Drug Control in the Americas

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psychopath by choice. Countering this position was the difficult practical experience of Internal Revenue in accomplishing effective law enforcement. The bureau came to support a curative solution for addiction. Under its auspices, forty-four narcotic clinics were set up for the purpose of assisting gradual withdrawal, or providing maintenance for addicts if necessary. Commissioner Daniel C. Roper praised the work of the clinics in his annual report for fiscal year 1918–19, but the bureau's next report, subsequent to the Supreme Court decisions of 1919, condemned the clinics for "providing applicants with whatever drugs they required for the satisfaction of their morbid appetites" and applauded "the wisdom of the policy being pursued."[59]

The fluctuating support for strict law enforcement, judicial decisions, and the complexity involved in actually reducing narcotic use help to explain in one sense why the nation's maintenance clinics never became more than a transitory experiment which had largely ended by July 1920. The Public Health Service and the AMA's Committee on Habit-Forming Drugs both lauded the closure of the clinics.[60]

In another sense, the bureaucratic differences over narcotic law enforcement support conclusions in other studies concerned with the role of bureaucracies and institutions during the Progressive Era. Whatever its particular characteristics, the Narcotic Division of the Prohibition Unit of the Treasury Department, established in December 1919 after the passage of the Volstead Act, can be seen as representative of the organizational movement for efficient management. Strict law enforcement therefore need not be seen as distinct from social reform. In this instance, as institutionalization in a penal rather than a therapeutic or curative facility for what was essentially a medical matter (although not universally recognized as such at the time) became a major organizational objective, humanitarian social reform lost its remaining importance. At this juncture, Kolb's depiction of addicts as psychopaths becomes indistinguishable from the reality of government policy.[61] Interest-group administrative liberalism, as Theodore Lowi describes it, had replaced older, less administratively reliable ways of handling the socially unacceptable practice of narcotic consumption.[62]

To implement antinarcotic policy, the Congress provided the Narcotic Division, under the direction of Levi G. Nutt, a budget for fiscal year 1920 amounting to $515,000, almost twice that of the

prior year. Increasing violations of the Harrison law probably led to larger budgets for its enforcement. From 1916 to 1919, the number of known violators ranged from a low of 1,100 in 1917 to a high of 2,400 in 1919. There were 3,900 known violators in 1920, an average of 10,300 in 1924–26, and an average just below 9,000 for 1927–28. Of the 7,738 persons in federal prison at the end of the fiscal year 1928, nearly one-third, or 2,529, were imprisoned for Harrison law offenses. Daniel Roper believed that the drug problem in the United States was out of control by 1920. Terry and Pellens concluded that enforcement practices induced higher levels of addiction, drug peddling, and associated criminal activity. Of America's addicts, the Special Committee observed, "From information in the hands of the Committee, it is concluded that, while drug addicts may appear to be normal to the casual observer, they are usually weak in character, and lacking in moral sense."[63]

In many ways, the law and the evolving organizational structure through which it was administered had made the addict population of the United States into a social class not unlike that of Latin America, associated with extralegal, antisocial behavior. Official tolerance for drugs and related activity differed greatly. Moreover, the depiction of addicts in the United States as a coherent social class, useful for administrative purposes, did not reflect actual racial or socioeconomic conditions. There existed no distinct drug culture, no unified group similar to the Andean coqueros, the participants in rescates, or the rural poor, often Indians, who for generations had worked the land for the benefit of others.

It was within the context of its emerging federal antinarcotic activity that the United States encouraged Latin American participation in the larger, international campaign against narcotics. And it is from the perspective of the aspirations of officials in Washington juxtaposed with the vastly different cultural history of Latin America that the success or failure of the narcotic foreign policy of the United States should be assessed.

No Latin American country attended the Hague conference of 1911–12. At that meeting it became evident that the campaign against illicit drug traffic needed Latin American support to be effective. This was especially true in the case of Peru, the world's

leading coca leaf exporter. The government of the Netherlands, charged with obtaining signatures to the convention by the nonrepresented states, asked the United States for assistance.[64] Hamilton Wright composed a detailed memorandum for United States representatives in Latin America which outlined the brief history of the international antinarcotic campaign and requested countries there to sign the supplementary protocol. Wright's letter pointed out that the conferees at The Hague realized the importance of Peruvian and Bolivian acceptance of the convention and concluded their business only after agreeing that "the signature of the Convention by Latin American states was essential if the Convention was to become effective."[65]

The generally favorable response from Latin America pleased State Department officials, but Peru and Bolivia withheld adherence. Bolivia objected to the linking of coca with opium in the convention and was reluctant to take any action threatening its coca industry. By the end of 1912, though, all Latin American countries except Peru indicated a willingness to sign the Hague Convention if they had not yet done so. Peru was undecided because of revenue derived from the coca trade and because of limited involvement in opium traffic, primarily within the Chinese population in Peru.[66]

In deliberations during the second conference at The Hague in July 1913, Great Britain and Germany reiterated an earlier concern that the 1912 convention would be worthless regarding cocaine unless Peru signed. Peruvian reluctance was delaying ratification by several important narcotic manufacturing states. Before the conference adjourned, Peru promised to sign the convention, but the promise was made only after urgent appeals by the United States.

The delay in depositing ratifications led to the convening of a third conference. The start was postponed from May until mid-June 1914 because officials in Washington were seeking Mexico's support at the meeting and hoped the delay might serve to lessen tension that arose between the two countries over the United States occupation of Veracruz earlier that year. With war on the horizon in Europe, the conference took place. By its final session forty-four of forty-six nations had signed or pledged to sign the Hague Convention. Eleven countries had completed ratification,

including Venezuela, Guatemala, and Honduras as well as the United States.[67] Although adherence to the convention was gradual, it provided a basis for subsequent international antinarcotic activity.

Through 1920 in Peru and Bolivia, adherence to the convention did not signify its implementation. Both nations refused to jeopardize their lucrative coca leaf operations.[68] Only Mexico, of the Latin American countries crucial for control, tried in any way to restrict drug-related activity. Early in 1916 the *de facto* government prohibited opium importation. The following year President Venustiano Carranza sought to outlaw opium transactions in Baja California, but his own lack of control and the alleged complicity of the governor there in the trade (as discussed in chapter 2) nullified Carranza's efforts.[69]

These episodes presaged future difficulties that would impede antidrug activity throughout Latin America and cause concern in the United States. The overriding fear in Washington, then as later, was that illicit drugs produced in Latin America or shipped there from Europe or Asia would find their way to the United States. Compounding the matter, few Latin American states admitted the existence of a drug problem within their borders. With a rise in smuggling as a probable consequence of greater actions against drugs, concern in Washington over inadequate controls in Latin America was no doubt warranted. The legal-organizational process leading to the formation of a strict drug control program seems clear; just as apparent, conversely, is the cultural and economic background of Latin American inattention to controls in the early 1900s. The incongruity between the two would be further revealed as the United States continued to press for more effective international controls on drug traffic.

East, while the second would deal with the limitation of manufactured narcotics and their derivatives, and the restriction to legitimate needs of raw materials produced for export. In formulating a program of that nature, the League virtually assured United States participation in the latter conference, as we shall presently see.[44]

Latin American participation in the international movement followed an uncertain course as well in the early 1920s. Explanation of this uncertainty can be found in the nature of the directives issuing from Geneva and in the unsettled domestic conditions then prevalent. In the first place the Opium Advisory Committee had unintentionally erred in transmitting questionnaires regarding cultivation, production, and manufacture only in French and English, the two official languages of the League. Replies reached Geneva belatedly, if at all. The use of Spanish, a goodwill gesture to countries largely unconcerned about drug control, might have improved the situation. The lack of substantive data in responses further underlined the differences in attitudes. Annual reports for 1921 came only from Chile, Cuba, Guatemala, and Venezuela; Bolivia sent a partial report.[45] The import-export certificate system received even less attention. By the fifth session of the OAC only Mexico, not a member of the League, and Panama were experimenting with the system; several other countries were considering doing so. As late as August 1925 only Cuba, Guatemala, and Haiti joined Mexico and Panama in using the certificates. Peru once contemplated adoption, but decided against doing so.[46] In short, the administrative directives of the League had little impact in Latin America.

Even more important, domestic conditions worked against the adoption of controls. Mexico, for example, was burdened with border difficulties and an increase in drug use by its own populace. Border conditions in the 1920s had not changed appreciably since the end of the revolutionary decade.[47] Chihuahua, Sonora (one of the states most dramatically affected by the Revolution), and Baja California Norte continued to meet American demands for narcotics and other illicit pleasures. The situation in Baja stood as a dubious legacy of the governorship of Esteban Cantú, 1915–20.[48] While in office Cantú virtually set up an autonomous regime despite Carranza's efforts to the contrary. He cemented his hold on

power, until forced out of office, by licensing gambling, prostitution, and other vices illegal across the border. Narcotics, too, were readily available. Not surprisingly, numerous Americans, including some business interests in the West, preferred Cantú's control of Baja and the enjoyments found in Tijuana to the more restrictive, anti-American leadership of Venustiano Carranza in Mexico City.[49]

As in Tijuana, so, too, in Ciudad Juárez. To some observers the notoriety achieved there was truly appalling. United States Consul John W. Dye remarked that "Juárez is the most immoral, degenerate, and utterly wicked place I have ever seen or heard of in my travels. Murder and robbery are everyday occurrences and gambling, dope selling and using, drinking to excess and sexual vices are continuous. It is a Mecca for criminals and degenerates from both sides of the border." Said an American evangelist: "I would rather shoot my son and throw his body in the river than have him spend an hour in the raging inferno of Juárez."[50] Conditions in Juárez, exacerbated by continuing economic dependency upon El Paso and by the imposition in Texas of prohibition in 1918, sparked the inflammatory comments.

The sentiments of Dye and the evangelist should not be viewed in isolation, but need to be seen in the context of the border's history since the Mexican War. In brief, a predisposition to illegal activity, including smuggling, emerged along the border soon after the war. Border areas are often regions of great opportunity. This potential took concrete form from the 1850s to the 1890s with the establishment on the Mexican side of a free zone for trade. Within the Zona Libre, whether through legal or illegal activity, standards of living were generally higher than in the interior, a result of considerable trade with the United States. Both this American orientation and discrimination in favor of the Zona ultimately aroused such strong domestic opposition that the Díaz government abolished the free zone. The resultant economic dislocation at Paso del Norte, the area encompassing Ciudad Juárez and El Paso, was particularly felt in the agricultural sector of the economy. To compensate for the socioeconomic travail of recession, Juárez turned to the tourist trade—a way of life even more dependent on the United States than existed with the Zona Libre.[51]

Tourism, of course, serves many masters; and tourism flourished during reform times in the United States, notably during the era of

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prohibition. The rampant vice that Dye and others decried resulted largely from a demand being created on the United States side of the border, the fulfillment of which had been forced to the Mexican side by social and legal proscription. Illegal activity was reciprocal. During the revolutionary decade, as Juárez was acquiring its dissolute reputation, Americans were carrying on an illicit arms trade with various revolutionary factions in Mexico.[52] Although Mexican needs from the contraband trade subsided as revolutionary violence abated, American demands—including access to narcotics—on the illegal border economy continued.

Compounding difficulties at the border for Mexico were domestic drug problems that President Alvaro Obregón and other federal officials could not readily bring under control. In February 1923 the governor of Yucatán, Felipe Carillo Puerto, issued a decree prohibiting trade in opiates, cocaine, and marijuana.[53] Shortly thereafter, the Mexico City newspaper *Excélsior* called attention to the domestic use of narcotics. Demanding corrective action against alleged drug-induced violence by young Mexicans, the paper reported growing national concern about the spread of addiction. *Excélsior* charged that perhaps 90 percent of the addicts acquired their habit while in the nation's hospitals and sanitariums.[54] The paper's campaign against narcotics elicited government response when in July Obregón prohibited by decree the importation of narcotics except for legitimate needs.[55] The high incidence of smuggling and residual corruption of officials probably nullified the decree at the moment of its promulgation.

The geographical and ideological configuration of forces during the Mexican Revolution restricted Obregón's authority as president.[56] Moreover, internal conditions reduced the likelihood of effective drug controls. That is to say, the Revolution put forth the intoxicating promise of democracy and socioeconomic change, as expressed in expanded political participation and agrarian reform. While such goals necessarily raise the level of expectation and aspirations of people in a revolutionary situation, fulfillment is a dismayingly more gradual process. As a result, established patterns of drug-related behavior persist even as changes occur.

Although Mexico's revolutionary tribulations have been frequently chronicled and analyzed, it seems worthwhile to recount them briefly, as indirect, though substantial, support for the present interpretation. The Mexican Revolution did not appreciably

alter at once the life-style of many Mexicans. At length, an enlarged middle class took shape, but only as part of a larger political structure wherein persisted from times past patterns of marginality, internal colonialism, and a distinctly plural society. Access to effective political participation was therefore not easy, and many groups, especially rural ones, whether native or mestizo, remained for a long time in virtual isolation from national political activity.[57] Few previously marginal groups became organized well enough to demand effective participation or to insure that the nation responded to their political concerns.[58]

In the place of democracy, then, Mexico has experienced a modern continuation of essentially caudillo-dominated rule, even if a particular president's hold on power was brief or uncertain—as was the case until the time of Lázaro Cárdenas.[59] In effect, one ruling elite replaced another. However diminished actual democratic opportunity and practice have been, there has simultaneously existed a high degree of aspirational politics—at least until recently. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that the Revolution redistributed and broadened the base of power, gradually enlarging the size and enhancing the power of the middle sector. To argue additionally that this process guaranteed a cohesive nationalism, as has been done,[60] seems to claim too much in view of our knowledge of those who do not share in the process.

A look at early attempts at agrarian reform further brings into question the extent of the benefits of the Revolution. As with democracy, it has been difficult to transform the promise of change into reality. It is possible, in fact, to question the putative national commitment to reform.[61] Specifically, the revolutionizing effect of the *ejido* on land reform is less than its proponents have claimed. Practical limitations of the ejido were evident even with the inclusion of Article 27 in the Querétaro Constitution of 1917.[62] The need for change was great, however. Around 1920 perhaps 70 percent of the labor force was engaged in agriculture, and an equally high percentage of the population lived in rural communities. (It is probable that 90 percent of the rural families owned no land on the eve of the Revolution.) In ten years the rural population of Sonora had increased by nearly 45 percent,[63] while Mexico's total population had declined—as had agricultural production. Significant change in the form of actual agrarian reform would not alter these conditions until after 1930.[64]

The extent of social and economic deprivation in Mexico, for which agrarian reform was intended to be a major panacea, can be depicted with some precision. There was much to be done after the Revolution; life meant little more for many Mexicans than a culture of poverty. Drawn even in the broadest strokes, gradual change is evident when differences between 1910 and 1930 are charted. Education at the primary level chipped away at the solid block of illiteracy. So, too, were slight improvements noticeable in income distribution and the general level of poverty.[65] Although statistics on unemployment, or more accurately underemployment, are meaningless in the modern sense, its pervasiveness can be appreciated when seen in the context of Mexico's traditional, persistent agricultural-village economy.[66]

If the foregoing suggests that the Mexican Revolution, however factional and regional it may have been, experienced an early Thermidorean or reactionary phase, that conclusion should not obscure the essential complexity of the revolutionary process and the richness of its ultimate achievements. The Revolution brought Mexico economic growth, industrialization, and prepared the way for modernity. There continued at the same time, nevertheless, a concentration of wealth, but with a broader social base than prior to 1910. Instead of having a leveling effect, however, subsequent economic growth and urbanization, while expanding the middle class, sustained discernible class distinctions. There emerged at length what Peter H. Smith has termed "a stable, authoritarian regime."[67] Limited political participation, social differentiation, and economic privilege for the few still characterize Mexican society long after the Revolution.

