In Northern California, Bisqueen Castles (hothouses) mark the beginning of spring and the start of a new campaign season for marijuana eradication operations. A continent away in the Chaparé region of Bolivia, the rainy season is ending, allowing the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to rekindle the flames of its campaign to eradicate Andean coca plants and disrupt the drug flow to the United States. The past five years or so have witnessed numerous large counterdrug operations such as those conducted under the aegis of US embassies, DEA, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, state governors’ offices and many more.

Since Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney’s staunch Department of Defense (DOD) letter of September 1989, the military has been actively supporting drug law enforcement agencies at home and abroad. In the US Southern Command (US SOUTHCOM) area, Operation Support Justice has provided continued military support to US ambassadors’ counterdrug efforts and to the host nations’ counterdrug infrastructures in order to attack drugs at the source. US Army Forces Command, by way of its continental armies and Joint Task Force 6, has been supporting major marijuana eradication operations, while the state governors’ National Guard has been especially active in countering drugs at the growing source. Many of these operations are large-scale efforts involving interagency planning and civil–military cooperation in the execution of complex concepts for operations. Operations such as Green Sweep, Green Merchant, Ghost Dancer, Ghost Zone, Grizzly, Wipeout, Badge and Blast Furnace have become highly visible to citizens of the United States and South America, creating some curiosity as well as outright anger at military involvement.

With another season for “whack and stack” operations fast upon us, it would be useful to look at example interagency operations, one abroad and one at home, to explore just where these types of operations fit into our counterdrug strategies. Have they had any real impact on the drug threat? What is the significance of these large counterdrug operations? Do they fit our objectives? Are they backed with the requisite resources and long-term commitments needed to make their concepts work?

The origins of counterdrug efforts can be traced through a series of strategies to the National Security Strategy. Therein the president’s strategic objective is to “reduce the flow of drugs
into the United States by encouraging reduction in foreign production, combatting international traffickers and reducing demand at home...” He would also help combat the “illicit drug trafficking” threat to friendly nations. Implementing these general goals is the National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS), prepared within the Executive Office of the White House by the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

The 1992 NDCS is the fourth attempt to provide strategic guidance for the president’s war on drugs. While the two-front approach, supply and demand, is still evident, there are some subtle shifts of emphasis that cannot be lost on the military planners who support supply reduction efforts:

● Reducing the supply of drugs by sharpening the focus of the attack on drug trafficking organizations.
● Identifying drug trafficking networks, determining their most vulnerable points, including leadership, operations centers, communications systems, shipping capability and transportation modes, chemical suppliers and financial assets and dismantling them by attacking these points simultaneously.
● Coordinating law enforcement attacks, especially against the traffickers’ home base of operations.
● Isolating key growing areas, blocking shipment and importation of precursor and essential chemicals, destroying major processing and shipping centers and controlling key air and riverine corridors.

This strategy overlooks the fact that the United States is also a source for marijuana. It rightly seeks to avoid pitting law enforcement officers and supporting military personnel against the farmer who grows the drug: “Eradication programs will be undertaken only after an assessment of their effect on total... production... and the likely political consequences.”

Supplementing the president’s counterdrug strategy are a number of law enforcement strategies that guide counterdrug operations. DEA’s Strategic Management System provides guidance for worldwide counterdrug efforts organized into sub-strategies by function: intelligence, investigations, cannabis, cocaine, heroin, and so on. Operation Alliance and Project Northstar are two coordinating headquarters with strategies for dealing with drug trafficking, the former in a four-state region of the US southwestern border, the latter along the US-Canadian border. An emerging theme in these drug strategies is “pursuing the producers, rather than the product.” Emphasis is shifting from suppressing drug production at the growing site to targeting cartel kingpins, their financial underpinnings, transportation networks and assets.

