And that's why I think this is one of the most important aspects of this effort on the war on drugs, to make sure that we have efficient prosecution and enough people dedicated to that part of the effort, and a successful prosecution.

If we need to have a prosecution task force assembled and sent into these areas where we have a lot of drug activity, where we know the southern part in the Gulf of Mexico has a great deal of narcotics traffic, we need to have a task force in Mobile, a tremendous achievement.

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One of your topics deals with the large prosecution situation in Alabama. Some progress has been made. For example, when I became an Assistant United States Attorney in 1975, this office had some 20 or 30 heroin prosecutions going and the local officials had a greater number. When I left in 1977, the top heroin defendant was being prosecuted. There has not been a single heroin case in the 2 years I have been United States Attorney, either federal or in my knowledge, local. In aggregate prosecution, we've very few heroin cases in Mobile, a tremendous achievement.

The most spectacular cases have been the large prosecutions of those who smuggled boat loads of marijuana into the district. With our large fishing and shrimp fleet and secluded inlets, this area became an active area for smugglers. For awhile a boat load of marijuana (usually about 20,000 pounds), was a great victory. The traffic reached a peak from 1978 to 1981. In fact, we are now using intelligence data and informants to go back and prosecute many individuals who successfully avoided prosecution through duplicity of that period. There appears to have been a dramatic reduction in the amount of boat traffic in recent years. It is universally agreed that the Coast Guard Patrols in the Yucatan strait have been the main reason for that. Successful investigations by the existing federal and state agencies, along with the resources of the new Drug Task Force will, I believe, allow us to completely crush the major boat smuggling rings. We have made great progress recently, gotten some heavy sentences, and I do not think we are through yet.

In the past two years, there has been a decided shift to airplane smuggling. Of course, that is progress of a sort, since it will take many more pounds marijuana to equal 20,000 pounds, but airplanes are more difficult to catch. It is a whole different ball game.

Mr. Sessions. Senator, Senator Sessions. We have had a downhearted period because I think we were in a crisis. I believe we now can handle our responsibilities.

Senator Cochran. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
The Sheriff's Department of Mobile County, Alabama, is charged with the security of 1,000 miles of unincorporated area of Mobile County. It covers a 50-mile patrol area of 1,500 miles of roads. The Sheriff's Department must supply services and safety to the 66,522 citizens who reside in that area. There are approximately 300-500 miles of irregular jagged shoreline between Mobile and Baldwin County. Mobile County has a total of four public airports, in excess of 20 private airfields, all suitable for drug trafficking. An ideal location for smuggling drugs by water and air is Dauphin Island. It is an uninhabited area that can be used for smugglers to drop their cargo. A case in point, about six months ago one of the local Federal agencies received an anonymous tip that a plane landing north from the gulf loaded with narcotics would be landing on Dauphin Island at 8:00 a.m. on that particular day. The weather was extremely bad and in the opinion of the officers involved no one would attempt a landing at Dauphin Island. Agencies in nearby States were alerted to be on the lookout for this aircraft. The following day at about 10:00 a.m. an officer arrived out to Dauphin Island and landed on the island. The pilot had flown in and out in spite of the weather. This incident is also indicative of the caliber of pilots that are flying drugs into the United States.

In recent months, we have seen a great deal of cocaine brought into this area by aerial smugglers. These people are able to pass through ports of entry with multiple kilo amounts on their person and/or in their luggage. Additionally, varying quantities are being sent through the mails. Drug usage and availability has shown a marked increase in the Mobile area. The cultivation and utilization of domestic marijuana has increased, I am told that the domestic is equal to and often superior to imported marijuana. There is more cocaine being utilized in this area today than in the past, probably because cocaine has become a high drug of choice.

In my opinion the South Florida Task Force has impacted on the trafficking of drugs on the Gulf Coast. However, instead of eliminating the drug problem, the task force has merely misconceived the drug traffickers and forced them to seek new alternatives by which to bring illicit drugs into the United States, and has increased the domestic cultivation of marijuana.

As Sheriff of Mobile County I appreciate the efforts of this committee and hope that your findings will give us an accurate account of the problem.

Thank you.

Senator Davenport: We'll now hear from Maurice J. Stack, Jr. We'll ask him to step forward. He's the special agent in charge of the Mobile division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Welcome, Mr. Stack. I believe you have a colleague appearing with you. Would you care to introduce him?

Mr. Stack: Yes, Mr. Chairman. He's Michael Balgley, who is the chief of the organized crime unit from headquarters.

Senator Davenport. Welcome. And you may proceed, sir.

STATEMENT OF MAURICE J. STACK, JR., SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, MOBILE, AL

Mr. Stack. Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, my name is Maurice J. Stack, Jr., and I am the special agent in charge of the Mobile division of the FBI. I am responsible for FBI investigative efforts in approximately 65 percent of the State of Alabama. This territory includes two judicial districts: the Southern District of Alabama centered at Mobile and the Middle District centered at Montgomery. FBI responsibility in the remaining portion of the State is shared with the Northern Judicial District of Alabama, and the Northern Judicial District is under the direction of the special agent in charge headquartered at Birmingham.

On January 28, 1983, the Attorney General delegated to the FBI concurrent jurisdiction with the Drug Enforcement Administration to investigate violations of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention
and Control Act of 1970, commonly referred to as title 21. Prior to that date, FBI-Mobile had been involved in investigations pertaining to narcotics under the racketeer-influenced and corrupt organizations (RICO), and the interstate transportation in aid of racketeering (ITAR), statutes targeted at traditional organized crime groups.

An investigation using the RICO statute involved the smuggling of 15,000 pounds of marijuana on a DC-4 aircraft into the State of Alabama. Information initially developed by the FBI was disseminated to DEA and the Alabama Bureau of Investigation. Through this information the ABI was able to successfully place two undercover agents in a position to infiltrate this drug-trafficking organization. In these narcotics investigations, the Mobile division has shown an ability to make use of their knowledge of the drug market and to react to targets of opportunity and follow through with investigation and prosecution. While these efforts are not new to narcotics investigations, the Mobile division works closely and in most cases with other Federal, State, and local agencies, including DEA, U.S. Customs, IRS, ABI, and police departments and sheriff's offices. To date, this effort has resulted in eight convictions of drug distributors, with 12 additional indictments awaiting trial. In addition, $275,000 was recovered in fines, $285,610 in court-ordered forfeitures, and $3,774,000 in fines have resulted.

However, more importantly, these initial efforts and investigative successes have provided the Mobile division of the FBI with the necessary experience to develop an intelligence base and expertise in narcotics matters which is most helpful in major ongoing investigative efforts.

I have been advised that the purpose of this hearing is: No. 1, to study the impact of the South Florida Task Force on drug trafficking in this gulf coast, with emphasis on the Port of Mobile; and No. 2, to seek a comprehensive assessment of the drug problem in Alabama.

It is difficult to completely assess the drug problem in Alabama. There are indications that the drug supply is increasing. In addition, the purchasers are no longer limited to street criminals who depend on burglary and other crimes to support their habits. Drug abuse has spread to those in professions and businesses. No longer is the money originating from just underworld sources. Now some persons usually occupied in legitimate businesses and professions can be found brokering drugs. It is difficult to definitely state what is the total amount of drugs available in or passing through Alabama, or to strike comparisons between the amounts available now and in the past.

There are some measures of success in the fight against illegal drug trafficking. We can point to more cases under investigation, the involvement of more law enforcement, more convictions, more seizures, and more public recognition of the problem. We in law enforcement are continuing our efforts to deal with the problem and to work our way toward the very answers you seek here today.

For example, let me mention two of our major cases involving DEA, ABI, and the FBI. One case involved the crash landing of a twin-engine plane during bad weather at the Dothan Airport in Dothan, AL, on March 15, 1983. Onboard this aircraft were 655 pounds of cocaine, which was seized along with the aircraft. Approximately 1 week later, an additional 80 pounds of cocaine was discovered in a field located 300 yards from the aircraft's original site. The pilot of this aircraft was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in the Middle District of Alabama for violation of title 21, U.S.C.

Another incident involved the landing of a twin-engine aircraft in Dannelly Field, Montgomery, AL, on August 4, 1983. This aircraft taxied to a remote area of the airport causing an airport employee to become suspicious and call for law enforcement. This aircraft had onboard 815 pounds of cocaine, and seven individuals were arrested in connection with this incident. To date, three have been indicted and two have been convicted on four counts involving title 21. Two seizures mentioned above represented a wholesale value of cocaine in excess of $200 million.

In these cases the combined Federal, State, and local response to these incidents was quick, coordinated, and successful, and they illustrate how law enforcement's ability to react to targets of opportunity and follow through with investigation and prosecution. But since we had no advance intelligence information about either of these flights, these cases also illustrate that there are limits to our knowledge of the problem of smuggling drugs through the use of light aircraft. If the pilot of the aircraft had not run off the runway and if the subjects in the other case has not acted so suspiciously, the activity might have gone undetected, and the loads might have been distributed as planned. With this awareness, we are constantly working to build up our fund of intelligence information to increase our effectiveness in detecting drug law violations.

The State of Alabama has many airfields which are located in rural and remote areas. These airfields consist of those located on private
property, as well as public ones. Because many of these airfields are located in remote places, are unmanned, and have runway lights that can be activated through a radio transmission signal from the aircraft, they are attractive to drug smugglers. Additionally, Alabama is geographically located so that fuel requirements for twin-engine light airplanes are not exceeded on trips from the Bahamas, Central, and South American countries. It should be noted that aircraft smuggling is just one of the three major drug problems pertaining to Alabama. The other two involve drug importation by boat and the growing of domestic marijuana. At the present time, the Mobile division of the FBI is developing an intelligence base to ascertain the extent of the problem in each of these three areas.

