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THE ROLE OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES IN COUNTER-NARCOTIC
OPERATIONS

A Thesis presented to the faculty of the U.S. Army Command
and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

MARK A. HASELTON, MAJ, USA
B.S., United States Military Academy, 1977

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
1990

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (Reference to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES IN COUNTER-NARCOTICS OPERATIONS: A thesis on the suitability of Army Special Operations Forces in combatting narcotics traffickers in the area known as the Andean Ridge, by Major Mark A. Haselton, USA, 133 pages.

This thesis discusses the suitability of using Special operations Forces to supplement present interdiction operations in the Andean Ridge. The study begins with a background and description of the present problem of cocaine in the United States. It describes the legislative reforms which have been introduced to increase the military's role in enforcement. It describes the current legal restraints against the use of the military in assisting law enforcement agencies both in the continental US and in foreign countries. The thesis includes a description of activities conducted at the federal level to revise the Posse Comitatus act and the impact of significant revisions.

The study continues with a description of cocaine trafficking in the Andean Ridge. The thesis explains some of the societal and economic problems associated with a full scale "war on drugs". These problems are described in terms of the violation of ancient customs and rituals as well as the severe economic impact of dismantling the current trafficking organization on the host countries' populations. The thesis also includes a description of Army Special operations Forces and their unique organization and capabilities. Finally, the thesis contains descriptions of the largest paramilitary counter-narcotics operations conducted in the Andean Ridge. This portion of the thesis does not dwell on seizure rates or arrests, but more on the tactics and lessons learned.

The thesis concludes that with the present administration's plan to combine eradication, interdiction and demand reduction programs, the use of SOF will significantly enhance law enforcement's capability to identify targets and successfully interdict lucrative shipments.



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to define the role that Special Operations Forces (SOF) should perform in counter-drug operations. While acknowledged that the United States Army's traditional war fighting role is not compatible with a law enforcement mission, many tasks done by SOF significantly enhance law enforcement agencies' ability to combat illicit drugs.

Research Question

What SOF missions are suitable in counter-narcotic operations? This thesis does not focus on the legality or extent of involvement of SOF forces in counter-narcotic operations. SOF and other military organizations, are responsible for conducting operations "to support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic." President Bush's National Security Directive #18 stated that illegal drugs constitute a clear and present danger to the national security of the United States.

The present administration's 1989 National Drug Control Strategy requires all military organizations to help law enforcement agencies with counter-narcotic operations. This thesis identifies counter-narcotic missions compatible with any or all the SOF units presently in the Army's structure.

To address adequately the role of SOF in counter-narcotic

operations, an overview of the current state of illegal narcotics activities is presented. This overview relates to the target countries of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. The area known as the Andean Ridge will be the specific target area for this thesis. In examining narcotics production and distribution, this thesis will identify the critical targets and nodes of operations that typify a generic trafficking organization. To provide focus for this thesis, only cocaine production from the Andean Ridge area will be addressed. The present crisis in the Andean Ridge and the associated countries provide many opportunities to study the largest and most well organized trafficking structures.

This thesis will address only Army Special Operations Forces (SOF). The current SOF organization is such that each element of SOF can perform unilateral or combined operations. This thesis will briefly discuss the organization and structure of each element of the Army's special operations community. These units; Special Forces, Rangers, Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, Special Operations Aviation, while often complementary, are not interchangeable. Other units and structures within the SOF community, often listed as "Special Activities," while having a viable role in counter-narcotic operations, are classified subject matter and will not be addressed.

The role of SOF must be placed in context with the current strategies developed by the National Command Authority (NCA). To do this, this thesis will examine

current counter-narcotic strategies at the NCA level. It looks at Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), the command that has regional responsibility for the Andean Ridge. Finally, it looks within the Special Operations' tactical doctrine manuals. This will provide a broad base for discussing the specific tactics and techniques to be employed by SOF within the target region.

This thesis will briefly outline previous counter-narcotic operations in which SOF played an active part. This description of earlier operations will provide for lessons learned. It also validates or rejects the applicability of present SOF doctrine in the counter-narcotic mission.

This research thesis will conclude with a recommendation on the tactics and techniques to be employed by SOF in a counter-narcotic operation. It also gives recommendations for adaptation or revision of current tactical doctrine and force structure.

Background

In 1981 the Congress of the United States introduced legislation to change the Posse Comitatus Act to allow the armed forces to play an active role in drug interdiction and enforcement. Since 1982, the U.S. military has been actively involved in drug interdiction yet severe limitations have been imposed on the type and amount of involvement authorized. Many reports show that the effect of these actions has been less than adequate.

With the increased linkage between narcotics traffickers

an insurgent movements, the US Army will be a more active participant in counter-narcotic missions and forces assigned to United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) will be involved in drug interdiction. ¹ This increased activity relates to a changing definition of Army missions. Budgetary constraints and lessening of world tensions require the Army to define viable missions for ground forces. It is both politically expedient and publicly popular to use the Army in counter-narcotics.

During Congressional Hearings in 1982, the Vice President's Task Force on Illegal Narcotics testified that the sophistication and volume of illegal drug smuggling was more than could be handled by civilian law enforcement agencies. ² The task force's recommendation was that the military take an active role in drug interdiction. Since that testimony the military has assisted local and federal drug enforcement agencies in in-transit interdiction and intelligence collection and training.

The United States Army was charged with combatting "narco-terrorism" as one of its collateral missions. Congress began a complete review of the Posse Comitatus Act to decide the constitutionality of using US military organizations to advise, train, and assist foreign counter-drug agencies. The Congress also considered the effect of direct Army involvement in counter-narcotic operations. In the event that the US Army engages in counter-narcotic operations, doctrine must be developed.

The US Justice Department issued an opinion before "Operation JUST CAUSE" that the Posse Comitatus Act is not applicable outside the Continental United States (CONUS).

This opinion has opened the way for expanded military involvement in drug enforcement.

Is Low Intensity Conflict Adaptable?

The initial point for addressing the military's role in counter-narcotic operations is a review of existing doctrine.

The United States Army identified the need for doctrine dealing with operations in the spectrum of conflicts termed "low intensity."

As defined in the joint Air Force and Army Manual FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, Low Intensity Conflict is:

a politico-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low intensity conflict includes activities from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means, employing political, economic, informational and military instruments. Low intensity conflicts are often localized, generally in the Third World, but contain regional and global security implications. 3

Narcotics trafficking organizations operate outside the laws of the countries that they inhabit. Like other illegal activities, certain conditions must exist for them to flourish. In the Andean Ridge these conditions include a poor and disaffected population, weak local government, and corrupt or ineffective police controls. When coupled with proper climatic and soil conditions, they produce an

environment that is both politically and geographically suitable for narcotics cultivation, preparation and distribution.

The Medellin Cartel, perhaps the best known and well organized trafficking organization, recognized that pre-conditions exist in Colombia for their initial success. They must retain support of the local population to maintain control of their area of operations. The Cartel has provided a means of raising the standard of living of the campesino throughout the Andean Ridge. In the Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV) of Peru, coca growers rely on sales to distributors in Medellin for their livelihood.

Despite the violent nature of the cocaine cartels operating in Colombia, they continue to enjoy some support of the people. This support comes from direct and indirect economic benefits accrued through coca cultivation and cocaine preparation and distribution . ^

With the economic aspects of direct cocaine production, the cartels continue to gain political leverage as a logical by-product of corruption. As the cartels solidify their position through coercion and corruption, they have begun to act more like a state within a state. ^ With the increase in political power, they gain the ability to influence political decisions made by the host country and may pose an even greater threat than they do at the now.

LIC doctrine attempts to provide guidance in the use of military organizations in an environment like that found in

the Andean Ridge. Counter-narcotic is not, however, addressed in the Army/Air Force manual. While many tactics and techniques developed to answer the problem of LIC apply to counter-narcotic missions, no organization has yet made the case that counter-narcotic missions are LIC. Yet LIC doctrine is a "jumping off point" in preparing tactics and techniques to conduct these missions.

Problem Solving and Doctrine Development

A logical method of dealing with the drug cartels in Colombia would be a judicious use of the problem solving method endorsed by the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This methodology for problem solving is not unique to LIC or any other type of operation and has applicability in any situation.

The first step of the methodology requires the planner to identify the problem. It is not sufficient to say that drugs or drug traffickers pose a threat to the nation. The problem can be quantified in several ways. The National Drug Control Strategy for 1989 quantifies the problem in both the domestic and international arenas. It depicts the effect of drug use in terms of domestic productivity, international security, and economic cost. * Testimony given to the United States Congress on 8 June 1987 draws a direct correlation between the increase of illegal drug trafficking and threats to the security of the United States and its allies. † This step is the same for military operations in the field. Couched in different terms, the military version of problem definition

is mission analysis.

Once the problem (or mission) is defined, the planner must gather facts and information, prepare possible solutions, compare these possible solutions in terms of desired outcomes and finally make a recommendation. The military planner proceeds similarly by preparing a mission statement. He develops courses of action and compares them based upon a projected outcome. Finally the planner must recommend a single course of action. Simplistically, then, the case can be made that all doctrine, not just LIC doctrine is adaptable. The problem then becomes one of both adaptability and suitability.

If the problem of illegal drug trafficking is simply one of supply, then the solution is to eradicate the supply. The problem is far more complex than it appears. Cocaine has become the most lucrative cash crop in the Andean Ridge area. It is responsible for producing a major part of the gross national products of Peru, Colombia and Bolivia. It is estimated that the illegal narcotics trafficking in the Andean Ridge area accounts for sufficient revenue to erase the national debts of the three countries. This shows that the problem of drug trafficking is not one solely of supply. The political, economic, and societal problems associated with the loss of the revenues from drug trafficking must be considered when preparing strategy.

Having said that the problem is multi-faceted, the question remains, is the Army's LIC doctrine suitable and

adaptable to counter-narcotic missions? In reviewing the Army's LIC doctrine as outlined in FM 100-20, Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) planning is used to develop plans that:

. . . identify social, economic, and other problems which are or may become political issues. The plans assess methods and resources available . . . determine priorities and time tables . . . allocate resources -civilian and military, public and private. They ensure that the security forces defensive and development plans complement each other. *

As the Army continues to refine its LIC doctrine, the adaptability of the manual to counter-narcotic missions should be addressed. As it stands now, the similarity of insurgencies and drug trafficking organizations provide an early, albeit inadequate, starting point.

Of equal importance to the military is the question of restraints used to control military participation in counter-drug missions. The United States Army operates under a system of rules of engagement which are based upon the situation facing a deploying unit. The rules minimize violence, safeguard non-combatants, and protect US servicemembers. As an adjunct to increased military participation in providing assistance to law enforcement agencies, rules of engagement and operational constraints must first be defined. They prevent inappropriate activities and provide structure for critical situations.

The case can be made that the violent nature of drug trafficking organizations justify the use of deadly force. Additionally, the traditional role of the military is to

close with and destroy the enemy. The nettlesome problem becomes one of identifying the enemy and bringing sufficient and reasonable force to bear. While easily written, this is a most significant problem in applying a military solution to the problem of illegal drugs.

It is imperative that rules of engagement be developed that protect American servicemembers and innocent civilians. The military must provide advice to the President and Congress that ensures against inappropriate military action. While it was not a counter-narcotic operation per se, the US intervention in Panama in December, 1989, proved the efficacy of rules of engagement in limiting unacceptable collateral damage. In counter-narcotic missions, these rules take on a different meaning and will protect the soldiers involved. Inappropriate use of deadly force can result in legal charges against the soldier. If not controlled, the military runs the risk of being branded criminals in a foreign country. Rules of engagement, clearly developed, will reduce the possibility of legal problems with international ramifications.

Affect of Military Counter-narcotic Missions

An additional, but equally important question to answer in the military's role in counter-narcotic missions is what effect these operations will have on military preparedness. The military's traditional role is conducting conventional campaigns against the armed forces of another nation in defense of US national interests. The counter-narcotic

mission is, in actuality, a law enforcement mission. The military is not trained, organized or equipped to conduct law enforcement missions on a large scale. Equipment found in combat units provides destructive firepower developed to defeat another armed force. Doctrine is developed to apply adequate combat force to defeat an enemy within the framework of the laws of land warfare, not under criminal statutes.

The use of the military will require training in enforcement methods, criminal statutes, international law, rights of the accused, limitations on deadly force, rules of engagement, etc.. This training will require reduction in other training areas. The positive aspect of military preparedness may be that some missions equate with some unit's traditional missions. Military intelligence, communications, transportation, and logistics units may easily adapt their traditional missions to law enforcement missions. Infantry, artillery, armor, etc. may find it far more difficult to translate their operations to a law enforcement role.

To ensure proper employment of US soldiers, a coherent strategy is developed. It must identify the potential risks and benefits of the counter-narcotic mission. This potentially dangerous environment requires meticulous planning and execution.

Current National Drug Strategy

Present US counter-narcotic strategy is broad based and contains actions to be taken at both the national and

international levels. The combination of national and international counter-narcotic efforts is crucial to solving the total drug problem in the United States. Only international applications of SOF will be discussed in this thesis. Supply reduction translates easily to military terms. Demand reduction requires social program not related to military functions. While the national program must be supported by the international program, the scope of this thesis does not include an in-depth discussion of the national aspects of the President's Anti-drug Proposal.

The international aspects of the present anti-drug proposal will have a direct effect on the role of SOF in counter-narcotic missions. * There are three significant parts of the anti-drug proposal to be addressed.