Military strategies guide the application of operational and nonoperational support to drug law enforcement agencies and military detection and monitoring along drug trafficking routes. Most instructive of these is the USSOUTHCOM Southern Theater Strategy with its series of plans for forward-presence operations; these include guidance for counterinsurgency, nation assistance and counterdrug operations. Under this strategy, USCINCSOUTH has developed a counterdrug campaign plan that provides support to host nations to assist them in combating drug production and trafficking. Cuing on the NDCS, the USSOUTHCOM counterdrug campaign targets the drug source area (Andean Ridge), transit areas in Central America and...
other potential source and transit areas. "The USSOUTHCOM focus is on the Ambassador and his country team—we support the Ambassadors."10 USSOUTHCOM's major thrust here is to "support successful and decisive host nation

Military strategies guide the application of operational and non-operational support to drug law enforcement agencies and military detection and monitoring along drug trafficking routes. The USSOUTHCOM Southern Theater Strategy [has a] series of plans for forward–presence operations; these include guidance for counterinsurgency, nation assistance and counterdrug operations.

counterdrug operations . . . [to] . . . destroy physical infrastructures for cultivation, processing and transportation . . . [and to] . . . neutralize key organization personnel by capture, arrest, extradition or imprisonment."11

This seems to replicate the national strategy of targeting the producer rather than the product, suggesting that the lessons of operations Green Sweep in California (1990) and Blast Furnace in Bolivia (1986) were useful in fine-tuning US thinking about counterdrug strategies, and that conceptually we are on the right course.

Counterdrug operations conducted in Bolivia throughout the summer of 1992 provide an opportunity to see the influence of our drug strategies upon current operations and the relationship of these operations to the host nations' interests and attitudes. A history of our involvement with counterdrug efforts here could begin with the August 1983 US–Bolivian treaties, which provided a basis for US funding support for Bolivian counterdrug efforts. This enabled the creation of the 300–man UMOPAR (Rural Area Police Patrol Unit) (Los Leopards—The Leopards), whose task was to eradicate the cocaine trade flourishing in the departments of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.12 By the summer of 1984, the UMOPAR, joined by 1,500 Bolivian soldiers, entered the Chaparé region of Cochabamba to tear apart the drug industry. The operations were unpopular, and peasant demonstrations caused the withdrawal of troops from the Chaparé "military zone." In July 1986, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs authorized US troops to provide temporary logistic support for National Police Corps find–and–destroy operations against coca–processing facilities in the Chaparé region and the Beni and Santa Cruz departments.13 Blast Furnace provided US training assistance (aviation and counterinsurgency) and helicopter transportation to the UMOPAR and others to search out and destroy coca–processing facilities (coca base and cocaine hydrochloride laboratories). Six US Black Hawk helicopters and 160 US support personnel arrived in Bolivia on 14 July to provide air mobility to Bolivian antidrug forces.14

Blast Furnace was ill–fated—it attacked the subsistence–level coca worker without hurting the narcotrafficker. Also, publicity of the action enabled narcotraffickers to leave target areas ahead of the DEA–UMOPAR. The disruptive effect of Blast Furnace was short lived—it was a matter of too few resources and too short a time. The four–month operation depressed coca prices below production costs, but things returned to normal at the end of the operation. The positive effects, however, were long–lasting, in that a basis for joint combined interagency cooperation had been forged, and Blast Furnace was an effective training exercise for Bolivian and US personnel.15 Blast Furnace also hardened local attitudes against counterdrug forces. Coca farmers were incited by narcotraffickers and peasant union federations to support demonstrations (a problem still today). In October 1986, just before the end of Blast Furnace, around 6,000 residents of the Beni town of Santa Ana de Yacuma expelled 150 US soldiers and UMOPAR members.16

Since 1988, DEA has continued its efforts to suppress cocaine trafficking along the Andean ridge, under a US–based program called Operation Snowcap. This operation has pro-
provides temporary-duty agents to US ambassadors to support the country strategy and advise host nation counterdrug forces.17 Continued pressure by farmers, union groups and narcotics traffickers has pushed both Bolivia and US counterdrug agencies toward alternative ways of attacking cocaine at the source. A tough 1988 Bolivian antinarcotics law (Law 1008), passed to continue receiving US assistance, served to inflame the campesino and inspire nationalist anti-American feelings. Considerable political clout is held by the peasant coca growing syndicates organized into regional federations that are, in turn, supported by the powerful Bolivian Workers' Union.

The result has been that the Bolivian government has shied away from repressive eradication in favor of voluntary crop substitution and eradication.18 This seems to fit well enough into the NDCS and the operational concepts of the DEA, the State Department (International Narcotics Matters) and USSOUTHCOM as they support Bolivia's cocaine suppression program.