Regarding waterborne deliveries, there is reason to believe that the historical shrimp boat caravans have been significantly reduced. This is generally credited to the blockage of the Yucatan Peninsula by the U.S. Coast Guard. I have seen no evidence that such deliveries again increased because of the south Florida coast being shut off. With regard to airbone delivery, it is again difficult to determine whether planes are flying into Alabama now, that originally went into south Florida. We don't know exactly how many went to either place before the formation of the South Florida Task Force and we don't know exactly how many go to either place now.

However, the Mobile Division has conducted several investigations in which information has been developed indicating that drug smugglers, in addition to utilizing the south Florida area, are also interested in other locations, including Alabama, for their drug smuggling operations. In one case a major significant trafficker in the State of Alabama was convicted along with his two suppliers from the south Florida area. This investigation utilized the undercover technique, and tape recordings were made between the main subject and cooperating informant. The main subject stated that he was concerned that smuggling by boat from South America into the south Florida area was becoming riskier due to the existence of the Vice Presidential Task Force.

In another investigation, it has been determined that the drug trafficking organization involved has changed from boat smuggling to aircraft smuggling due to the fact that it is considered safer. In terms of the growing of domestic marijuana, Alabama has the climate and soil suitable for the cultivation of high-grade sensemilla marijuana. Additionally, this high-grade sensemilla marijuana can be grown in heavy stands of pine in central Alabama, making it almost impossible to spot from the air. In addition to this technique of growing marijuana in the forests, plants are covered to accelerate the growing process. Sensemilla marijuana grows in south Alabama to approximately 10 to 20 feet in height. One large grower admitted to us that he realized approximately 800 pounds from one single plant. Sensemilla marijuana sells for $2,000 to $8,000 per pound.

During August and September 1963, Mobile FBI investigated a large sensemilla marijuana operation in Baldwin County. One thousand two hundred pounds of high-grade sensemilla were seized. Seven growers were arrested. The sensemilla was valued conservatively at $1,200,000. Investigation determined these individuals operated undetected during the previous year and realized a profit of $485,000.

As a result of this case, six additional marijuana fields were located; however, these fields had already been harvested. An additional eight fields were located on October 15. These fields had also been harvested and were located in Baldwin County, AL. Much intelligence information has been received showing large-scale growing of domestic marijuana occurs in Mobile, Baldwin, Escambia, and Washington Counties. Mobile office has initiated investigations into other growing operations in these counties.

Mr. Chairman, there is some obvious logic to postulate that if there is sufficient interdiction regarding the importation of narcotics in south Florida, the drug operations will move up the coast to the Gulf States. Alabama's gulf shoreline is limited compared to the Panhandle of Florida and the States of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, and it may be that these areas are more attractive to boat smuggling. In any event, while they may experience a somewhat measurable increase due to the impact of the South Florida Task Force, I cannot state that I am aware of any impact in Alabama on either water or airbone deliveries of narcotics, and certainly the growing of marijuana is not caused by it.

As we gather more intelligence and continue to conduct successful investigations, we will be learning more about the drug problem in Alabama. On a most positive note, law enforcement cooperation is, I believe, at the highest it has ever been. This cooperation is overall.

It exists between Federal agencies and among Federal, State, and local law enforcement.

But this problem, generally described as the Nation's No. 1 crime problem, is pervasive, and needs more than just law-enforcement efforts to control; more than just changes in the judiciary and penal system to eliminate soft sentences and early parole. Your presence, Mr. Chairman, shows the absolutely essential congressional interest and concern.

Public awareness of this problem has been greatly heightened, but renewed efforts to solicit the cooperation of family, civic, and church groups are necessary to overcome the public apathy that still remains. What is lacking to this day in combating narcotics is public outrage. I want to thank the members of this subcommittee for allowing me to provide testimony on this significant topic.

I am now prepared to answer any questions you may have.

Senator DEMOTT. Thank you very much, Mr. Stack. You are rather coldly realistic and I'm sure authoritatively so in your overview.

The lack of public outrage is quite evident in your presentation. We have had, of course, a great deal of interest on the part of the press, but there is practically no outrage that we have seen. It is a somewhat difficult thing to understand why if drug smuggling is a Federal offense that we can have such magazines with such advertisements. There are motorcycle-related magazines which deal with drugs and many sexually oriented magazines which deal with drugs in the same way.
It makes me wonder if there isn't some lack of logical connection with, say, the FCC or some Senate committee that has something to do with that when we permit the exploitation of drug smuggling, encourage it and sell it by magazines which we permit in our free society. A free society is one thing; but a society which is killing itself without public outrage, indeed, without public awareness or concern about it I concur with you in a fundamental problem.

Mr. Stack. Are we much different, sir, from the fuzz busters concealed in the dashboards of prominent citizens' cars to hold the speed limit down?

Senator Denton. I agree. You can carry that down through a lot of imperfections. But I think the one involving drugs from what I've seen of the results here in this country and in other countries is one which should be viewed with priority concern. . . .

I think that the nature of their equipment may allow them to go into the underworld through the-right now the system is through the sale of equipment which has been confiscated in that particular crime area.

Mr. Stack. If I may defer to Mike who has a national perspective on that.

Mr. Bleakley. We are not in the FBI using that technique very often. But I believe you should ask the U.S. Customs Service that question because I believe they have found considerable use for it because of the nature of their responsibilities.
of a parole? That's just one aspect of it. What gives you the greatest problem in their sophisticated operations?

Mr. Stack. There has been a great deal of concern about the use of the Bearcat scanner type of equipment. The fact that we do not have voice privacy-type communication. I'm not saying anything that has not already been discussed. There's been Appropriations, requests, and money have been made available. In a recent case involving marijuana in Baldwin County, elements of the Alabama Bureau of Investigation, the DEA, FBI, and ABI were all involved. We do not have common frequencies. And we utilized a procedure in which we loan out equipment to other units or we patch ABI with the FBI or the DEA with the PBI, so we can have some kind of communication. It's a very expensive problem and one that's being looked into.

Senator Denton. And you can imagine that problem with your colleagues and with local authorities, State and county and city out in California with respect to such heavily populated areas as Los Angeles with the task of taking on the 1984 Olympics, for example. In many cases it's not a financial limitation, it's an FCC limitation on the use of frequencies, as you know.

Mr. Stack. Yes.

Senator Denton. What money-laundering activities are you aware of taking place in the area of your division?

Mr. Stack. I really haven't seen any large-scale money laundering taking place here, Senator. I would not in any way say it's not taking place, but we certainly have not had any experience with it here.

Senator Denton. Senator Cochran will be submitting questions in writing and you may be receiving some from us. And I want to thank you for your expert testimony and the courtesy of both of you in appearing this morning.

Mr. Stack. Thank you, sir.

Senator Denton. The next witnesses will be in the form of a panel. I'll ask Robert J. Grimes and Rick Miller to step forward.

Mr. Grimes, who is in the brown suit, is the Regional Commissioner, South Central Region, U.S. Customs Service, and Mr. Rick Miller is a special assistant to the U.S. Customs Service. And I will ask you to proceed in whatever order you have predetermined.

STATEMENTS OF RICK MILLER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT, AND ROBERT J. GRIMES, REGIONAL COMMISSIONER, SOUTH CENTRAL REGION, U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE

Mr. Miller. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, in the interest of time, I will try to summarize my testimony. And after my testimony Mr. Grimes will have a brief bit of testimony as to the nature of the smuggling threat in this particular area. I think he'll probably try to summarize his testimony as well.

Senator Denton. If you both desire that your full prepared written testimonies be made a part of the record, we will enter it.

Mr. Miller. I would appreciate that very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Denton. Without objection, it's so ordered.

Mr. Miller. Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to come before you today to discuss the efforts of the U.S. Customs Service to combat illicit drug trafficking at our Nation's borders. As you are so keenly aware, Mr. Chairman, the problem this Nation faces with respect to the smuggling and use of illicit drugs is simply staggering. It is by any measure a tragic and serious problem which should be of great concern to all Americans.

I am, however, delighted to be here today because of your hearing and the important work of your subcommittee is providing this administration with an excellent opportunity to better inform the American people about the serious nature of the drug-smuggling threat. And I might add, if I may, Mr. Chairman, that we're honored to be here today before your panel, because the panel that assembled here today, along with a few other Members of the Senate who were unable to be here, really, in our minds, constitutes the leadership, the cutting edge, so to speak, of the U.S. Senators, those Members who are leading the fight against narcotic smuggling and drug threats.

With respect to Senator Hawkins, I'm not sure our words would be adequate to describe all that she has done. She has criminally the country and probably put in more appearances at more hearings than any other person in the United States in an effort to do something about this problem.

Senator Cochran plays a key and strategic role on the Appropriations Committee, the Defense Subcommittee, and a great deal of our efforts to enhance our ability to interdict drugs, especially in getting the equipment from the military, simply probably would not be happening if it weren't for the fine work that Senator Cochran was doing on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.

And, of course, Senator, I would like on behalf of the U.S. Customs Service, and I really think I could probably speak on behalf of all the Federal law enforcement agencies, to thank you for your leadership in the area of Federal law enforcement and for the concern which you and your Subcommittee have continually displayed with important law-enforcement matters, not only national security matters, but other serious problems, such as organized crime and narcotics trafficking.