Increased spending to support military and law enforcement activities in Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia has augmented the \$65 million dollars authorized for direct military aid. As part of this increase, President Bush made US armed forces available if requested by the host country. This additional funding is aimed at destruction of coca leaf production, destruction of cocaine laboratories in the host country, and identification and "dismantling trafficking organizations." 10

Increased overt and covert operations aimed at interdicting drug flow into the United States is a key element of the National Drug Control Strategy. This portion of the proposal would require significant interagency

cooperation between both US and foreign enforcement agencies. The operations would specifically target international traffickers. Operations also would target "smuggling methods and routes." ¹¹

The third aspect of the proposal that would directly affect military involvement is intelligence gathering. The proposal identifies the need to increase the intelligence gathering capabilities of drug enforcement agencies, specifically in South America. This portion of the proposal requires that there be an improvement in information systems to, "allow quicker prosecutions and improved interdiction, . . . information would be more readily and effectively shared between federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies." ¹²

The anti-drug proposal will have a significant impact on the use of military organizations. This thesis will discuss the anti-drug proposal only in terms of its effect on military operations of SOF. The application of SOF in the Andean Ridge countries has applicability in the newly formed Joint Task Forces along the Mexican border and the Gulf of Mexico.

Scope of the Problem

The US administration has formally stated that the present international drug problem is the "gravest present threat to our national well being." ¹³

To this end, the President has outlined a comprehensive plan for combatting narcotic trafficking, use, and addiction.

This plan was presented to the public in an address from the Oval Office on 5 September 1989. This anti-drug proposal addresses both the national and international requirements for effectively combatting narcotics.

While essential for an effective policy, the national aspects of the plan, e.g., education, penalties, treatment, and research, are not discussed in this thesis.

Internationally, the plan is focused on South America, specifically the countries of Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. The United States is the single largest consumer of cocaine, spending an estimated \$150 to \$200 billion annually on illegal narcotics. Even these figures are questionable. The administration has been unable to quantify the exact dollar figures regarding the magnitude of cocaine sales in the US. These figures reflect both direct and indirect costs of cocaine use and may be understated. The Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV) of Peru grows over 50% of the world's coca leaves. Illicit laboratories in Colombia produce over 75% of the world's refined cocaine. The need exists for the biggest consumer to focus on the biggest producer. ¹⁴

With the vast potential for profit in illicit drugs, the United States must develop a comprehensive strategy with both national and international applications.

President Bush addressed three key points for a coherent international strategy.

Economic Assistance

The United States must provide economic assistance to the endangered countries. This assistance must be both economic and military in nature. The strength of the drug cartels in South America is economic. They can influence internal and external policies of governments through corruption, violence, and coercion on an unprecedented scale. Also, the linkage between insurgency forces such as the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas in Peru and cocaine traffickers increases the militaristic nature of drug operations in South America.

Interdiction Efforts

Interdiction of the drug flow into the US must be increased. The ability of law enforcement agencies to interdict drugs once in the country is " . . . one in a million of getting an entire load of dope off the street." ¹⁵

Because of the complexity of drug trafficking operations, interdiction operations must be joint ventures between all involved countries and are necessarily clandestine.

Intelligence Collection and Dissemination

Intelligence gathering operations must be cooperative and mutually supportive between all involved national and international agencies. This reduces redundant activities and increases the effectiveness of information gleaned from many sources. Interagency cooperation also will have a positive effect on the timely prosecution of traffickers.

Use of Military for Enforcement

A significant facet of the National Drug Control Strategy is President Bush's willingness to employ US troops in South America if requested by a host government. It is imperative that intelligence play a critical role in helping the NCA decide to commit US troops to a foreign country.

The magnitude of the problem and the need for a coherent strategy was best stated by Senator Joe Biden in testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee on Narcotics Control in September 1989. He stated that the current drug problem in the United States is "the single greatest threat to national security." The biggest problem with strategy development is a lack of intelligence with which the planner can quantify measures of success.

The United States is faced with an illicit drug problem of epidemic proportions. It is estimated that the United States consumes over 80% of the world's illicit drugs. The most pervasive of these is cocaine. Consumption of cocaine within the United States results in illegal revenues of an estimated \$200 billion annually. ^{1*} Revenues come from cultivation of raw coca leaves in South America and coca paste production in clandestine labs. Cocaine refinement in modern urban laboratories, transportation and distribution of refined cocaine from the source increase the profit base. The redistribution of profits from sales via underground money laundering hides the money and provides additional profit. All these activities have proven so lucrative that

the networks used to conduct them have attracted sophisticated organizations. ¹⁷

The most notable suppliers of cocaine consumed by the United States are two international drug cartels based in the cities of Medellin and Cali, Colombia, South America. Their activities have been widely publicized in recent years due to their violence and pervasiveness. It is estimated that these two cartels supply over 80% of the world's illicit cocaine and employ nearly 10% of the population of their country. It is because of the sheer magnitude of the activity these two organizations engage in that they have become the target of both internal and external counter-narcotic activities.

The power and influence that these two cartels wield make the actions taken by national and international law enforcement agencies largely ineffective. ¹⁸

Because of the impact that cocaine has had on the lives of its people, it is not surprising that the United States has come to take a position as the world's drug enforcer. As the world's largest cocaine consumer, it is obligatory the United States take an active role in countering illicit drugs. The purpose of this thesis is not to argue the merits of reducing the consumption of cocaine as a counter-narcotic strategy. It must be understood that simply stopping drugs at the source will not solve the problem. If demand remains as high as it is, the consumer will find suppliers. A comprehensive counter-narcotic strategy must include domestic programs aimed at reducing demand and international programs

to reduce supply. The purpose of this thesis focuses on military activities, specifically Special Operation Forces' roles, to reduce supply. Domestic enforcement and rehabilitation actions are best discussed in another forum. While not a principal mission of the military, assisting in external enforcement to reduce supply is part of its mission to protect the United States against any enemy, foreign or domestic posing a threat to the national security. 19

In the past 10 years, various national and international agencies have attempted to interdict the flow of cocaine from South America with varying degrees of success. These activities may have had some impact in the past. It appears that the organizations responsible for production and distribution of cocaine have reached a degree of power and sophistication that exceeds that of their adversaries. In part this is due to the tremendous potential for corruption that exists in any business that can produce the revenue of the cocaine industry. A large degree of success enjoyed by the cocaine cartels has resulted from their ability to organize. The problem is compounded by the enforcement community's inability to organize.

As early as 1981, the Vice President's Task Force on Narcotics Control had testified that the degree of organization and sophistication of international drug trafficking was overwhelming the international enforcement community. Due to this testimony, the Congress of the United States began a comprehensive review of the Posse Comitatus

Act. The Act prohibits the use of the military in a law enforcement role. The opinion of the Congress is that the level of sophistication found in international drug trafficking organizations can only be combatted by a comprehensive drug strategy. The strategy is then coupled with an efficient enforcement organization. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs stated that the equipment required by enforcement agencies to locate, track, and interdict trafficking nets was largely present in the military. ²⁰

Definition of Terms

Anti-drug: Defensive actions taken to reduce vulnerability to illicit drugs. This includes both social programs aimed at drug users and defensive tactics to reduce the availability of drugs to the population. It requires fostering an atmosphere not conducive to illicit drug use.

Civil Affairs Operations: The complex of activities in support of military operations embracing the interaction between the military force and civilian authorities fostering the development of favorable emotions, attitudes, and behavior in neutral, friendly, or hostile groups. (FM 41-10)

Clandestine: Operations conducted in such a manner so as to provide for plausible denial of the operation itself.

CARVER: Acronym used in Special Operations Target Analysis. Acronym letters represent both subjective and objective evaluations of elements of a target system done in terms of criticality, accessibility, recuperability,

vulnerability, effect on population, and recognizability. Elements scoring highest on the CARVER target analysis represent those systems or sub-systems of a target that, when attacked, result in the target's destruction or significant degradation.

Counter-narcotic: Offensive actions taken to prevent, deter, and respond to all aspects of illicit drug traffic and consumption. Supply reduction is one strategy employed in counter-narcotic operations.

Covert: Operations conducted in such a manner as to conceal the organization conducting the mission and thereby allow for plausible denial by the country responsible.

Direct Action Operation: Short duration strikes and other small scale offensive actions by SOF to seize, destroy, or inflict damage on a specified target; or to destroy, capture, or recover designated personnel or material. (FM 31-20)

Drug interdiction: Actions taken to interrupt the flow of drugs from the point of cultivation, preparation, or production to the point of actual consumption.

US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC): Major Command in the United States Army responsible for the training, readiness and deployment of US Army Special Operations Forces worldwide. As an Army major command, USASOC acts as the Army component commander for SOF assigned to USSOCOM.

Foreign Internal Defense (FID): Participation by civilian

and military agencies of a government in any action programs taken by another government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. (JCS PUB 1-02)

Forward Operational Base: Command, control and support base established and operated by the Special Forces Battalion. Used to prepare, deploy, control and support SF teams in specified operational areas.

Host Nation Support: Combat, combat support, and combat service support provided to deployed SOF units by a nation in which representatives or organizations of another nation are present because of government invitation or international agreement. (FM 31-20)

Insurgency: An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government by subversion and armed conflict.

Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield: A systematic and continuous process of analyzing the enemy, weather, and terrain in a specific geographic area. The process integrates enemy doctrine with weather, enemy forces, terrain, environment, and mission. (FM 100-5)

Internal Defense and Development: All measures taken by a nation to promote its growth and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. (FM 31-20)

Mission Support Site: A portion of the advanced operational base that supports the combat service support requirements of a deployed special operations unit.

Marco-terroriam: Loosely defined as the use of coercive powers to support drug production and distribution

operations.

National Command Authority: The National Command Authority (NCA) consists of the President and the Secretary of Defense. The NCA has the constitutional authority to direct the Armed Forces in their execution of military action. (JCS PUB 1-02)

Overt: Actions done in such a manner that the organization conducting the operation is known to the target during or after the completion of the mission.

Psychological Operations: Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to influence emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator's objectives. (JCS Pub. 1-02)

Special Forces Operational Base: Command, control, and support base established and operated by a Special Forces Group from organic and attached resources to support deployed Special Forces teams. Functions include planning and directing SF operations, supplying combat support and combat service support items, coordination with higher, adjacent, and supported headquarters.

Special Reconnaissance: Reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted by special operations forces to obtain or verify by visual observation or other collection methods, information concerning the capabilities, intentions and

activities of an actual or potential enemy or to secure data concerning the meteorological, hydrographic, or geographic characteristics of a particular area. (FM 31-20)

Target Analysis: Analysis of the components, critical nodes, and vulnerable components of a target, specifically identified for destruction, neutralization or degradation. (POI, JFKSWC)

Target Interdiction: Actions taken directly or indirectly, to destroy, neutralize or degrade the effectiveness of a target assigned to a special operations unit.

Unconventional Warfare: A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes guerrilla warfare and other direct offensive, low visibility, covert, or clandestine operations, as well as collection, and evasion and escape. (FM 31-20)

United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM): A unified command responsible for the training, readiness, and deployment of Special Operations Forces worldwide. Although a Unified Command, USSOCOM acts as a supporting CINC to the regional warfighting CINCs.

Assumptions

As part of the preparation of this thesis, certain assumptions have been made to help both in narrowing the

scope of the thesis and to predict the situation when the thesis is complete. Although these assumptions are not all encompassing, they are necessary to the foundation of the thesis. Additionally, these assumptions were meant only as predictions and do not "assume away" any key issues.

Revision of the Posse Comitatus Act

The Posse Comitatus act has been revised by Congress to allow active Army participation in counter-narcotic operations. This revision deals with the role of the Army in assisting law enforcement agencies with maritime and air interdiction. While the Army is precluded at this point from performing direct action missions, an assumption in this thesis is that the Congress will continue to revise the act to allow more direct involvement of the military. It is not within the scope of this thesis to address the legal ramifications of revising the current law. The assumption is that based upon the public's desire for military involvement in counter-narcotic operations.²¹ The Act will be further refined to allow direct participation of Regular Army units.

Increasing Drug Problem In the US

The consumption of illegal drugs is an enormous problem. It appears that the problem will increase over time unless there is a significant change in both the availability (supply) of drugs and the public's consumption (demand). The problem will increase over time as more people gain access to drugs. The introduction of crack cocaine, a smokeable derivative of cocaine hydrochloride has increased both the

supply and profitability. Since a large profit can be made, supply will remain high. Since the consumer demands drugs, there will be a steady market for the drugs produced.

Military Counter-narcotic Operations

The United States has deployed three joint task forces along its southern border with the sole mission of combatting narcotics trafficking. It is assumed that the military's role will continue to increase as the problem increases. Having declared the drug problem to be a threat to national security, President Bush's strategy calls for increased military support to law enforcement, be it direct action or some form of foreign military assistance to drug producing nations.

Focus of Counter-narcotic Operations

The present focus of the counter-narcotic mission has been predominantly in South America. The sophistication of the trafficking infrastructure in Colombia, the pervasiveness of cocaine consumption in the United States, and the proximity of South American cultivation locations, dictates this as an assumption. For this thesis, the US focus on counter-narcotic missions will remain in South America for the future.

Use of Special Operations Forces

With the increase in the number of Special Operations Forces available to the National Command Authority (NCA), the assumption here is that there will be sufficient SOF units to deploy for counter-narcotic missions. Present SOF structure

has been expanded to provide for integrated operations by all services concerning direct action, counter-insurgency, foreign internal defense, civil-military operations, and psychological operations. SOF operations are normally supported by special operations aviation units. This enhanced structure, combined with the formation of a joint headquarters (US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)), will provide the NCA with sufficient forces to operate in a counter-narcotic environment.

Constrained Operational Environment

The final assumption deals with the type of environment in which any force used in counter-narcotic missions will be expected to operate. Cocaine is produced predominantly in foreign countries where little US military presence exists. This dictates that any use of the military in a host country will be at the behest of, and within the limitations imposed by a foreign country's political environment. These restrictions will force commanders to constrain operations to those acceptable to the host country. Additional constraints will be placed on the services by the economic impact of military operations in a foreign country. Money will necessarily be allocated for economic aid and agricultural support. Additional money will be used to help the internal politics of the host. For these reasons, as well as the need for the Army to allocate money to other theaters, it can be assumed that the Army will not have a financial carte blanche.