On the surface the preceding analysis does little to alter the traditional view of the rural Mexican, or *campesino*, a characterization that finds the campesino to be scarcely more than a helpless, oppressed peon.[68] At issue is not whether the Revolution succeeded in changing the status of the campesino, for it inevitably did to some degree, but rather how campesinos may have acted during the Porfiriato to gain a measure of control over their own lives—so that we may revise our understanding of their role within society.

The emerging picture suggests a life-style of mutual adjustment and accommodation, especially in terms of service and the level of wages, in contrast to one of unbridled exploitation. Not that land-

owner control suddenly became undesirable; rather, labor shortages, particularly in the center and north of Mexico, changed the forms of control *latifundistas* endeavored to employ. Before the Revolution the transition of the campesino out of peonage remained sadly incomplete. It was not unusual therefore to find him out of work, dispossessed of the land he had worked for another's advantage. In the course of modernization of the work of the agricultural laborer to a form over which he exerted some control, a clash of values resulted—the impact of which ironically threatened the survival of his cultural heritage. The demands of an increasingly market-oriented economy no doubt disrupted natural agricultural rhythms, often alienating the campesino from wage labor even when it was available.[69]

The scarcity of work, alienation, the threat of cultural change, and the promises of revolutionary caudillos combined to bring *peones* actively to the Revolution. In the south this meant joining with Zapata in a radical quest for land reform, consecrated, as it were, in the Plan de Ayala. For the Zapatistas, the Revolution was agrarian-based and political in nature, advancing a more coherent ideological position than evident elsewhere. The northern supporters of the revolt against Victoriano Huerta, led by Carranza and Pancho Villa, were far less unified. Villa's revolt, described by John Womack, Jr., as "more a force of nature than of politics," commanded the allegiance of a diverse group of followers: dispossessed campesinos, cowboys, railroad workers, bandits, Yaqui Indians, and others. This congeries of social misfits and the downtrodden gave little organized support to the nationwide uprising. An effort to join with Zapata in opposition to Carranza and the Sonorans failed markedly.[70]

What the Villistas brought about, however, was their own brand of chaos in Chihuahua and parts of Sonora (for which they contended and lost)—a social anarchy whose impact was felt even after the revolutionary decade ended. Yet the Villistas could not ordain chaos in the north on their own. Social upheaval was generously abetted by economic dislocation, the result jointly of internal civil strife and international conflict. Nor were the actions of the Villistas as directionless as has been generally assumed, despite their being declared "outside the law." One of the principal examples of their alleged anarchy, the raid on Columbus, New Mexico, on March 9, 1916, may actually have been a rational if erroneous response by

the Villistas to the relationship their leader believed existed between Carranza and the Wilson administration.[71] A minor aspect of that episode, but important for our purposes, and which superficially lends credence to the charges of anarchy, discloses that Villa's men probably smoked marijuana to steel themselves for the raid on Columbus.[72] Marginal men and marijuana, border troubles and drugs: whether in the context of revolution, social and economic dislocation, or simply vice, the association was clear and the message direct. Domestic and international controls had to be made more effective.

Numerous incidents occurred in the early 1920s providing authorities ample opportunity to reiterate these sentiments. At present, one example will serve to make the larger point. Citizens from Yuma, Arizona, acting in conjunction with the local Women's Christian Temperance Union, petitioned the State Department to set up a dry zone along the border with Mexico. The practical effect, the petitioners argued, would be to halt the flow of liquor and narcotics, thereby containing the "unbridled vice and debauchery" prevalent along the border.[73] Attempts at control of this and similar situations met with scant success. Drugs continued to play a discernible if veiled role in Mexican society. The Revolution had barely touched the foreign and domestic preconditions for their presence.

At the same time, the situation in Peru presented a comparatively clear picture, bound as it was to the observable culture of the Quechua and Aymara Indians. It is simpler therefore to understand the context in which drugs helped to shape the contours of Peruvian society. Primary, of course, was the presence of coca. Its use could not be eliminated, and scarcely reduced. Army officers, largely from the middle class, considered it an achievement if they succeeded in denying Indian conscripts their quid of coca. Urbanites, it seems, smoked tobacco.[74]

This type of incident reveals much of the place of the Indian in Peru during *el oncenio,* the dictatorship of Augusto B. Leguía lasting from 1919 to 1930. Leguía, who disingenuously held that "dictatorship is more popular than anarchy," imperiled the fortunes of democracy in Peru until his ouster. The fortunate coincidence of an expanding, supportive middle class and the impetus given that class during the First World War to participate more actively in national political life assisted Leguía's rise to power in 1919. The

approach to drug control. In 1923 the government issued a number of decrees establishing a partial state monopoly over the commerce in drugs. By placing restrictions on imports of opium and cocaine, the government intended to limit usage to legitimate medical purposes.[23] Concern, however, about drugs as a serious social problem only arose five years later. The case of Uruguay raises an important question with broad implications. If within a short period of time the nation changed from giving casual attention to drugs (the 1923 laws) to acute concern over their prevalence and misuse (the warnings of the National Health Council), how serious must the situation have been when drugs first received legislative response? As one official later put it, drug usage in 1923 had "acquired the proportions of an actual plague."[24] If this were true in Uruguay, what were actual conditions elsewhere in Latin America?

Insufficient information leaves that question largely unanswered. Such is not quite the case with Mexico, however. The government there had equated increased drug usage with social problems since the early years of the decade, as the executive decrees of 1923 and 1925 attest. Their promulgation had no discernible effect on a worsening situation. Marijuana continued to grow wild throughout the country and opium poppy cultivation flourished especially in northern states. The poppies were frequently processed into morphine and heroin. This indigenous crop, along with opiates smuggled into Mexico from abroad, served both domestic addicts and innumerable others in the United States. In a further attempt to control the situation, President Calles signed a decree late in 1927 banning the export of heroin and marijuana.[25] Two years later a revised penal code enumerated strict penalties for those persons found guilty of illegally growing or manufacturing drugs.[26]

Success in the Mexican effort depended, of course, upon effective enforcement of the decrees. As before, congruence between intent and actual procedure seemed coincidental. For instance, Henry Damm, the United States consul at Nogales, reported the growing of large quantities of opium poppies in the region, yet Damm had no indication that local authorities were trying to halt cultivation. Similar reports reached the State Department from other consular districts in northern Mexico.[27]

Revelations similar to Damm's came also from Mexicali where Consul Frank Bohr learned of the existence of a lucrative, wide-

spread commerce in opium. Bohr managed to arrange a visit to an opium den run by Chinese nationals. There the consul found Mexicans and Chinese as well as black and white citizens of the United States. Inside the den many varieties of narcotics were available for sale and consumption on the premises; a special room was set aside for the smoking of opium. Upon Bohr's arrival the Chinese operators expressed suspicion about his presence, but Bohr's contact secured entry by buying a small amount of cocaine. The consul's report does not reveal whether he partook of the drug.[28] This incident underlines the difficulty inherent in drug law enforcement for Mexican officials.

In addition to internal narcotic problems, Mexican authorities had to cope with the ubiquitous matter of smuggling. At Juárez and Nuevo Laredo, officials rarely confiscated more than a small percentage of the quantity of drugs admittedly crossing the border. Conditions in the Matamoros-Brownsville area resulted in a consular request for a special agent to investigate the illicit traffic there.[29] The poor record of interception stemmed not only from Mexico's lack of agents and funds to patrol the border properly, but also from the absence of any cooperative antismuggling effort with the United States.[30]

Despite the difficulties they faced, upper echelon leaders in Mexico seemingly possessed antidrug sentiments similar to those held in the United States. Neither side working alone, however, could achieve the results each desired. Yet the idea of a common effort had been considered earlier and abandoned, but for reasons not strictly pertaining to drug control. The plan for cooperation evolved from the previously mentioned request in 1924 by a group of citizens in Yuma, Arizona for a dry zone along the border.[31] Recognizing the unilateral nature of the dry zone proposal, State Department officials instead issued an invitation to Mexico to join in a conference to create channels for improving information exchange on illegal drug activity. All border consuls were instructed to attend the meeting in El Paso scheduled for May 1925.[32] Against a backdrop that portended further smuggling at Ciudad Juárez and depicted Ensenada in Baja California as "an entrepôt of some [considerable] quantity of narcotics,"[33] the two sides quickly reached an agreement. Both pledged regular exchange of information on known smugglers and their activities. The pact took effect in March 1926.[34]

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The treaty was not an open-ended one, so as the conclusion of the initial year of its operation approached, the United States notified Mexico of its intention to terminate the agreement. The decision resulted from an assessment by State Department officials of political and economic conditions within Mexico. Secretary of State Frank Kellogg explained the decision in a conversation with the British Ambassador Sir Esmé Howard. Painting a picture of chaos and imminent disintegration of Mexican society, the secretary described a situation in which business activity was slowing down and revenues decreasing. Kellogg feared that opposition to Calles by "radical Communists" would prevent any corrective action. "Mexico," he told Howard, "[is] evidently on the brink of financial collapse."[35]

In a postscript to the termination of the treaty, Consul Jon Dye in Juárez reacted to its lapse indifferently. He felt that the Mexican government had not seriously endeavored to enforce the accord.[36] True, the task of transforming commitment into effective action often failed, producing understandable exasperation on the part of officials who were reminded daily of the large quantity of drugs moving northward. In April 1931, when a special Mexican agent arrived in the Juárez–El Paso area to assist the consul there, William Blocker remarked that "the arrival of the narcotic agent . . . would indicate that the Mexican Government has at last decided to clean up the drug traffic on this section of the border."[37]

The vicissitudes associated with drug control activity throughout Latin America in the latter half of the 1920s prevented the United States from discrediting the work of the League of Nations at the 1928 Havana Conference. The emerging definition of drug usage as a social problem was demonstrated more, by those few governments which acted, through acceptance of the 1925 Geneva Convention than by sole adherence to the 1912 Hague agreement, as the United States desired. By the start of the meeting in Havana, Latin American nations including Brazil, Chile, Nicaragua, Uruguay, and Bolivia with reservations, had signed the Final Act of the 1925 convention; others were reportedly about to sign. These ratifications, plus those from outside the Western Hemisphere, guaranteed adoption of the convention. The action of the United States at Havana only added to its isolation from international antinarcotic activity. That is, the refusal of the United States to

disavow fully the right of intervention doubtlessly limited the willingness of Latin Americans to follow the lead of the United States in other matters, including narcotics.[38]

Despite her support for the position of the State Department, Mrs. Wright knew that American policy was inherently counterproductive to effective drug control. In January 1928 during one of her frequent discussions with Nelson Johnson, she suggested that some way should be found to have the 1925 convention made more acceptable. She offered few specific proposals except the vain hope that other nations might be willing to accept an amendment to the convention so it would not be adopted in its present form. Johnson told Mrs. Wright that Porter and the Division of Far Eastern Affairs were studying the situation to determine what could be done.[39] Caldwell and other officials realized that she was right in calling for a reassessment of policy. Johnson, though, remained skeptical; he saw no feasible way to revise Washington's policy toward the League. But Mrs. Wright interposed her ideas once again. In March she urged the secretary of state to formulate a policy reasserting United States leadership in the antinarcotic movement. This meant convening a new conference.[40]

Caldwell reversed his prior isolationist stance and supported the idea. He wanted the United States to ask for a conference, possibly for 1929, and then approach it with greater flexibility than had been the case in 1924–25. Johnson was not persuaded of the idea's merit. "So far as I know," he told Caldwell, "we have no program other than that which our delegation offered at Geneva in 1925, which was rejected and would be rejected again by the powers."[41] That assessment seemed accurate, since, by its insistence on a program of limitation at the source, the United States strongly discouraged consideration of any other drug control scheme, including manufacturing restrictions. American rigidity thus obscured the cultural, financial, and political difficulties some countries had in accepting Washington's program wholesale.[42]

Renewed cooperation with the League was essential for effective drug control. If nothing else, the OAC provided an available forum in which pressure, however limited, could be brought to bear on producing and manufacturing nations. Such pressure might not have had sufficient influence if exerted through bilateral diplomatic channels. To United States officials this must have seemed especially true concerning Latin America by 1928. At the time of the

is addicted to drugs," Porter remarked several months before his death, "is sick. He or she is the victim of a disease and should be placed where treatment can be given. You can't cure a sick person by sending that person to jail."[76] That sentiment seemed to be anathema to the commissioner of narcotics in 1930, as his actions in office would soon reveal.

Flexibility rather than rigidity marked the relationship of the United States with the international drug control movement at that time. During its January 1931 session the OAC, with Caldwell's active support, enlarged the list of narcotics that might become subject to manufacturing limitations at the May conference.[77] In his instructions to the delegation Stimson told Caldwell and the other members (including Anslinger) not to oppose a convention "which would be acceptable to other governments and unacceptable to the United States . . . , provided it would seem likely to accomplish the desired restriction of manufacture." The secretary of state hoped that the United States would be able to accept any convention agreed upon.[78]

Prior to the opening of the Conference for the Limitation of the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs, Stimson also encouraged Latin American participation at Geneva. Some hesitancy about committing themselves wholeheartedly to League-directed antinarcotic activity still existed, but over half the countries there sent representatives to the conference.[79] In attendance were Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Physical presence in Geneva did not ensure active participation in the deliberations. Mexico, for instance, assisted in administrative procedures, but contributed little to the substantive discussions. This reluctance may seem anomalous when compared with her continuing domestic problem with drugs. Yet as Martínez de Alva explained for his government: "There [is] no problem of narcotic drugs in Mexico. Mexico produce[s] no raw material, [does] not manufacture narcotic drugs, [does] not export them and [does] not even consume them except for legitimate requirements."[80] Under Mexican law the activities mentioned were illegal unless carried out under strict government supervision. The statement of the Mexican representative, otherwise disingenuous, becomes explicable if it is remembered that Mexico, still immersed

in the spirit of its revolution, was participating for the first time in a world narcotic conference and probably did not want to admit the existence of any blemishes on its antinarcotic record.