The fact that you are a forceful spokesman for effective law enforcement is appreciated by all of us within the Federal law enforcement community. And again, on a personal note, I can think of no other individual who is better equipped to help lead in this fight, having in your career, another time, another place, very personally confronted the forces of evil. Again, I believe that you are well equipped to do this day and time lead and help in this fight against a very real other form of evil, narcotics and narcotics abuse; and the moral leadership that you are providing is an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Chairman, historically, Customs Service has had a broad mission, including the collection of revenues, the administration of laws relating to trade and tariff matters and numerous activities in the law-enforcement area. Especially activities relating to the smuggling of contraband including marijuana.

Today, the Customs Service bears a major responsibility for interdicting all drugs being smuggled into the United States.

The Gulf and South Atlantic coast continue to be primary entry points for smuggling of narcotics and drugs.

One important area that has received a great deal of attention and publicity is the threat we face in the air from smugglers who are bringing...
ing cocaine, marijuana, and methaqualone into the country via private aircraft.

The tactics that we employ to combat this type of air smuggling are generally speaking as follows: Whenever and wherever possible, we try to identify target aircraft via the use of radar. This includes FAA radars, Customs-manned radars and military radars such as the Seek Skyhook-tethered balloons located in Cudjoe Key, FL.

Additionally, our utilization of data from military AWACS and E-2C aircraft also helps us to identify and track smuggler aircraft which are attempting to penetrate our borders. The ability to detect smuggler aircraft attempting to penetrate our borders is, of course, the first and most important element of our air strategy. Obviously, we must be able to first detect the presence of a smuggler aircraft before other enforcement measures can be taken.

Typically, once a suspect aircraft has been identified via radar, we will then launch a Customs plane in an attempt to intercept and track the suspect smuggler.

Once the suspect aircraft is intercepted, our Customs plane will attempt to secretly track the aircraft to its destination, which often turns out to be a remote airfield located somewhere in the southern or southeastern part of the country.

In order to track smuggler aircraft, some of our Customs planes have been modified and equipped with sophisticated sensors, which enable our aircraft to intercept smuggler planes more easily. We have some aircraft equipped with FLIR, which is known for forward looking infrared which helps us visually track a suspect aircraft which are attempting to fly at night with lights out. When the smuggler aircraft flies using its clandestine landing, we attempt when ever possible to actually land our aircraft on the ground behind the smuggler's plane.

Mr. Chairman, I can assure you that this is a very dangerous situation. Our officers, flying at night with lights out, really don't know what's going to be waiting for them on the ground. It's a very dangerous situation and I think it's a real compliment to the type of men we have on board in our offices, who really place their lives in jeopardy going into these small clandestine strips at night.

If possible, Mr. Chairman, we also try and put a second aircraft on the ground or, preferably, to have a Customs helicopter available to land and assist in making arrests. Of course, we also will call State and local law enforcement officials to participate in the smuggler's apprehension when a smuggler's plane lands like this, and we've been getting excellent cooperation from State and local authorities.

The planned loan of aircraft from the Department of Defense represents for the Customs Service the single most significant step forward to date in the development of a comprehensive air interdiction program. We currently have on board four Cobra helicopters and one Blackhawk helicopter which has been made available to us by the Army. We anticipate receiving three more Blackhawk helicopters from the Army in the coming months ahead. And I would like to reference this picture, Mr. Chairman. This is the Blackhawk that the Army has generously provided to the Customs Service and has been used in a number of cases very effectively.

Plans are also in progress for the Customs Service to obtain from the Navy a total of eight F-3 aircraft over the next two fiscal years. And this is a picture of the F-3. And, of course, Admiral, I know you're familiar with the aircraft. Of course, Senator Cochran, with his influence and respecting a man and the position he plays in the Appropriations Committee, is moving the project along quite nicely and we're greatly appreciative of that, Senator.

The F-3 aircraft is a large four-engine plane that can remain aloft for several hours at a time and has a considerable flying range. We envision equipping these aircraft with an F-350 intercept radar and a forward looking infrared and also utilizing the existing detection equipment on the aircraft which is suitable for tracking vessels at sea.

The first radar and FLIR-equipped F-3 aircraft hopefully will be available to the Customs Service for evaluation in the summer of 1984.

The acquisition of this equipment will enable us to expand our module concept and provide greater detection and interception capabilities in areas where the threat has increased, the Gulf area, along the Atlantic coast and in the Southwest and Western border areas.

Additionally, negotiations are underway for the U.S. Customs Service to acquire several C-12 twin engine or similar light aircraft from the Department of Defense. Again, we have a photo of the C-12 which is the military version of the Beach King Air. And this is an excellent aircraft for us to use as a tracker airplane. We have some of the civilians version in our fleet already.

I would like to emphasize that with respect to all of these assets which the administration has helped make available to the Customs Service, that they will be manned by Customs Service personnel and they will be kept in such condition such that they could be returned to the military in the event of a national defense emergency.

Mr. Chairman, we also face a tremendous marine smuggling threat that's been discussed by Coast Guard officials and others. But there we're talking primarily about large mother ships that come up from Colombia. And the Coast Guard has done an excellent job in intercepting a lot of those large shipments of marijuana, particularly at check points. And in that respect, the Customs Service also maintains a marine patrol. And our marine patrol officers are located on boats. We have some boats that we send out that we use as radar platforms that we will send offshore. And we try to identify the clearly coastal traffic and separate that out from traffic which we know is coming from far offshore or foreign countries. We try and separate that out.

And if we have a suspect vessel, we try and use their patrol craft, which are usually small, high-speed vessels, to stop and board any suspect ship and subject the vessel to a search. And this, I might add, is an area that we are having a great deal of. I would say, difficulty in the sense that there are a lot of small vessels and pleasure craft traveling out there. But, again, the Coast Guard has done an excellent job in this area.

Mr. Chairman, we have an awful lot of narcotics that are brought into this country as sea cargo. We see narcotics smuggled into the country through the international mail facilities and letters and packages. We have narcotics brought into the country on passengers. So, I would like to emphasize that we are very much a multilayered threat in regard to the smuggling of narcotics. And it requires on our part a
continual review of our resources and of our strategy to combat the threat which oftentimes shifts back and forth with respect to particular pressures that we might be applying to any one type of drug smuggling technique.

Mr. Chairman, of course, we play a significant role in NNBIS that's been discussed previously, and I will not go into that in any greater detail on the account of time. We also are playing a major role with respect to the presence of the 12 city-organized crime strike forces, where we have approximately 300 agents who are dedicated to that effort and are investigating the laundering of drug money.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to conclude by emphasizing that under this administration the strengthening of the enforcement posture and capabilities of Customs as they relate to drug interdiction remains our agency's top priority. In this regard we have significantly restructured the management of our enforcement activities not only at headquarters but at the regional level as well. And we have attempted, whenever and wherever possible, to devote more resources and more attention to serious law enforcement matters.

Although we think we are doing a credible job, I can assure you that our commissioner is not satisfied with the status quo. All of us who are involved in trying to fight the drug menace must continue to work together to do the very best possible job we can to halt the flow of narcotics into this country and to put more dope peddlers behind bars.

Although the difficulties we face are many and although we do not pretend to have all the answers to the problems, we pledge, and I know our colleagues in the other enforcement agencies pledge as well, to continue to fight this menace with all the collective ingenuity and energy we can possibly muster.

Mr. Chairman, I know you regard this as a moral obligation and we do as well.

Mr. Chairman, after Mr. Grimes' testimony, we can go into the moiety situation and the problems of forfeiture we have encountered concerning that question.

After his brief testimony, with your indulgence, we have a brief video tape we would like to play for the committee, and it concerns narcotics interdiction. We have two examples of air chases at nighttime utilizing military assets. I think it's an excellent opportunity to see how the military can help and is helping with this problem.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller and a letter to Senator Denton, subsequently submitted for the record, follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD MILLER

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to come before you today to discuss the efforts of the United States Customs Service to combat illicit drug trafficking at our Nation's borders. As you are so keenly aware, Mr. Chairman, the problem this Nation faces with respect to the smuggling and use of illicit drugs is simply staggering. It is by any measure, a tragic and serious problem which should be of great concern to all Americans.

I am, however, delighted to be here today because your hearing, and the important work of your subcommittee is providing this Administration with an excellent opportunity to better inform the American people about the serious nature of the drug smuggling threat.

In that regard Mr. Chairman, I would like, on behalf of the U.S. Customs Service -- and I think I can speak for other law enforcement agencies as well -- to thank you for your leadership in the area of Federal law enforcement and for the concern which you and your subcommittee have continually displayed with important law enforcement matters -- not only concerning national security issues -- but other serious problems such as organized crime and narcotics trafficking. The fact that you are a forceful spokesman for effective law enforcement is appreciated by all of within the law enforcement community -- and again we thank you for your interest and concern.

Mr. Chairman, the Customs Service is an old and proud agency with a rich heritage and a colorful background. As you
may know the Customs Service was the first of our Nation’s Federal law enforcement agencies to be established. The second act of the Continental Congress was, in fact, to create the Custom Service. Historically Custom has had a broad mission, including the collection of revenues, the administration of laws relating to trade and tariff matters and numerous activities in the law enforcement area, especially activities relating to the smuggling of contraband, including narcotics.

Today, Mr. Chairman, the Customs Service bears a major responsibility for interdicting all drugs being smuggled into the United States.

I will give you a brief overview of the national smuggling threat and Customs enforcement activities and Regional Commissioner Grimes will address the situation in this region and in Alabama in more detail in his testimony.