Significance of the Thesis

The problem of drug abuse in the United States is a threat to the national security. With the role of the military in counter-narcotic operations under debate in the Congress of the United States, it is obligatory the Armed Forces determine the best methods and tactics to be employed. The National Drug Control Strategy, signed in September of 1989, clearly states that the solution to illegal narcotics must address both international supply and domestic demand. The international applications of the military in counter-narcotic operations will have extensive effects on the training, force structure, and employment of the Army. This thesis will address:

1.) The methods and procedures of SOF with the highest degree of applicability in counter-narcotic operations.

2.) The critical nodes and vulnerabilities of a drug trafficking organization against which SOF could be feasibly targeted.

3.) The potential costs and benefits of employing SOF in the role of drug enforcement.

4.) Baseline information for the SOF planner as to the potential targets. Also successful methods and procedures employed by other organizations and the inherent risks involved in counter-narcotic operations.

Limitations

This thesis will be limited to the geographic area of

Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia. It will deal only with the cocaine industry. It will only address the potential mission of US Army Special Operations Forces (Special Forces, Ranger, Psychological Operations, Special Operations Aviation, and Civil Affair units.)

Delimitations

This thesis will not address other services' role in counter-narcotic operations. It will be confined to the cocaine production, transportation and distribution system in the defined area. It will not address other drugs produced in the region. The information cut-off for this thesis will be 1 March 1990.

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Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The body of literature dealing with the drug problem facing the United States is varied. While much of the information is present in classified documents, some of the same information is found in open sources. The purpose of this thesis is to both inform and assist in preparing counter-narcotic doctrine. Classifying this thesis or using references from classified theses would be counter-productive. The literature reviewed in this chapter, therefore, is limited to open source documents, books, Congressional Transcripts, et al.

Books

This research topic is not well documented in books. There are few significant books on the subject of the cartels operating in the Andean Ridge. Even fewer books exist on the types of operations conducted to combat illegal drug trafficking. The body of research for this thesis comes from periodicals, newspapers and Congressional Record transcripts. Pertinent field manuals, professional magazines and those few books (both fiction and non-fiction) that exist were used also.

To orient the thesis on the existing problem, the first source used to document the activities of the drug cartels in the Andean Ridge was the book, Kings of Cocaine: Inside the

Medellin Cartel. This book details the key actors in the largest illegal trafficking cartel in South America. It also describes the cartel's organizational structure and methodology. While it has become somewhat dated by recent events, including the death of Jose Rodriguez Gacha in December, 1989, this book is one "handbook" on the Medellin and Cali cartels. There are few books like this in existence.

Tom Clancy's, Clear and Present Danger, is a different kind of reference manual. While a work of fiction, chronicling the events surrounding a U.S. military operation against the Cartel in Colombia, Clancy's well known research ability has made this book required reading for organizations conducting counter-narcotic operations. While the book has some problems in terms of depicting the Central Intelligence Agency as a loose cannon on a rolling deck, it clearly describes the problems of inter-agency cooperation, international ramifications of unilateral interventions, operational requirements for precise, timely intelligence, and the possibility of corruption at all levels.

Congressional Testimony

The Problem

In terms of setting the stage for the introduction of U.S. forces in counter-narcotic operations, the United States Congress has been hearing testimony for many years. Various agencies of the federal government give their assessment of the South American situation. A comprehensive

listing of the testimony given would date back to early 1981. The most significant reports have been given to the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Representatives. In 1987, the House of Representatives received a Review of the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report: Mid-Year Update. This document provides testimony from the Honorable Ann Wroblewski, Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of International Narcotics Matters in the Department of State, and the Honorable David L. Westrate, Assistant Administrator, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice. The testimony given in this meeting details the coca production statistics for 1985-86 in South America and the success, or lack of it, in eradication programs in the major drug producing countries.

The statement that illegal narcotics pose a threat to the security of the United States is addressed in a large body of Congressional testimony. A very complete appraisal of the problem is found in the transcript of Hearing Before the Caucus on International Narcotics Control of the United States Senate, 100th Congress: International Narcotics Networks as an Increasing Danger to the National Security of the United States and Its Allies, (S.Hrg 100-246). This testimony by many government sources, depicts the drug problem on an international scale. It includes testimony by Mayor Ed Koch of New York, Giovanni Falcone, Magistrate, Palermo, Italy, and several members of the law enforcement community.

Role of the Military

It was necessary to review methods and procedures used by traditional law enforcement agencies in the scope of this thesis. Additionally, the thesis covers previous use of military organizations.

Posse Comitatus and Military Applications

To understand the initial problems involved with the employment of the military in counter-narcotic missions, a review of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 was made. It is difficult to establish the "cans and cannots" in the original document. Further clarification is possible by reading "New Laws and Insights Encircle the Posse Comitatus Act" by Colonel Paul Jackson Rice in Military Law Review, Volume 104, Spring 1984. This essay discussed the origins of the Posse Comitatus Act. The Act addresses the use of the military in a law enforcement role during the Reconstruction Period following the American Civil War. Interestingly, the Posse Comitatus covers only the use of the Army and the Air Force and does not address the Navy or Marine Corps. Colonel Rice uses a case study format to clarify when and where the Army can involve itself in enforcement operations. Colonel Rice cites landmark cases such as *United States v. Banks*, *United States v. Jaramillo* and *United States v. McArthur*, and addresses their legal ramifications. In these cases, the role of the Army in helping law enforcement agencies is clarified. Colonel Rice's discussion also deals with changes and modifications of the original Posse Comitatus Act. This

is found in "Military Cooperation with Civilian Law Enforcement Officials", codified as Title 10, United States Code, sections 371 through 378. The point in Colonel Rice's article is that these revisions were prepared with the express purpose of providing military assistance to law enforcement in counter-narcotic operations. ¹

Gaps in Literature

Although much information exists on the problem of drug trafficking in the Andean Ridge, significant gaps exist concerning strategy and doctrine. The information found in Congressional testimony, professional journals, periodicals, and newsprint often deal on the scope of the problem versus potential solutions.

When this thesis began, the aim of research methodology was to identify the problem and describe a "typical" trafficking network. Also, the thesis was to analyze the network in terms of vulnerabilities. Research was conducted to review doctrine at the strategic, operational and tactical levels applicable to counter-narcotic operations, and develop potential strategies for SOF.

The methodology used was effective only in terms of identifying the complete lack of information on all the subjects. During a lecture on this subject in February, 1990 by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to students in "Drugs and National Security" at the Command and General Staff College, an agent was asked to identify the magnitude of cocaine shipments to the US. He stated that a "bust" made in

the San Fernando Valley in 1988 resulted in the seizure of twenty-two tons of refined cocaine HCL. He further stated that before this seizure, DEA did not believe that there was that much cocaine in the world. ²

The statement by DEA reflects an apparently flawed strategy. It is a prerequisite of strategy development that planners define the problem completely. With this problem definition, the planner then defines the desired outcome or measure of success. Without a true understanding of the magnitude of the problem, it is impossible to design a strategy with a meaningful measure of success.

This is the single largest gap in the literature dealing with counter-narcotic operations and the associated strategies. There exists a national strategy that ostensibly provides the national framework within which to develop service doctrine. First printed in 1989, The National Drug Control Strategy assigns tasks in a generic sense. While identifying shortfalls in present drug control policies and developing "agendas" for critical areas, this strategy did not address specifics. The lack of "how to" and quantification of specific programs to attack supply and demand rendered the first strategy ineffective.

In 1990 the administration published an updated version of the strategy paper of 1989. Although called "Strategy II," this new version began the process of completing the initial document. Dollar figures were added to the cost of programs and more definition was given to each critical

agenda. While not advertised in this manner, it is helpful for agencies using The National Drug Control Strategy to use both documents simultaneously. While the latter document was meant to replace the first, it is an expansion and definition of the former. By using the two documents together, the reader gains some perspective into the process of developing the drug strategy. Together the documents fill gaps found in each.

Military Literature

The most profound gap in literature on this subject is in military professional writing and doctrine. During the conduct of research for this thesis, a primary source for background was attendance in a class entitled "Drugs and National Security," taught as an elective in the Command and General Staff Officer's Course at Fort Leavenworth. The premise of this course was simply that the military would play an increasing role in counter-narcotic missions. As part of this expanded role, it is obligatory that responsible officers be familiar with the problem. Exposure to existing strategies at every level is essential. During the conduct of the course, students were provided with information from operating agencies at the local, state, and national levels. The lead agency for monitoring drug flow and air/ maritime interdiction is, by definition in the national strategy documents, the United States Army.

The problem identified to students that doctrine does not address counter-narcotic operations except in the most

cursory manner. An example of this lack of doctrinal guidance is the treatment of counter-narcotic missions in the premier manuals for SOF.

Field Manual 31-20, "Doctrine for Special Forces Operations" discusses the missions, organization, command and control, and the doctrine for employment of US Army Special Forces (SF). This manual addresses the primary and collateral missions assigned to SF. It includes some information on counter-narcotic operations suitable for SF. The manual does nothing to increase the capabilities of the units that may be assigned this "collateral" mission. Unfortunately, the discussion of collateral missions consists strictly of definitions and broad scope statements. In FM 31-20, the entire body of doctrinal literature for counter-narcotics missions is included in the definition of collateral mission activities.

Collateral mission activities: The inherent capabilities of all military forces may periodically be applied to accomplish missions other than those for which the forces are principally organized, trained, and equipped. Collateral activities . . . include . . . counter-narcotics. ^a

Even more telling in terms of the gap in doctrinal literature is the lack of guidance provided for SOF in total. The SOF capstone manual, Field Manual 80-1, "Doctrine for Army Special Operations Forces" contains less than a page of guidance to SOF commanders on the conduct of counter-narcotics missions.

Again listed under the broad heading of "Collateral

Activities," this critical SOF doctrinal manual relegates SOF roles in counter-narcotic missions to a short, generic discussion of SOF responsibility to provide training and assistance to host nation indigenous and US enforcement agencies. While this short discussion is in the same area as paragraphs on civil military operations and foreign internal defense, counter-narcotics missions do not have additional sources comparable to these other collateral activities.

There has been a tendency to place counter-narcotic missions into the arena of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC). The newest joint manual on the subject is Field Manual 100-20/ Air Force Manual 2-20, "Military Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict." The subject of counter-narcotic operations is discussed in this manual only in terms of the efficacy of using the military in non-traditional roles.

Military activities in support of counter-drug operations are excellent examples of support to civil authorities. Employing specialized aircraft, ships, and personnel, military forces help the US Coast Guard and other US law enforcement agencies track and interdict illegal drug shipments. ^

Other Significant Writings

The subject of methods and procedures in the conduct of counter-narcotic missions is not dealt with in any great detail. The most significant body of writings on this subject exists in some military professional journals.

Professional journals such as Military Review dealt with counter-narcotic missions on a cursory basis during Frank Carlucci's tenure as Secretary of Defense. Carlucci's

position that the military lacked a viable role in counter-narcotic operations had a chilling effect on the development of the application of military assets in the war on drugs.

Two events have appeared to galvanize the military writing community. The present Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, states the military must play a significant role in combatting illegal narcotics. "

While this has been Mr. Cheney's position, the non-traditional role and sideshow aspect of the counter-narcotic mission kept senior Army commanders from developing comprehensive strategies for their commands. The impact of the second event had more influence on the field commanders than Mr. Cheney's stated position.

The last six months in Europe have done more to energize the defense community than any written guidance. With the perception of a diminished conventional threat in Europe, Army field commanders have had to redefine the missions of their organizations. This move toward embracing counter-narcotics seems rooted more in political realism than belief in the mission. Money, structural organizations and technical developments that have counter-narcotic, low intensity conflict or contingency mission application are more likely to be funded by Congress than traditional European scenario mechanized forces.

The March, 1990 Military Review is dedicated to the war on drugs. The seven articles in this issue deal with several aspects of the counter-narcotic mission. Other

journals, "Army Focus, November, 1989," "Defense, 1989," et al, have placed an increased emphasis on the military's role in the war on drugs. This trend will continue as budgetary considerations force commanders to focus on the face of the most viable threats. Of the threats to national security, illegal drugs are the most visible to the public. It will continue to draw attention to the role of the military.

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Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This thesis defines the problem and proposes strategies for combatting drug operations in Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia using Special Operations Forces. To do this, the thesis looks at counter-narcotic strategies at the national, regional and organizational levels. The thesis presents documentation on the background of illegal drug trafficking. As background, it identifies the organizations and the respective missions of Army SOF units. The thesis then identifies critical targets in trafficking organizations. To capitalize on experience, the thesis contains a summary of lessons learned from previous military counter-narcotic missions. At the end, the thesis proposes reasonable strategies available to Army SOF in operations against illegal narcotics organizations.

National Strategy and Objectives

The United States is committed to the reduction and possible elimination of illegal drugs. ¹ In September, 1989 the President signed the "National Drug Control Strategy." This document was forwarded to the Congress as the first step in directing national assets to combatting an endemic illegal drug problem.

The strategy document outlines national priorities for criminal justice, treatment, education, international

initiatives, interdiction, research, and intelligence. The national priorities focus all levels of government at the problem of combatting illegal narcotics.

The initial 1989 strategy provided baseline information for various governmental agencies. Although the strategy document contains little specific mission guidance, it served several important purposes.

First, the document showed the resolve of the administration to begin to address the problem of illegal narcotic trafficking. It is not an all inclusive users' manual. The document does provide for a balanced international and national response to both the supply and demand problems facing the nation.

Second, the document delineates the need to maximize the efficiency of the interdiction effort through the compilation and dissemination of usable intelligence. The ability of law enforcement agencies to interdict drug shipments relies on timely, accurate intelligence. This allows enforcement to identify trafficking organizations and manage related activities.

Third, the "National Drug Control Strategy" assigns general responsibility for tasks to operating agencies and departments within the government. Before the publication of the document, many agencies involved in counter-narcotic missions had difficulty in defining their role.

The 1989 version of the "National Drug Control Strategy" was updated in January, 1990. Published under the same

title, this update adds additional detail to the original. By reviewing this document with the original, a more defined picture of national strategy can be drawn. In the methodology for this thesis, Congressional testimony was reviewed before reading the 1989 and 1990 strategy documents. It appears that the problem has not been a lack of willingness to take action, but insufficient understanding of what actions to take.

