

Running Head: WAR ON DRUGS

Countries involved in the War on Drugs

MSG William L. Majors

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SGM Hardin

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ABSTRACT

The United States Military is actively engaged in fighting the war on drugs. The U.S. government's position is to fight the war in the countries that grow, export and sell the drugs in the United States. Fighting the war abroad gives us the greatest chance of victory. We fight this battle by providing soldiers, money, equipment, arms, intelligence, training, and joint service assets. Most American Citizens feel that this war cannot be won; due to minimal media coverage on current drug busts of major cartels perpetuates this perception. The reality is; the communities of America are far freer of drugs than they could ever possibly imagine.

Countries involved in the Drug Wars

For the United States to win the war on drugs; we must continue to take the war abroad. Fighting the war on drugs abroad prevents two major things from occurring. One it prevents known drug cartels from establishing their headquarters in America, and two it prevents the possible destruction of our country. The U.S. Military works in a partnership with the local, state, and federal levels of government in each country participating in the War on Drugs.

Here are some of the countries the U.S. Military has and is conducting operations: South America, Columbia, Central America, Mexico, China, Peru, Bolivia, Caribbean Islands and South Asia. In most of these countries they do not possess a willing and trained military or police force to conduct drug interdiction and protect their people from the Drug Cartels. Significant Drug Cartels in Columbia are the, Cali Cartel - based Cali, and Medellin Cartel - based in Medellin and was prominent during 1970's-1980's.

According to (Miranda, 2001) in Mexico they are; Gulf Cartel - based in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Juarez Cartel - based in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Sinaloa Cartel - based in Culiacan, Sinaloa, Sonora Cartel (Caro-Quintero Cartel) - based in Hermosillo, Sonora and the Tijuana Cartel (Arellano-Felix Cartel) - based in Tijuana. These places are the Drug Cartels location of choice because they have the drugs they traffic in their raw form, and most of those drugs are legal to grow and harvest in raw form. The labor is cheap; and it's a main source of income for most of the population. The terrain for most of these countries is jungle, mountainous, and wooded which makes it very difficult for law enforcement to detect. The most advantageous reason of course is the corruption throughout their governments.

Cocaine is the drug of choice for the drug cartels to traffic because of the demand and its street value. Other drugs being sold illegally are: Heroin/Morphine, Opium, Marijuana, Methamphetamine, and Anabolic Steroids. Some of the ways these drugs are smuggled into the U.S. will surprise. Smugglers use human mules, which is a person that carries drugs; on and some cases in their bodies. During the Vietnam War the coffins of Soldiers were used, even cars, trucks, airplanes, boats, luggage, and even cute little puppies have been used by them.

The U.S. Military's involvement in the War on Drugs includes these assets: Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and the Coast Guard. The Department of Defense (DOD) provides the services of the Drug of Enforcement Administration (DEA). These joint services provide an obvious contribution based on their role.

The Army sends special teams to these countries to provide training and equipment to their military and police forces. They are experts in day and night operations that require skill in tracking and land navigation. These teams will stay within that country for weeks, months, and in some cases even years until that country can do the job itself. The Air Force provides aerial reconnaissance and produces maps of designated target areas. They are also very effective in day or night operations. The Navy and Coast Guard share the same role; they conduct drug interdiction operations in international and national waters.

According to (Miranda, 2001) here is an example of the type of units needed to continue the fight. The U.S. SOUTHCOM (Southern Command), which is responsible for Latin America and the Caribbean, is considered to be manning the "front line" of the war on drugs. SOUTHCOM has a total of 6300 Army personnel, including one infantry

brigade (about three battalions), plus assorted Special Forces, military police, military intelligence and aviation units (Miranda, 2001). The SOUTHCOM is a perfect example of the type of units we will need globally to give a significant blow to the cartels. They are even more important now, because the drug lords are paying terrorist groups for protection and power against their governments, military, police and its citizens. The White House is increasing its foreign policy with these nation states by providing millions of dollars to help them combat the cartels.

These policies also include advisors, military assistance, and financial aid for drug prevention within their own countries. The largest amount to date the White House has approved is an eighteen billion dollar budget for 2008, to continue the War on drugs.

Here is the latest good news story on how effective the War on Drugs is going; SAN DIEGO - A leader of the notorious Arellano-Felix drug cartel was arrested while deep-sea fishing off the coast of Baja California and will face federal charges in San Diego, authorities said Wednesday. Francisco Javier Arellano-Felix, 37, was taken into custody Monday by federal drug agents and the U.S. Coast Guard according to (North County Times Wire Services, 2007).

Conclusion

As the U.S. Military continues in to fight the War on Drugs; we must remember that they deserve the best Soldiers, training, equipment, and the support of the American people to win. The Department of Defense must ensure that the media continues to show the positive accomplishments that our military is making. We have the best military in the world, we can deploy by land, air or sea and with the cooperation of our international partners we can win this war.

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