The Gulf and South Atlantic coasts continue to be primary entry points for smuggling of narcotics and drugs. Our intelligence analysts predict that in this calendar year, 82 percent of the cocaine, 27 percent of the hashish and 86 percent of the marijuana introduced into the United States will penetrate our shoreline between Brownsville, Texas, and Norfolk, Virginia. Specific predictions are that 20 percent of the cocaine and 24 percent of the marijuana will be smuggled into the Customs South Central Region – which comprises the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Tennessee.

Mr. Chairman, one important area that has received a great deal of attention and publicity is the threat we face in the air from smugglers who are bringing cocaine, marijuana and methaqualones into the country via private aircraft. 64,800 pounds of cocaine will enter the United States in 1983. Of this amount, we estimate as much as 40,000 pounds (or about 41 percent of the total cocaine entering) will be smuggled by private aircraft. Obviously, there is a large smuggler population we have yet to stop or effectively deter. The tactics we employ to combat this type of air smuggling are, generally speaking, as follows:

- Whenever and wherever possible, we try to identify target aircraft via the use of radar. This includes FAA radars, Customs manned radars, and military radars, such as the Seek Skyhook tethered balloon located in Cudjoe Key, Florida. Additionally, our utilization of data from military AWACS and E-2C aircraft also helps us to identify and track smuggler aircraft which are attempting to penetrate our borders. The ability to detect smuggler aircraft attempting to penetrate our borders, is of course, the first and most important element of our air strategy. Obviously, we must be able to first detect the presence of a suspect aircraft, before other enforcement measures can be taken.

- Typically, once a suspect aircraft has been identified via radar, we will then launch a Customs plane in an attempt to intercept and track the suspect smuggler aircraft. Once the suspect aircraft is intercepted, our Customs plane will attempt to secretly track the aircraft to its destination, which often turns out to be a remote airstrip located somewhere in the southern or southeastern part of the country.

- In order to track smuggler aircraft, some of our Customs planes have been modified and equipped with sophisticated sensors which enable our aircraft to intercept smuggler
aircraft more easily. We have some planes equipped with the F-16 fighter radar as an example. Some of our aircraft are also equipped with FLIR, which is known as Forward Looking Infrared, which helps us visually track a suspect aircraft during hours of darkness.

It is not unusual for our pilots to have to follow the smuggler aircraft at night, flying with lights out. When the smuggler aircraft makes his clandestine landing, we attempt, whenever possible, to actually, land our aircraft on the ground behind the smuggler's plane. I can assure you this is risky business - our officers, flying into a clandestine air strip at nighttime, really don't know what might be waiting for them. If possible we also try to and put a second aircraft on the ground or, preferably, to have a Customs helicopter available to land and assist in making arrests. We also will call state and local law enforcement officers to participate in the smuggler's apprehension.

In dealing with the air threat, Mr. Chairman, our major goal is to expand our air interdiction capabilities with additional resources which hopefully will be made available to Customs through the relaxation of the provisions of the Posse Comitatus statutes. We envision the loan of additional highly sophisticated interception and tracking aircraft from the military which will be radar and FLIR-equipped, along with additional state of the art helicopters to be used for apprehension.

The planned loan of aircraft from the Department of Defense represents for the Customs Service the single most significant step forward to date in the development of a comprehensive Air Interdiction Program. We currently have on loan four Cobra helicopters and one Blackhawk helicopter which has been made available to us by the Army. We anticipate receiving three more Blackhawk helicopters from the Army in the coming months ahead (reference picture). Plans are also in progress for the Customs Service to obtain from the Navy a total of eight P-3 aircraft over the next two fiscal years (reference picture). The P-3 aircraft are large four-engine planes that can remain aloft for several hours at a time and have a considerable flying range. We envision equipping these aircraft with an F-15 interceptor radar and a Forward Looking Infrared, and also utilizing the existing detection equipment on the aircraft, which is suited for tracking vessels at sea.

The first radar and FLIR equipped P-3 aircraft should be available for Customs evaluation in the Summer of 1984. The acquisition of this equipment will enable us to expand our air module concept and provide greater detection and interception capabilities in areas where the threat has increased -- the Gulf area, along the Atlantic Coast, and in the Southwest and Western border areas.

Additionally, negotiations are underway for the U.S. Customs Service to acquire several C-12 twin engine or similar light aircraft from the Department of Defense (reference picture). The C-12 is the military version of the Beach King Air which is an excellent type of plane for us to use as a tracker aircraft. We are grateful to the Department of Defense and the Congress for the interest that has been shown in making these military assets available to us to use for drug interdiction purposes. I would like to add that these aircraft will be manned by U.S. Customs' personnel and will be maintained by the U.S. Customs Service in a manner and condition such that they could be transferred back to the military in case of a national defense emergency.
Mr. Chairman, we also face a tremendous marine smuggling threat, particularly in the southern part of our country. There we are primarily faced with smugglers who are bringing large quantities of marijuana into the country. In Colombia the marijuana is loaded onto large motherships which make their way back to U.S. offshore waters; in these offshore waters, the marijuana is then transferred to several smaller sporting vessels or high-speed recreational boats and brought into numerous landing sites, such as bayous, inlets, and canals located along our coastline. Private vessels, such as shrimp boats, that are capable of sailing to Columbia and back to the U.S., also constitute a significant smuggling threat.

Our strategy in combating this type of smuggling consists primarily of deploying unmarked large pleasure craft which are manned by Customs personnel at strategic points off our coast. These larger vessels are equipped with sophisticated radar and serve as mobile radar platforms to identify sea traffic which is coming in along the coast. Sorting out the marine traffic and identifying suspect vessels is a major problem and in this regard we try to separate out the coastline traffic from the traffic which is clearly coming from far offshore or foreign waters.

Used in conjunction with these radar platform vessels, we have unmarked high-speed pursuit vessels which patrol the nearby areas and when a suspect vessel is either identified via radar or visually, we will attempt to intercept the vessel and board and search it. We normally concentrate our marine resources in the high-smuggling threat areas, but vary the location and hours during which our Customs vessels are on patrol. These Customs marine activities typically take place in waters which I should add, are relatively close in to our coastline -- while the Coast Guard, with which we have an excellent relationship, usually is patrolling further out at sea, often locating their large cutters in strategic choke points in the Caribbean.

Mr. Chairman, the marijuana and cocaine trade has become so lucrative that the smugglers are able to purchase and operate top-of-the-line vessels equipped with the latest and most sophisticated communication and navigational gear. Occasionally, upon forfeiture to the Government, we are able to utilize seized vessels, aircraft and equipment. However, the seizure, forfeiture and litigation processes are currently so lengthy that frequently, forfeited equipment, by the time it is made available to us has greatly deteriorated and is no longer economically suited for official use. Legislation which would, in effect, dramatically speed up this process is currently being considered by various House and Senate committees, and we are hopeful that positive action will be taken in this session of Congress, and we are grateful for your interest and support.

Also in the marine area, we are exploring other tactical methods, including rapid deployment procedures whereby we might be able to deploy, within a short time-frame, increased numbers of marine patrol units into an area. An example of such a capability would be the quick deployment of an expanded marine patrol, including personnel and vessels to meet a perceived shift or surge in smuggling traffic, or to carry out special enforcement operations over a period of several days or weeks.

And we are currently conducting tests on a comprehensive marine detection and interception system. In any event, Mr. Chairman, the threat we face in the marine area is serious and it has become a priority in our enforcement efforts.
Thus far, I have discussed our tactical enforcement posture for combating smuggling by private aircraft and vessels. Our inspectors and other enforcement officers must contend with smuggling by numerous other methods as well.

Significant amounts of cocaine, heroin – especially heroin - hash oil and some marijuana are smuggled into the United States through international airports - by air passengers and in air cargo. Likewise, cocaine and some heroin and other drugs arrive in our seaports, having been hidden, presumably by crew members, on generally legitimate commercial carriers or concealed in shipping containers or in other sea cargo.

Drugs are also smuggled into the country at our land border crossings and also via the international mails.

As a response to smuggling in cargo, we have created special Cargo Enforcement Teams (CET) comprised of specially trained inspectors, whose specific mission is to search arriving cargo and carriers for contraband. The use of detector dogs continues to be productive in locating drugs at airports, seaports, land border crossings, and at international mail processing facilities.

The National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS), was discussed earlier, and Customs is playing a major role in the coordination of this program.

The Customs Service also plays a major role in the Administration's 12 city organized crime task forces. We have 200 agents dedicated to that effort who are involved with investigating the 'laundering' of drug money.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to conclude by emphasizing that under this Administration the strengthening of the enforcement posture and capabilities of Customs as they relate to drug interdiction remains our Agency's top priority. In this regard we have significantly restructured the management of our enforcement activities not only at Headquarters but at the Regional level as well - and we have attempted whenever and wherever possible to devote more resources and more attention to serious law enforcement matters.

Although we think we are doing a creditable job I can assure you that our Commissioner is not satisfied with the status quo. All of us who are involved in trying to fight the drug menace must continue to work together to do the very best possible job we can to halt the flow of narcotics into this country and to put more dope peddlers behind bars.

Although the difficulties we face are many and although we do not pretend to have all the answers to all of the problems, we pledge and I know our colleagues in the other enforcement agencies pledge, as well, to continue to fight this menace with all the collective ingenuity and energy we can possibly muster. I know you regard this as a moral obligation and we do as well. Thank you Mr. Chairman, after Mr. Grimes concludes his testimony we have a brief video tape we would like to show the committee and then we will be delighted to answer any questions the Subcommittee may have.
The Honorable
Jeremiah Denton, Chairman
Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

During hearings on October 28, 1983, in Mobile, the Subcommittee requested further information concerning amount of narcotics entering the South Central Region via passengers, and ideas to accelerate the forfeiture procedures.