Background on the Problem of Trafficking

In the methodology used in this thesis, a search was done in the area of cocaine trafficking organizations. It was conducted through a computerized search of the Washington Post, United Press International, Associated Press, and Reuters News Service information data banks via the COMPUSERVE communications network.

This search revealed many things. The most significant is the complete lack of usable unclassified material on specific drug trafficking organizations. This data base search showed that the book, Kings of Cocaine: Inside the Medellin Cartel is a primary source of background information on the personalities and characteristics of the key players in the South American drug cartels.

Additionally, the search of newspaper data bases provided a wealth of current operations of the drug cartel and its interaction with the governments of the Andean Ridge. Unfortunately, these same data bases only provided cursory glimpses of the impact of international initiatives on drug

trafficking in the area. There exists a fair amount of space about the social problems exacerbated by cocaine. Little is written about the social and economic problems alleviated by coca production and sales in the cultivating countries.

It also appeared that few, if any journalists had been to the Andean Ridge, or more specifically, the Upper Hualлага Valley. Whether this stems from complacency or fear is unclear. The problem with this methodology is apparent. By limiting the search to only unclassified information, it is difficult to get a feel for the effectiveness of national intelligence assets in the counter-narcotic mission.

Mission Profiles for Counter-narcotic Operations

To successfully define the types of missions suitable for counter-narcotic operations it was necessary to do a cursory mission analysis. This mission analysis was an informal process in the methodology. It attempted to quantify the existing problem, define the criteria for a successful operation and figure out the best method of operation. All sources were used to do this. Included were discussions with members of the enforcement community, sources involved in counter-narcotic missions, and representatives from all levels of government. These sources spoke to students in an elective course offered through the Command and General Staff Officer's Course, Fort Leavenworth, KS. The course, "Drugs and National Security," served as an introduction to the counter-narcotic mission for mid-level commissioned officers

in the Army.

The curriculum in the course dealt with problems surrounding both demand and supply strategies. It included frank discussions with representatives from local, state and federal enforcement agencies. Classroom debate dealt with strategy issues arising from the expanded role of the military in counter-narcotic missions. The students involved in this seminar type discussion were predominantly newcomers to counter-narcotic missions. There were several officers previously involved in counter-narcotic operations, including Operations BLAST FURNACE and SNOWCAP. Additionally, students from Colombia, Venezuela, Argentina, Peru, Honduras and Mexico provided their countries perspective on the US strategy.

Through these discussions and seminars, questions of tactics and requirements surfaced. Although no strict doctrine on fighting narcotics traffickers exists, a sensing of operational needs emerged. When compared with the "National Drug Control Strategy," applicable manuals, and personal experience, the question of suitable missions and roles began to take shape.

It was from this point that the thesis direction turned from the national strategic level to the tactical. Addressing success criteria, albeit limited, against the trafficking organizations weaknesses, revealed some critical targets (nodes). The thesis methodology then required a review of existing tactical doctrine to assess its

suitability and applicability.

A review of military manuals revealed that there is no specific doctrine for applying military force to the issue of counter-narcotic missions. There did exist an evaluation tool for the target complex. A unique SOF method called Target Analysis, using the acronym CARVER, provided the framework for narrowing the areas to be addressed. From this targeting model, requirements for intelligence, communications, transportation, support, etc., follow the same basic principle for any military operation.

Present US Army SOF Structure

To describe the present SOF structure in the United States Army, this thesis relies upon the newest SOF doctrinal manuals. A complete description of each SOF organization appears in the thesis. The purpose of this structure definition is to provide the reader with the background and capabilities of each unit that comprise the Army component of USSOCOM.

One factor in providing the reader of this thesis with the structure of SOF units is the lack of understanding by conventional commanders about SOF. The austere nature, special requirements, and unique command and control apparatus that exist in SOF is unfamiliar to a large segment of the Army. Although conventional units may be used in the counter-narcotic role, the premise of this thesis is that SOF have missions that are inherently suited for counter-narcotic missions.

Successful SOF employment requires understanding, close coordination, detailed planning and adequate support. The responsible commander must clearly understand not only SOF strengths, but weaknesses as well.

SOF Missions

The missions of the various SOF units in the Army have been defined using three source documents. Field Manual 100-20, "Low Intensity Conflict" describes the Army's role in operations short of war. The role of SOF in these types of operations is briefly discussed, but the missions that would be conducted in a counter-narcotic mission, e.g., civil military operations, psychological operations, foreign internal defense, etc., are defined.

Field Manual 80-1 describes the present Army SOF structure, the command relationships within the joint arena, and the organization and mission of each element of Army SOF.

Field Manual 31-20 describes the specific mission of Army Special Forces as a component of SOF. This manual describes roles most commonly associated with foreign internal defense and military assistance programs.

After-action Case Studies

The most significant after-action case studies are reviewed to develop lessons learned. These operations have not received a great deal of attention in the military. They are crucial in the Department of State's development of recommendations for military assistance to law enforcement agencies.

The after-action reports used in this thesis were published by a variety of sources, including participants, observers, and official testimony before Congress. While many reports were reduced to statistical reviews of seizures, even these were significant to this chapter. The report of statistics show an attempt to quantify results. This "body count" procedure is meaningless without a numerical base from which to work. The administration cannot define the scope of the problem. A bust of two tons is meaningless without a scale to measure the success.

Role of Army SOF

It is important to compare the missions of SOF with the administration's Drug Control Strategy. The Drug Control Strategy emphasizes the international interdiction campaign. If SOF are to be successfully employed in a counter-narcotic role, their strengths must be targeted against realistic vulnerabilities of the traffickers. Also, the missions conducted must satisfy the success criteria assigned by the NCA. These missions were derived based upon hypothetical scenarios and within the framework of the present SOF structure. Capabilities of SOF were juxtaposed with the trafficking complex of targets. In doing this, the strengths of SOF were targeted against traffickers' weaknesses.

While methods and procedures are dealt with in this part of the thesis, the actual tactics cannot be developed using a cookie cutter approach. General target

vulnerabilities are identified using CARVER. Methods and procedures for execution are described in field manuals. The actual execution techniques would be left to the ground commander.

Impacts

The impact of certain operations on US strategy and on the host country are discussed. While based in doctrine, these impacts are extrapolations of possible effects. Presently the US populace overwhelmingly supports an active role for the Army in counter-narcotic missions. ² Also, host countries will allow greater latitude on US military assistance. Loss of this support would have a severe impact on the ability of the administration to conduct the international aspects of the counter-narcotic strategy.

Coca cultivation, cocaine production, and trafficking business represents a significant portion of the gross national product of the Andean Ridge countries. This impact must be considered. The loss of these revenues must be dealt with in the framework of any large scale operation.

Conclusion

Research on this thesis was completed on 1 March, 1990. The research committee has had periodic input on the direction and structure of this thesis. A large portion of the research was developed by discussion with members of the research committee. They are assigned to the staff and faculty of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth.

ENDNOTES

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Chapter 4

DRUG TRAFFICKING OPERATIONS IN THE ANDEAN RIDGE

The operations of the Medellin Cartel have received the most significant press coverage of any drug trafficking organization. The methods and procedures used by the Cartel are typical of trafficking organizations around the world. This thesis will analyze the structure, operations, command and control, and background of the Cartel to identify the critical nodes of trafficking operations. After identifying critical components of the trafficking organization, this chapter will conclude by analyzing the trafficking organization using the Special Operations Target Analysis model CARVER (criticality, accessibility, recuperability, vulnerability, effect on the population, recognizability). This Special Operations model assesses a target, and assigns forces. Units use CARVER to prepare and execute a detailed plan to produce a desired effect.

Cultivation

The first step in cocaine production is cultivation of the coca plant. The coca plant is one of the hardiest of plants and easily adapts to difficult climatic conditions.¹ Coca cultivation is the single largest income producer for the indigenous farmer (called *campesino*) of the Andean Ridge. A "typical" coca plantation has been slashed and burned out of the jungle. It consists, nominally, of 7 hectares (15

acres) of cultivated land. 5 acres are used to grow food, manioc, and maize with the other 10 acres devoted strictly to coca. ²

Coca cultivation has been part of the Andean life style since the early 16th century. Coca leaf chewing is an accepted part of the culture of the Andean Ridge and as such has some redeeming qualities. Andean natives chew coca leaf out of tradition and necessity. Small quantities ingested slowly help alleviate hunger, fatigue and the effects of high altitude, all endemic to life on the Andean Ridge. Rooted deeply in their culture, coca cultivation plays an important role in the Andean society. It will not simply "go away" because outsiders corrupt its use. Even more important to the rapid spread of illegal coca cultivation has been the dramatic effect that this crop has had on the standard of living of the campesino and the entire economy of the Andean Ridge. By growing coca for cocaine processing, campesinos can harvest their crop ten times per year vice two yearly harvests for other cash crops. The return on a harvest of cocaine is three times that of coffee. The mathematics of cocaine cultivation are staggering. It is estimated that in 1988 in Bolivia, the government eradicated 3600 hectares of coca plants while the campesinos increased hectares under cultivation from 90,000 to 119,000. ³ The ease with which coca is cultivated, its adaptability to various climatic and soil conditions, tied with the tremendous profit potential has greatly exacerbated the problem of reducing the cocaine

supply.

Initial Chemical Processing

Once the coca leaf has been harvested, it is taken to crude jungle "processing sites" to convert the raw leaf into coca paste. In somewhat small, scattered locations, raw coca leaf is spread to dry in the sun. This operation is labor intensive and does not require a high degree of skill. Coca farmers have combined the cultivation and initial processing locations on a single plantation. This increases security by cutting out a middleman. Plantations increase the profits for individual farmers who would normally pay wages from the sale of raw, unprocessed leaves.

Dried leaves are collected and ground in a pit containing a mild sulfuric acid solution to help in the maceration process. Once the leaves are crushed they are combined with simple precursor chemicals. These chemicals: kerosene, sodium bicarbonate, ammonia nitrate, lime, potassium permanganate, when added in the proper amounts, cause a precipitate to form. This precipitate, called cocaine base, is the basis for much of the economy of the countries in the Andean Ridge.

To understand the impact that the cocaine base industry has had on the campesino, one need only refer to the economics of the process. One acre of coca leaf will provide 400 grams of cocaine base (.4 kilo). A typical slash and burn farm will produce four kilograms of cocaine base each harvest. Coca leaf can produce a new harvest every thirty-

five days. A typical coca farmer will harvest three times annually. Were he to sell at the present market price of \$500 per kilogram, the farmer's annual income would be nearly \$6,000. ⁴ With a per capita income of \$1100.00 on the Ridge, the recalcitrance of the campesino to eradicate his crop is understandable. ⁵ It allows the Cartels' infrastructure to maintain a high degree of security due to the vested interest of the farmer. Profit potential also ensures replacement should government action eradicate a farmer's crop.

Initial chemical processing employs a large segment of the population on the ridge. It is estimated that as much as ten percent of the population of the Andean Ridge countries are employed in some segment of initial production. These tasks require little skilled labor and are manpower intensive. It is at this "grass roots" level that Cartel members like Pablo Escobar have made dramatic inroads in acquiring a degree of legitimacy greater than that of the actual government. Escobar has used some of his enormous wealth to "buy" the affection and respect of his countrymen. ⁶ He has helped in development of the Andean Ridge by providing low cost housing and civic improvements that are unavailable through the central government. Often, the difficulties that the Andean Ridge countries have had in locating and capturing high level Cartel figures like Escobar has been a result of the insulation provided by the local population.

Secondary Chemical Processing

Coca leaf cultivation and cocaine base production are two of the areas in cocaine production that take place in somewhat open areas. Although illegal, these activities require large space and significant amounts of manpower. The sheer volume of the cocaine trade in the Andean Ridge dictates that these two areas are most easily identified and attacked. Attacks against these targets may have some effect on cocaine availability, but will have little or no effect on the infrastructure of an organization such as the Cartel.

Investment in raw coca leaf and initial precursor chemicals per kilo of cocaine is approximately \$4500.00. The same kilo will sell for as much as \$45,000.00 in Europe once refined. Secondary chemical processing, on the other hand, is facility intensive and requires a larger degree of skilled labor.

In secondary chemical processing, the cocaine base is combined with several expensive and relatively exotic chemicals to produce cocaine hydrochloride (cocaine HCL). It is in this crystalline form that cocaine is packaged, transshipped and provided to retailers.

Cocaine base is combined with acetone, ether, and hydrochloric acid to form the crystalline powder with which most people are familiar. The production of cocaine HCL is one of the operations "chokepoints." The ability to produce large quantities of cocaine HCL lies with the availability of skilled chemists, a large power supply, exotic precursor

chemicals, and access to transportation and distribution nets.

Again, the economics of cocaine are staggering. The original \$500.00 worth of coca paste and the investment of \$4000.00 in chemicals has produced a kilogram of 65-70% pure cocaine with a United States' street value of \$25,000.00 and European street value of \$45,000.00. It is at this point, that the infrastructure of organizations such as the cartel become more vulnerable.

The high capital investments for laboratories, skilled labor, transportation, distribution, and money laundering require slightly more direct ties between the cocaine and the members of the Cartel. Still well insulated, the loss of expensive investments has a significant impact on the Cartel members. Additionally, far more of the refined product is available at these relatively centralized points. The cost of doing business is such that the advanced labs and chemists are limited and need to be brought together to improve efficiency. That these labs are so important to the cartel was evident during the four nation drug summit in Cartagena, Colombia. A message from "The Extraditables," a name for the heads of the Cali and Medellin Cartels, offered up the location of two drug labs to President Virgilio Barco of Colombia as a good faith gesture. Although a simple publicity ploy, it emphasizes that these advanced production labs are central to the Cartels' operation. *

Secondary chemical processing and refinement is the final

step for cocaine before its entrance into the international distribution network. Refined cocaine is not only the merchandise of the market, it is often times the underground currency as well. A "mule" may accept some of the load he carries as his expense for transporting the product to market. At the distribution terminal, retailers may provide an amount of the merchandise to their distribution network. This often times has adverse effects on the network as a whole, but mostly, the use of cocaine "bartering" has become an accepted method of conducting business.