Argentina, the only other Latin American nation to play a vocal role in the conference, naively became involved in the debate over manufacturing limitations. Its representative, Fernando Perez, who had no constructive proposals to present, dismissed the argument that overproduction and excessive consumption of drugs had a direct relationship. Perez told the assembled delegates in terms reminiscent of those heard years earlier in the United States:

> The spread of drug addiction and the development of the illicit drug traffic are not the effect of over-production, but are due to the moral perversion of the drug addicts and of the unscrupulous traffickers who supply them with material for their vicious practices.

This assessment of the motives behind drug usage led Argentina to support a proposal of the Soviet Union which, if adopted, would have expanded the scope of the conference to include a discussion about whether to place limits upon raw material cultivation.[81]

In more contentious times the United States would have ardently supported a similar drug control plan. To the credit of Caldwell and his superiors, the United States delegation did not have to labor under such restrictions in 1931. Instead Caldwell and Anslinger backed a Franco-Japanese proposal based on the concept of an open and competitive market. First, each government would submit to a central office annual estimates of legitimate needs. Next, internal regulations would limit the supply of available narcotics to those requirements. Finally, the central office would have the authority to regulate narcotic traffic as a means of restricting excessive exportation.[82] If this plan had been adopted as composed, it would have ultimately resulted in limiting the production of raw narcotic material.

Because of objections, especially Germany's, to so comprehensive a plan, the scheme could not be adopted without modification. Agreement in principle was reached, however, on the need for strict supervision of the quantity of raw materials in the possession of each manufacturer. Accordingly, one provision of the 1931 convention was intended to prevent the accumulation of excessive supply. Going beyond the 1925 convention, the new one made the

estimates of legitimate narcotic requirements binding on the nation submitting them. The Permanent Central Opium Board would try to curtail violations of the agreement by exercise of its supervisory and administrative duties. The PCOB also received the authority to place embargoes on countries exceeding their import and export estimates. In sum, the manufacturing limitation conference sought to bring under control by the League commerce in the chief preparations of the opium poppy and the coca leaf.[83]

The work of the conference pleased the United States government. If the convention did not exactly duplicate Washington's position, it at least embodied many of the ideas Caldwell and his associates found crucial to effective control. Caldwell therefore signed the convention and protocol of signature on July 18. He refrained from signing the final act only because the United States did not belong to the League. Other signatories included the major manufacturing countries—Germany, Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.[84] Among the Latin American states, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Argentina *ad referendum* signed the convention. Nicaragua, a nonparticipant, deposited the first ratification with the League, followed closely by the United States in April 1932. Enough nations deposited their ratifications for the convention to take effect on July 9, 1933.[85]

The presence of the United States and numerous Latin American countries at Geneva in 1931 and the convention drafted during the conference underscored the changes which had transpired since 1925 in the attitudes of the American republics toward international drug control. The United States had altered its method of administering domestic policy with the creation of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. As of 1930 Congress possessed less authority than before to formulate policy. Henceforth legislative action would reinforce rather than define the antidrug efforts of the executive branch. By formally participating in the activities of the OAC, the Department of State reduced congressional influence over narcotic foreign policy as well. The results of the 1931 Geneva conference seemed to demonstrate both the efficacy of shared power within the executive branch and the return of the United States to leadership in the international movement. Disputes with Congress over the nature of policy could only undermine that position.

Simultaneous attempts to build, let alone rebuild, the politics of

drug control in Latin America produced a closer relationship than had existed previously with the League of Nations. Several nations, particularly Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia, began gradually to perceive drug usage as a social problem. Remedial action rarely altered existing conditions, however. On the other hand, Mexico and Uruguay employed legislative and administrative means to restrict drug commerce and usage. Yet even those efforts proved largely ineffective. Financing was unavailable for proper control—if large-scale financing could have helped; official corruption became a major obstacle; and drug use as part of the cultural heritage throughout Latin America militated against comprehensive controls. Nevertheless, at the close of the Geneva conference of 1931, recognition existed in Latin America of the need for additional controls, a recognition that hemispheric diplomacy alone had not been able to produce. In the 1930s, the growth of the bureaucratic state there would contend with drug-related traditions for influence over the direction of drug policy. The United States seemed the logical choice to lead the way toward greater hemispheric drug control, whether by example or direct diplomacy. A reconstructed bureaucracy and a revised narcotic foreign policy ostensibly provided the example of sound management necessary for effective policy change.

4 Drug Control in the Americas, 1931—1936

The adoption of the 1931 Geneva Convention buoyed hopes for rapid progress in the worldwide antinarcotic campaign. Shortly after the convention went into effect in July 1933, the World Narcotic Defense Association celebrated. The association's leader, Capt. Richmond P. Hobson, a Spanish-American War veteran who had become an active campaigner for several organizations, delivered a number of speeches praising the work of the Geneva conference. In another tribute the *Literary Digest* heralded the implementation of the convention with an article entitled, "End of the Illicit Drug Traffic Now in Sight."[1]

Unfortunately, such euphoria was unwarranted. For nations steadfastly committed to the eradication of illicit drug commerce and usage, including the United States, the convention provided an additional tool to help in the fight. Nations with less systematic programs, especially those in Latin America, were encouraged to reconsider the extent of their antidrug activities. In some cases more vigorous actions would be undertaken. For their part United States officials believed that the recent integration of foreign and domestic drug policies would mitigate some of the nation's drug problems. They miscalculated the complexity of the situation.

In the early 1930s domestic addiction remained at a considerable level, a steady stream of illegal drugs, including marijuana and opium, continued to flow north from Mexico, and new problems appeared for policymakers as Central America and Colombia became important locales for smuggling opiates and cocaine from

Europe. These conditions plus a general inability to control illicit narcotic commerce by Latin American governments offered officials in Washington scant hope for success in their endeavors.

Conservative estimates provided by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics placed the number of addicts around 100,000 in 1926; six years later the official figure had increased by 20,000. This amounted to approximately one addict per one thousand people. Testifying in 1930 on his bill creating the bureau, Stephen G. Porter stated that the most reliable estimates of addiction ranged from 200,000 to 1,000,000 addicts. Porter personally felt that the accurate number approached 400,000.[2] If Porter's statistics exaggerated the real extent of addiction, the government's figures underestimated it. The point is that addiction was probably not decreasing, despite the enforcement programs being carried out under the provisions of the Harrison Narcotic Law and its amendments. On the twentieth anniversary of the law's passage, an editorial in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* termed it a failure which had only produced large-scale smuggling. The Federal Bureau of Narcotics denied the allegation asserting that addiction had decreased during the two decades of the law's operation.[3]

Moreover, the continuing depiction of addicts as social deviants belied the faith officials placed in their capacity to reduce addiction. In 1932 Treasury Secretary Ogden L. Mills found addicts to be "mentally defective and psychotic," easily given to the influence of other addicts. Bureau Commissioner Anslinger doubted whether addicts could ever play a useful role in society. In remarks before the Attorney General's Conference on crime held in Washington in December 1934, he commented that "we understand that none of these addicts would have become habitués had they possessed the mental stamina to resist the drug. The mere fact that they could not control their craving, and yielded time after time even when they knew from experience that they faced a jail sentence, is indisputable proof . . . that many of them will relapse to the ravages of the old habit and form underworld associates." To Anslinger, addicts were "derelicts from a sinking ship."[4]

Only occasionally in the 1930s was there heard a dissent from such views. Dr. Walter L. Treadway of the Public Health Service, reflecting perhaps his bureau's difficult historical experience with drug addiction, warned of the danger in a facile dismissal of the

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social and environmental causes of addiction. Treadway pointed out that addiction appeared in all social classes, although it remained more visible within the lower class. He also felt that a high level of recidivism did not so much lend support to the assertion that addiction was a function of a pathological personality as it refuted the approach which sought to control drug usage primarily by punitive means.[5] Since Treadway's views ran counter to the enforcement patterns practiced by the Bureau of Narcotics, they did not obtain a large audience within the policy-making bureaucracy.

At this time the major instance of an attempt to improve domestic controls came in the movement to adopt a uniform state narcotic law. Long before 1930 it became evident to officials that many states were defaulting to the federal government the task of enacting and enforcing adequate antidrug legislation. The Harrison law served not as a model for some state legislatures, but as an excuse not to pass complementary state laws.[6] At its annual conference in October 1932 the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws accepted a draft proposal for a uniform state narcotic act. Under the terms of the draft, no person could trade in drugs without specific authorization. The final version of the Uniform State Narcotic Drug Act related primarily to the opiates and cocaine; marijuana was incidentally included under the general provisions of the act. The proposal also recommended the strict licensing of manufacturers and wholesalers. Hoping to create a receptive atmosphere, the Bureau of Narcotics prepared a number of articles about the need for the act. It is noteworthy that early in the government's campaign, the American Medical Association added its support for the adoption of the act. The rapid response throughout the nation pleased the bureau; by 1936 twenty-seven states had put the act into effect.[7]

The renovation of drug control policy did not proceed in a vacuum isolated from contemporary events. In fact, the economic exigencies brought on by the depression almost negated the meticulous work of the State Department and the young bureau. The problem appeared in the form of a proposed reorganization of various government agencies just as President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration was settling into office. Among the contemplated changes was the transfer of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics from the Treasury Department to the Attorney General's office. Initiative for the change apparently came from the Bureau of the

Budget and its director, Lewis W. Douglas, who convinced the commissioner of prohibition, A. V. Dalrymple, that the interchange of agents for narcotic and prohibition law enforcement would increase the operational efficiency of the bureaus being merged.[8]

Stuart J. Fuller, a narcotic expert speaking for the State Department, offered two objections. First, any change might contravene Article XV of the 1931 Geneva Convention which required each signatory to maintain a separate, central narcotics office. Furthermore, the proposal would probably place the enforcement of narcotic laws in a situation similar to that which existed before the establishment of the Bureau of Narcotics. In a cover note on a memorandum to Undersecretary of State William Phillips on March 31, 1933, Fuller wrote, "Our Narcotics Bureau has been held up at Geneva as a *model* one." Fuller therefore concluded that to:

> abolish the Bureau of Narcotics would be regarded as a distinctly retrograde step and would discourage abroad the centralization and coordination of foreign narcotics administration which the American Government has repeatedly urged.[9]

Fuller took his case both to the Justice Department and the prohibition chief. He informed Dalrymple that the 1931 convention had been composed and signed "on the insistence of the American Government." Any alteration in the policy structure would make it appear that the United States had reneged on its antidrug commitment, causing embarrassment for the State Department.[10] Reports also reached Washington detailing concern by the Opium Advisory Committee over the proposed merger. President Roosevelt finally ended all speculation when he told Phillips that there would be no merger or abolition of the bureau, especially in view of the treaty obligations incurred in 1931.[11] The defeat of the proposed merger underscores the bureaucratic skills at work in the management of national narcotic policy by Harry J. Anslinger and his colleagues in the Department of State. After an early decrease in funding as a result of the depression, they were able to maintain appropriations for the Bureau of Narcotics at a relatively constant level throughout the depression, New Deal, and the years of the heavy fiscal demands generated by the Second World War. (See Table 2.) In financial terms at least, the stability of

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TABLE 2. Annual Appropriations for the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1931—1950

Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Fiscal Year	Appropriation
1931	$1,712,998	1941	$1,303,280
1932	$1,708,528	1942	$1,278,475
1933	$1,525,000	1943	$1,289,060
1934	$1,400,000	1944	$1,150,000
1935	$1,244,899	1945	$1,338,467
1936	$1,249,470	1946	$1,167,400
1937	$1,275,000	1947	$1,300,000
1938	$1,267,000	1948	$1,430,000
1939	$1,267,000	1949	$1,450,000
1940	$1,306,700	1950	$1,610,000

Source: Compilation of Federal Bureau of Narcotics annual reports

funding shows that public narcotic policy had finally taken its place as a regular and institutionalized function of the federal government. With the end of the controversy over reorganization, drug policy could be looked upon almost as an entity unto itself—no longer subsumed within broader policy considerations as had been the case since 1914. By having to devote less time to obtaining support for their policy at home, drug officials were able to give more concerted attention to related problems abroad.

As had been the case for some time, the situation in Mexico and its direct relationship to drugs smuggled into the United States required much of the energy officials in Washington were expending in their effort to improve the quality of control in the Americas. A crucial obstacle to their goal arose out of the difficulties the Mexican government faced in handling its own drug situation. Usage apparently increased in the early 1930s. Marijuana smoking persisted, and heroin was found among the lower levels of society.[12] Despite claims to the contrary by the government, the decrees of the 1920s had not really alleviated a deteriorating situation.

A report in the newspaper *Excélsior* on June 12, 1931 revealed the severity and extent of the situation. In a letter to the paper, the minister of government, Carlos Riva Palacio, announced his resignation, an action resulting from his alleged complicity in a smuggling operation which was introducing illegal drugs into Mexico and then transporting them to the United States.[13] Plutarco Elías Calles, the most powerful man in Mexico and now ex-president,

had the nominal president, Pascual Rubio Ortiz, accept the minister's resignation. There existed no certainty, however, that Riva Palacio was intimately connected with the smugglers. Others mentioned in connection with the operation were the president of the Federal District, the governor of San Luis Potosí, and also members of the staff of Rubio Ortiz. "The most charitable construction to put on the action of the President," declared United States Military Attaché Col. Gordon Johnson, "is that the sudden exposure of so many high officials of his Administration might be politically disastrous."[14]

In short, a government crisis seemed at hand. Mexico's financial condition, more precarious because of the depression, was worse than at any time since 1915. Credit was poor; gold and silver were in short supply. With the resignation of the head of the presidential staff, Calles's faith in the ability of Rubio Ortiz to govern effectively nearly evaporated. Fortunately for Mexico, the power and prestige of Calles held the government together. In August the crisis passed when Gen. Lázaro Cárdenas, who would become president in 1934, accepted an appointment to Riva Palacio's former position.[15]

It is not clear that the appointment of Cárdenas had a causal effect, but shortly thereafter the government undertook a reassessment of the operation of its drug control policies. Specifically, the Public Health Department sought to establish special hospitals to care for addicts: the program was obligatory and the department had to authorize an addict's discharge. Under the plan, free care would be provided for poorer addicts. Finally, physicians were to be held responsible for the condition of patients upon their release.[16] Nothing came of the proposal until Cárdenas took office as president. At the end of August 1934 the new administration published a revised sanitary code and decree of implementation. Under provisions of the code, if an addict had drugs in his possession for personal use, he would be consigned to the Public Health Department, not to the criminal courts. But if an addict supplied others with drugs, he would be subject to criminal prosecution after undergoing treatment. Most important, the Department of Public Health would constitute the ultimate authority concerning possible prosecution for criminal offenses.[17]

Implementation of the sanitary code left Mexico's drug law enforcement practices at variance with those of the United States. Policy would be set by an agency with a medical function rather

than by one (the Bureau of Narcotics) emphasizing punitive law enforcement and administrative efficiency. The Public Health Department planned to treat addicts first as individuals meriting medical attention; their particular situation would determine the applicability of criminal law. Conversely, enforcement practices in the United States blurred distinctions between sale and possession solely for personal use. Whether the Mexican approach to drug control would prove any more successful than that advocated in Washington remained to be seen.