In Bolivia, the change in interdiction strategy is highly significant since it effectively redirects US and Bolivian antinarcotics forces from the areas of coca cultivation and the initial phase of the cocaine production cycle, where the largest number of subsistence-level farmers are involved, to the more powerful and important trafficking elements in the isolated areas of Bolivia.19 In a sense, the focus of the strategy is on the drug trafficking organization as a center of gravity, and some of its key strengths that are not directly linked to the small farmer.

The strategy seeks to enhance investigative police work to disrupt and dismantle trafficking...
organizations; establish a permanent government presence throughout the Chaparé; reinforce the Bolivian eradication effort with US aid and military civic action projects; and block the movement of coca product out of and essential coca-processing chemicals into Bolivia. By reducing the availability of coca paste and base product indirectly, the price should plunge far enough to encourage crop substitution. It seems reasonable to expect a drop in prices, given the successful joint US-Bolivia antidrug efforts during 1990 in the Chaparé. Leaf prices declined due to operations against coca-processing. With Blast Furnace as a forerunner, Snowcap and other interdiction efforts have adjusted to the art of the possible in Bolivia. This can be seen in the lengthy Ghost Zone, which started in March with the goal "to completely disband the drug-trafficking organizations that have operated throughout the Chaparé region." As one senior DEA official in Bolivia has said, "the king-pins are the center of gravity." "

Ghost Zone is in line with the Document of Cartagena and contributes to the US ambassador's strategic objective "to restrict and ultimately eliminate the production of cocaine for export to the US or other markets or for domestic use [illicitly in Bolivia]." Using human and high-technology intelligence gathering, this sophisticated counterdrug operation involves about 750 Bolivian counterdrug personnel under a Special Antinarcotics Force (FELCN) (UMOPAR, police and military). Bolivian military participation includes the Navy Blue Devils (five riverine support vessels, 20 light patrol boats and 10 Zodiac inflatable boats) and the Air Force Red Devils (22 UH-1 helicopters and five Cessna fixed-wing aircraft). They are supported by about 35 Americans from the Army, Coast Guard and US Customs, with DEA as the lead agency. They intend to suppress the export of coca base via air, land and river routes from the growing fields to distant processing labs in Pando, El Bení and Santa Cruz departments. Because a drug trafficker's Cessna 206B type aircraft can carry about 300 kilograms of paste or base, one military senior operations planner who is assisting DEA has identified this type aircraft as the center of gravity for the counterair part of Ghost Zone.

In addition to ending the air shipment of coca paste from the Chaparé, Ghost Zone also attempts to interdict movement of essential paste- and base-producing chemicals into the region, and uses intelligence and investigative police work to immobilize wholesale paste buyers and producers. "

In addition to ending the air shipment of coca paste from the Chaparé, Ghost Zone also attempts to interdict movement of essential paste- and base-producing chemicals into the region, and uses intelligence and investigative police work to immobilize wholesale paste buyers and producers. Mindful of Blast Furnace's lessons, Ghost Zone will maintain a presence throughout two growing seasons, until the October rainy season. This could be long enough to make a significant dent in the availability of coca paste to Colombian traffickers. Now enjoying some early success, operations planners are hoping to extend the campaign into 1993.

As originally framed, Ghost Zone has three phases. Phase I, an intelligence preparation started on 4 February 1992, included imagery, signal and human intelligence collection methods to identify narcotrafficking leadership, pro-
cessing laboratories and airfields. Phase II began 28 March, with intensive operations to close land, sea and air lines of communications from the growing and processing areas to Colombian traffickers, dismantle trafficking organizations via raids, arrests and seizures, and enhance Bolivian government eradication efforts. Phase III, which began 12 May, is sustaining Phase II operations (ongoing as of this printing) in order to keep the pressure on narcotraffickers for a significant period of time. This is to negatively affect coca profits and expand operations aimed at kingpin targets in areas outside the Chaparé.

To take advantage of the drop in coca leaf prices caused by Ghost Zone and Snowcap, DIRECO (the Coca Eradication Directorate responsible for rural development in areas where alternative crops displace coca growing) has been encouraging crop substitution by offering $2,000 certificates for each hectare of coca destroyed. It is uncertain how successful this effort will be, even with the pressure exerted by Ghost Zone. In the past, “eradication failed to keep pace with the expanding amount of new coca being planted by Bolivian growers.”