Distribution

The segment of cocaine production and trafficking that has the highest visibility is distribution. At this point, the drug trafficking organization must recruit individuals who can transport the finished product to wholesale distributors in the target countries. This step holds the greatest risk for the merchandise itself. In organizing a distribution network, the need for security is paramount. It is also at this link that law enforcement agencies focus most their efforts.

The "bust" of a load of cocaine is seen by some to be the end of an operation. Unfortunately there is a dearth of information on the exact scope of the problem. This lack of usable intelligence on shipments, and the inability of enforcement agencies to successfully infiltrate large scale distribution rings has made the quantification of success a nightmare. The law enforcement agencies are unable to

quantify the amount of cocaine entering the country and therefore, no measure of success can be assigned to an operation.

Trafficking and distribution of cocaine is a complicated process that has become very sophisticated. In the early 1980s, distribution of cocaine was limited to small, dispersed loads that could be easily concealed. The demand in the United States increased at such a dramatic rate that new methods had to be developed. Some original cartel "founding fathers" realized that efficiency could be gotten through organization and volume sales. The lucrative North American market demanded larger and larger deliveries of refined cocaine. This increase in demand may have been one of the driving reasons behind the formation of the Medellin Cartel. This even more than the internecine warfare that rocked the cocaine traffickers from Colombia to Miami.

Carlos Lehder, while in prison in Danbury, Connecticut began to develop a plan for aerial smuggling. ° He concluded that the use of individual "mules," while difficult to interdict, was not capable of maintaining pace with demand. He envisioned loads in terms of hundreds of kilograms instead of the usual small multi-kilo loads carried by individuals.

In the early 1980's smuggling of cocaine into the United States was conducted via small private airplanes, pleasure boats, a few overland "mules," and travellers aboard commercial conveyances. With increased emphasis on in-transit interdiction and attacking the infrastructure of the

wholesale distributors' net, traffickers from Colombia began to investigate new methods of delivering bulk loads of cocaine with minimum risk to the organization.

The use of bulk cargo containers is one of the most efficient ways to smuggle narcotics into the US. Cargo containers offer the trafficker a secure, relatively inexpensive, concealed method of delivering contraband into the US. It arrives in sufficient quantity to meet the demands of a growing consumer market. The number of containers entering the US annually is so large that it is physically impossible to inspect them all. ²⁰

Additional methods of smuggling include airdrop, airland, and over water operations. It is unclear about the exact amount of cocaine smuggled into the US via these methods. Optimistic figures place the present seizure rate at approximately 10%-15% of total shipments. ²¹ Without adequate intelligence the seizure rate will not dramatically increase. The amount of smuggled drugs and the methods used for transportation exceed the capabilities of enforcement agencies. Unless the enforcement community can be directed against known shipments, and the number of shipments reduced to a manageable number, it will be impossible to completely stem the flow of cocaine into the US.

CARVER Target Analysis

The problem in developing strategies for defeating drug traffickers in the US is twofold. First, intelligence is critical to identifying targets vulnerable to attack. With

precise, comprehensive intelligence, operations can be planned to maximize the effectiveness of enforcement agencies assets. The intelligence collected by enforcement agencies must be timely, accurate, and detailed. These requirements are essential to conducting meaningful interdiction operations.

Second, the targets attacked must be of significant importance to the drug trafficker. Seizing a small, relatively unimportant distributor will have little effect on the supply of drugs. If the desired outcome of a drug strategy is to significantly reduce the availability of a drug like cocaine, the target of an interdiction campaign must be critical to the trafficker's operation. To this end, a system must be used to identify possible targets. Once identified, these targets are prioritized and attacked to meet the success criteria assigned by the responsible commander.

The system used to identify, classify, and prepare plans in SOF is the CARVER Target Analysis. This analysis model allows the planner to identify critical components or nodes in a target complex. Once identified, the planner can conduct operations to achieve a specified effect. Additionally, this model allows the planner to factor in other variables such as available forces, effect on friendly populations, and the length of time the degradation will be in effect. Finally, CARVER allows the planner to specify limitations to the operational commander. If total

destruction is necessary, the planner will make that clear in his target interdiction plan.

The acronym CARVER is used to assess each target component in the complex. These assessments then rank order the components in terms of each CARVER variable.

Criticality

Criticality of a target is the relative importance of a system, subsystem complex, or component that, if attacked, will have some effect on the operation of the intended target complex. Criticality is measured based upon the effect that a component's destruction will have on the target's capability. Criticality is based upon several factors.

Components of the target or target complex may be irreplaceable. If the component is unique (one of a kind) and there is no capability to replace it exists, this component is the most critical.

A component does not have to be an inanimate object. Critical personnel in the target complex may be the component to attack. If specialized training of personnel in the target complex is required for them to perform their jobs, the action element may recommend their removal. In a cocaine production complex a grower is more easily replaced than a chemist. The head of a distribution ring may possess information capable of completely dismantling the structure. The SOF planner must attack the one component or group of components most critical to the target complex.

A target that is destroyed and has an instantaneous

positive effect on the host government or US is more critical than a target that takes longer to show any appreciable impact.

Accessibility

Accessibility is simply the ease with which a target can be attacked. This attack can be either direct or indirect. An unguarded component is more accessible than a heavily guarded component. Additionally, accessibility relates to its attack by weapons used at a distance. A lightly guarded target that must be attacked by a man on the ground is less accessible than a heavily guarded target that can be successfully attacked by stand-off weapons. Although a subjective point sometimes, accessibility may be graded in terms of the ability of an operational element to attack and be withdrawn in relative safety.

In a cocaine trafficking operation, the fields of the campesino may be the most accessible. If they are not critical, or if their destruction would have a significant negative effect on the people whose life depends on farming, the planner may choose another target. The chosen target must still be accessible. The accessibility of the target must, however be weighed against all other factors.

In preparing a target folder for the cocaine industry, the planner may choose to weight one factor higher than others. In doing so, he may accept some risk to achieve a more significant effect. A target that requires stealth to reach may not be terribly accessible. If the destruction of

this target completely destroyed the availability of cocaine, the planner may accept risk in getting the action element to the target in order to reach that specific component.

Recuperability

Recuperability, in its simplest form is rated based upon the time the enemy force can successfully return a system to operation. It is also based on the desired effect. If the desired effect is a twenty percent drop in production, a small target destroyed that can be by-passed immediately but only provides sixty-five percent capacity gets a higher rating than a component that can be replaced in a longer period but returns the target to eighty percent production capacity.

Vulnerability

Vulnerability of a target is related to the ability of the operational unit to physically conduct the mission. A target may be identified as critical and non-recuperable. If the operational element does not possess the material or expertise to attack it, it is not vulnerable.

Effect on Population

Another concern in target analysis is the effect on the population. By considering both the positive and negative impact on the population, the planner attempts to limit harmful collateral damage. This damage may be psychological or physical. If the target complex is a power station that serves a predominantly supportive population, its destruction may have an adverse effect on the people upon whose support the operation depends.

Recognizability

A critical portion of the CARVER model is recognizability. The ability of the action element to recognize the target under varied conditions is essential. If the target is incorrectly identified the operation will be unsuccessful.

The CARVER model is used to rank order targets. SOF units use CARVER to select those targets or target components that, when attacked, achieve the desired effect.

Potential Targets

In looking at the complex of targets in a drug trafficking organization, several areas can be considered.

Coca Leaf

Coca leaf itself is a target. The leaf is easily recognized and is the critical component in making cocaine HCL. The problems with attacking the leaf are its ability to recuperate and the size of the growing area. Destruction of the crop would have a very limited effect on the cocaine industry. Sheer profit potential would ensure that the traffickers found new growing locations.

The destruction of the coca leaf crop could be accomplished by severe eradication methods. The use of chemical sprays to defoliate large portions of the UHV is an option. This method has been condemned by the Peruvian Sendero Luminoso. Were the crop completely eradicated, it is apparent that a significant portion of the economies of South America would be affected. The potential exists that this

deprivation of income could swing a portion of the apolitical majority to the cause of the insurgents. If that were the case, the destruction of the cocaine industry would prove to be a more significant problem to the host countries.

Precursor Chemicals

A second target is precursor chemical supply. Precursor chemicals are exotic and are presently imported to produce cocaine base and HCL. Precursor chemicals lend themselves to sabotage and direct interdiction. Intelligence provided by deployed SOF elements may provide information on suppliers and sabotage of existing stocks may have a short term effect. In the long run, the availability of precursor chemicals will have an immediate effect on cocaine production. If the loss of these chemicals becomes critical to the operation, traffickers will begin to produce their own supply. Additionally, the chemicals used are "dual use" chemicals and have a number of legitimate uses. It is nearly impossible to stop the supplies of these chemicals as they have a number of legitimate uses. If the capability exists to produce these chemicals in abundance, the profit potential in cocaine will support the traffickers in establishing their own production facilities.

Trafficking Structure

The third and very critical target of the trafficking complex is something not easily defined. The target is the actual infrastructure of the trafficking organization. The SOF units' capabilities to attack the structure itself is

limited by the accuracy and availability of intelligence.

The present trafficking structures as they exist are the key to the supply problem. They are the critical link between the growers and the consumer. The efficiency of the structure has greatly increased the problem for enforcement agencies. Their close knit structure has precluded infiltration and has provided the organizational strength to stand up to government interdiction efforts. If the structure can be successfully attacked, its loss would significantly decrease the availability of cocaine for a significant amount of time. The only requirement for attack of this structure would be a determination of the criteria for success.

Within this infrastructure are technicians who perform much of the final chemical processing, financial conduits responsible for money laundering and the heads of the cartels themselves. The cartels' leadership is well insulated but represent a very lucrative target. The information they possess on distribution nets, laboratory locations, money laundering operations and official corruption is the single most critical component of a successful supply interdiction program.

(NOTE: The information on the CARVER Target Analysis System was paraphrased from "SFOD-I Student Handbook on Special Operations Targeting." This handbook is used as an instructional manual for the Strategic Industrial Target

Analysis Training Course, Deputy Chief of Staff for
Intelligence, 1st SOCOM, FT Bragg, NC.)

ENDNOTES

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Chapter 5

ORGANIZATION AND MISSION OF ARMY SOF

The present structure of SOF allows for the task organization of SOF units into operational groupings for specific type operations. The SOF organizations addressed here are those presently found in Army SOF Tables of Organization and Equipment.

SOF units include Ranger, Special Forces, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and Special Operations Aviation units. This thesis will briefly describe the organization and capabilities of each of these units.

Before discussing the individual units assigned to conduct special operations, it is important that the general command and control structure for SOF be described. The unique capabilities and operational support requirements for SOF have made the development of a clear, unfettered chain of command one of the tenets of conducting special operations.

United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)

Due to the often critical nature and political sensitivity of special operations, the command structure for SOF was developed to ensure sufficient control of deployed SOF. The command structure allows field commanders adequate flexibility to conduct operations with a high probability of success. The President and the Secretary of Defense, comprising the National Command Authority (NCA), go through

very few command levels to reach an operational unit. These layers allow military commanders to plan and execute operations within their capabilities with the support required from higher echelons.

The formation of USSOCOM resulted in creation of a headquarters with the sole responsibility of advising the NCA and National Security Council on Special Operations activities and SOF. The Commander-in-Chief, USSOCOM (USCINCSOC), unlike other combatant commanders, lacks a specific geographic area to cover. Instead, USCINCSOC provides SOF to regional CINCs to conduct operations under the regional commanders operational command.

In this manner, USCINCSOC and the USSOCOM staff can provide unique capabilities to a regional CINC. The regional CINC can conduct SO activities without maintaining regional SOF. Additionally, as USSOCOM is a joint headquarters, comprising components from all services, the USCINCSOC can tailor the SOF package provided. This ability to tailor the force to the mission ensures that the SOF provided are capable of conducting the missions assigned by the supported CINC. 1

Without discussing the actual organizations themselves, USSOCOM has several units from each service. Nominally, USSOCOM has under its control an Army component (US Army Special Operations Command), a Navy component (Naval Special Warfare Command), and an Air Force component (Air Force Special Operations Command). With these combatant elements,

USSOCOM controls the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), and the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS). All special operations above the basic field headquarters are inherently joint (involving more than one uniformed service). The formation of USSOCOM has increased the individual unit capabilities by ensuring that all SOF can work with other services.

US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC)

The Army component of USSOCOM is the US Army Special Operations Command. This headquarters is the Major Army Command (MACOM) responsible for the training, deployment and employment for Army SOF units.

USASOC advises USSOCOM on the capabilities, availability and readiness of Army SOF assigned to support a regional CINC. The Commander, USASOC is responsible for ensuring the readiness of assigned SOF units. Additionally, USASOC may provide staff augmentation to the supported CINC. He may direct a subordinate SOF commander to provide augmentation from the supporting structure. ²

RANGERS

Ranger is a term that describes light infantry units specially trained, organized, and equipped to operate in a special operations role. These units are rapidly deployable and capable of operating across the entire spectrum of conflicts.

The Rangers are organized as a three battalion regiment which is capable of deploying a Ranger force from platoon to

regimental size. A deployed Ranger force is capable of conducting conventional light infantry missions using special techniques. While the unit is austere in nature, the Regiment is capable of performing independent special operations.

The missions of the Ranger Regiment are characterized by detailed planning, security, and violent execution. The term "violent execution" does not necessarily denote mass destruction. On the contrary, Ranger operations stress limitations on excessive force. While the employment of a Ranger force on a direct action mission accepts the use of deadly force, the violence of the operation is limited to selected target areas. Wholesale violence in the objective area may politically negate the gains secured in a military operation. 3

An oft used, but seldom understood term is that of the surgical strike. Through extensive planning, rehearsals, and comprehensive intelligence, the Ranger force attempts to accomplish an assigned mission with a minimum of violence.