Despite the intentions of the Cárdenas administration, it was doubtful that the new regulations had a discernible impact on the drug situation in areas distant from Mexico City. In April 1935 the United Press news wire carried a story from Geneva stating that a standing committee of the League of Nations, probably the OAC, named Mexico as a nation from which large quantities of drugs were being smuggled into the United States. It also noted that Mexican officials took part in the illicit activity. The government denied the allegations, putting the blame for smuggling instead on manufacturing nations with insufficient controls over exports. Whatever the level of official corruption and complicity, the government's countercharges had a basis in reality. In Manchuria, British and Swiss interests were seeking to have the opium trade from Persia legalized: an increased trade would prove lucrative financially, particularly if the demand for narcotics could be artificially stimulated in places other than China.[18] Notwithstanding the denials, the level of smuggling from Mexico remained high.[19]

Based upon its record in the early 1930s, the government in Mexico City appeared willing to act with the United States to stop smuggling. In 1930 the two countries concluded an informal agreement for the exchange of information on drugs.[20] The following year officials sent a special agent to coordinate antidrug activity with Consul William Blocker in the Juárez–El Paso region.[21] Mexico next requested that agents of both countries be permitted unrestricted border crossings there pursuant to their duties. The State Department and Bureau of Narcotics turned down the request, although United States agents would continue to cross into Mexico with Anslinger's express approval.[22] By mid-1932 all the Mexicans had achieved was another informal arrangement for the exchange of information.[23]

While reluctant to engage in cooperative activity, the United

States took several unilateral steps to detect and prevent illegal traffic. Around 1930 private planes began smuggling drugs out of Mexico. In response, an antidrug air patrol operated from various sites in Texas starting in 1931. During the first two years of the program no drugs were seized, only liquor. Yet authorities remained convinced that smuggling by air was a prime means of getting drugs into the United States.[24]

In addition to west Texas, Baja California continued to serve as a prominent locale for smuggling. The consul at Ensenada, William Smale, suggested that the State Department pressure Mexican authorities to act by taking steps "which would reduce to a minimum the travel and expenditures of American tourists in Baja California . . ."[25] Not until Operation Intercept thirty-five years later would the United States try, in a comparable situation, to take the action Smale suggested. In place of economic pressure, a meeting was held on October 10, 1934 in Los Angeles to disseminate information on smuggling to representatives from the state, treasury, labor, and justice departments. The need for the meeting became evident after the district supervisor of the Bureau of Narcotics in San Francisco stated that he saw no reason to believe anything other than liquor was being smuggled into the United States.[26]

Such ignorance of the actual situation was unacceptable in Anslinger's Bureau of Narcotics; nor would it help matters in Baja California. In January 1935 Smale found "the matter of smuggling . . . taking more and more of the time of this office."[27] The meeting in Los Angeles provided some assistance. Communication lines between State Department representatives and Treasury agents, who had often operated in Mexico without consular knowledge, were improved. Smale and other consuls would receive any urgent information from the Customs Border Patrol Office in San Diego. In turn, they were required to report periodically to a general coordinator in Los Angeles.[28] The transfer of a clerk at the consulate, Paul Carr, to the employ of the Treasury Department provided additional help for Smale. Carr undertook most of the daily work concerning smuggling. He worked for the Treasury Department in order to avoid the necessity of presenting a formal request to the Mexican government to allow him to move freely about the Ensenada area. As noted previously, the United States had no interest in reciprocal operations of this kind. "It is

inadvisable," Smale was told, "to notify the Mexican Government of the general nature of the appointee's duties."[29]

Yet as Smale well knew, the United States could do little about illicit drugs in Baja without assistance from Mexico City. Assistance was offered infrequently, however. Smale therefore could only relay information to his superiors. On one occasion in March 1936 he reported learning of extensive cultivation of opium poppies and marijuana in remote regions of Baja. The only action Smale was able to take was to have a staff member take a "vacation" in the area and report on conditions there. This and similar occurrences in other consular districts moved the United States to bring the matter of border smuggling to the attention of the OAC in Geneva. In a presentation distinguished by sensitivity for the diplomatic feelings of Mexico, and therefore symbolic of the reciprocal nature of the Good Neighbor Policy, Stuart J. Fuller declared that smuggling presented a problem on both sides of the border. In response, the Mexican delegate, Manuel Tello, promised a more comprehensive exchange of information on drugs would be forthcoming. Nonetheless, available records for 1936 do not reveal the conclusion of any agreement to augment the previous ones of 1930 and 1932.[30] It seems unlikely that the Mexicans could believe, as they had at Geneva in 1931, that there was no drug problem in Mexico.

Illicit drug activity also flourished elsewhere in Latin America in the early thirties. Most governments failed to respond even with the rudimentary measures of control prompted by smuggling across the Mexico–United States border. Instead, official inattention and incompetence, even corruption, defined the spectrum of responses to drug problems. Such a situation brought into question the extent to which Latin American governments actually had begun to view drug usage and traffic as domestic social problems in the late 1920s. It also demonstrated the difficulty of inculcating in others by whatever means the antidrug fervor of the United States. As before, the division remained in part one of culture versus bureaucracy.

Only Uruguay embarked upon a serious campaign to control drugs. In June 1931 the State Department distributed throughout Latin America a questionnaire seeking information about the situation there. Uruguay's reply showed a flurry of activity between 1929 and 1932. In May 1929 the Geneva Convention of 1925 had

gone into effect. Then came the implementation of an import-export certificate system and a decree in March 1932 seeking to control further commerce in drugs. Most important, the government gave full power to the National Council of Public Health to supervise the enforcement of all narcotic regulations.[31]

In 1933 the government created the ornately titled Special Commission for the Defense Against Toxicomania and Control of the Narcotics Traffic to work with the Public Health Council. The duties of the special commission included supervising compliance with all domestic and international regulations, compiling statistics on the extent of addiction, and promoting an antidrug educational campaign throughout the country. To assist the work of the special commission Uruguay planned to spend $10,000 per year.[32]

As was true elsewhere, attention to domestic matters alone could not mitigate the narcotic situation. The Uruguayan government also had to deal with the possibility of increased drug traffic resulting from apparent Japanese efforts to establish an industrial center in the Free Zone of Colonia across the Río de la Plata from Buenos Aires. The Anti-Opium Information Bureau in Geneva, a clearinghouse for narcotics data, asked Uruguay to scrutinize closely any questionable activity in Colonia. Of particular concern to the bureau was the relative proximity of Bolivian coca fields, an available source of illicit cocaine.[33] Unlike officials in Geneva and Washington, Uruguayan authorities did not believe Colonia would become a transit point for smuggling. Dr. José Mora, a foreign office official in charge of narcotics, told United States representatives in Montevideo that Colonia had never played a prominent role in illegal traffic. Problems with illicit drugs centered around the border with Brazil. Nonetheless, Uruguay promised to supervise any unusual activity in Colonia. By the mid-thirties, it should be noted, the feared Japanese industrial center had not come into existence.[34]

At this same time Uruguay took other steps to guard against the introduction of unwanted drugs. At the Seventh Pan-American Conference at Montevideo in December 1933 the government urged those Latin American republics which had not yet ratified the 1931 Geneva Convention to do so quickly.[35] Uruguay also sought assistance from the Opium Advisory Committee. At the OAC session in May 1934, Alfredo de Castro asked the committee to make a special appeal to all Latin American governments urging the prompt submittal of their annual reports. He further requested

that Geneva encourage the development of drug education campaigns by individual nations. The suggestions received substantial support, including Fuller's for the United States, and resolutions putting them into effect passed easily.[36]

Available evidence suggests that Uruguay's efforts were succeeding. Although not formally establishing a state monopoly, the government effectively assumed full authority to supervise and direct all commerce in drugs.[37] Also, the public health minister and prefect of police in Montevideo offered cash rewards to those officers who were most productive in their antinarcotic work. By early 1937 drug consumption seems to have fallen below the 1930–34 level. What illegal drugs were uncovered came primarily, as before, from Brazil and secondarily from Argentina. "Compared with cities of similar size in the United States or Europe," observed United States Minister Julius Lay, "drug addiction in Montevideo is of minor importance."[38]

Uruguay imported all its narcotics, both raw and manufactured. This fact plus careful regulation of sale and consumption did much to restrict illicit traffic there. Finally in September 1937 the government officially created a state monopoly governing the importation, exportation, and distribution of all narcotic substances. This action went beyond the more limited effort of 1923. Public health officials took charge of the monopoly. Possession of narcotics became illegal whether intended for personal use or sale to others. The law putting this program into effect outlined stiff penalties for any physician or police official who violated its provisions. Significantly, a state hospital was set up to treat addiction. Part of the funding for the institution would come from revenues derived from the monopoly.[39]

No other Latin American nation followed the example set by Uruguay. Argentina, for example, had never made a serious attempt at drug control. The government acceded to the 1925 Geneva Convention but did not actually sign the document.[40] Smuggling was uncontrolled around Buenos Aires. It was not surprising, therefore, that Argentina tended to import more drugs than allowed under the terms of the 1931 convention. In 1935, for instance, imports of morphine and cocaine exceeded the stipulated allotments.[41]

Not until three years later did Argentina enact a comprehensive drug law. In February 1938 the government placed controls on the

traffic in opium, heroin, and cocaine, and began import and export supervision. In a comment on Argentina's action, the assistant secretary of the treasury, Stephen B. Gibbons, declared that the regulations were malleable enough to permit physicians to prescribe sufficient quantities of drugs to maintain addicts in their habit. In Gibbons's view, Argentina's annual estimates far surpassed the actual yearly need. A newly created Section of Narcotics Control in the government evidently did not deem it necessary to revise national drug requirements.[42]

The narcotic situation in Honduras seemed equally out of control early in the decade. In the eighteen months prior to the end of 1933 Honduras imported enough morphine, eighty-seven kilograms, to meet its medical and scientific requirements for one hundred years. The supply, far in excess of quota allotments, came mainly from France, Germany, and Switzerland, nations traditionally reluctant to adopt manufacturing limitations. In 1934 when Honduras received another twenty-two-year supply of morphine, League of Nations officials suspected wholesale forging of import certificates.[43]

Considerable amounts of the imports, including morphine and cocaine, found their way into the southern United States, particularly the New Orleans area, where local authorities managed to seize a portion of them. At least one other seizure took place in Dallas. When the smuggling continued, the United States began using Coast Guard vessels to track ships on which drug couriers were believed to be traveling. Consular officials in the Honduran ports of La Ceiba, Tela, Puerto Cortés, and Belize provided the Coast Guard with information on ship movements. The State Department viewed the reconnaissance efforts as a temporary measure which might provide a deterrent to smuggling. Such an eventuality was, of course, unlikely, given the historical role of smuggling in Central America during depressed economic times. In the 1930s as in earlier eras, smuggling became a part of the local way of life—a potentially rewarding enterprise for some individuals during the worldwide depression.[44]

Numerous Hondurans received narcotics from Europe, but one man, José María Guillen Velez, seemed to acquire larger quantities than most. (It was morphine from one of his shipments that officials in Dallas seized in 1932.) Guillen Velez, owner of a pharmacy in Puerto Cortés, accepted shipment of forty kilograms of morphine

from France in 1933, an amount large enough to satisfy legitimate Honduran needs for fifty years.[45] Faced with such a serious situation, the government professed a desire to revamp its control activities. At the same time, however, Dr. Ricardo Alduvín, dean of the medical faculty at the national university in Tegucigalpa, told United States representatives that the Director of Public Health, P. H. Ordonez Díaz, had authorized Guillen's imports of opium, morphine, and cocaine. Permission was evidently granted for the years 1933 and 1934.[46]

Official corruption no doubt contributed to the ease with which drugs reached Honduras. Julius Lay reported that Honduran politicians were susceptible to bribery. The depression exaggerated the consequences of the unhappy fact that Honduras was the poorest of the Central American republics. As was true elsewhere in Latin America, especially Mexico, accepting bribes helped officials personally make the best of an economically difficult situation. Yet official corruption would mitigate in no way the impact of the depression upon Honduras. In mid-October 1932, scarcely two weeks before scheduled presidential elections, Lay found trade "nearly at a standstill."[47]

As had been the case since earlier in the century, Honduran prosperity primarily depended upon the banana industry, which was controlled by the United Fruit Company and the Standard Fruit and Steamship Company. Even had the companies not dominated the economy, the monocultural tradition would have prevented an effective response to the depression. As it was, the companies, too, were constrained in their ability to ameliorate conditions. The depression cut world banana prices, and Panama and Sigotoka disease devastated the fruit throughout the banana plantations, further damaging the nation's export-oriented economy. Although the companies contributed in numerous ways to improving the quality of life in Honduras, the wages they paid "provided little more than subsistence for workers and families" in the estimation of career diplomat Willard L. Beaulac. In 1933 wages were reduced 10 percent across the board.[48]

It was within this climate that a national election was held on October 30, 1932. The victor, Tiburcio Carías Andino, would take office on February 1, 1933. At that time, no informed person would have predicted a future of amicable relations between Washington and the new Honduran government. In 1924 the United States

helped to prevent Carías from assuming the presidency. Then in 1928 the United States supported Vicente Mejía Colindres as Carías lost a relatively free election. After his electoral success in 1932, Carías immediately had to quell a revolt by dissident elements within the Liberal party. At the same time the national treasury was virtually empty.[49]

The two situations were not unrelated. While in office Mejía Colindres had kept potentially rebellious army factions in line by paying them with funds borrowed from the banana companies. (Repayment of the loans came in the form of reduced customs collections.) The vicissitudes of the depression did not afford Carías a similar option. Unable to obtain requested arms from the United States, Carías received aid from El Salvador and soon put down the revolt. The denial of the request for arms, despite Lay's recommendation to the contrary, could have only increased Carías Andino's wariness of the United States.[50]

In what cannot be interpreted as other than a diplomatic formality, Carías pledged himself to a policy of cordial relations with other governments, "especially that of the United States." The pledge included reorganization of the departments of justice and public health. What this declaration portended for drug control, or United States influence, remained to be seen.[51] Even had Honduras acceded at once to the 1931 Geneva Convention, the problem of excessive narcotic importation would have existed. In turn, smuggling would have continued unchecked.[52] When a legislative decree in March 1934 finally put the convention into effect, the practical problem of enforcement still remained—as Dr. Alduvín admitted.[53]

Essentially the problem for the United States in Honduras was that the governments of the two countries did not share the common objective of the eradication of illicit drug traffic. As a result, reciprocity—a prominent aspect of the Roosevelt administration's Latin American policy—played a lesser role in the situation than the United States would have liked. No narcotics bureaucracy existed in Honduras that would take the United States cause as its own. The tacit assumption held by Washington in hemispheric narcotic relations—that cultural and other impediments to effective drug control could be mutually overcome—simply was not relevant. There were practical limits therefore to what American diplomacy could achieve.