The projected 1983 drug threat in the South Central Region by type and amount of drugs entering the region as it pertains to passengers is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Crew/Passenger</th>
<th>Crew/Passenger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heroin</td>
<td>22 lbs</td>
<td>10 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>4,278 lbs</td>
<td>427 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana</td>
<td>10,296 lbs</td>
<td>515 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hashish</td>
<td>1,143 lbs</td>
<td>114 lbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The processing of cases forwarded to Headquarters is time-consuming. Raising the jurisdictional amounts for the District of Mobile to $25,000 would speed up case processing. Inflation has rendered the $25,000 and $50,000 limits obsolete. A $100,000 limit would better serve the forfeiture procedures. This limit would apply to Section 592 cases, liquidated damages and penalty cases, and seizure cases.

Sincerely,

Richard W. McElroy
Special Assistant to the Commissioner for Congressional and Public Affairs

Senator Denton, Commissioner Grimes.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT J. GRIMES

Mr. GRIMES. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to be here in Mobile today to brief the members of this subcommittee on the current efforts of the Customs Service to interdict drug smuggling along the gulf coast.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the historic port city of Mobile is one of two district headquarters within our south central region, which includes the States of Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

The charm of this great city's past is preserved in the quality of its architecture and in the manners of its people, but Mobile is not a city of yesteryear. To the contrary, as Customs Service officials know firsthand, this is a vibrant port city with an extraordinary future. With the splicing of the Tombigbee and Tennessee Rivers, the late 1980's hold unlimited opportunities for international commerce here, and the role of the Customs Service here will increase proportionately with the prosperity that the State of Alabama and her neighbors are expected to enjoy.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, I am here to report to you today on the darker side of international trade within my region and within the district of Mobile—drug smuggling.

As you may be aware, Mr. Chairman, I was appointed Commissioner of the five-State south central region only last month. What may not be apparent is the significance of Commissioner Von Raab's decision to appoint a law enforcement officer to oversee customs operations in this area. He gave me a clear mandate to redouble our enforcement efforts against drug traffickers, and it is my expressed desire to see the Mobile district and the rest of the region become the showcase for narcotics interdiction in the Nation.

As National Director of Customs Patrol until last month, I was keenly aware of the increasing drug traffic in the South Central Region. Three of our seven U.S. Customs regional offices—Miami, New Orleans, and Houston—work together to interdict the drug traffic within the gulf coast area. Ironically, the apparent shift in traffic to other areas was a tribute to our success with Operation Florida, which forced drug smugglers to avoid our officers in the Southeast Region.

Today, we consider the Mobile district to be part of the key threat corridor on the gulf coast. The drug traffickers, particularly those smuggling cocaine, have adapted not only to their locations but also their methods of penetrating our borders. Customs officers at Mobile noted that at the beginning of Operation Florida, in approximately March 1981, the routes and method of smuggling narcotics into this area appeared to change markedly from the use of vessels to the use of aircraft.

Certainly, the Mobile statistics bear out that observation. From January 1980 until the beginning of Operation Florida some 15 months later, the Mobile District experienced a large influx of illegal importation of marijuana from South America by fishing vessels landing in the coastal areas. During that period, 12 vessels were seized and

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<td>Heroin</td>
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months later, the Mobile District experienced a large influx of illegal same period, only one notable seizure of hard narcotics was made—
600 pounds of cocaine aboard a twin-engine aircraft.

Since that time, this pattern has reversed itself. Only one vessel has been seized, while several aircraft have been intercepted. Information and intelligence from Customs Patrol, the Coast Guard, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Agency, State, and local agencies indicate that more and more narcotics are being smuggled into the area by long-range, twin-engine aircraft to points 200 miles or more from the gulf coast, as far north as Tennessee, West Virginia, and Arkansas. Most alarming, it appears that these aircraft of the air now no longer smuggle low-grade marijuana as before. Instead, they are concentrating on entering such high-ticket items as high-grade marijuana, cocaine, and pills, particularly quaaludes. It further appears that large trafficking organizations are moving these drugs through our airspace for distribution in the Midwest and Northeast. Therefore, the increasing traffic through the Mobile District is of national significance.

Our intelligence estimates for the south-central region bear out just how significant this increase has become. We now predict that cocaine smuggling by private aircraft through the region will be virtually equal to that of the Florida region. We expect to be on the receiving end of more than 17,000 pounds of cocaine before the end of this calendar year. That figure is more than one-third of the total amount of cocaine that will cross our national borders this year in private aircraft, according to our intelligence reports. This, Mr. Chairman, is an alarming statistic which deserves a top priority in our enforcement strategy.

Fortunately, I am able to report today that the Customs Service in this region has taken the initiative to crack down on air smuggling. I speak to you a P-3 radar aircraft is being fitted for surveillance operations along the gulf coast. This is the first of only such surveillance aircraft which the Customs Service will put into the skies above our borders next year. We will soon mount a detection threat to air smugglers that they have never faced before. These surveillance aircraft will be backed up by new pursuit aircraft, including in this region even a Blackhawk helicopter for pursuit to remote landing strips. These new aircraft are the tactical elements of our air interdiction strategy, which combines detection, interception, seizure, and arrest. The rapid increase of the success of this strategy is the arrest of smuggler-pilots. Many of them fly one load after another, so the arrest of just a few of these pilots can have a significant impact on the smuggling community.

The air smuggler is often flexible, well organized, and has a resource base that is superior to ours. He flies sophisticated aircraft which he does not hesitate to ditch rather than be caught.

A large load of narcotics has a sale value which makes even a one-time trip profitable. Smuggler pilots are well paid, experienced, and willing to take high risks.

But as our experience with Operation Florida has shown, they are quite vulnerable to our air interdiction strategy. Customs air interdiction results are measured not only in seizures and arrests, but also by disrupting smugglers, forcing them to change their smuggling routes and methods, and deterring them from attempting to enter the United States by air.

Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned, one ironic tribute to the success of Operation Florida, as a deterrent to drug traffickers, has been the increase in smuggling into the south-central region. It is a war in which the fronts are shifting.

To meet this new threat to the Mobile District and the rest of the five-state region, Customs is deploying sophisticated equipment along the gulf coast. We are, incidentally, developing plans for another dedicated air unit in Alabama.

The Department of Defense has been particularly helpful in sharing information from its radar installations. We are also able to locate low-flying aircraft as they enter our airspace, thanks to the input from Navy E-2C's.

Furthermore, Army Cobras and Blackhawk helicopters have increased our ground arrest capability because of their speed and maneuverability. These aircraft allow us to follow a suspect aircraft at high speed and virtually set down alongside the violators before they have time to exit their aircraft.

We are eagerly awaiting the deployment of the Blackhawk in our region. The Army indicates delivery will be early next year.

We expect the acquisition of additional loaned military aircraft over the next 2 years which will mean a major shot in the arm to our interception efforts.

We also expect a Navy P-3 aircraft, equipped with radar for surveillance, to be deployed in the south central region early next year. This would give us the advantage of having greatly enhanced detection capabilities all along the gulf coast.

Mr. Chairman, as I noted earlier, there has been a significant decrease in marine smuggling activities within our region. This is a tribute to the success of not only the South Florida Task Forces, but also the Yucatan blockade by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The threat, however, still exists. For example, Mr. Chairman, in January, after a 4-day joint air and marine operation, we seized a smuggler with 28,000 pounds of marijuana aboard. The contraband was to be offloaded to a smaller 22-foot T-Craft, which was also seized.

This was a classic mother ship smuggling operation, with the larger craft waiting offshore and the smaller vessel ferrying the bales of marijuana to land.

In June, another 40,000 pounds of marijuana were found concealed aboard a 200-foot tug, aboard which we discovered highly sophisticated navigational equipment.

To increase our deterrent threat to marine smugglers, we are upgrading our vessel resources by replacing them with high-speed pursuit models, especially equipped with sophisticated navigational and radar devices. Furthermore, we are currently formulating plans that will result in the establishment of tactical enforcement stations inland in Alabama and along the coast of southern Louisiana.

Our present marine module, operating out of Dauphin Island, AL, will be steadily increased in manpower and high-speed pursuit vessels throughout the next year. This module will direct and coordinate all marine operations conducted along the gulf coast from Gulfport to the Florida State border. The same actions are projected for the New
Mr. MISZJE. I might add that this tape that you'll see, you are seeing the picture that shows up on the infrared device. Both of these aircraft took place at nighttime.

[Video tape playback]

Mr. MISZJE. Mr. Chairman, I would like to explain the second aircraft that you saw there. It was out of a serious and unfortunate situation. After that plane crashed later in the morning, a civilian plane, apparently curious as to what was going on, came into the area and just crashed itself. There was a fatality in that crash as well and I think it's still being looked into. But that was the red plane you saw there. And the person who had in the ambulance was that civilian pilot. He just sort of wandered into that area where really I think maybe he was paying a little bit too much attention to what was going on the ground or something. We really don't know why he crashed.

Senator DENTON. Well, you mentioned the dangers associated with flying at night. The reason the man crashed, the second man crashed, is commonly characterized as target fixation which occurs in the mind when you are looking for something like a tank and you wrap yourself up in a turn and stall out and spin in.

The hazards are evident, particularly to one who has served so long in aviation. I think, Mr. Miller, you have flown one or more of those flights yourself?

Mr. MISZJE. Well, I've been on some of their aircraft. We have been in some pursuits, we've done some interceptions, and it was quite thrilling to me. But I was sort of along for the ride on those occasions. And I can certainly tell you that our officers who do this regularly, to show it's a very sobering and serious thing for them, I mean, I enjoyed it and it was exciting for me. But they really, I mean, we will come up behind the aircraft, quite close to the aircraft at night, following the smuggler. He doesn't know we're behind him.