Ranger operations are, of necessity, direct action missions. The Ranger Regiment is used by the NCA to attack high priority, time critical, and politically sensitive targets. While the Ranger Regiment is capable of conducting a variety of operations, it is most effective when used in a limited, contingency combat operation role.

Rangers are best employed when conducting short duration raids against lightly defended targets. These

raids are of short duration due to the relatively austere support elements associated with a Ranger force.

Special Forces

Special Forces' units are organized, trained and equipped to conduct a myriad of operations. They can operate in the entire range of conflict from peace through war. Special Forces' units provide unique capabilities to the commander of a theater.

The largest structure in Special Forces is the Special Forces Group. The Group is responsible for planning, conducting and supporting Special Operations' activities across the entire strategic continuum. The Group has three Special Forces Battalions, called "C" Teams. These "C" Teams are responsible for the training, readiness, deployment and support of three Special Forces companies, called "B" Teams.

The "B" team is responsible for the command and control of six Special Forces Operational Detachments, or "A" Teams. The special forces company is capable of providing liaison elements to a supported headquarters while maintaining an advanced operational base (AOB) to support deployed "A" teams.

The primary missions of Special Forces at every level are foreign internal defense, unconventional warfare, special reconnaissance, direct action, and counter-terrorism. *

Special Forces' detachments are capable of helping civilian and military forces of a host country, or conducting operations as part of a joint (US only/all services) or

combined (more than one country) force. This assistance includes a range of missions from instructional to direct combat. The type mission is based upon the rules of engagement developed by the supported CINC and approved by the NCA.

Psychological Operations

Psychological operations units are unique elements responsible for influencing populations to support future or current US or host nation operations. Operations may be designed to prepare host country nationals to accept the presence of US troops in their country, provide legitimacy to an ongoing host nation or US operation, or discredit enemy operations. *

The PSYOPS Group is responsible for the training, deployment and support of subordinate PSYOPS units. The PSYOPS Group maintains the capability to tailor forces to support a specific region at levels from theater to division level. Within the PSYOPS Group, the three PSYOPS Battalions are capable of operating unilaterally or as part of a joint or combined force. PSYOPS messages are developed with the supported commander and host nation counterparts. Once developed, the message is distributed via spoken, printed, or broadcast media. Additionally, once distributed, the PSYOPS units are responsible for gauging the effect of the message, the impact of the message on future operations, and refining the message to maximize its impact.

Civil Affairs

The Civil Affairs Foreign Internal Defense / Unconventional Warfare Battalion is responsible for planning and conducting civil/military operations (CMO) in support of SOF. These language trained, regionally oriented units train, advise and assist indigenous and US forces in the conduct of CMO to support FID and UW. *

The CA FID/UW Battalion assists military units in developing population and resource controls, civic action and civil assistance programs that increase the legitimacy of the host government. The legitimacy of the government is critical in maintaining the support of the local population. Additionally, recognition of social and economic problems that erode popular support ensure that the response of the host government and US units deployed in country is balance. This idea of balanced response attacks the root causes of the problem facing the host nation. By eradicating the root causes of a societal problem, the host government defeats an internal problem permanently. In the counter-narcotic mission, by attacking the societal problem that makes illegal coca growing attractive, the popular support of eradication will have a significant impact on the supply of cocaine.

Special Operations Aviation

The Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR) provides dedicated aviation support to SOF units throughout the operational environment. The regiment is flexible to allow the tailoring of aviation assets to a particular theater or

mission.

SOAR units are capable of conducting low visibility and clandestine operations in support of SOF. This capability provides for maximum operational security and enhances surprise. The surprise inherent in SO activities is critical to force protection and increases the impact of the operation itself. 2

SOAR units have the capability to transport, resupply, provide reconnaissance for, evacuate, and support by fire, SO activities in all weather conditions. With precision guidance and sophisticated avionics, the SOAR provides a specialized, highly versatile capability to SOF.

ENDNOTES

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3. IBID, pp. 8-1/8-19

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Chapter 6

COUNTER-NARCOTIC CASE STUDIES: TACTICS AND TECHNIQUES

The drug problem facing the United States has reached a stage where the capabilities of the drug trafficker have outstripped those of the enforcement agencies. The gulf between law enforcement's and drug trafficker's capabilities requires the development of operations designed to defeat the trafficker before illegal narcotics reach the consumer.

Several operations have been conducted which were designed to use the assets of the military to maximize enforcement operations. The ability to detect, monitor, and interdict drug shipments from their point of origin to distribution sites requires assets not normally found in civilian law enforcement organizations.

A successful interdiction campaign of the scope that will have an appreciable impact on trafficking organizations requires extensive intelligence assets, secure communications, logistical support, transportation assets, and a command and control structure capable of rapid tactical decision making. These requirements could be met by restructuring the drug enforcement agencies. The problems with a restructuring of this magnitude are threefold.

First, the physical restructuring of drug enforcement agencies would degrade present capabilities as restructuring is being accomplished. In any organization where

responsibility and relationships are revised, some degradation in capability occurs while the organization sorts itself out. The magnitude of the US drug problem is such that enforcement agencies are barely able to keep up with present operations. Were their capabilities degraded, even for a relatively short time, the long term impact would adversely affect the enforcement situation.

Second, the equipment requirements for a full scale interdiction campaign carry a high price tag. The need for advanced communication equipment, aircraft, transportation assets, logistical support facilities, etc., would rapidly deplete an already overburdened budget. Competing interests for these scarce resources, e.g., military versus enforcement requirements, would cause either duplicate capabilities to exist in both communities or the enhancement of one organization at the expense of another.

Third, and perhaps most significant in terms of maintaining efficient enforcement operations is the requirement for training. Equipment, procedures, tactics and techniques which are unfamiliar to the typical enforcement agency require extensive training to ensure safe and efficient operations.

The enforcement community, the Congress, and the administration recognized some of these problems. Debate in Congress began to revolve around methods to enhance law enforcement capability by exploiting existing technology and structure found in the military. Realizing that using the

military in a direct enforcement role carried some of the same problems as restructuring the enforcement agencies, the administration's solution was to provide enforcement agencies with assistance from the military. In light of legal restrictions, this assistance had to be in accordance with the provisions of the Posse Comitatus Act. Along with the legal restrictions, the assistance provided by the military was to be such that it did not affect the military preparedness of the supporting service.

Since 1981, a number of joint civilian/military counter-narcotic operations have been conducted. These operations have provided a number of lessons learned for both sides of the house. Tactics have been developed and strengths and weaknesses of each side have been identified.

While not all of the operations have had a significant impact on the availability of cocaine in the US, they have shown that many of the existing capabilities in the military can be effectively used by the drug enforcement community.

Operation BLAST FURNACE

Operation BLAST FURNACE was a joint US/Bolivian operation to destroy cocaine hydrochloride labs. The general concept of the operation was to identify clandestine laboratories through enforcement agencies' intelligence sources and to then conduct direct action (DA) missions against these sites.

The criteria for success in this mission was not specific. It was believed that the effect of the operation could be monitored through significant fluctuations in the

wholesale price of coca leaves. In economic terms, the less leaf available, the higher the market price of raw leaf. Conversely, the less leaf available, the lower the quality of the refined cocaine and hence the lower street retail value.

In July, 1986 at the invitation of the Bolivian government, the US deployed a task force from the US Army's 193d Infantry Brigade, FT Clayton, Panama. This task force consisted of six UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters with their aircrews. Additionally, 160 personnel were assigned to the task force to provide maintenance, logistic, intelligence, and security support. An operations cell was deployed to coordinate activities and assist in mission planning.

The tactics employed by the combined task force were those of airmobile assault. When the Bolivian anti-narcotics police force (UMOPAR) or field agents of DEA had identified a laboratory, the task force was responsible for airlifting enforcement assets. UMOPAR and/or DEA conducted arrests and destroyed the laboratory facility.

The rapid movement of enforcement assets to these remote sites greatly increased the ability of UMOPAR to reach previously untouched areas. Additionally, the shortened response time from target identification to putting agents on the ground increased the chances of seizing both raw materials (coca leaf, paste, base, precursor chemicals) and the personnel operating the labs.

In the short term, BLAST FURNACE appeared to be successful. A drop in retail prices indicated that the

effect of the raids was reducing the availability of raw leaf and paste. This lack of cocaine base caused a concurrent drop in the quality of the cocaine which reduced the market value. The loss of laboratory assets and the personnel to man them apparently had an immediate impact on the profitability of cultivation.

Shortly after BLAST FURNACE began, coca leaf price began to rise again. This appeared to indicate that the laboratories were in operation at new locations. Over a four month period, UMOPAR and DEA, supported by BLAST FURNACE personnel conducted 256 insertions. These insertions resulted in the destruction of 22 HCL laboratories and identification of transshipment sites. While the initial objective, based on wholesale leaf price, appears to have been met, the speed at which the traffickers resumed operations was less than satisfactory. ¹

BLAST FURNACE lessons are mixed. ² The most conclusive lesson is that intelligence, both timely and accurate, is critical to successful interdiction missions. The number of missions conducted and the relatively low seizure rate is significant. An aspect that apparently was ignored was the effect on the population. As the raids continued, drug operations were moved to new locations. The time in which new labs became operational is indicative of the profit potential in cocaine production. Because of the economic impact that coca cultivation has had on the local population, it is doubtful that BLAST FURNACE's eradication program was

supported by the local campesino.

It is unlikely that operations like BLAST FURNACE will be successful in and of themselves. A more broad and comprehensive strategy is called for.

Operation SNOWCAP

Operation SNOWCAP was originally classified by the DEA, and was only recently made public knowledge. This operation was designed as a paramilitary operation to curb cocaine trafficking in the Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV) of Peru. The operation was a joint and combined operation with US DEA agents and Peruvian anti-narcotics police supported and trained by US advisors from the Army, Navy and US Coast Guard.

Involving over 30 nations at its peak, SNOWCAP attempted to penetrate an area that was considered sanctuary by both the narcotics traffickers of Peru and the Sendero Luminoso guerrillas. This broad operation was designed to operate along traditional military lines, using civilian agents and host nation police as the operators. 3

The tactics and techniques used in SNOWCAP were standard military tactics for low intensity conflict. The DEA, with the advice and assistance of the Army, set up an advanced operations base (AOB) from which they conducted patrols, raids and ambushes against processing sites, transshipment locations, and coca fields.

The most significant problem with SNOWCAP was the use of civilian DEA operatives in a paramilitary role. Training

was conducted to enhance the agents' capabilities. This military training included small unit tactics, air assault techniques, advanced weapons training, and operational planning. A significant problem with the operation was the placement of the AOB in an area controlled by the Sendero Luminoso guerrillas. ^ While the DEA was attempting to interdict drug traffickers, the Sendero saw the presence of the DEA as a threat to their Maoist movement. The basic precepts of the Maoist is that he controls the countryside and operates freely among the people of the area. With the DEA base in Santa Lucia, the government of Peru could claim that they were regaining control of the UHV. The threat of direct conflict with the Sendero resulted in a seven month suspension of operations as the site was "hardened" by advisors from the Army's Special Forces attached to the Ambassador's country team.

Operations under SNOWCAP have resumed, yet these operations are, in the words of one DEA agent, simply to show the American people that something useful is being accomplished. ^ As a public relations tool, SNOWCAP may have been a partial success. As a significant threat to drug traffickers, the results are less clear.

SNOWCAP's basic premise was to carry the drug war to the traffickers and interdict unrefined and partially refined cocaine at its source. While the seizure level is impressive at first glance, when viewed in terms of the total amount exported it is not very significant.

Lessons learned in SNOWCAP were much the same as those in BLAST FURNACE. The need for extensive, real-time, reliable intelligence is paramount for a successful operation. SNOWCAP went much further than previous operations by combining ground, air, and maritime interdiction programs. It still failed to embrace the root causes of the problem which makes coca cultivation so attractive to the campesino. The operation attempted to attack identified centers of gravity, e.g., laboratories, precursor chemical supplies, technicians, and physical plants. The problem remains rooted in profit potential for the actual trafficker. Until a strategy can be developed that removes the profit for the trafficker and has the support of the growers, it will not solve the supply problem facing the US.

Operations HATTRICK I/II & III

Operations HATTRICK I/II & III were operations conducted in 1985 and 1986, respectively, aimed at disrupting drug flow during Colombia's fall harvest. This operation was supported by US Army communication systems operators and two UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters with aircrews. The operation was conducted in support of Colombian and DEA agents and was marginally successful.

The Army's role in these operations was geared to coordinating activities between the Colombian/DEA ground operatives, Coast Guard, air and naval assets, and other involved nations. The Army's communication and coordination

support allowed the different agencies and countries involved to communicate in a secure manner. It also attempted to alleviate the problems inherent to combined operations by providing standardized equipment to all participants. *

Summary of Operations and Lessons Learned

Operations other than the few listed previously have been supported by the Army. All of these operations together run the gamut from simple logistical support operations to full blown training and advisory missions. The scope of these operations will continue to increase as the President and the Congress loosen restrictions on direct military involvement. The restrictions of the Posse Comitatus Act may or may not apply outside the US. Recent supreme court decisions have increased the arrest and seizure powers granted to the military in counter-narcotic missions. The Justice Department is on record that the Posse Comitatus Act does not apply outside CONUS.

Some of the more significant lessons learned during the conduct of the larger missions must be analyzed in order to develop strategy and doctrine. Application of these lessons will maximize the effect of military participation. Additionally, these lessons identify the inherent weaknesses of these operations. The limited effect that a one dimensional strategy has on the drug problem must be countered by comprehensive programs which deal with both host nation and US concerns.