Several comments are in order about the Good Neighbor Policy. Its two primary tenets, military and political nonintervention by the United States in Latin America and the return of prosperity to the hemisphere, became evident within a short time after President Roosevelt took office.[54] Later in the decade, military security from potential Axis subversion became inextricably linked with the Good Neighbor Policy. Throughout, the idea of reciprocity in inter-American relations provided a basis for giving the policy its widespread appeal. In the words of Josephus Daniels, ambassador to Mexico: "The only hope of the Good Neighbor Policy lies in reciprocally applying it with justice and fair dealing between the Pan American States . . ."[55]

However skeptical of United States intentions Carías may have been, he joined in the general approval of Roosevelt's policy of nonintervention.[56] This gesture should not be construed as a thoroughgoing acceptance of the Good Neighbor Policy. As would be discovered in other countries, particularly Brazil, reciprocity could be used to domestic political advantage without being accepted wholesale. As we shall soon see, Carías realized this as he tried to rebuild the Honduran economy and cement his hold on power. In 1933 and 1934, reciprocity did not necessarily extend to implementation of a policy to curb illicit drug traffic.

Julius Lay experienced the selectivity of Honduran policy first hand. Lay felt that the prosecution of Guillen would improve the situation, but he remained pessimistic about the likelihood of any such action. An official search of Guillen's pharmacy in June 1934 uncovered no evidence linking him to the narcotics trade. "By means of forged government certificates," an exasperated Fuller declared, "Honduras has imported sufficient morphine . . . to supply her legitimate needs for a century." Compounding the frustration, it was later learned that under Honduran law the forged import certificates would not have been evidence enough to convict Guillen of a crime.[57] Lay learned, too, that Guillen served as minister of government and justice under an earlier administration and entertained hopes of becoming the president of Honduras. As such, he tried not to alienate any elements within the country, including the banana companies that might thwart his ambitions.[58] Even a League of Nations inquiry prompted by Fuller's statement did not convince the government to take action against Guillen.[59] In an ironic epilogue to the Guillen affair, which

will be discussed in greater detail later, the Department of State learned that Guillen participated in at least two abortive attempts to remove Carías Andino from power in 1935 and 1936. Had the revolts succeeded, Guillen would have become acting president of Honduras.[60]

Smuggling from Honduras was not the only problem troubling American officials. Elsewhere in Central America, especially in Panama and the Canal Zone, illegal drugs were abundantly available. Costa Rica and Colombia, two countries with negligible controls, frequently served as transit points for drugs bound for Panama. United States authorities regarded Panamanian police as generally honest, but helpless to control the situation. One side effect of this condition was that a large percentage of U.S. Army personnel receiving hospital care in Panama were suspected of being addicts.[61]

If little could be done in a remedial way in Panama, continuing problems in Honduras (in addition to the difficulties posed by Guillen) made the situation there even less amenable to resolution along lines desired by the United States. Throughout his tenure as minister, Lay suspected the government of complicity in the drug traffic. It did not surprise him greatly therefore when Dr. Ricardo Alduvín, who had occasionally been helpful to Lay, resigned his post at the university. In his capacity as dean of the medical faculty, Alduvín possessed the authority to issue or withhold narcotic import certificates. On at least one occasion, Alduvín signed a certificate for a firm to import narcotics from a New Orleans company, the Meyer Brothers Drug Company, which was not authorized by the Bureau of Narcotics to export drugs to Honduras. The newspaper *El Cronista* revealed that throughout his service as dean, Alduvín had granted import authorizations to a select group of businessmen suspected of participating in the illicit traffic.[62]

Dr. Francisco Sánchez replaced Alduvín. He evidently wanted to change his predecessor's policy, declaring that only "pharmacies of good reputation will be allowed to petition importations of narcotic drugs through the Faculty of Medicine." Trying to assist Sánchez, Commissioner Anslinger turned down a request from the Meyer Brothers Drug Company to export morphine to Honduras. At best, Anslinger's action served a symbolic purpose. Without a strong antinarcotic commitment on the part of the Carías government, little could be done to stop the persistent smuggling. The

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murder of Sánchez in July 1935 testified to just how chaotic the narcotic situation had become.[63]

By that time, the Honduran government could no longer afford to ignore the problems caused by narcotics, yet it had virtually no prior antinarcotic experience to rely upon. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Antonio Bermúdez, turned to the United States for assistance. He asked the Federal Bureau of Narcotics to send a trained investigator to Honduras. American authorities turned down the request. Shortly after the death of Sánchez, federal agents and New Orleans police had seized a shipment of heroin bound for the United States through Honduras. Distrust of the government there by officials in Washington abounded. One agent, Fuller and Anslinger knew, could not compensate for the lack of a systematic antinarcotic commitment.[64] The overture from Honduras accomplished nothing.

What concerned Carías more than drug control was the economic revitalizaton of Honduras. In 1929 Honduran exports were valued at $24.6 million, dropping to $7.4 million in 1938; imports dropped over the same period from $14.9 million to $9.5 million. Trade with the United States also plummeted, as seen in the value of banana exports: from $20.9 million in 1928–29 to $4.2 million in 1937–38. Bananas accounted for more than 80 percent of the nation's total exports; and fully three-quarters of the export trade to the United States in 1934 consisted of bananas.[65] The task for Carías was to diversify and increase the volume of exports.

Secretary of State Cordell Hull's reciprocal trade agreement program presented a partial solution to Carías. Negotiations were begun in mid-1934, and an agreement was signed on December 18, 1935. The agreement did not help to lay a basis for economic diversification, though. It may even have resulted in the reduction of customs revenues in Honduras, a liability which Julius Lay quickly foresaw. Moreover, a total reciprocity agreement might conceivably threaten banana markets in Great Britain and Germany; it assuredly would harm the import of cotton goods from Japan, a trade previously dominated by American merchants. As concluded, the agreement made few concessions to Honduran economic aspirations.[66] Despite, or perhaps because of increased dependence upon the United States, the domestic political fortunes of Carías improved. If nothing else, Honduras had obtained a guaranteed export market—not an inconsiderable achievement

in depressed economic times. However minimal, economic predictability was something the opponents of Carías could not provide.

In Peru and Bolivia, where domestic antidrug activity directly affected the international situation, few constructive measures were undertaken. This lack of activity proved to be particularly disappointing to officials in Geneva and Washington. Prior to 1931 each nation had begun to consider drug use as a societal problem; it was hoped that remedial actions might follow. Peru made a start in the desired direction. In March 1932 a bill was introduced in the Constituent Assembly placing restrictions on cultivation and use of the coca leaf.[67] As before, the issue of the stability of Peru's economy became closely linked with the question of coca restriction, as did Peruvian tradition. An official in the narcotic office of the government told William C. Burdett, United States Consul General at Callao-Lima, that Peru wished to comply with the regulations of the League of Nations, especially since "the use of coca constitutes one of the most pernicious habits of the Indian populations." The official acknowledged that coca chewing could not be fully halted, but felt that coca production could be controlled. In course, the international trade in cocaine would surely decline.[68]

Upon completion of a brief trip through Peru's coca-producing regions, Burdett reported that coca controls were unlikely. "American engineers operating some of the most important mining enterprises in the world in Peruvian highlands," Burdett noted, "have been unable to report adverse effects from coca upon their men." He doubted as well whether export laws could successfully restrict illicit commerce. "There is, however, no guarantee," Burdett stated, "of conscientious enforcement of these laws. Enforcement is vested in the Bureau of Health, which has in recent years been accused of more corruption than any other section of the Peruvian government." Five different men headed the bureau between 1930 and 1932, a period when Peru was on the verge of civil strife after the ouster of Leguía in August 1930.[69] Any hope of effective coca control therefore seemed unrealistic. Ultimately the bill limiting coca leaf cultivation failed to secure passage; and for the year 1932 Peru produced more than 3.5 million kilograms of coca.[70]

It was not until 1936 that the government made another attempt to regulate the coca leaf. A planting crisis in Cuzco, a major area

for production, substantially diminished the revenue derived from coca sales. Moreover, a malaria epidemic drastically cut the supply of Indian labor. These occurrences induced officials to reconsider the role of the coca leaf in Peru.[71] No action was taken then, perhaps because of the international narcotic conference scheduled for June in Geneva. During these same years the newspaper *La Crónica* was calling for a more vigorous policy. The lack of substantive action led the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau to remark that the government of Peru did not seem disposed to waging a serious fight against drug problems.[72]

Like Peru, Bolivia failed in the early 1930s to limit coca production. Nearly two million kilos were grown in 1932, most of which were consumed domestically. International pressure to restrict production brought a response from a landowners' association in the coca-rich Yungas region.[73] Illustrating further Bolivia's rejection of proposed coca controls, President Daniel Salamanca rescinded in September 1933 a tariff on Peruvian coca in transit through Bolivia for shipment abroad. Bolivian laborers, employed in Chilean mining operations, continued to chew coca on the job. Controls on coca would not soon come to Bolivia.[74]

Except in Uruguay and to a lesser extent Mexico, the record of narcotic control in Latin America between the Geneva conferences of 1931 and 1936 was not an encouraging one to officials in the United States and at the League of Nations. Patterns of usage continued, tied as they often were to historical traditions and contemporary developments; and smuggling became a phenomenon more widespread than ever before in the hemisphere. The United States suffered most from this situation. By 1936 it was clear to officials in Washington that they could not eliminate smuggling by their own endeavors. Moreover, the perceived emerging antidrug commitment of the late 1920s in important Latin American nations proved largely illusory. The only alternative place to look for assistance was Geneva.

In trying to restrict illicit traffic, international authorities had two means available not regularized by earlier conventions. They could either attempt to control sources of supply or they could sponsor a move to increase domestic penalties for drug law violations. The OAC decided to concentrate on the second tactic. After devising a draft convention, the committee called a formal confer-

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ence for June 1936. Although originally unenthusiastic about the proposal, the United States sought additional information about the scope of the conference. The Department of State hoped to broaden the agenda. "The American Government considers it important," a department communiqué stated, "that the Conference consider prevention and punishment of illicit cultivation, gathering, and production of the poppy, coca, and cannabis."[75] The League appeared to encourage Washington's plans. "Any delegation at the conference may propose any matter," declared Eric Einar Ekstrand, director of the Opium Traffic and Social Questions Section. The draft convention, Ekstrand suggested, merely offered a basis for discussion. The State Department accordingly made preparations for formal participation at the conference.[76]

Before the first session was held it became apparent that the attempt to enlarge the scope of the conference agenda would encounter opposition. Peru objected to further restrictions on coca leaves—evidently having decided not to reconsider the role of coca in society. Enrique Trujillo Bravo was instructed to reverse the position Peru had taken on the 1931 convention. He was to amend Peru's acceptance of the convention with reservations similar to those of Bolivia. He also hoped to obtain a quota for manufactured cocaine.[77] Dr. Carlos Enrique Paz Soldán, Vice-Director of the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, suggested the change in Peru's position. In a pamphlet issued under the auspices of Peru's Sociedad Nacional Agraria, Paz Soldán wrote that exports of coca leaves and raw cocaine had fallen dramatically since the mid-twenties. As a result much of the current coca crop was being consumed domestically. If Peru were to restrict coca production, an economic crisis would occur. To placate those favoring restrictions, Paz offered several options. Peru might attempt to regulate production through the creation of a state monopoly. He suggested, too, that Peru erect its own facility to manufacture cocaine. Paz envisioned as well the establishment of a national institute to study the impact of coca on Indians, a proposal commensurate with the desires of the indigenistas. Finally, he advocated a program to educate the masses about the possible dangers of coca usage.[78]

Over half the American republics sent delegations to the conference along with Peru. These included Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Uruguay, and

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Venezuela. For the United States, Fuller, Anslinger, and Frank S. Ward, a legal adviser in the State Department, served as representatives.[79] The conference began with discussion of the first article of the draft convention, which enumerated offenses meriting punishment. The framers hoped that the threat of severe penalties would reduce illicit traffic. At once Fuller proposed an amendment. Although in agreement with the need to punish drug offenders, he did not think the offenses should be listed. Instead he asked other nations to "limit exclusively to medical and scientific purposes the narcotic drugs and substances to which this Convention relates." In turn, Ward explained that the absence of enumeration would make clearer the purpose of the conference. In short, the United States delegation had subtly asked for a program of cultivation restriction in order to control the usage of all drugs; suppression of the illicit trade was not enough.

In reply Portugal and Great Britain claimed that Fuller's proposal fundamentally altered the purpose of the conference and should not be considered. Fuller rejoined that any subject could be introduced as Ekstrand had stated, and noted that his delegation further wished to discuss "prevention and punishment" of illicit activities in connection with opium poppies, coca leaves, and cannabis.[80] The burden of Fuller's argument reflected his country's belief that the draft convention added little of substance to previous international agreements. Uruguay supported the United States, noting, as we have seen, that the inter-American meeting at Montevideo in 1933 passed a resolution recommending more comprehensive drug controls than those then in existence.[81]

Portugal remained adamant and sought to eliminate Fuller's proposal from additional consideration. This turn of events presented a serious problem for the United States delegation. If the amendment were not considered, Fuller and Anslinger were prepared to refrain from further participation at the conference.[82] The Department of State, mindful of the difficulties caused by such action a decade earlier, advised against any rash action by the delegation.[83]

Ultimately a committee was appointed to study Fuller's proposal and Portugal dropped its challenge to the amendment. The full conference finally settled the matter by deciding to place the "cultivation restriction" proposal into the Final Act as a recommen-

dation rather than in the text of the convention. After this step was taken the United States delegation confined itself during the remainder of the conference to occasional observations. At one point, for example, when discussing whether to use the words "if willfully committed" in the article advocating punishment for drug law offenses, Anslinger made unmistakably clear the position of his government concerning such violations. "The work of narcotic authorities would be radically handicapped," he stated, "if, when prosecuting for illegal possession, for instance, or for illicit sale, they were obliged to prove willful commission." [84] Mere possession of proscribed substances served as presumptive evidence of law violation; it was that approach which the State Department and Federal Bureau of Narcotics wanted other nations to adopt.