During these active counterdrug operations, routine forward–presence operations (nation assistance) have been conducted under the direction of the US military group to support the Bolivian goals of strengthening democratic institutions and economic growth. At the center of this effort, throughout the summer of 1992, are 16 major engineer projects (horizontal construction, airfield development, road improvement and hospital repairs) from eight different locations in Bolivia. Such projects are essential to reinforce DIRECO efforts in convincing the farmer that his movement to alternative farming will enjoy some long-term benefit, and that he is part of a general economic development. Yet, this seems to be the Achilles’ heel of our counterdrug strategy in Bolivia—though Ghost Zone’s operational concepts are sound, the operation may rest on a foundation of faltering alternative development and Bolivia’s overall slow economic development. As a senior DEA agent observed, narcotraffickers are fish swimming in a sea of coca farmers. Perhaps the success of Ghost Zone and similar campaigns is best measured by the progress of the campesino.

According to Gonzalo Mercado, Bolivia’s chairman of the Legislative Chamber of Deputies Antinarcotics Committee, nothing has changed for the common peasant. The alternative development program has been limited to small groups of growers, while counterdrug efforts continue. This has resulted in an environment of constant social tension in the Chaparé.
that could spark armed struggle. "Desperation prevails among certain peasants in the Chaparé region because, despite their constant efforts to replace their crops, an appropriate response by the organizations financing alternative development is missing."29 Further exacerbating the situation have been allegations of corruption within DIRECO, which resulted in the replacement of its chairman in April.30

Local dissatisfaction was illustrated by leaflets appearing in Chaparé the first week of June 1992, exclaiming "Coca or Death—We Will Win." This declaration by the "Young Coca Growers Group," perhaps a fledgling subversive group or just a narcotrafficker's ploy, called for a "revolutionary and prolonged struggle in the region" and urged coca producers to "plant new plantations and to expel by force the US advisers of the official policy against drugs."

This calls to mind the nagging question of the long-term effectiveness of large counterdrug operations such as Ghost Zone. Can a combined US—Bolivian effort, well conceived, well executed and supportive of both nations' counterdrug objectives, undermine fundamental national goals for economic development and efficient democratic institutions? Can such large and visible counterdrug operations contribute toward establishing conditions for corruption and disaffection from the legitimate institutions of government—or even insurgency? Reports of the presence of elements of the Peruvian Communist Party—Shining Path in Bolivia make this an important element in the assessment process as future strategies and operations are considered.32

A preliminary assessment of the significance of Ghost Zone and its relationship to national and counterdrug strategy can be useful as the United States continues to plan the drug battle in overseas areas. Among positive indicators, Bolivia has demonstrated a commitment to countering illicit coca production within its domain, thereby supporting its image as a law–abiding nation and reinforcing sovereign control over its territory. According to Social Defense Undersecretary Gonzalo Torrico Flores, the FELCN has achieved "partial control over drug trafficking activity" by arresting hundreds of traffickers, largely avoiding the outbreak of violence among the coca growers.33 Ghost Zone also has provided an opportunity for US drug law enforcement and military personnel to train while assisting the professional development of Bolivian police and military. The operation is also an important combined exercise in which Bolivian and US officials at all levels learn each other's capabilities and limitations, perhaps clearing the way for future cooperation. Time will tell if this campaign will have lasting impact on narcotraffickers, if it contributes to the objectives of the US National Counterdrug Strategy, and if it makes any lasting contribution toward the well–being of Bolivians and others along the Andean Ridge.