Operations like SNOWCAP and BLAST FURNACE demonstrated

the efficacy, albeit short term, of eradication programs. The problems with eradication programs are the negative impact on the local economy, the high cost versus relative low return, and physical limitations on the amount of drugs seized or destroyed. SNOWCAP for example cost the DEA over \$24 million and seized approximately 43 metric tons of cocaine. This represents less than twenty percent of the cocaine exports from Peru. Some of the disparity can be traced to the lack of usable, timely intelligence. In conducting over 250 site "visits", DEA and Peruvian anti-narcotics police found fewer than 70 of the sites active.

Other valuable lessons learned from previous operations deal with operational matters. The pressing need for accurate intelligence has been revealed on all operations. The ability of organizations to collect, analyze, process, and distribute intelligence is a specialized function. It becomes even more critical when dealing with other services and other countries. With the potential of compromise it is incumbent upon operational elements to ensure security. The necessity for security in the collection and dissemination of intelligence materials is critical.

Although technical intelligence collection such as an AWACS intercept is important, enforcement assets must be directed to high value targets. In a \$200 billion business a small commuter plane carrying 100 kilograms of cocaine is insignificant. On the other hand, identifying the upper echelon of the trafficking structure will yield greater

returns. This structure is responsible for paying growers, processors, distributors and operates money laundering operations. The only reliable method of attacking the structure successfully is through the use of accurate human intelligence. This type of intelligence not only complements technical intelligence by verifying visually, information received through other means, it also provides accurate pictures of structure and identifies rather than locates targets.

ENDNOTES

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Chapter 7

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL MISSIONS

SOF units are the most readily available to the National Command Authority to conduct counter-narcotic operations. The question remains as to their suitability to conduct operations which would significantly affect availability or production of illegal narcotics. In terms of the ability of SOF to conduct intelligence collection or harassing operations, the point is moot. Those are the type of missions for which SOF has been trained, organized, and equipped. Additionally, the cultures in which drug cultivation and preparation have become economic staples are inherently unstable. While it may seem that the eradication of illicit farms and chemical labs is the answer to the United State's drug epidemic, it begs the question as to the responsibility of the government to assist those countries in controlling their economies and replacing lost revenues once drug production no longer contributes to the local marketplace.

In order to address the suitability of SOF, the capabilities of the complete SOF spectrum must be defined. This does, however, present an additional problem. In the country's zeal to eradicate the illegal drug epidemic, it is far too easy to find a unit and assign a mission. If the problem appears at first glance to be answerable with

military technology and personnel, why not a Marine landing force? The equation then becomes one of simple mathematics. Country "A" supplies illegal drugs to the United States. Drugs are a threat to U.S. national security. In order to protect national security, the President must dispatch "X" numbers of battalions to country "A" to halt shipments of the narcotic. This solution is specious as it does not address the root cause of the problem, nor does it allow for flexibility in a response. Under this premise, any threat to national security requires an invasion. That is a policy which could not, would not, and should not be supported.

The question is suitability and flexibility of response. The National Drug Strategy is aimed at both domestic and international aspects of illegal drug trafficking and distribution. This thesis is aimed at determining the roles of SOF in counter-narcotic operations. To determine suitability, the National Command Authority must define the required response, the target effect required, and the acceptable risk. In broad terms, it is the responsibility of the NCA to conduct a target analysis to determine how to most effectively achieve the required effect on the target. Upon designation of an adequate target and the assignment of a required effect, along with acceptable risk, the National Command Authority is then in the position to determine the suitability of SOF.

Within this thesis, the drug problem is defined in terms of target nodes (places which are exposed) and the required

effect. By simple definition, the entire spectrum of SOF must be addressed. Target analysis requires a description of the impact of SOF employment.

SOF units are austere organizations which are regionally oriented and specially trained to conduct overt, covert and clandestine operations under the control of the National Command Authority (NCA). These units have the capability of conducting unconventional warfare, counter-insurgency operations, direct action missions, psychological operations, civil affairs missions, special reconnaissance, as well as a number of advisory and training missions that may be directed.

Due to the flexibility and wide range of capabilities inherent in SOF, the utility of adapting SOF to counter-narcotic missions appears to hold great promise.

First, SOF units are capable of providing extensive real-time intelligence to the NCA to assist in the decision making cycle. Counter-narcotic operations require an extensive intelligence capability. The illegal nature of cultivation and distribution of illicit narcotics requires these organizations to operate clandestinely. To adequately affect drug production, enforcement agencies require secure, reliable, and timely intelligence. This decreases the response time of enforcement agencies once a target is identified. Reliable intelligence ensures that the target to be attacked is valuable and worth the effort expended. Finally, attacking a lucrative target quickly leaves no

response time for the traffickers.

SOF is, ostensibly, regionally oriented and language capable. These capabilities enhance the effectiveness of the units. The ability to effectively use the native language of a country and a familiarity with the customs, history and social mores of a country increase the units credibility in the eyes of the host country. The ancillary benefit of these capabilities is the units ability to work "undercover".

SOF missions include counter-insurgency, unconventional warfare, direct action and special reconnaissance. Each of these missions requires extensive planning, intelligence and security. In the National Drug Strategy document dated September 1989, the President identified the need for timely intelligence and rapid response by enforcement agencies. An additional concern of the present administration is a well documented relationship between the drug trafficking organizations in South America and several virulent insurgencies. This "marriage of convenience" has had a significant impact on the South American drug cartels' ability to defend themselves. While drug trafficking provides the money to the cartels, the cartels provide money to insurgent organizations within the country. The governments of the affected countries are forced to fight a two front war against forces who are neither economically or politically restrained.

Attacking the Root Cause

Special consideration must be given to the root causes

which have led to the success of the drug cultivation business along the Andean Ridge. The primary reason that cocaine production has proven to be so lucrative in these countries is that there are present in this area, all of the prerequisites of a successful cocaine production and distribution system. Within the targeted countries there exists a weak local government, a disaffected population, and corrupt or ineffective police controls. These factors, with the proper climatic and soil conditions, combine to produce an area suitable for successful cocaine cultivation, production and distribution. The crop of choice is cocaine. The choice of crops is based solely on profit. Were an organization, like the Medellin Drug Cartel, capable of producing the same profit with another type of crop, that would then be the new South American cash crop.

Understanding the Area of Operations

In answering the question of the suitability planners cannot operate in a vacuum. The entire problem must be addressed in terms of social and economic difficulties inherent to the target country. Planners must choose actions that reduce the profitability of cocaine cultivation. Planners may select crop substitution, eradication or attacking the infrastructure. Planners also consider the ability of the government to control its own enforcement efforts. They must also answer the question of as to whether the operation will have a significant impact on the actual production and distribution of illicit drugs.

The SOF Community as an Answer

The diverse nature of the units and capabilities within the SOF community dictate that the problem be dealt with as more than a military interdiction. The presence of Psychological Operations units to influence the population, Civil Affairs units to assist in strengthening the ability of the host government to adequately address social and economic programs, and the capabilities of Special Forces and Ranger units to conduct counter-insurgency, direct action and intelligence collection to disrupt production and distribution, indicates that all SOF missions are adaptable to counter-narcotic operations.

Direct Action Missions

Direct action (DA) missions are a SOF specialty. A DA mission requires detailed intelligence, extensive planning, and violent execution. A DA mission may be an ambush (attack against a moving target), raid (attack against a facility or complex), or other small scale offensive action. The DA mission is directed against high value targets, normally in a denied or contested area.

The DA mission may be conducted by a direct assault against the target or by the use of special munitions, e.g., mines or terminal guidance devices emplaced by the SOF unit. These missions are limited in scope and are not designed to be decisive in nature. The DA mission may be conducted by a pure SOF unit, e.g. a Ranger Battalion, or by a mixed SOF grouping.

All DA missions are part of a larger campaign plan. The use of the DA mission must be limited to critical high value targets to maximize the effect of the attack.

In a counter-narcotic mission, the DA operation may be used to deny the traffickers access to key facilities, destroy necessary supplies, or capture designated key personnel. These type of operations are presently being employed by the DEA in the UHV. The DA missions in the UHV have centered around raids against clandestine laboratories and interdiction of cocaine shipments. The inherent capabilities of SOF to plan, execute, and support DA missions in a denied area such as the UHV make them extremely suitable for this mission.

Special Reconnaissance

The term special reconnaissance (SR) is actually a misnomer. The missions described as special reconnaissance are actually intelligence collection missions. These collection missions are planned to gather intelligence data to support other SOF or conventional military operations. The SR mission is designed to collect new information, verify information from other sources, discern capabilities of a specified target, conduct target acquisition for other forces, and to gather other information (hydrographic, topographic, etc.).

While it appears that there is nothing particularly special about special reconnaissance, the environment in which the operations are conducted make them unique. The

language capability, area orientation, low visibility insertion methods, and use of clandestine tactics set the SR mission apart from other reconnaissance.

Other counter-narcotic efforts have proven the absolute necessity of timely and accurate intelligence. The problem with interdiction operations has been, and will continue to be, identifying interdiction targets with reasonable surety. Once cocaine enters the distribution network, it is difficult to track and intercept. Even through the use of advanced technical platforms such as the airborne warning and control system (AWACS), it is impossible to tell if an airplane is actually transporting cocaine.

The presence of SOF units conducting special reconnaissance would have several significant impacts on trafficking organizations in the UHV. First, the operations of SOF, or the threat of their presence, would cause some degree of uncertainty and consternation to exist in the area. This uncertainty or consternation may disrupt efficient production operations in the production areas of the UHV. This disruption would decrease the output of the traffickers by forcing them to move on a regular basis.

Second, the operations of SOF on reconnaissance missions would provide immediate human intelligence on traffickers, infrastructure, production capabilities, etc. This information is invaluable to enforcement agencies. As the shroud of secrecy is lifted from the traffickers' operations, it becomes easier to target individuals who are more

important than the individual grower. In order to successfully defeat drug traffickers, the structure which supports it and has the most to lose must be attacked.

Special reconnaissance is designed to complement a system like AWACS by visually verifying the loading and launching of aircraft or other vehicles suspected of transporting drugs. With the advanced communication systems used by SOF it is possible to provide real-time intelligence and data to interdiction organizations at great distances.

Mobile Training

SOF possess the capability to export training in support of another government. Special Forces are specifically trained to conduct training for a host nation in a myriad of military and paramilitary subjects. These training packages, approved by the Department of State, are tailored to a specific mission and are conducted in the host country.

SOF presently is conducting training of US drug enforcement agents as well as providing rudimentary military training to a number of foreign countries. This training has a great deal of applicability to counter-narcotic missions, specifically in the interdiction arena.

Missions in Support of SOF Counter-narcotic Operations

The relative lack of success in counter-narcotic missions, notably BLAST FURNACE and SNOWCAP, has been due, in some part to the lack of support of the local civilian populace. While in downtown Bogota, where violence has been

rife, support for attacking narcotics traffickers may be greater than in the interior where the campesinos' livelihood is based on coca cultivation. Regardless of the operation, if it is not supported by the majority of the population, especially in a remote area like the UHV, its chances of success are diminished.

SOF possess special capabilities to influence populations to accept the presence of government and government supported operations. Psychological warfare units assigned to SOF are designed to prepare the host nation to accept the presence of units in their area. The psychological warfare battalion can prepare print, visual, and other media to present a message favorable to the government and unfavorable to the narcotics trafficker.

It is incumbent upon the government to convince the population that the narcotics trafficker is the enemy of the country and that the government is dedicated to helping the people who must make their living from cocaine. This message must convince the people affected that the government is working at alleviating the economic and social problems which have made cocaine production and trafficking attractive.

Civil Affairs and Civil Military Operations

When looking for a military solution to the drug supply problem, the need arises to treat the operations against traffickers in the same manner as one would plan a campaign. Military definitions of a campaign plan state that it is a plan of relatively long duration with a beginning,

middle, and end. This seems simple enough, however, the ability to quantify success, apply assets judiciously, and commit forces to terminate a conflict on favorable terms requires a balanced approach to operations.

The success of trafficking organizations and widespread support of their activities is often related to the perception that the local population has of their other activities. The Medellin Cartel has fostered a degree of good feeling by providing goods and services to the local population. These goods and services are often times things that should be provided by the host government. A trafficker who provides low cost housing, paved streets, utilities, and employment to the population may be more credible than a government which has failed to provide these basics.

One of the preconditions that trafficking organizations look for in an area in which to operate is a disaffected population controlled by a weak and ineffective government. In the UHV, the lack of credible government has left a vacuum which has been filled by the trafficking organization. When tied to an incipient insurgency like the Maoist Sendero Luminoso, the potential for a drug trafficking problem to become a viable insurgency is greatly increased.

SOF possess a capacity for assisting a host government in executing a development plan aimed at destroying the root causes of an insurgency. The Civil Affairs Battalion is capable of performing various governmental tasks in support of a campaign plan. Additionally, the Civil Affairs

Battalion plans for, and executes, civil military operations in which military assets are used to provide services to the civilian population. This capability allows SOF to balance the governmental response in much the same way that a government deals with the root causes of an insurgency. Ultimately the actions taken by any SOF unit must support a balanced plan supported by the host government and the population. This balanced response cannot be solely military in nature. It must address whatever root causes there are which makes illegal activities attractive to the people.

Unilateral Versus Coalition Action

Inherent in unilateral actions by any country is the potential that those actions may be perceived as provocative or aggressive. The United States cannot violate the sovereignty of another nation unless that nation's policies or very existence represents a significant danger to the security of the United States. The present declaration via National Security Directive that illegal drugs constitutes a clear and present threat to national security is not sufficient to warrant unilateral action in the target countries. While it is in the national interest to assist these countries in curtailing the cultivation, production and distribution of illegal drugs, it remains the responsibility of the legal governments of these countries to take action that they deem appropriate. Therefore, it is imperative that any actions taken by the United States be taken at the behest of the host nation.

As the production of cocaine and the system of distribution becomes more pervasive, all affected nations must be involved in developing a coherent strategy. If those responsible for cultivation, production and distribution find sanctuary in another area, the problem of illegal drug eradication is magnified. All of the assistance provided at present to the countries of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia would have been for nothing if the drug problem becomes a state sponsored business.