The final convention did not reflect the American sentiment. Rather it resembled the preconference draft. In a cable to Washington, Fuller and Anslinger charged that countries with minimal narcotic problems controlled the formulation of the convention. Additionally, opium monopoly countries had been especially uncooperative since they feared revenues would fall if any restrictions were accepted on opium beyond those already in existence. "It has become evident," the two concluded, "that most European nations are not prepared to sign any convention which would provide for a really effective system [of control]." On June 26, twenty nations excluding the United States signed the convention. Fuller termed it "a retrograde step" for his country and found its provisions inadequate.[85] Other American republics signed the pact, including Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Honduras and Peru were not present at the final session.[86]

Years later Anslinger further explained the decision not to sign the 1936 convention. He noted that it applied only to trade in and distribution of manufactured narcotics. Such narrowly defined provisions meant that it "would afford no Constitutional basis of Federal control of the production of cannabis . . . and the opium poppy." As we shall see presently, control of marijuana was becoming a matter of increasing concern to the bureau. And even though no opium poppies were grown in the United States, the commissioner's point was clear: "Provisions of the Convention would weaken rather than strengthen the effectiveness of the efforts of

6 Control Across the Border

United States–Mexican narcotic diplomacy between 1936 and 1940 offers the most demonstrable example of the impact of Washington's antidrug policies on relations with other countries. In the early 1930s the governments in Mexico City and Washington, D.C. concluded two agreements providing for the exchange of information about drug traffic across their common border. By the middle of 1936, Treasury Department agents had undertaken operations in Mexico to gather additional information about smuggling activities. Although occurring on a limited basis, these operations took place without the concurrence of the administration of President Lázaro Cárdenas.[1] The increasing strain in relations between the two countries over petroleum, commercial policy, and other matters in the late thirties gave a greater importance to common antidrug efforts than they might have otherwise enjoyed. From 1936 to 1940 United States drug diplomacy threatened to exacerbate the sensitive state of affairs existing with Mexico and accordingly brought into question the reciprocal nature of the Good Neighbor Policy of the Roosevelt administration.[2]

In November 1936 Ambassador Josephus Daniels, acting as he sometimes did to lessen tension between the two countries, questioned the secrecy surrounding the presence of the Treasury agents in Mexico. In particular Daniels objected to the appearance in the Mexico City region of Alvin F. Scharff, the assistant supervising customs agent at San Antonio, Texas. The ambassador doubted that

the presence of agents in Mexico without the knowledge of the government there served any useful purpose and might offend the Mexicans.[3]

The activities of the agents may have shown that United States officials were dissatisfied with the way Mexico was carrying out the agreements of 1930 and 1932.[4] The Mexican government, though, felt differently about the accords. On October 16, the *Weekly News Sheet*, published by the publicity department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, lauded the joint antinarcotic efforts of the two nations, and especially noted the reduction of smuggling through the port of Mazatlán.[5] (It should be noted that Daniels failed to verify the accuracy of the report during a discussion with José Siurob, chief of the Department of Public Health.[6])

Mexico seemed desirous of improving and expanding even further its activity against narcotics. In January 1937 Luis G. Franco, chief of the Alcohol and Narcotic Service of the Public Health Department, told Daniels that he wanted to meet with United States customs agents at a border city in order to alter the earlier agreements so that Mexican agents, if need be, could cross the border into the United States.[7] Narcotic authorities in Washington rejected the proposal, just as they had turned down a similar request some years before.[8] Border crossings by agents, it seemed, would remain a one-way proposition.

Although the Mexican officials failed to secure approval from the United States for border crossings, they took other steps to increase antidrug activity. Franco and Siurob favored strengthening sections of the national penal code dealing with illegal narcotics. Such a legislative process would take many months to complete, yet the situation demanded immediate attention. "Mexico is not only an important producer of drugs," the newspaper *El Universal* observed on February 25, "but . . . also the chief distributing center for this continent." The Public Health Department quickly expanded the scope of its activities beyond simply a legislative response to drug problems. A centralized narcotics administration was planned and set up under Siurob's direction. Broadly defined, the National Auxiliary Committee's responsibilities consisted of devising ways to eliminate illegal narcotic traffic in Mexico.[9] Soon after operations began in April 1937, *El Universal* reported that the committee was considering the creation of a national narcotic monopoly.[10]

These efforts under Siurob's direction elicited a generally favor-

able response from United States personnel in Mexico.[11] Their view soon changed, however. In at least two instances Daniels was unable to substantiate Mexican claims of success in handling drug-related problems. The matter of smuggling at Mazatlán has already been mentioned. He also could not verify a government assertion that the incidence of addiction in Mexico had fallen dramatically since 1935. In fact, a story in *Excélsior* reported a rise in drug abuse.[12]

Available evidence suggests that Mexico's antidrug activity was having little discernible effect upon domestic conditions. *Excélsior* commented that for the campaign to be successful both the federal constitution and penal code would require amending. Changes were especially necessary in the nation's prisons, where drug usage abounded.[13] Not everyone agreed that the newly formed national committee was the proper agency to handle the situation. Ángel de la Garza Brito, who headed the rural hygiene program, felt that either the Treasury or Interior Department should be in charge. He argued that as long as the Public Health Department controlled the antidrug effort, political rivalry would supersede effective action. The accuracy of this allegation seems doubtful. During 1937 Franco had achieved a cooperative relationship among various government bureaus, and thus strengthened Mexico's antinarcotic commitment and effort.[14]

While Mexico was endeavoring to improve its drug control program, United States officials were advocating passage of the 1937 Marihuana Tax Act. The Bureau of Narcotics therefore became interested in Mexico's marijuana policy. Through Daniels, Commissioner Anslinger learned that Mexico restricted the growing of marijuana, or hemp, for rope fiber without proper authorization.[15] In fact, Article 202 of the Mexican Health Code forbade the cultivation of Indian hemp. Other provisions of the code outlawed marijuana possession, sale, use, and any form of commerce.[16] Whether the restrictions were effective cannot be determined with any more precision for Mexico than for the United States. Manuel Tello, the Mexican representative to the OAC in Geneva, claimed that marijuana smoking took place primarily among the criminal elements in his country. *Excélsior* saw no reason to minimize marijuana's suspected dangers: "Many of the crimes of blood . . . are committed under the pathological influence of marihuana . . . The number is beyond count."[17]

Whatever the extent of cannabis usage or the effectiveness of

drug control, an administrative change in February 1938 interrupted the work of the Public Health Department. Siurob resigned as department chief to become governor of the Federal District of Mexico City, and Franco left the Federal Narcotics Service for a position with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[18] These changes ended the first phase of United States–Mexican narcotic diplomacy between 1936 and 1940. While Mexico's attempts to enhance its antidrug activity had not yet produced noticeable results, a process was under way which presaged the government's being more critical of drug abuse. Just as promising from the United States point of view was Mexico's desire to work more closely with Washington to halt the northward flow of illegal substances. To that end, Siurob and Franco had met in 1937 with H. S. Creighton, supervising customs agent at San Antonio, to discuss coordinating their countries' antidrug efforts along the border.[19] But by the time the Mexicans had left office, no formal plans had been agreed upon.

Leonidas Andreu Almazán succeeded Siurob at the Public Health Department, and Leopoldo Salazar Viniegra took Franco's place at the Federal Narcotics Service. Salazar had earned a good reputation in Mexico as a result of his work with addicts in the national mental health hospital.[20] Shortly after taking office, he met with customs agent Creighton. Mexico, he stated, could only reduce the flow of illegal drugs through government controlled distribution, with the aid of an expanded antidrug educational campaign, and through the construction of more hospitals to treat addiction. Salazar did not underestimate the difficulty of the task. "It is impossible to break up the traffic in drugs," he told Creighton, "because of the corruption of the police and special agents and also because of the wealth and political influence of some of the traffickers."[21] During the meeting Salazar mentioned that he did not consider it his duty to act as a policeman in supervising drug control activity.[22] In so doing, he implicitly warned that his policy on control would probably not parallel that of the United States to the same extent as his predecessors'.

Despite the obstacles he envisioned impeding effective drug control, Salazar seems to have favored the continuation of cooperation with the United States. He requested the assistance of cus-

toms agents in the destruction of opium poppy fields growing in the states of Sonora and Sinaloa. An agent from Texas observed the burning of a number of fields in April.[23]

Such cooperative activity failed to prevent doubts about Salazar's antidrug commitment from arising within the United States. Before Salazar had completed two months in office, Creighton and Thomas H. Lockett, a commercial attaché serving in Mexico City, were complaining to José Siurob about the narcotic chief's lax attitude toward drug control. The charges against Salazar were unspecified, but the reason for the criticism must have stemmed from his approach to drug law enforcement.[24] Were Salazar to minimize the punitive aspect of his antidrug activity, Mexico's program for control would become markedly different from Washington's. (During deliberations over the Marihuana Tax Act, United States officials reiterated their belief in punitive treatment for the nonmedical and nonscientific use of drugs.[25])

Before the end of 1938 Salazar began to chart a course that produced further displeasure in Washington. Proposed revisions in the federal toxicomania regulations gave the Public Health Department the authority to establish methods of treatment for addicts and to create hospitals or dispensaries for their care. Entrance into the facilities would be voluntary. Most important, the regulations included a proposal calling for the formation of a state monopoly for the sale of drugs.[26]

In reaction, R. Walton Moore, counselor of the State Department, wrote Daniels that the contemplated change in regulations, particularly the provision for drug sale by the government, "occasions no little concern to authorities in the United States." Judging from the short-lived and disappointing experience with dispensing clinics nearly two decades earlier, officials in Washington concluded that implementation of the new Mexican regulations would inevitably lead to an increase in the illicit drug trade. As Moore put it, border dispensation would "nullify the efforts being made on the American side to suppress the abuse of narcotic drugs." In sum, ambulatory treatment of addiction, by placing drugs in the hands of addicts, would create the very situation officials in Washington believed led to illicit drug traffic. Only strict supervision of commerce in drugs and confinement of addicts could eliminate the trade.[27]

The disquiet Salazar was creating in the minds of United States officials increased further with the appearance of his article, "El Mito de la Marijuana." The fourteen-year study detailed widespread marijuana smoking by Mexico's lower classes, yet Salazar had not uncovered evidence of psychoses resulting from the use of cannabis. Any deleterious effects, he argued, were psychologically induced. He also claimed that marijuana usage did not provoke criminal impulses and in fact created fewer social problems than alcohol abuse. Salazar's doubts about the harmfulness of marijuana stood in sharp contrast to the position taken by the Bureau of Narcotics during discussions of the 1937 Marihuana Tax Act.[28]

Criticisms of Salazar's findings appeared at once. A derogatory editorial was published by *El Universal* on October 22. Two days later the paper printed an article by Manuel Guevara Oropesa, head of the Mexican Association of Neurology and Psychiatry, disputing Salazar's conclusions. Next, *Excélsior* reported that many officials in the Public Health Department also disagreed with the contentions in Salazar's article. For the United States, Consul General James Stewart suggested that ridicule would provide the best means of combatting "the dangerous theories of Dr. Salazar Viniegra." And Bureau of Narcotics chief Anslinger reiterated his agency's unequivocal opposition to marijuana by referring to it as "the deadly drug."[29] When the article appeared in the December issue of *Criminalia,* the editors felt compelled to print as a counterbalance to Salazar's piece an antimarijuana study completed in 1931. The view of marijuana presented in that article approximated the position of the Bureau of Narcotics.[30]

Salazar, supported by other research on marijuana in Mexico,[31] sought to refute his critics. The proposed alterations in the federal regulations, he explained, stemmed from the generally inefficient and often selective enforcement of prior antinarcotic laws in Mexico. Salazar, it seems, did not question the propriety of antidrug activity, but differed with other officials in his own country and the United States over the best way of fighting drug problems. He described all existing international agreements on narcotics, such as the 1931 Geneva Convention, as "practically without effect." Illegal drug traffic was "surreptitiously tolerated, if not encouraged, by those same countries which have agreed to suppress it." Thus Mexico, to reduce smuggling and control the domestic drug situa-

tion, would experiment with a relatively untested measure for control, the national narcotic monopoly.

Mexico's experience convinced Salazar that the solution to drug problems did not rest with the jailing of addicts or the expenditure of large sums from the national treasury to track elusive smugglers. He felt that United States antidrug efforts, for example, suffered from this overly punitive and costly approach. Salazar wanted governments to alter their traditional perceptions of addicts and addiction. This meant revising, he declared, "the concept of the addict as a blameworthy, antisocial individual."[32]

The United States was not prepared to make such a fundamental change in its drug control philosophy. Indeed, Salazar's position ran counter to Washington's foreign and domestic drug policies as developed during the previous twenty-five years. In the view of the United States, drugs were not to be dispensed for other than express medical and scientific needs. By adhering to this deceptively simple formula every nation would insure cooperation, in Anslinger's words, with "other nations in the common effort to prevent the abuse of narcotic drugs." As the country most concerned with effective drug control, the United States had the duty, Anslinger felt, to supervise the vigilance of other countries in the fight against narcotics.[33]

Such a self-appointed task would seem to suggest success by the United States in its own struggle with drugs. Salazar held that available information offered an opposite conclusion. Arguing that the incidence of recidivism remained high, he cited statistics indicating the withdrawal of more than three-fourths of the patients from a voluntary program at the federal narcotics hospital in Lexington, Kentucky. He also estimated that the thirteen hundred addicts interned as prisoners at Lexington for drug law violations represented barely 1 percent of the addict population in the United States. The remainder, he felt, had been virtually abandoned by the government to illegal drug merchants, the result of overly punitive narcotic policies.[34] By attacking the antidrug efforts of the United States, Salazar hoped to dissipate criticism of his own proposed regulatory changes.

Not content merely with a defense of his plans at home, Salazar had Manuel Tello elaborate upon the proposals at the May 1939 meeting of the Opium Advisory Committee meeting in Geneva.

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Tello, after promising the continuation of Mexico's antidrug effort, reiterated Salazar's statement that addicts would only be able to acquire drugs from official dispensaries or state-licensed physicians. The principal reactions to Tello's remarks came from dubious United States and Canadian representatives who condemned drug dispensation schemes and advocated stricter supervision by Mexico of intercourse in narcotics. For the United States, Stuart J. Fuller asked Mexico to postpone for one year promulgation of the controversial regulations. Harry Anslinger, also in attendance, minced no words reminding Tello that drug addicts "were criminals first and addicts afterwards." He doubted as well whether Mexico's proposed action would be acceptable under the 1931 Geneva Convention. Tello responded by reading a letter from Salazar defending the changes, but promised nonetheless to convey to his government Fuller's request for a delay in their promulgation.[35]

The pressure put upon Salazar by foreign and domestic critics to alter the nature of his antidrug activity so that it would conform more closely to that of the United States led to his departure from the Public Health Department in August 1939. He was replaced by Heberto Alcázar, public health director of the Federal District. Also, José Siurob returned to his former position as head of the Public Health Department, taking the place of Almazán, who while in office played a subordinate role to Salazar.[36]

Consul General Stewart applauded the change in personnel, noting that the "weakness and indifference" of Almazán had allowed Salazar "to advance his wild theories regarding narcotics and narcotic addicts." A representative of the Rockefeller Foundation in Mexico, Charles A. Bailey, told Stewart that Alcázar was "a man who will do just what he is told and will follow the policy which Dr. Siurob will outline."[37] With Salazar's departure another phase of United States–Mexican narcotic diplomacy came to a close. Domestic disputes over his policies and contention with the United States over proposed drug law enforcement changes marked Salazar's eighteen months in office. His critics never tried to assess dispassionately the plans he hoped would improve antinarcotic activity in Mexico. As a result, he spent considerable time defending himself rather than putting his ideas into operation.[38] That a national narcotic monopoly would provoke controversy in the 1930s is undeniable; but that it contravened the 1931 Geneva Convention seems less certain, despite the assertions of United States officials to the contrary. Whether a monopoly would have successfully

restricted illicit drug activity in Mexico at that time remains a moot issue.