The continuing presence of large–scale counterdrug initiatives in Andean Ridge countries prompted criticism that the United States was being hypocritical—we were demanding coca eradication efforts from our overseas friends while we were unwilling to take the political heat to counter marijuana growing at home. Even though DEA's Domestic Cannabis Eradication Suppression Program had been under way since 1979, then President Alan Garcia Perez of Peru openly chastised US countercannabis efforts. As a result, William Bennett, then head of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), directed an expansion of domestic marijuana eradication efforts.34 This was a reasonable ini-
During these active counterdrug operations, routine forward–presence operations (nation assistance) have been conducted under the direction of the US military group to support the Bolivian goals of strengthening democratic institutions and economic growth. At the center of this effort, throughout the summer of 1992, are 16 major engineer projects from eight different locations in Bolivia.
A significant problem that plagued Green Sweep from the outset was its failure to win enthusiastic local support. With marijuana a major cash crop in Humboldt County ($500 million annually), there was little enthusiasm for “whack and stack” actions. Indeed, the Citizens Oversight Group (COG) seemed to be a catalyst for resistance to the operation. The COG was alleged by some law enforcement personnel to be the “Council of Growers,” a marijuana cooperative group that shared profits, provided seed money and insurance against crop failure or eradication and social support. Local press reaction was also negative. Green Sweep was pictured as an “invasion.” Radio station KMUD discouraged support for the operation, describing daily task force activities and a media day demonstration against the eradication effort. Worse yet for the task force, the sheriff of Humboldt County, who had initially been part of the operation, pulled out two weeks before its start and became a harsh critic of the effort. He preempted federal action by conducting his own marijuana eradication near the objective area three days before Green Sweep. Some officials contended that the sheriff’s operation breached operations security and played to the press. As Green Sweep got underway, the sheriff “expressed displeasure with the way the troops ‘stormed in,’ and area residents protested the ‘invasion’ of nearly 200 armed soldiers in camouflage fatigues and face paint as frightening for their children and horses.” The BLM press release on 29 July seemed to have little salutary effect. As the operation began, seasonal weather delayed some aircraft support, and the motor convoy was involved in an auto accident. At the base camp, the high frequency radio command and control net was experiencing difficulty because of mountainous terrain. Finally, about 50 protesters and other interested citizens appeared at the site, adding to the challenge of the first day. On 30 July, the day began with five BLM-National Guard patrols conducting countermarijuana efforts in areas close to the base camp. At the same time, station KMUD identified the base camp location and encouraged local citizens to demonstrate there. The day’s results were the seizure of 200 marijuana plants and 700 pounds of farming equipment. Three arrests for trespassing were made by BLM at the base camp (a diver-
sion for others to photograph the camp). The next day, two eradication teams were deployed and the plant count rose by 523. Task force leaders began preparation for “media day,” an opportunity to invite the press to the base camp and tell the task force story. KMUD was already describing a “media day” demonstration.

Eradication continued on 1 August, with 683 plants and 2.6 tons of growing paraphernalia confiscated from federal lands. This equipment included marijuana drying shacks, fertilizer, black plastic water hoses, timers, sprinklers, water barrels, plywood, and so forth. At this point, code words were introduced into task force radio nets because local citizens were attempting to disrupt operations on the air-ground frequency. A telephone was installed at the base camp to facilitate communications. That evening, the task force made ready for media day.

On 2 August, 80 accredited press people arrived, accompanied by 300 demonstrators. Among the latter were representatives from Earth First, NORMAL (National Organization for the Repeal of Marijuana Laws) and many “flower people” attending the annual Rastafarian Reggae Festival, a local harvest celebration of the sinsemilla crop. It was coincidentally in progress at nearby Shelter Cove, 5 miles from the base camp. Nevertheless, extensive media coverage failed to help the mission, not because ubiquitous protesters captured press sympathies, but because on that day the press quickly migrated to the day’s big story: Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait seemed to be more newsworthy than the “invasion” of Humboldt County.

The operation continued through August. The remaining days were punctuated with occasional protests (some violent) and general local resistance. The California Highway Patrol escorted government vehicles to preclude violent confrontations. On 3 August, local civilians threatened a military laundry unit with a pistol, and a UH-60 helicopter was hit with three rounds of .22-caliber ground fire. In addition, the only access to the base camp shared the single highway to the reggae festival attended by nearly 15,000 people, increasing the potential for conflict. Numerous incidents with locals continued during the exercise, prompting the development of rules of engagement for task force use in protecting government property. On 5 August, violent demonstrations threatened camp security, and search teams were kept in the field to avoid the demonstration.

Through 7–8 August, forest fires became a significant problem, precluding continued operations by eradication teams in the northern areas of the King Range. The campaign ended
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9 August 1990 with task force redeployment and demobilization.