Implications of the Use of SOF

SOF are rapidly deployable and easily summoned by the NCA to deal with any number of contingencies. The use of SOF has both hidden benefits and problems which must be understood before they are committed to a counter-narcotic role.

In 1878, the Posse Comitatus Act was written to relieve the United States Army from its law enforcement role during Reconstruction after the American Civil War. Since that time, the accepted scope of the legislation has become far broader. It is used now to prohibit the Armed Forces in engaging or assisting in those jobs normally performed by traditional law enforcement agencies. Since the preparation of the Posse Comitatus Act, law enforcement has been left in the venue of local, state and federal authorities. While the use of military organizations in the enforcement role is not without precedent, it is not the method preferred. The Posse Comitatus has developed into a document of far greater scope

than may have been envisioned by its authors. It is oft times cited as one of the methods used to ensure the civilian control of the military. The impact of using military units in a law enforcement role is twofold. First, the military is neither equipped nor trained to perform in an enforcement role. The application of military force to a problem of national security normally involves the right to apply deadly force and does not require the normal conventions of due process to be applied. The military would require specialized training in enforcement, perhaps at the expense of military preparedness. Additionally, the use of the military within the boundaries of the United States would require significant coordination with existing law enforcement agencies. The potential of "turf battles" such as those which often times exist between local, state and federal agencies would increase significantly.

The presence of SOF, with their connotation as unconventional, covert forces often conducting "dirty" operations can be perceived as provocative. SOF units possess a number of capabilities which make host governments nervous. Their use in normally denied or restricted areas also increase the risk factor of direct combat confrontations which most would prefer avoided. The fact that SOF are in a country normally denotes that they have been requested by the host government to enhance an existing capability.

The presence of SOF units, specifically Special Forces and Ranger units can also be perceived that the host

government is in trouble and needs US assistance to maintain its position. For these reason the host government may be ambivalent to the presence of SOF in their country.

This ambivalent feeling must be understood if SOF are to be successfully employed in a foreign counter-narcotic role.

On the credit side of the ledger is the ability of the MCA to use SOF to their maximum capacity in the role of nation builders. The ability of SOF to balance a response between DA, SR, civil military operation, all supported by a comprehensive PSYOP plan will have a positive effect on future counter-narcotic operations. Additionally, these missions, when properly planned and executed allow SOF to operate and train in a realistic environment. This enhances the capability of the entire SOF community.

Finally, by using SOF and their unique capabilities, present interdiction missions by drug enforcement organizations will become more efficient. This efficiency will result from increased real-time intelligence, psychological preparation of the population, and a balanced response of both military action and civil development programs.

When and Where to Employ SOF

Presently, the administration believes that the most cost effective method of performing drug interdiction is a combination of source and in-transit interdiction. The difficulties involved with destination interdiction is that

the requirements to curtail distribution far outstrip the enforcement agencies' abilities' to effectively control narcotic shipments.

Regardless of the strategy adopted, SOF must be used to enhance, not replace enforcement agencies' capabilities. The law enforcement agencies are not only necessary, but should be the primary mission planner. The enforcement agencies deployed for drug interdiction must use their expertise in criminal law and criminal methods to increase the efficiency of the military support.

The military, on the other hand, with its inherent technology, organization, and military capability must be used to strengthen the enforcement agencies' ability to fight the trafficker on his home ground.

Regardless of whether interdiction is accomplished at the source, in-transit, or at destination, the military has unique capabilities to support DEA and other agencies. This expertise, when operating against a drug trafficker, and as part of a comprehensive campaign strategy, is a judicious use of the military.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSIONS

The present counter-narcotic operations have not yielded the results hoped for by the administration. This is not a function of a lack of effort but more of a lack of direction and definable goals. Forces used to combat narcotic traffickers have been plagued by a poorly defined strategy and a lack of unity of effort.

The original research question, "What SOF missions are suitable in counter-narcotics missions?", relies upon the administration's definition of success. This definition must encompass not only the statistical measures of success, but also a concerted effort to unify the actions of all involved agencies. The scope of this thesis is not broad enough to supply the success criteria, but it does lend itself to identifying the role of SOF in any coherent strategy.

The problems at the tactical level which have plagued the enforcement community are well defined. Those which can most successfully be dealt with through a judicious use of SOF are critical to a successful counter-narcotic operation.

Intelligence Collection

The need for usable, timely intelligence is paramount for any interdiction campaign. The guesswork methods used by most enforcement agencies and the "hit or miss" inspections done by Coast Guard, DEA, Immigration, Border Patrol, etc.,

do not maximize the effect of an interdiction campaign. Present interdiction operations are akin to the little Dutch boy putting his finger in the dike. The deluge of cocaine which enters the country on a daily basis far outstrips the capacity of all enforcement agencies combined. For example, one single method of drug smuggling is the use of container cargo. With millions of these containers off-loaded annually in the US, it is physically impossible for the responsible agencies to inspect them all. ⁴

Intelligence assets which can track cocaine from leaf cultivation through distribution are needed to direct interdiction against the most lucrative targets. Additionally, this intelligence can be used to defeat trafficking networks. While it may be politically expedient to seize a large shipment of narcotics, in the long run, destruction of the distribution and trafficking networks will pay greater dividends. Loss of the trafficking structure will reduce the efficiency of trafficking operations and lessen the capabilities of these organizations to operate undetected. In order to reorganize after a major operation, the trafficking organization, like an insurgent, is forced to recruit new members from the population. This open recruiting increases the opportunities to infiltrate the trafficking infrastructure.

As important as tactical intelligence is to successful interdiction operations, it is equally important for identifying trends and capabilities.

As traffickers begin to feel the pressure of an invigorated interdiction campaign, the organizations will attempt to infiltrate new markets using new techniques. Intelligence in this arena allows the planner to be proactive versus reactive. The planner who is aware of the changes within an organization like those in a typical trafficking network is able to predict where new markets are being opened versus those being closed and direct efforts to new sites.

SOF has unique intelligence collection and analysis capabilities to increase the interdiction campaign's efficiency as well as providing higher level intelligence against the infrastructure. With its regional orientation and language capability, SOF can operate comfortably in a foreign country. The deployed SOF unit can also provide a training program to enhance the efficiency of both US and foreign national counter-narcotics units. These capabilities allow the enforcement agencies to operate along standardized lines and improves their ability to operate jointly. This joint capability will increase the area enforcement agencies can cover while improving information sharing between agencies and other countries.

Physical Interdiction

SOF, with their rapid deployment and direct action capability can, within certain limitations, be used to physically interdict shipments and key personnel. This may not be the most efficient use of a SOF unit as specialized

rules of engagement (ROE) must be developed. ROE for a counter-narcotic mission will have to be, out of both necessity and legality, different than the ROE used in a true combat situation. There will be limitations on weapons and tactics used. These ROE will have to meet some type of legal test and may be subject to oversight by agencies outside the Department of Defense.

Understanding that new techniques and tactics will be employed necessitates the development of training plans which allow soldiers to operate comfortably under new ROE. Lack of familiarity with the ROE leaves the soldier vulnerable to prosecution for such things as use of unnecessary force. Examples of these type violations can be seen in the British Special Air Service in Northern Ireland. Soldiers who were not adequately trained and violated existing ROE have been tried and convicted by civilian courts. It is unsatisfactory to use US combat troops in an enforcement mission and leave them vulnerable to prosecution. ROE development and an adjunct training program on enforcement missions are mandatory prior to deploying combat troops into an interdiction mission.

SOF's inherent ability to rapidly and clandestinely deploy, while providing a balanced response of military, civic action and psychological operations can greatly enhance present interdiction efforts. While this thesis has only addressed the international application of SOF, these capabilities can also be used in the continental United

States. There will, of course be legal restraints placed on the use of SOF in CONUS, however, their capabilities remain the same.

The Role of SOF in Interdiction

The need for timely, accurate intelligence is paramount to interdiction. Through numerous case studies, after-action reports and newspaper accounts, the single greatest limiting factor in controlling the supply of illegal narcotics is accurate intelligence. This intelligence must be provided to enforcement units in a manner and in a format that is useful.

Operations like BLAST FURNACE and SNOWCAP proved that equipment upgrades, funding and personnel can all be in place, but without adequate intelligence to direct the effort, the results are inadequate. Harkening back to the DEA agent who said that the chance of getting a whole load of dope off the street was one in a million begs the question, why? The why is simply a lack of intelligence and the ability to attack multiple targets.

The availability of accurate intelligence would, it appears, increase the number of shipments intercepted. This reduces the supply of cocaine and therefore reduces the targets for US law enforcement. If a load of cocaine can be accurately tracked from cultivation, through processing, to distribution, it increase the likelihood that it can be interdicted at any point.

SOF has, as one of its five primary missions, Special Reconnaissance. All SOF elements assist in intelligence

collection and processing. With its language capability and area orientation, SOF is well suited to enter denied areas and collect, collate, analyze, and transmit intelligence to direct enforcement against high value trafficking targets.

Balanced Response

SOF also possess a capability which answers a glaring oversight in the administrations counter-narcotics policy. The failure of the administration to address the root causes which affect supply dooms any interdiction program to failure. A Colombian Army officer at Fort Leavenworth for the Command and General Staff College said, after reviewing the President's National Drug Control Policy, "This is very good, but you must remember that your demand for cocaine is not our problem. The things which have made the traffickers so popular with my people are." ² Simply put, this officer was trying to explain his frustration with a US policy which, if fully implemented would have a disastrous impact on his country. While this officer was not condoning his countrymen's drug trafficking, he fully recognized the societal problems which have made cocaine trafficking palatable to the local campesino. He further understands that a campesino who has his livelihood destroyed may become a target for insurgent recruiters.

SOF Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units are not be the total answer to the problem of a balanced response. They do, however, offer a different approach. While interdiction efforts are aimed at the supply and

distribution networks, the other SOF elements are free to assist the host government in implementing societal development plans which alleviate the blight characteristic of areas like the UHV. With the return of legitimate government, SOF elements also assist in the training of local law enforcement agencies in controlling both traffickers and insurgents. These are missions for which SOF was developed.

Summary

This thesis was prefaced with the statement that no interdiction or eradication program will succeed without an equally developed plan to reduce demand. Demand reduction is an education function and not compatible with traditional military operations.

Supply reduction, on the other hand, is a function of assets efficiently directed against high value targets to significantly reduce the supply of illegal narcotics. Interdicting supplies, whether they be arms and ammunition or precursor chemicals and refined cocaine is clearly compatible with traditional military missions. The need for SOF is one established from an understanding that destruction of the coca leaf is not the answer. If it were, then an option open to the administration is defoliation of the growing areas. The ecological, social and economic problems associated with this option make it prohibitive.

SOF help provide a balanced response of social development, training and interdiction which, when coupled with a demand reduction program in the US, will have a

significant impact on the present US cocaine epidemic.

SOF employment is not the total answer to the supply problem. Even if all cocaine shipments were stopped immediately, the US would still have a significant drug problem. The techniques described in this thesis can be made to work in the US as well as in the Andean Ridge. While the legal ramifications are great, these tactics are applicable to domestic producers as well.

Finally, it cannot be stressed strongly enough that if a supply reduction program is not tied to an equally vigorous demand reduction program, it is doomed to failure.

ENDNOTES

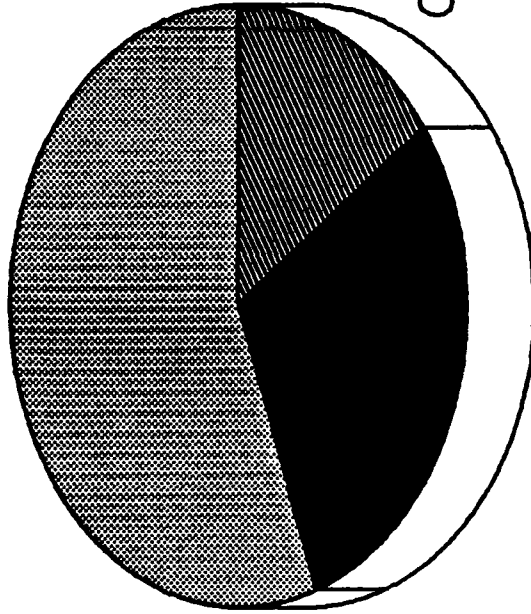
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APPENDIX A

Worldwide Coca Production Totals

Peru
124408



Colombia
33487

Bolivia
65998

APPENDIX B

Federal Agencies Roles and Missions

DEA: Designated Lead Agency for Counter-narcotics Operations

FBI: Concurrent Jurisdiction with the DEA to Investigate Drug Offenses. Responsible for Law enforcement efforts and policies.

United States Customs Service: Responsible for the Processing and regulation of all people, carriers, cargo and currency entering the United States

US Coast Guard: Responsible for enforcing Federal Law on the high seas.

Internal Revenue Service: Supports counter-narcotics by pursuing income tax violations and money laundering operations.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms: pursues drug related violations of Federal Law involving destructive devices.

Roles and Missions (Cont.)

Department of State: Responsible for Coordinating international narcotics control policies and programs carried out by the Bureau of International Narcotics Matters.

Federal Aviation Administration: Assists in pin-pointing and intercepting airborne drug smugglers.

Immigration and Naturalization Service: Responsible for the control of illegal entry into the United States.

United States Marshal Service: Acts as the custodian for federal prisoners and seized property.

United States Intelligence Community Agencies: Responsible for providing international intelligence on narcotics trafficking.

Department of Defense: Lead Agency for air and maritime interdiction, command and control of counter-narcotics activities and support for law enforcement agencies.

APPENDIX C

Potential Supply Reduction Task Force Under Department of State

*Taken from 'Narcoterrorism, the New Unconventional War'

MAJ Mark Hertling, Military Review, MAR 90

Plans and Operations	Intell	Security	Clandestine OPS	Embassy
Military Forces/SOF	CIA	CIA	CIA	Ambassador
Host Nation Police/	Military	Military	SOF	CIA
Military	SOF	Press Pool	Local Military	Mil Group
				USAID
				USIS

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