The return to office of José Siurob seemed to promise a rebirth of Mexican–United States antinarcotic endeavors. Ambassador Daniels commented that under Siurob's earlier tenure relations had been cordial, but under Almazán "the spirit of cooperation was lacking." Siurob asked for a copy of the drug control regulations of the United States Public Health Service, and intimated to Daniels that he would like to establish in Mexico a control system similar to that found in the southern United States. Frequent talks with H. S. Creighton about drug law enforcement likely influenced Siurob's thinking on narcotic control.[39]

The American impact upon Siurob's antinarcotic beliefs became more evident in November in Mexico at the annual convention of the Pacific Coast International Association of Law Enforcement Officials. In an address to the gathering, Siurob depicted drug users in terms similar to those employed by United States officials. Addicts were individuals "constitutionally or educationally unadapted to the struggle for life; the restless not satisfied with a straight and noble mode of living, . . . the weak minds seduced by mysterious and unknown pleasures." Drug usage demonstrated "deficiencies of will power." In concluding his remarks, Siurob praised the leading role of the United States in its continuing struggle with drugs.[40] His words suggested that he was intent upon promoting closer ties between Mexico City and Washington in their antidrug activities.

Siurob's address, although showing a firm commitment against addiction, belied the nature of the policy he would seek to enforce. Drug problems in Mexico ranging from individual usage to smuggling were producing much concern among officials in the health department. In an attempt to combat the situation, new drug regulations had been promulgated on October 23 prior to the convention of law officials, but surprisingly, these statutes were virtually the same as those put forth by Salazar Viniegra.[41]

Siurob hoped that the change in policy would not elicit an adverse reaction from Washington. He felt that cooperation in antinarcotic work between the two governments remained not only desirable, but possible. He continued to apprise United States representatives of progress in the campaigns against opium and

marijuana.[42] Siurob then announced that he would attend a public health directors' conference scheduled for Washington in May 1940. He also asked Commissioner Anslinger to visit Mexico to discuss the training of narcotic agents in order to deal more effectively with smuggling.[43]

The Department of State favored a trip by Anslinger since a meeting "should result in a better understanding on the part of competent Mexican authorities of the aims and policies . . . being pursued by the United States." Daniels thought that March would be a good time for Anglinger's visit since it was shortly before the start of the public health conference in Washington.[44] On February 17, 1940, however, the trip and, more important, the Mexican–United States antidrug effort Siurob desired were seriously jeopardized. The new statutes creating a national drug monopoly and providing addicts with increased access to narcotics had finally taken effect.[45]

Anslinger at once informed the State Department that he would embargo all shipments of medicinal drugs to Mexico. A 1935 amendment to the Narcotic Drugs Import and Export Act of 1922 authorized such action by the commissioner. Under the law drugs could only be exported to countries for explicit medical and scientific purposes. This stipulation did not include the ambulatory treatment for addiction which Mexico was about to undertake.[46]

State Department officials had received advance information that the regulations would become law. To have taken no position on them would have constituted tacit acknowledgment that they were acceptable. Authorities in Washington's drug policy hierarchy could not allow this unless they intended to reexamine their own restrictive and punitive methods of control. No top-level official was prepared to do that.

To explicate his government's position on the Mexican regulations, Stuart Fuller prepared a lengthy memorandum. Mexico could call drug dispensation by physicians "medical use," he stated, but the United States found such a definition inconsistent with the meaning of the term defined in various international antinarcotic agreements. For instance, Fuller believed that the Permanent Central Opium Board in Geneva would regard drug dispensation through a national monopoly as a violation of the 1931 convention. No major country except Mexico was trying to handle its drug problem with a state monopoly. "The plan envisaged by the pro-

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posed legislation," Fuller wrote, "differs completely from those followed in all countries in the world which are parties to international narcotics conventions." Even if Mexican actions were "praiseworthy," he continued, supplying addicts with narcotics "merely for the purpose of satisfying their cravings could not be regarded by the Commissioner of Narcotics as otherwise than constituting distribution for abusive use. . . ."[47]

Anslinger's embargo on medicinal drug exports therefore coincided with the State Department's view, in Fuller's words, "of settled international policy." In sum, the commissioner could not issue export permits without breaking United States law and contravening the 1931 Geneva Convention. Anslinger followed the embargo with the cancellation of his trip to meet with Siurob.[48] But because officials in Washington hoped that the Mexican government might be induced to reverse its policy, no public statements were issued detailing United States opposition or Anslinger's actions.[49]

Mexico mildly protested the embargo, but no diplomatic rift occurred. In fact, Siurob tried hard to reconcile Mexico's differences with the United States. First, he met with Creighton to discuss ways of combating a recent increase in smuggling. One means considered by the two men was allowing health department officials to act as policemen in drug-related matters.[50] Next, in conversations with Daniels and Stewart on March 14 the public health chief made a compelling offer. Mexico, he observed, was prepared to suspend those portions of the new regulations found most objectionable by the United States. Siurob promised to seek suppression of the provision allowing drug dispensation to addicts by licensed doctors. As a gesture of reconciliation, he suggested the formation of a bilateral commission to study border narcotic problems. Siurob hoped that Anslinger would demonstrate a similar desire to settle the contentious matter. Throughout his discussions with Daniels and Stewart the Mexican official reiterated his commitment to a strong antinarcotic policy. His ultimate aim, he said, was to reduce domestic addiction and to render smuggling unprofitable.[51]

Daniels found merit in Siurob's plan to alleviate the dispute. The ambassador thought that his government might show some appreciation of Mexican intentions by suspending the prohibition on medicinal exports.[52] Siurob, Daniels noted, was "greatly disturbed

and would like to find a way of cooperation." The Mexican even asked, without success, for an interview with Dr. Thomas Parran, Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service.[53] As was often the case during his tenure in Mexico City, Josephus Daniels had again surpassed officials in Washington in his efforts to maintain good relations with Mexico. Anslinger's reply to Siurob's conciliatory offer provides a case in point. The commissioner matter-of-factly told Fuller that the proper way to determine legitimate drug usage was to ascertain if the usage was "lawful under international agreements," meaning—in the view of the United States—circumscribed medical and scientific use. Fuller and Anslinger found Siurob's offer too vague to warrant a more receptive response. The Treasury Department wanted to send the commissioner's blunt statement of policy to the Mexican government, but the Division of American Republics in the State Department quashed the idea, noting that "the memorandum . . . might also give offense."[54]

Herbert Bursley of State proposed a compromise which would let Siurob rescind the regulations and still maintain his integrity at home. Bursley felt that there should be no hint of pressure from Washington on Siurob. He volunteered to tell the Mexican consul that "it might be well for Dr. Siurob to announce that he cannot carry out his program because of the worldwide shortage of narcotics caused by the European war and that therefore he is suspending or cancelling the regulations in question."[55]

By the time Siurob arrived in Washington in May for the Fourth Congress of Health Directors of Pan-American Countries, he had done what he could to improve relations over narcotics with the United States. His temporary suspension of much of the new narcotic code left Public Health Department clinics as the sole dispensing stations in Mexico.[56] On May 4 and 7, prior to the opening of the meeting of the health directors, discussions about the Mexican drug control regulations took place. Present at the sessions for Mexico were Siurob and an English-speaking assistant, Dr. José Zozaya of the Institute of Hygiene in Mexico City. Anslinger, Fuller, Bursley, Dr. Lawrence Kolb, and John W. Bulkley of the Customs Bureau Division of Investigations and Patrol represented the United States.

Siurob found himself on the defensive during the first session. Implementing the regulations, he stated, concluded a process be-

gun before he took office. He personally felt that the action might have been premature, although he noted that the new program had achieved some success. For instance, the first Public Health Department clinic in Mexico City placed under government care over 700 of the 4,000 addicts in the capital. When Anslinger asked who provided the remainder with drugs, Siurob agreed that they probably obtained their drugs illegally. At the close of the session the public health chief received from Anslinger a copy of the memorandum in which the commissioner had tersely outlined the United States conception of legitimate narcotic usage. Privately, officials urged Zozaya, who concurred with their drug control philosophy, to explain further Washington's position to his superior.[57]

The problem was not that Siurob remained equivocal about his stand against drug abuse. In his address to the Pacific Coast International meeting the previous fall, he displayed a resolve similar to that of his counterparts in the United States. Rather, like Salazar Viniegra, Siurob felt it worthwhile to explore a national narcotic monopoly as a means of combatting illegal drug activity in preference to the less flexible system espoused in Washington. Mexican officials were not as convinced as United States authorities that a state monopoly would worsen the drug situation or that it violated international agreements.

As the second session of the talks began in Fuller's office on May 7, Siurob had evidently reevaluated his position on the new regulations. "The Mexican regulations [are] entirely wrong," he declared, indicating that the drug control policy of the United States was a more appropriate response to the existing problem. Siurob promised immediate suspension of the regulations still in effect, but warned that he could not publicize the policy change. The sensitive nature of Mexican–United States relations, arising especially out of the petroleum disputes of the late 1930s, would leave the government, in the midst of an electoral campaign, vulnerable to charges that the United States, as Siurob put it, was "dictating again."

The Mexican's fear of United States pressure and the reaction it was likely to occasion had some basis in reality. Bureau of Narcotics chief Anslinger closed the talks by telling Siurob that only formal suspension of the controversial regulation would permit him to resume authorizing drug exports to Mexico. With this declaration the narcotic policy talks ended. In seeking an accommodation over

policy differences as Siurob and Daniels wished, the Mexican government made considerable concessions while the United States did little to reciprocate. In fact, Siurob was unable to extract from Anslinger and his colleagues even a verbal pledge to intensify cooperative activity in the important region around El Paso and Ciudad Juárez.[58]

The conclusion of the Washington discussions brought to an end the final segment of United States–Mexican drug diplomacy between 1936 and 1940. The United States had been successful in its attempt to get Mexico to reconsider the nature of its drug control policy. Future antinarcotic collaboration was likely to proceed along lines set forth by officials in Washington. As Herbert Gaston of the Treasury Department told Secretary Henry Morgenthau: "I had a very pleasant conversation with Dr. Siurob and his associate Dr. Zozaya . . . They are completely won over to our method of handling the narcotics problem and ask our continued help and advice." Gaston concluded: "This is a notable victory for Harry Anslinger."[59] Anslinger's sense of achievement must have increased two months later on July 3 when *Diario Oficial* published a decree suspending indefinitely the February regulations. Thereafter, Mexican addicts would be dealt with under the more punitive statutes of September 1931.[60]

José Siurob, who held ultimate responsibility for the care of Mexico's addicts, may have had misgivings about the outcome of the talks in Washington. Shortly after his return home, but before publication of the governmental decree, he wrote Creighton and attributed the change in policy directly to the discussions. Creighton's reply referred to "*your conclusions* with respect to the control of illicit narcotics in Mexico."[61] On the same day that he wrote Siurob, Creighton sent the following note to Washington and enclosed copies of the two letters:

> Realizing the position the Bureau [of Narcotics] has taken with Dr. Siurob, I am very happy to now have the letter of June 17th in which he states that he has finally come to recognize the inefficacy of their experiment to control narcotic drugs by administering same directly to the addicts. While I believe that Dr. Siurob has taken this position now because of the manner in which the situation was presented to him while in Washington, you will observe from the enclosed that I am

trying to convince him that he has made this change of his own volition.[62]

The publication of the decree rendered moot whatever second thoughts Siurob may have entertained about the change in policy.

Between 1936 and 1940 the United States had successfully reshaped Mexican narcotic policy. Nominally, it would conform more closely to the legalistic-punitive policy espoused and followed by the United States. The exertions of Anslinger, Fuller, and their colleagues helped force from office a dedicated public servant, Leopoldo Salazar Viniegra. Moreover, since their actions led to intervention in Mexican affairs, the reality of the professed Good Neighbor Policy of the Roosevelt administration must in this instance be brought into question. Had the drug control program of the United States been measurably more effective than it apparently was, the interference with Mexican policy might have been more understandable if no less objectionable from Mexico's point of view. Such was not the case, however.

Throughout the 1930s officials in Washington arrogated to themselves a leading position in hemispheric activity. Because of the lengthy history of paternalism toward Latin America and as a result of Mexico's proximity to the United States, this self-delegation of leadership and assumption of moral superiority led to intervention in Mexican affairs. Anslinger and others never questioned the propriety of that interference. In the context of the disputes between the two countries in the late 1930s, the politics and diplomacy of drug control could have exacerbated an already sensitive situation. That it did not do so is testimony to the antinarcotic commitment of José Siurob and his desire, along with that of Josephus Daniels, to reach an accommodation over the narcotic policy differences between their two governments.

not match United States standards of strictness—must have pleased officials in Washington. A Peruvian decree in November 1943 required all cocaine producers to sell to the government stocks exceeding a one year's supply. The next spring the government even seriously considered the creation of a state monopoly to control cocaine. But there were obstacles. Eight or ten producers were maintaining their operations and did not want their permits revoked. They argued that they were performing a service by stockpiling cocaine during periods when there was an abundant coca leaf harvest. Still, the government's rationale for monopoly was that authorities were having to rely on the honesty of these producers to provide production statistics which the government could not verify. Despite this, the monopoly did not come into existence during the war.[36]

Officials in Washington would have preferred some form of limitation at the source rather than a monopoly. But if there had to be one, a state monopoly for the production and sale of coca leaves, and not cocaine, would be preferable. Extensive supervision of coca cultivation instead of cocaine production was unlikely though. Despite the increased government activity resulting from wartime exigencies, the enforcement of Peruvian drug laws was not uniform through the mid-forties. Violators, especially drug sellers, often received lenient treatment. Near the end of the war a change in policy may have been in the offing. A key official in Peru's narcotics bureau told Julian Greenup that Peruvian authorities regretted the lack of a mandatory sentence for drug traffickers. But no evidence suggests that any changes were forthcoming.[37]

Drug problems in Mexico had always posed more difficulties for the United States than similar problems in the other Latin American states, for Mexico was after all a contiguous neighbor. Geographical proximity—and wartime—were not the only shaping elements of the relationship between the two countries. Also significant were political antagonisms originating at the time of the Mexican Revolution and the differing ways in which each society viewed drug use. But Mexico's renewed antidrug commitment, arising out of the discussions in Washington in May 1940 between United States and Mexican officials, had helped to minimize these difficulties. As administrations in Mexico changed from that of

Cárdenas to Ávila Camacho, Anslinger, H. S. Creighton, and the others most concerned with the situation could only wait and see if the level of cooperation would remain the same.

Several indications appeared late in the year suggesting that their hopes would not be realized. In December, Creighton asked for and received permission from his superiors to resume the practice of sending operatives into Mexico to aid in the tracking of drug smugglers.[38] At the same time, a scandal arose within Mexico's narcotic bureaucracy. *Excélsior* reported allegations of irregular practices in the health department, including high-level complicity in the drug trade. The arrest of an attorney, José Perdonio Benítez, helped narcotics police discover numerous forged authorizations for excessive drug imports. Large quantities of these drugs, it was believed, ended up in the illicit traffic.