The results were: 1,400 marijuana plants (perhaps worth $2,000 each) eradicated at 28 growing sites—26 of these sites returned to their natural state—and 12 tons of growing equipment removed from the forest. An additional 12 tons of equipment were destroyed in place. Marijuana growers' profits were set back three years. As in Bolivia, the drug farmer was not pleased with the presence of a counterdrug task force that was perceived as a military organization.

Experience gained and the after-action evaluation of Green Sweep were helpful to other operations, especially Ghost Dancer in western Oregon, a BLM operation following on the heels of Green Sweep. Obvious lessons were the need for a good public affairs program to support operational objectives, thorough intelligence preparation of the operating area, consensus building among law enforcement officials down to the local level and a resolution of the logistical burden created when forest sanitation is an objective. Most important was the need for long-term commitment to pursue the operation so as to have an impact on the drug trafficking organization. It is remarkable how these lessons are interchangeable with our counterdrug campaigns in overseas regions.

The high degree of sophistication of the marijuana growers, who planted in difficult terrain inside seasonal fog banks, then camouflaged their crops, was interesting. Garden sizes were scaled to federal court work loads which, at the time, declined to prosecute growers of small plots. Growers were supported by a well-organized human intelligence network, and they used booby traps and poisoned food to discourage man and beast from attacking their plants.

Green Sweep's strategic results and lessons are significant for understanding the place of large-scale campaigns against drug crops in supporting...
counterdrug strategies. On the positive side, “Green Sweep was very valuable to the building of partnerships with South American nations to fight illicit drug production and trafficking.” According to ONDCP, US embassies in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia sent cables stating that stateside counterdrug operations such as Green Sweep were lending strength to the US case for coca eradication in the Andean Ridge.

Green Sweep was also an opportunity to reestablish federal control of lands given over to the drug trafficker, remarkably parallel with the counterdrug efforts in Bolivia.

In another sense though, Green Sweep had a negative side. It did not last long enough to make a difference, a problem experienced years before with Blast Furnace in Bolivia. It was expensive in resources—airplanes, people and logistics. The biggest problem was the lack of clearly defined objectives. BLM focus shifted from eradication, arrest and prosecution to returning the land to its natural state and removing agricultural paraphernalia. Some California officials were fixed on eradication; ONDCP’s strategic goal was to demonstrate resolve to attack US drug source areas while the US pushed its Andean friends for continued eradication overseas. Now, with such a large basis of experience in counterdrug campaigns, some concepts are evolving that may help leaders as they tackle the drug challenge.

Operations such as Ghost Zone and Green Sweep bring to mind some central issues for operational planning to support US counterdrug strategy. Identifying the main source of the drug criminals’ strength is an important first step that can bring necessary focus to the operation. With Blast Furnace as a lesson learned, the planners of Ghost Zone in Bolivia have zeroed in on the narco-trafficking organization and its key leadership as the center of gravity. In a major supporting operation, the fight to control air space and air lines of operation, the traffickers’ single-engine aircraft was an important strength that had to be neutralized. The important thing for planners is to focus on the direct relationship of the objective and the center of gravity. If objectives are not clear, then it becomes difficult to focus efforts against a center of gravity, and more difficult yet to ensure that everyone understands the intended goals.

In Green Sweep, the strategic objective was not clear to the planners because they were perceived as changing in emphasis or priority during the very operation. Was the center of gravity the marijuana farmer or the COG? Was it the bank branch office where safe deposit boxes were sold out? Was it public attitudes and the media that precluded a favorable showing? A logical choice has to begin with defining the strategic objective.

Another problematic issue inherent in counterdrug operations is the close relationship between drug trafficking and drug use, and the social–political–economic environment in which this is sustained. Large-scale paramilitary counterdrug operations may well be inadequate if they do not support a long-term interagency strategy for economic development, social reform, institutional development and professionalization and law enforcement. It is often painful for strategists to remember that successful strategies require clear objectives, suitable concepts and sufficient resources. Ghost Zone in Bolivia has been well conceived and executed and is correctly tied to the aims of US and Bolivian
strategies; yet, there is concern that both nations will not have the resources to effectively support strategies for national development on a scale that can transform coca traditions into alternative forms of economic development.