The lights are out. And they'll go into a strip and we've put our aircraft right in behind them. We've run into automobiles, we run into other planes. We've had crashes. Thank the Lord, we haven't had any Customs fatalities. We'll land on the ground and we don't have any people waiting for us. There might be a dozen or so bad guys and two or three Customs officers. And we've had fire on the ground and we've been very fortunate. Sooner or later, unfortunately, the odds are such that we may run into an unfortunate incident.

But, again, I think it's a tribute to the guys who are out there on the line. And, of course, Customs, FBI, DEA, the Coast Guard, all of the officers; I sit behind a desk. I don't have to risk my life or anything, but we've had folks out there who are really putting their lives in jeopardy every day to try to do something about the problem.

Senator DENTON. Well, they're certainly unusual heroes and there are many kinds of wars going on in the midst of peace, I guess. The risks of flying at night without lights, without a clearance and really without any—you're a single-pilot aircraft—really good means of knowing where you are exactly, without knowing where other aircraft are, as the gentleman said, in the plane, just looking to see, I hope, that's inherent. And I certainly admire the gentleman for carrying on that work without being recognized. They're essentially with all those clouds you saw today without instrument clearance. There is the danger that they can collide with themselves and collide with another aircraft which had been caught without clearance, which happens more often at night because in the day you can see the clouds. If there were thunderstorms or towering cumulus clouds there, which themselves can pose hazards, so, indeed, it is a risky business. I'm amazed that you haven't lost men.

Have you used this film as a deterrent, say, on public television, to those who might be discouraged?

Mr. MISZJE. Yes.

Senator DENTON. And also, I think you show a rather grim aspect of it to those who would consider marijuana smoking.

Mr. MISZJE. Yes. The film has been made available to the media. And part of the film has been shown on one of the networks as a segment of the interception and the chase and the crash. Yes, we will probably make it more available. I'd like to have an opportunity at some point, Mr. Chairman, to maybe make it available to more Members of the Senate, maybe bring it up there at your convenience some time with yourselves, Senator Cochran, maybe some of the other Members, and let them see it. It's something that really everyone should see, to get a feeling of exactly what we're up against, and the nature of smuggling business. Too many people seem to think it's a glamorous fun thing. It's a serious business. And you go out and you can talk with these agents and their officers about some of the things they run into.

And I guess the point I would make, this is a business full of a lot of scoundrels, and these people belong behind bars. And I know that you and everybody else, we all want to do everything we can to lock those people up to stop this terrible trade. It's just a filthy scum business, and we want to get it stopped.
Mr. MILLER. Well, the interesting aspect of that is, of course, the 25 percent of the resources that are mixed are available to the informant that provided us the information which led to the seizure, up to $50,000, I think, which is the amount that it is as it now stands. Of course, that's a very valuable resource in being able to provide these funds to the actual informant that helps us in a case.

The unfortunate part of it is, while it's a substantial amount of money, the actual process that we go through to get that money processed, the administrative procedures are very lengthy and as everyone knows, the quicker that we can reward our informants, the more successful we will be in the future, and certainly the better it is for them. They have laid many years of their personal life in jeopardy to provide us with this information. And a quick reward is certainly essential. The moiety payment system does not really provide that quick payment.

Senator DENTON. I've heard some Senators who do not understand the problem, say that you can't fight fire with fire in that respect, that the payoffs they get for delivering the drugs are such that we shouldn't be in there trying to match it from the other side. But I think they missed the point, that when an informant really blows the cover on something, he normally blows it on an entire system of drug trafficking, rather than on one operation. And it's money well spent, because it does cost plenty for law enforcement when an informant really blows the cover on something.

Senator DENTON. The unfortunate part of it is, while it's a few years ago, If Mr. GRIFFIES, it's been testified here by numerous witnesses, I think, the value of the intelligence for taking kind of enforcement action and the use of all this equipment helps us in the future, and certainly the better it is for them. They have laid many years of their personal life in jeopardy to provide us with this information. And a quick reward is certainly essential. The moiety payment system does not really provide that quick payment.

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smugglers, principally taking undue, economically deprived, poor Central and South Americans and training them to act as professional swearers, and then they might pay them a couple thousand dollars, which is a fortune to someone from that area of the world who really doesn't have anything, and pay that person to ingest the cocaine, and try and walk through customs.

But we have developed a set of profiles, we don't like to discuss really the details of our profile system in public because it gives away too much information to the smugglers. But we have developed a set of profiles, and we have been training our inspectors to look for certain tell-tale signs, and certain documentation, and other things which would more than likely point out a potential violator. And, of course, we have the authority that we can stop someone and see that they are medically examined in a proper environment to see if they are, indeed, smuggling cocaine in that manner.

Also, some quantity of heroin comes in on passengers, we believe, as well.

Mr. GRIMES. We process over 310 million people a year coming into our country. And you can imagine that by far, well over 99 percent of those people are legal, law-abiding citizens. But even at that, you take a very, very small percentage, you've got a large number of people who do smuggle into this country.

Senator DENTON. You mentioned the lengthy administrative procedure regarding the forfeiture process. I won't ask you to relate orally suggestions to streamline that process. But I will ask you if you do not, please summarize whatever you have in that respect because it doesn't bear upon some of our duties.

Mr. MILLER. We will be delighted to supply that for you, Mr. Chairman. And, of course, we are appreciative of the work that you and the Judiciary Committee have already done with respect to forfeiture. And we're hopeful that some of the things that you've pointed out and it will greatly help us in cutting down on the amount of time that it takes for this material to be forfeited to the Government. It will save the Government a lot of money and streamline a lot of the procedures as well. And we'll certainly provide you with an update on our most recent observations with respect to that.

Senator DENTON. Well, on behalf of Senator Hawkins, who is in the gallery in which you complimented him even more than he heard, I want to thank you on their behalf. And, of course, he can speak for himself for what he heard before. It's nice to hear such the armed services have had their successes in movies and television, not Service has been reflected in that respect. And I just wanted to say you, and acknowledgment of the risks you take in a very important area in protecting the country.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we ever have a Customs television show, they'll have to get somebody better looking than I am to do it.
In actuality, it would have probably been a whole lot more than that.

We made 99 arrests. We confiscated other drugs in conjunction with this. And we seized $85,000 worth of property. We seized six steel traps.

Mr. Milner. Six what?

Senator Denton. Six steel traps.

Mr. Milner. Steel traps, the old bear traps. Those were placed in the fields, around the fields, hoping that whoever was encroaching on the fields would step in one of them and get him away.

I have not seen but I have heard that in Florida they have encountered fish hooks, rattlesnakes tied to marijuana plants, and a lot of other varied ways of trying to protect their property.

Any time you find sensimilla you will find people who are constantly just right, keep the bugs off of it. It also sells for about $8,000 a marijuana.

That's about all I have to say about it. I'll be glad to answer any questions you might have.

Senator Dawson. Well, thank you, Major. That's very interesting.

Twenty feet high is about as high as this room, maybe a little bit higher. I have some pictures of it I would like to leave with the committee for their viewing of some actual plots of marijuana to the height of the marijuana plants. I would present them, and you can judge by the height of the people as well.

Senator Dawson. You and you pulled up about $1 million worth of marijuana. Would you care to estimate how much you haven't been able to pull it among the difficulty of finding them in many cases?

Mr. Milner. Senator, I would be surprised if we have gotten as many as 30 percent of the total growth; I would be surprised if we have.

Marijuana plants are grown singular, they're grown in quantities of up to 1,000 plants. We find them, two plants behind a house or one plant along the interstate. It's just so easy to grow.

I'm not sure who gave this statement. Maybe it's your prepared state-ment other than the general posse comitatus provisions.

Mr. Milner. That was not mine.

Senator Dawson. OK. There's no name attached to it, and I don't recall having heard it. It may have been the one, the next witness, Winston Orr, the chief of police. He's going to be represented by Jeff Stokes. Perhaps it's his.
I call your attention to the information package which has been provided to you. The contents of this package will aid you in following our testimony.

At this time I would like to defer to Corporal Jeffery Stokes who will begin our testimony.

STATEMENT OF JEFFREY A. STOKES

Mr. Stokes. Thank you, Senator. The purpose of the following information outline is to briefly describe certain evaluative assessments of the efforts being exerted by the Mobile Police Department in the area of drug enforcement as it relates to the interest of your subcommittee.

In addition to the intensified enforcement programs adopted in the Mobile area in comparison to the relative increase of illegal drugs, in the school year 1979-80, drug-related cases were 574. Quite a step above.

In addition inclusive observations and appraisals of drug enforcement operational efforts in the Gulf States region is provided for the review of the panel.

No. 1, assessment of impact of illegal drugs entering the Gulf States. Noticeable increase of cocaine supply in the region. Notable increases in pharmaceutical drugs such as Talwin, Dilaudid and Demerol which is a problem that we've had an increased amount of input into the area in comparison to the relative increase of illegal drugs.

In 1982 larceny was up 44.5 percent from 1979. 1982 burglaries were up 25.1 percent from 1979.

Accessibility of illegal drugs has increased in the schools as evidenced by the intensified enforcement programs adopted in the Mobile County School System and by the resultant increases in the number of drug-related offenses investigated at this level.

In the school year 1979-80, drug-related cases were put at 172 in the Mobile County School System. 1980 to 1981, drug cases were 193. 1981 to 1982, drug-related cases were 574. Quite a step above.