Within the United States, resources are lacking to establish a presence in marijuana source areas and put an end to the "agricannabusiness." Smart growers have been moving indoors, with hydroponics technology to ensure a profit. During a period of economic difficulties, federal, state and local governments will be disinclined to support large counterdrug operations that may be politically unpopular—just as in Bolivia. It is difficult also to find convincing evidence that large counterdrug operations have any long-term impact on drug availability in the United States. There are certainly positive benefits, but perhaps the value of these operations, much as border control efforts in the Southwestern United States, is more in the demonstration of sovereign resolve than in the results produced.

Future US trends for counterdrug operations will be small actions against centers of gravity and other systemic strengths that can be disabled so as to hurt narcotics trafficking organizations. Eradication will focus on the increasing use of indoor cultivation and the exportation of the Northern California crop to high-priced markets in Hawaii and Canada. Future BLM operations will be small, on a site-by-site basis. "We will not engage in anything this size again."

Overses initiatives will probably continue paramilitary counterdrug operations in places such as Bolivia and Peru. Close linkage between these counterdrug campaigns and the national strategies they support will be requisite. Much like our Vietnam experience, campaign victories repeatedly won with the sweat and blood of brave people will be illusive if they are linked to hollow strategies.

NOTES

1. Bisqueen Castles are small farm structures covered with clear plastic (polyethylene) to form hothouses used by marijuana growers to get an early jump on the growing season. They are easy to spot from the air, as camouflage lends to reduce their effectiveness in gathering the springtime sunlight.


3. "Whack and stack" refers to cutting plants by hand, then placing them in piles for burning, a labor-intensive operation that is difficult to sustain. During Operation Whiskei in the Hawaiian Islands, August-October 1990, experimental eradication by Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) using a helicopter spot spray system proved to be very effective. (Glycophuta commercial name Round Up) was used with a sticking agent (scos) and Red Dye Number 23 (used in lipstick). Growers were forced off public land into more expensive indoor facilities; the price of marijuana went up from $2.50 to $6.00 a pound. This resulted in 25 arrests, seizure of $120,000 in assets and the destruction of 368,005 sinsemilla (high-quality, high–THC content) marijuana plants. See US Department of Justice, DEA, 1980 Domestic Cannabis Eradication Suppression Program (Washington, DC, December 1980), 21 and 30; also Office of National Drug Control Policy, Supply Reduction Working Group, Public Lands Drug Control Committee report "1990 After Action Assessment Seminar," San Francisco, California, 30–31 January 1991, 6–8.


6. Ibid., 91.

7. Operation Alliance, Southwest Border Drug Control Strategy II, El Paso, Texas, June 1992. Operation Alliance is a coordinating headquarters for the Southwest Border High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, established by the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Its task is to facilitate coordinated federal, state and local counterdrug actions in high threat counties of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. Project Northstar is the US–Canada border counterpart to Operation Alliance. It is a multiagency coordinating headquarters which operates through East, Central and Western Regional Joint Coordinating Groups. Membership includes law enforcement organizations from Canada and federal, state and local drug law enforcement elements across the northern United States.


9. Operational support to law enforcement agencies includes units and personnel involved in reconnaissance and surveillance, ground and air mobility, equipment operation and maintenance, intelligence preparation and fusion, planning and staff support, engineering construction, research and development and language translation. Nonoperational support is equipment loan or transfer and training in formal service schools.

10. GEN George A. Joulwan, Commander in Chief, USSOUTHCOM, comments to staff during a counterdrug modeling and wargaming initiative conducted at the Joint Warfare Center, Hurlburt Field, Florida, 30 April 1992.


12. UMOFAR (rural area police patrol unit) has had a reputation for being tough and sometimes corrupt—especially in the Chapare region. Today the

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force has about 640 members.


16. The author was the aviation battalion commander who deployed assets to Bolivia in support of those operations. His mission was to monitor the introduction of US military forces into the sovereign territory of a source country is neither an effective nor appropriate approach.

17. Hudson Harrarty, 265. Santa Ana de Yacuma has been a safe haven for narcotics traffickers, a large Bolivian operation was conducted in 1991 to reaffirm government sovereignty over the town.

18. US Congress, House Committee on Government Operations, 101st Congress, 2nd Session, House Report 101-673, "Stopping the Flood of Cocaine with Operation Snowcap: Is It Working?" (Washington, DC: 14 August 1990), 22. The report states, "Operation Snowcap is a joint US-host country effort to curb the flow of cocaine from the producing and processing countries of South America. . . mainly a joint law enforcement effort, it is conducted by means of para-military tactics. DOD provides training to host country narcotics police and logistical support for interdiction activities . . . and participates on cost—reimbursement basis, with NAU [the in-country narcotics assistance section (unit) of Department of State’s International Narcotics Matters] paying for all DOD services, supplies, and personnel."

19. Hudson Harrarty, 266. The Law of Regulations for Coca and Controlled Substances of 1986 targets coca production and trafficking. It identified legal and illegal zones of coca production, prohibited the use of herbicides for eradication of 40,000 hectares of coca and touched the penalties for traffickers, suckers and harvesters, transporters and coca stompers (see page 258).


23. The Document of Cartagena, agreed by the Andean Ridge nations and the US at the Andean Summit, 15 February 1990 at Cartagena, Colombia, is a multilateral expression of consensus to destroy and disrupt the cocaine trafficking networks that cross the source and transit countries. Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia as a resting place and as a supply corridor for smuggling weapons and narcotics, like Coca or Death, are part of Bolivia's past," and he discounted the possibility that the Young Coca Growers' Group might be a budding subversive organization.

24. "Shining Path Interested in Spreading to Bolivia," La Republica, Lima, 16 July 1992, 13—15, translated in FBIS Daily Report, Latin America, FBIS-LAT—92—144, 27 July 1992. 17. "There are signs that the Shining Path is infiltrating our country," said Bolivian Interior Under Secretary Francisco Canedo Huerta. In this article, he goes on to say that Shining Path members are using Bolivia as a resting place and as a supply corridor for smuggling weapons. While two Peruvians arrested in 1990 belonged to the MRTA (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement), there does not appear to be strong evidence that the Shining Path is seeking support from Bolivian subversive organizations. The article concludes that guerrilla propaganda, whether from Peru or Bolivia, has not been well received by the coca farmer.


28. US DEA, 1990 Domestic Cannabis Eradication Suppression Program (Washington, DC: December 1990), 32. The most selective marijuana is smokable (Spanish, sin semilla—without seed), prepared from the unpolinated female cannabis plant. Sinesis contains about 15 percent delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, the señor of tetrahydrocannabinol that produces marijuana's psychoactive effect. Wild cannabis, or ditchweed, contains about 5 percent THC, and imported Mexican, Jamaican and Colombian varieties range from 5 to 7 percent.

29. This area is circumscribed by the borders of Humboldt, Trinity and Mendocino counties. The triangle—shaped area is emerald, some would say, because of its beautiful green forests, which include redwood stands. Others relate the Emerald Triangle to the green marijuana plant that has been introduced into the natural flora—and to the crop of green dollar bills that help sustain the region.


31. California National Guard, "Operation Green Sweep After Action Review," briefing to military officials, slide 18, no date, as located in archives of National Interagency Counternarcotics Institute, San Luis Obispo, California.

32. In turn, it seems that the lack of success in making arrests in Green Sweep was attributed to the sheriff's operation that forewarned the growers, enabling them to stay clear of the action.


37. Unfortunately, drug law enforcement agents participating in these types of counterdrug efforts are prone to wear military camouflage fatigues. This makes it almost impossible for the local people to tell the difference between soldiers who are supporting and law officers who are arresting.

38. "Ghost Dancer was conducted in Oregon, west of the Cascade Mountain Range, from the northern border with Washington to the southern border with California. A good description of this interagency operation is provided by Henry J. Richter, Operation Ghost Dancer: The Use of Active Duty Army Forces in Marijuana Eradication, Military Studies Project, US Army War College (Carlisle, PA: 11 March 1991).

39. Generally, marijuana growers in the West have cultivated a self-sustaining image of peaceful folk, meaning no harm to others; growing pot for their own purposes. They avoid law enforcement personnel. In the East, such as in Kentucky, the grower tends to be more aggressive, and gunstocks and booby traps are meant to do harm. According to one Bureau of Indian Affairs leader from its Marijuana Eradication and Reconnaissance Team, drug law enforcement on the Indian reservations is often accomplished by high degrees of violence.