This statement is further supported through interviews and interrogation of offenders who indicate that supply, accessibility, and availability of illegal drugs have increased dramatically in our area. Corresponding increase of dealers and users as a result of the greater supply and accessibility of illegal drugs.

Notable increases in the amount of illegal drugs seized by authorities, particularly in cocaine seizures and corresponding amounts of cocaine importation. Seizure quantity has increased from an average 2-ounce quantity in 1980 to a 10-ounce average in 1982. Likewise, larger and more frequent marijuana seizures have resulted through departmental enforcement efforts. Indicators are that there is a larger shared involvement by a greater number of offenders in illegal area importation.

Senator Denton. Excuse me. You're referring to material you have given us here?

Mr. Stokes. Yes, sir. That's material that's not covered in this particular material that I'm reading now. This is additional material we'll get to you.

Senator Denton. All right. Will you make that available to us also?

Mr. Stokes. Yes, sir, absolutely.

Definite increases in the quantity and quality of domestic marijuana cultivation. Cases involving marijuana cultivation for personal as well as large-volume commercial distribution have been recorded in our immediate region.

Analysis of domestic product has demonstrated increases of the THC content of the locally/regionally cultivated plant. What that means is that the THC content—the psychoactive ingredient in the marijuana that's being grown locally—has a higher content of this THC in the locally grown plant than what we were having smuggled in.

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Although quantities of illegal drugs, cocaine, and marijuana, have increased in the region, prices of these drugs have likewise increased with the supply. Indicators are that enforcement efforts have resulted in a greater risk factor for the offender/imposter. This together with a greater demand for the drugs has brought about the price increase. An example is, in 1983 marijuana street costs represent a 50- to 100-percent increase over prices in 1980.

Millions of regional dollars are being spent for the purchase of illicit drugs thereby creating an economic drain and underdevelopment of the local region. This factor relates directly to the previously reported rise in property crime within our jurisdiction.

Review status of Federal, State, and local drug interdiction efforts. Working relationships of all levels of enforcement are at an all-time efficiency.

Crime Information Exchange, a locally founded organization comprised of members from all levels of enforcement which congregates monthly for the explicit purpose of exchanging and communicating intelligence and investigative matters of mutual concern. Expansion of this organization including members from adjacent Gulf Coast States was accomplished in September 1983.

Joint operational investigations between Federal, State, and local agencies are common. Recent undercover sting operations have resulted in the solution of numerous offenses and the apprehension of violators.

Joint efforts have consistently resulted in the arrest and prosecution of drug violators. An interdependence and reliability of agencies in our efforts to thwart drug trafficking has been manifested as an integral part of operational policy.

Current investigations are at this moment underway through the joint cooperation of all areas enforcement agencies. An expected continuation of these matters is anticipated.

Exploring the opportunities for enhancement of interdiction efforts. In view of the reported increases of domestic marijuana cultivation, it is the opinion and recommendation of this agency that greater monetary appropriations be earmarked for the detection and eradication of domestic marijuana in the region.

In consideration of the vast increases in domestic marijuana cultivation, it seems absolutely necessary that a greater enforcement effort from the air be undertaken.

As an example of our present underservice in this area, the State of Alabama currently has but one aircraft assigned to this region for this purpose.

Along the lines of similar reasoning, we foresee the immediate need for a more intensified enforcement effort directed to the near shore and coastal borders. The Alabama and Mississippi coasts have literally hundreds of Gulf accessible waterways leading to inland sites where
illegal importations of drugs are culminated. Through such an intensification of waterway patrols and detections on the parts of local authorities, we believe that a noticeable reduction in drug smuggling activities would result.

Mobile is a seaport community with worldwide trade. We feel that a more coordinated effort between State docks enforcement authorities and local police agencies should be undertaken to insure a greater and more effective scrutiny of the incoming cargoes aboard sailing vessels.

Senator Dawson. Excuse me. Between what two groups?

Mr. Storey. Between the State docks people and the local law enforcement, whether it be city or county. We're trying to instigate something in that nature now to get a little better cooperation.

This effort should also include the U.S. Customs office in order that a vital protection can be attained in our port. This same intensity of coordinated effort and revitalization of enforcement objective should apply to our local police.

Although communications channeled between Federal and local authorities has in recent years improved dramatically, there is, in our opinion, still area for more improvement. We would suggest that a more immediate disbursement of vital information be transferred via the El Paso Intelligence Center and other related agencies to local authorities, thereby providing for a more efficient and aware approach to the enforcement responsibility of local authorities.

The singular most important recommendation of endorsement that the Mobile Police Department can convey to this subcommittee is one of total commitment on the parts of all enforcement agencies to the ultimate goal of detecting, apprehending, and preventing drug smuggling into our region.

STATEMENT OF RONALD V. WILHELM

Mr. WILHELM. I have some general information statements pertaining to drug activity in the region with emphasis on the jurisdictional territory of the city of Mobile.

Investigative efforts and subsequent reports compiled by State authorities indicates that over 60,000 marijuana plants have been seized and destroyed in the State of Alabama during the first 9 months of 1983.

This statement and these figures serve in support of the previous testimony on the part of Corporal Stokes in relation to the increased level of domestic marijuana cultivation. Domestic cultivation has not only increased in this area but we have also noted during recent weeks an index of marijuana from the midwestern area of the country. These discoveries have led to communications with enforcement authorities from that region who have confirmed an increasing level of domestic marijuana cultivation in their area. Obviously, the successes of the Task Force in South Florida have had an affect outside our own region relative to domestic cultivation of marijuana.

In regard to the enforcement efforts being exerted toward this particular problem, it is our recommendation that continuity of support for air surveillance eradication plans be given high priority. In addition, greater support and encouragement toward the utilization of the asset seizure statute would serve as a more effective enforcement tool and as a deterrent for those persons less willing to sacrifice material holdings as a result of their involvement in the cultivation, storage and/or transportation of marijuana. Furthermore, inclusion of the Internal Revenue Service as a more involved investigative agency would result in establishing sources and patterns of income for suspected offenders.

Enclosed in the informational packets are photographs and other related documents concerning the unauthorized air importation of illegal drugs. The Federal Aviation Agency reports that there are approximately 30 airstrips in a four-county area of south Alabama and south Mississippi capable of handling the landings of medium to large aircraft. Further statistical information obtained from the Alabama Bureau of Investigation estimates that a minimum of three aircraft fully laden with illegal drugs are flown into and landed daily within the State of Alabama. This estimate is perhaps conservative when consideration is given to the seizures of 815 tons of marijuana by ABI agents in March 1983 and the more recent seizure of 815 pounds of cocaine in Montgomery, AL. These figures and other factors indicate that trafficking into our State is indeed on the increase as a result of the successful interdiction efforts in south Florida.

We would respectfully request that in response to this problem that operational methods, practices and efforts of the same type utilized in the task force region now be implemented and applied in the Gulf coastal area.

As you can see from the graph information provided to you, the categorical listings of marijuana seizures, cocaine seizures and the related number of police contacts with drug-related activities have dramatically increased since the time that the task force has been in full operation. We would like to believe that our investigative skills are the primary reason for these increases, but the simple fact is that there is simply a greater availability of drugs in our jurisdictional area than at any previous time.

We have implemented the following measures in an attempt to more effectively meet this problem.

No. 1, increased the number of investigative personnel assigned to our unit.

No. 2, began a program of intensified drug-related investigations focused or targeted on a particular person or persons.

No. 3, a continuation of the selection and assignment of top investigative officers to joint investigative efforts involving other enforcement agencies.

No. 4, the application of certain innovative investigative methods such as reverse undercover operations which have proven so successful in other locales.

No. 5, and lastly, but certainly important in view of the fact that statistics indicate a slight reduction in the number of drug-related offenses committed by juveniles, the creation of a drug education unit which has not great success in the area community awareness and cooperation in our efforts toward drug enforcement.

This concludes our testimony. Thank you.

[Submissions of Messrs. Orr, Wilhelm, and Stokes follow]
PREPARED STATEMENT OF WINSTON J. ORR

Mr. Chairman: The insidious increase of substance abuse into the civilian work forces of this country is seriously impairing our productivity and our very existence is a competitive world that we find ourselves in. This problem does not stop with the civilian work force, it is commonly known that services of the military branches are equally impaired by the substance abuse.

Therefore, I recommend to the committee that it take steps to broaden the pose control philosophy, which would not restrict the use of manpower as well as equipment and intelligence information and make these resources available to local law enforcement officials upon proper request to ensure that every effort is made to combat this problem. Services of the military branches should make a monthly commitment, including resources required to assist when requested by local authorities in the search and destruction of agricultural products of narcotics and the manufacture of drugs in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we should be aware that this is a national problem that can be resolved by total national commitment so that we can properly reduce the drug problem in this country to manageable proportions. Your committee should be made aware of the Yucatan Peninsula and the impact on other areas along the Gulf Coast. The Coast Guard and the Navy have shown great success in interdicting drug trafficking.

I feel that it would be in order for me to suggest that such liaison be set up through the (international) Association of Chiefs of Police, which would establish guidelines and instructions to be disseminated to all member chiefs on a national basis. Our assurance to drug interdiction is limited because of jurisdictional boundaries, limited resources and a lack of organizational ability to operate on the scale of the Florida Task Force.

Response to the problem

Target areas of the Gulf Coast should be equipped with tethered balloons (aerostats) which would provide the capability to detect low-flying aircraft. This information should be monitored by military installations at Eglin Air Force Base at Fort Walton, Naval Air Station at Pensacola, Coast Guard Base at Mobile, Naval Air Station at Pensacola, Coast Guard Base at Biloxi. This information should be given to law enforcement agencies when suspect aircraft have been detected. Further, Federal Aviation Administration employees who monitor civilian aircraft should report in the same manner.

The United States Coast Guard should increase patrol activities both air and water in areas of the South Florida Task Force. The Coast Guard and Naval blockade of the Yucatan Peninsula and the use of such sophisticated equipment as Air Force AWACS and other radar facilities to interdict drugs in South Florida has caused the South Florida Task Force to identify those persons who traffic in dangerous drugs and narcotics to preclude these areas.

The problem of non-existence due to the limited resources of local law enforcement.

Response to the problem

The Coast Guard should increase patrolling activities both air and water in these areas. We request the Coast Guard pass any intelligence data to the Task Force. Further, we recommend that military pilots and personnel be furnished training in the recognition of marijuana fields and to report suspect locations to local authorities. This training should be expanded to Reserve and Air National Guard units.

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IMPACT OF THE PORT OF MOBILE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA RESULTING FROM THE SOUTH FLORIDA DRUG TASK FORCE

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TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

SUBJECT: ON THE GULF COAST DRUG INTERDICTION HEARING

FROM: Mobile Police Department

RE: Testimony before Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism

The purpose of the following informational outline is to clarify the status of drug enforcement efforts in the Mobile, Alabama area and to present a factual account of conditions existent in the Mobile, Alabama area.

1. ASSESSMENT OF ILLEGAL DRUGS ENTERING THE AREA OF INTEREST

   a. Noticeable increase of cocaine supply in the region
      - More cocaine readily available at street level
      - Noticeable increases in the number of cocaine users
      - Significant increase in the number of drug-related offenses

   b. Noteworthy increase in corresponding levels of property crime in comparison to the relative increase of illegal drug interdiction efforts in the Gulf States region
      - Larceny (up 44.6% from 1979)
      - Burglary (up 12.6% from 1979)

   c. Accessibility of illegal drugs has increased in the school system
      - Increase in the number of drug-related offenses investigated at this level
      - Evidence of increased drug-related activity in the area
      - Cases involving marijuana cultivation for personal as well as large scale "commercial" distribution have been recorded in our immediate region

   d. Notable increase in the amounts of illegal drugs seized by authorities
      - Particularly cocaine seizures and corresponding amounts of cocaine imported (i.e., seizures averaging 2 oz. annually in 1982 to 10 oz. average in 1983)

   e. Decline in the quality and quantity of domestic marijuana cultivation
      - Declining trend in the number of large scale marijuana growing operations

2. CONCLUSION

   - Continued efforts are necessary to combat the illegal drug trade in the Gulf States region.
A. Analysis of domestic product has demonstrated increases in the area vacationally cultivated.

B. Economic Considerations:

1. Although quantities of illegal drugs (e.g., cocaine and marijuana) have increased in the region, prices of these drugs have remained high. Illinois agencies and authorities are faced with increasing demand for the drugs they confiscate. This apparent increase in drug prices has been linked to enforcement efforts that are not supported by the drug industry. The Illinois feedback for the enforcement efforts has been negative. For example, a 1985 marijuana "hot spot" study represented a $3,000 investment in the area.

2. Millions of illegal dollars flow through the black market for the purchase of illegal drugs. Along the lines of this practice, these efforts are directed to protect the market, and have resulted in increased drug seizures. In 1985, Illinois agencies and authorities reported that the drug industry increased its price levels, thereby creating an economic force that has been attracting the attention of the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry.

3. A more effective enforcement effort has been attractive to the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry.

II. EFFECTS OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL DRUG ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

4. Making relationships at all levels of enforcement at a high time efficient task.

5. A more effective enforcement effort has been attractive to the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry.

6. Investigative efforts have resulted in increased enforcement efforts. This has been attractive to the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry.

III. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON ENFORCEMENT OF ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES

A. In the view of the Illinois Department of Narcotics and the Illinois State Police, domestic marijuana cultivation is a major problem in the area. Enforecement efforts have resulted in increased enforcement efforts. This has been attractive to the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry. This economic force has been attracting the attention of the drug industry.

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IV. GENERAL INFORMATION AND STATEMENTS TO BE REPORTED IN THE REGION

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2. Begin a program of focused drug-related investigations focused or targeted on a particular person or persons.

3. A continuation of the selection and assignment of top investigators to conduct investigations involving other enforcement agencies.

4. The application of innovative investigative methods such as reverse undercover operations which have proven so successful in other locales.

5. And lastly, but certainly important in view of the fact that statistics indicate a slight reduction in the number of drug-related offenses committed by juveniles, the creation of a Drug Education Unit which has met great success in the areas of community awareness and cooperation in our efforts toward drug enforcement.

This concludes our testimony. Thank you.
Cocaine seized (in grams) L00

[These totals are representative of monthly totals of Cocaine seized by the Mobile Police Dept. Narcotics Unit.]

Florida Task Force begins February, 1982

1981 1982 1983
Senator DENTON. Thank you very much, gentlemen. I want to make sure that I do have all of that related to all of this that you gave us previously. And I want you to relay my thanks to Chief Orr, if you will, for your testimony here. And I regret that he had to depart.

Can we ask you these questions and expect that you can address them on their behalf?

Mr. Stokes. We'll attempt to, yes, sir.

Senator DENTON. All right. These represent the changes that occurred in cocaine seizures and arrests and drug-related calls handled by you since the Florida Task Force began.

I gather that you orally suggest that there have been more and that would be reasonably backed up by what's here on these graphs except on the drug-related calls which may seem to have dropped off somewhat. I don't know what the information for that would be. The others you have on the chart showing the arrests made by the Mobile Police Department Narcotics Unit only which I imagine represents. I don't know what other arrests might have been made. But you have a peak at the beginning of the Florida Task Force in January 1992 and then a dropoff throughout that year. And then a pickup to a higher peak in 1993. Does that characterize the trend?

Mr. Williams. That's a correct interpretation, yes, sir.

Senator DENTON. The FBI witness indicated that he thought it was unclear as to how much of an increase there may have been in drug traffic through this area since the task force was formed, the South Florida Task Force. Nothing he said would have ruled out an increase but I want to make sure that I have you straight.

Do I understand you correctly in that you believe or you are convinced that there has been an increase?

Mr. Williams. On the local level, yes, sir. A great many of the arrests and contacts reflected on those graph charts, and particularly the last one, reflect arrests for pharmaceutical products which we on the local level are very burdened. It comprises a large portion of our work percentage time.

Senator DENTON. In other words, some of the increase here may not be attributable to solely the South Florida Task Force but such things as an increase and emphasis on pharmaceutical drugs?

Mr. Williams. That's correct, sir.

Senator DENTON. OK. If you do get any more conclusive or comprehensive indication of an increase, we would ask to be tuned in as you proceed with these impressions.

If you had to list in an order of priority those categories which most critically needed improvement in the Mobile Police Department, which ones would you place near the top in the following categories: manpower, money, equipment, intelligence data?

Mr. Williams. From personal experience, I would have to say manpower. The entire police department, in particular the unit which I command, the narcotics unit, is understaffed in terms of being able to provide the necessary man-hours to carryout the investigation with which we are charged. So I would think if we had more individuals and certainly attention to those other things that you mentioned, but most importantly, more people to do the job. Then we could, in fact, do a better job.
Senator Dawson. Well, it's my impression from many hearings in Washington and throughout the country, with marihuana illegal it's almost impossible to even go after the users, for example. Therefore, there is very little deterrence in that respect.

Is that generally an accurate statement?

Mr. Wilhelm. It's very much like climbing up a wall and trying to deter and apprehend the user. That is a correct statement. However, we as local law enforcement officers bear a certain responsibility in attempting to at least clean up the streets. The common user in this area of town and certain specific areas of this town are very visible. And they are very much of a thorn in our side in that we get constant complaints. We feel that we must react to these complaints even though it may result in an arrest that afternoon and the offender out on the street again the following day. And I think that if we were negligent in that respect, we wouldn't be meeting our responsibilities.

Senator Dawson. But it does seem from what you just said about Mobile that it parallels to what exists in Washington, D.C., where certain neighborhoods are dominated by drug trafficking. And I believe even without police interference, the name which has been applied to one of those neighborhoods is the shooting gallery, which I suppose involves shooting between the supplier who hasn't been paid off and the user who pleads for more or the user shooting the supplier because he won't give it to him. And also the shooting gallery means the needle into the vein.

It seems that we have come to a sad point and I'm not sure we're getting, we're making improvement nationally. And it's a particularly tragic thing when the need for the resupply of whatever drug that is addictive causes, as you indicated by the property thefts, crime in that area as well as crime, assault, murders and so forth.

In Mobile, do you see that as getting better, about the same, or worse in general, overall?

Mr. Wilhelm. I would say at this point that it's about the same as it was over the last 8- to 8-year period. We have reached what we like to think of as a position of stability.

Senator Dawson. A plateau from which you hope to descend?

Mr. Wilhelm. We certainly do.

Senator Dawson. I want to thank you, Lieutenant Wilhelm, and you, Corporal Stokes, for your testimony here this morning.

And I wish to say, for what it's worth, that all of the hearings I've attended on drugs I have not attended one which covered the spectrum from the highest Federal level to the local level and also the holding overnight hearings on the DEA or the FBI or attending briefings at one or the other of those places.

I have excellent rapport with the Customs Service and the Department of Defense, of course. But I don't think I've ever been privileged to share a more comprehensive hearing or a more useful hearing. And I'd like to compliment those who attended because of their interest. And I'd like to compliment the media for their constant attendance.