Suspicion about the irregularities had surfaced in July when the League of Nations released statistics showing that Mexico was exceeding its import allotment for the year. Officials in the Federal District subsequently learned of a delivery of 150 grams of cocaine to Perdonio. Two men who had previously served in the government, Albert P. Léon as secretary general of public welfare and Francisco Bassols in the Office of Control of Medicine and Pharmacopoeia, denied granting the order for the delivery of the cocaine. The order had been questioned because the Department of Public Health employed a special form for all consignments over five grams. Perdonio refused to divulge how he obtained the required signatures. Following his arrest, the Department of Public Health ordered all suspicious narcotic imports halted and restricted the granting of import authorizations. As *Excélsior* reported, illegal purchases continued—on proper forms which had obviously been altered.[39]

In his defense, Léon declared that the order found in Perdonio's possession was false. The order was supposedly issued to Dr. Heberto Alcázar, former chief of the Federal Narcotics Service. Yet Léon claimed that a different name, that of a woman, appeared on the order stub found in the office where Bassols worked. He further declared his and Bassols's signatures on the order to be forgeries.[40] Alcázar, trying to clear his name, told his friends at the United States Consulate General that he had done nothing irregular. He concluded that someone wanted to discredit him and others formerly attached to the Department of Public Health. Alcázar felt

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that Pascual Sánchez Anaya, chief of the narcotics police, might be responsible. Sánchez had previously worked for Alcázar and ill feelings existed between the two. In fact, Alcázar thought that Sánchez might be a major participant in the illegal activities the narcotics police had uncovered.[41]

Allegations of complicity against Alcázar worried officials in the United States, for high-level corruption in the government would only serve to increase drug smuggling. Were the charges true, Anslinger and the State Department would be forced to conclude that the spirit and practice of cooperation which Jóse Siurob left behind was fraudulent. Against this background, customs agent Alvin Scharff visited the new public health director in mid-December. Dr. Victor Fernández Manero told Scharff that he intended to eliminate any illegal or questionable activities in his department. Fernández Manero admitted the potential seriousness of the scandal, but felt that the situation might provide its own remedy since a change in administrations and personnel was under way.[42] Significantly, the day after the Fernández-Scharff discussion, *Excélsior* printed a story entitled, "The Narcotics Traffic Scandal Increases." Perdonio Benítez had revealed information further implicating Alcázar in the illegal activity. He possessed a note naming Alcázar as a key figure in the scandal, and an agent of the narcotics police had reportedly verified the note's authenticity. To this charge Alcázar replied that a careful check of Department of Public Health records would remove all suspicion from him.[43]

As the year ended, the future course and effectiveness of narcotic control in Mexico seemed in question. Important officials in both the Cárdenas and Ávila Camacho administrations suffered from damaged reputations. Reports from several regions in the country indicated an increase in smuggling. In some border areas, for example, where vegetable farming had failed to produce a good income, opium poppies were being planted. Smuggling would naturally follow.[44]

One mitigating factor in this situation was the avowed desire of Fernández Manero for cooperation with the United States—the only way smuggling could be reduced.[45] Officials in Washington had no reason to question his sincerity, and rather hoped to bolster his commitment. Creighton arranged to go to Mexico City to talk with Fernández Manero about the illicit traffic, while the United States government, prompted by the uncertainty of the situation

in Mexico, temporarily removed the narcotic agents operating there.[46] Discussions took place early in February. One topic was destruction of the opium crop. Creighton expressed disappointment at the continuing poppy cultivation in Sonora and Sinaloa. Yet both he and Fernández Manero knew that destruction was not possible without the assistance of local officials.[47] The Mexican public health director told Creighton that he intended to supervise crop destruction of opium and marijuana plants in Baja California later in the month.[48]

During the talks Creighton sought formal approval from the Ávila Camacho administration for the continued presence of United States drug agents in Mexico. All prior agreements had been informal. Creighton's translator William K. Ailshie, vice consul at Mexico City, favored formalization because of the uneven record of drug control in Mexico. "The Federal Narcotics Service in Mexico City," he said, "does not have facilities to prevent the cultivation of poppy and marijuana plants throughout the Republic or the manufacture of opium derivatives, not to mention the illegal introduction of narcotics into Mexico, chiefly from Japan."[49] The Mexicans soon agreed to formalization, but sought an official request from Washington.[50] Herbert S. Bursley of the State Department attached a handwritten note to the report on the talks. It read: "I think it unfortunate that this question was aired. The situation regarding our people going to Mexico was OK."[51] The United States therefore deemed a formal accord unwise, and Mexico did not insist upon one. Washington's reluctance did not greatly offend the Mexicans for the government named Dr. Zaragoza Cuellar García, new chief of the narcotics service, as correspondent with the United States for the exchange of narcotic information. His selection reinforced the informal arrangements first made in the 1930s.[52]

Throughout the year the United States continued the practice of sending agents into Mexico to investigate smuggling and other drug-related activities. Three special agents arrived at the height of antinarcotic efforts in the fall.[53] Discretion was in order. As George Morlock commented: "I said . . . that I thought Treasury should be very careful not to overrun Mexico with its agents."[54]

By early 1942 rumors of a government scandal subsided and cooperative efforts were moving ahead. Consul General William P. Blocker at Ciudad Juárez felt optimistic enough to report that "the

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traffic in narcotics as a whole has been sharply reduced."[55] But as Blocker knew, intermittent vigilance would never reduce the level of smuggling for more than a short time. To emphasize the need for continuing action, a meeting was held in the Customs Agency Service office in El Paso. Those in attendance included Blocker, Creighton, a customs agent for the El Paso region, and Antonio Bermúdez, the mayor of Ciudad Juárez, who was "strongly pro-American," as Blocker put it. Plans were discussed for the reduction of border smuggling. Blocker's report gave no details, but stated: "Results of the campaign will be reported to the Department when achieved."[56]

Narcotics problems in the state of Chihuahua were not the only ones confronting Mexico at the time. From Mazatlán in Sinaloa came reports of extensive opium growing. Some of the harvested crop found its way into the United States. In fact, several state officials were suspected of reaping large rewards from poppy cultivation and smuggling, while concurrently implementing the national antinarcotic policy by destroying the fields of their competitors. Creighton, who had left his post in Texas to become the Treasury Department's special representative in Mexico City, met with the governor of Sinaloa, Rudolfo Loaiza. The governor told Creighton that stamping out the opium industry would be impossible since opium had nearly become the sole means of support throughout the state. Acreage under cultivation was constantly increasing, a fact noted by the Bureau of Narcotics in its annual report for 1942.[57]

Loaiza did not depict an entirely depressing situation for Creighton. He offered three suggestions for reducing the opium traffic. Federal troops, including cavalry, might help supervise poppy destruction. Also, health department agents could work more closely with state and local officials. Finally, improved roads and lines of communication might help limit additional cultivation. As a substitute for the revenue derived from poppy production, Loaiza suggested that the state build up its mining industry. Creighton hoped that agricultural crops would be planted even though opium poppy cultivation was more lucrative.[58]

Some destruction of poppies took place in January, March, and April, observed by special Treasury Department employee Salvador Peña.[59] He disputed Mexico's contention that one-third to one-half of the crop had been destroyed, for he believed that numerous

fields had been harvested before being burned. Also, the destruction occurred only in Sinaloa—not in Durango, Sonora, and Chihuahua where it was needed as well. (Sonora reportedly served as an important staging area for the smuggling of drugs into the United States.[60])

Creighton shared Peña's doubts.[61] In a related, intriguing development a proposal emerged, probably from one of Treasury's men in Mexico, advocating that the United States purchase the Mexican opium crop. Although he felt the proposal might offer a way to combat smuggling, Creighton played down the idea in a report to his superiors.[62] United States opium supplies were sufficient and any purchases might encourage additional, unwanted planting of poppies.

Throughout the year Mexico requested assistance combating illegal drug traffic. In October Mayor Bermúdez complained about the inadequacy of prior aid and asked for additional agents. Morlock, joined by other federal officials in the belief that smuggling around El Paso was increasing, approved the request.[63] Some results were achieved when in December eight traffickers were arrested and eight pounds of opium confiscated.[64]

The campaign against border smuggling of opiates and marijuana continued into 1943. At a meeting in Washington with state and treasury department officials Fernández Manero revealed that Ávila Camacho had directed the governors of Sonora and Sinaloa to suppress poppy cultivation in their states. Fernández imprudently asserted that cultivation had therefore ceased.[65] Within a month the State Department notified Josephus Daniels's replacement, George S. Messersmith, that conditions near Mazatlán were worsening. "The illicit traffic in narcotic drugs between Mexico and the United States has increased considerably since 1940," a cable read, "and unless checked will probably become as large as formerly existing between the Far East and the United States."

Treasury Department estimations that Mexico's opium production for 1943 would reach sixty tons, or three times greater than 1942, underlined the urgency of the message. The cable emphasized the need to suppress production. Messersmith was instructed was to find out if Mexico desired additional assistance. The cable also contained the prospect of unpopular, unilateral action: if excessive production continued, border guards would have to search all incoming vehicles and travelers from Mexico.[66]

Creighton went to Washington to discuss the situation with Bulkley and Morlock. He told them that Chinese nationals began opium production around 1925, but that Mexicans now controlled over 90 percent of the operations. In his opinion, Loaiza was not making a genuine effort in Sinaloa to restrict production. Creighton even suspected that United States funds marked for antinarcotic assistance were ending up in the pockets of smugglers. (The amount of aid had risen from 20,000 pesos in 1942 to 250,000 pesos the next year.)

Creighton also had unsubstantiated evidence that denied Fernández Manero's antinarcotic commitment. While serving as governor of the gulf coast state of Chiapas in southeastern Mexico, Fernández Manero amassed a personal fortune of between two and three million pesos. At that time he maintained a close relationship with Loaiza. The coincidence seemed important to Creighton. Closing the discussion, he regretted that he had no remedial suggestions. He doubted the likelihood of enhanced collaboration against narcotics with Mexico despite his belief in the good intentions of Ávila Camacho. Morlock could only add that if conditions worsened, as was probable, the United States would issue a formal protest to the Mexican government. [67]

Subsequent reports from Mexico were not encouraging. Herbert Bursley, now embassy counselor, alerted Washington that another inspection trip would be made to the northern states. He hoped to send an observer even though he doubted the trip would be a success. Questioning the sincerity of the commitment behind the trip, Bursely suggested that it was being staged to relieve pressure on Fernández Manero from Mexican newspapers and the United States embassy. After the trip Messersmith concluded that "while some poppy fields have been destroyed, nothing of importance has been done, however, to prevent cultivation or to destroy growing poppies." [68] Not surprisingly, the fall plantings in Sinaloa were reported to be the largest yet.[69]

To officials in the United States, relations with Mexico over narcotics seemed destined to follow a pattern of conference, promises, and nonperformance, as the Bureau of Narcotics annual report for 1943 reveals. Had José Siurob remained in office after 1940 that record would probably not have differed. The pattern recurred in March 1944 when the Mexican government requested a meeting in Mexico with top-level officials from Washington.[70] After this

particular gathering Messersmith expressed the frustration his colleagues and predecessors had long felt. He believed that at the highest level the administration wished to cooperate with the United States and genuinely committed itself to halting poppy growth near the northern border. As before, drug agents were welcome on trips into poppy country.

Sidney Kennedy, Creighton's replacement upon the latter's retirement, was also present at the meeting of narcotics officials. He thought that the United States should employ diplomatic protests to produce compliance by Mexico in antidrug activity. Yet diplomacy, as Kennedy discovered, could not overcome the problems which made effective control difficult. Dr. Gustavo Baz, minister of public health, elaborated. In the first place the government's antinarcotic program was poorly funded. Agents did not have sufficient funds to meet their own expenses, let alone to pay informers—a necessary practice. As a result agents were susceptible to bribes from drug merchants. Second, for several years the government had only enough manpower to send two agents to supervise crop destruction even though the United States share of the program's cost had risen steadily. Baz suggested that one more agent and a small increase in funds from Washington would enable Mexico to destroy 25 percent of the poppy fields. He intimated that the program might falter without additional funds.

The meeting concluded after one of Baz's subordinates presented a four-step plan to halt poppy growth. The measures included an educational campaign advocating the cultivation of agricultural crops, the withholding of public irrigation waters from lands with poppies, the forcible removal of opium growers from public lands, and the prosecution of selected growers as a warning to others.[71] The major drawback in the program as usual would be the difficulty of implementation.

An early test of Mexico's resolve to fulfill its antinarcotic pledges came in June. At the urging of Salvador Peña, a crop destruction expedition with twenty-three soldiers traveled to Durango. An inexplicable delay of one day alerted the growers to the coming raids. Upon arriving at the poppy fields, Mexican officials and the soldiers discovered local villages deserted and some of the fields burned. The soldiers made a superficial effort to destroy more fields; several soldiers assisted with the burning while the other twenty guarded against a surprise ambush. At the conclusion of the

abortive expedition, the coordinator from Durango declared that another trip would not be made.[72] (See Appendix.) If Mexico, like Peru, actually desired to join with the United States in controlling the flow of illicit narcotics in the Americas, its efforts met with little success. Federal administrators simply did not possess the capability to affect conditions in the major drug growing regions of the country.

Hemispheric drug control through 1945 became essentially an inter-American matter which reflected how the war halted international efforts. Just before the war a League of Nations mission traveled to Latin America hoping to influence governments there to adopt more comprehensive control programs. The League found that printing its documents in Spanish increased compliance with reporting procedures on the domestic drug situation. It was hoped that encouragement from Geneva might bring more efficient controls to those states plagued by serious drug problems. The mission visited twelve states including Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico. Results of the trip gratified the League and seemed to offer the prospect of an intensive antidrug effort.[73]

As we have seen, the wartime history of drug control in Argentina, the Andean region, and Mexico thwarted this expectation. A postwar report on the extent of wartime drug traffic chronicled a vast illegal trade. Both the United States and Canada had seized large quantities of contraband raw opium originating in Mexico. From 1940 to mid-1946, a total of 428 kilograms of prepared opium, primarily from Mexico, was seized. That country, too, served as a principal supplier of morphine and adulterated heroin reaching the United States. On the other hand, the report minimized the extent of cocaine traffic. The stated reason was the preoccupation of Japan with the war, but that assertion should be tempered by Washington's concern with illicit cocaine emanating from the Andes. Finally, most of the marijuana confiscated in the hemisphere in the early 1940s came from Mexico.[74]

The war had several notable effects upon the illicit drug trade. When older, established channels for smuggling came under closer scrutiny than before, new ones opened. The International Labor Organization appealed for assistance by seamen's unions and received a favorable response. Had this and other methods of detection been largely effective, the flow of drugs would not have

stopped. From Mexico, couriers often crossed the Rio Grande by wading or swimming and pushing their precious cargoes on rafts. Traditional European and Asian transfer points closed during the war. The risky, bustling romanticism associated with Marseilles and Hong Kong disappeared as drugs entered the United States after passing through less recognizable towns in Mexico and Central and South America.

As for the quality of drugs, the war evidently caused much adulteration of the opiates. The level of purity often did not reach 5 percent. Supply from the Americas, falling short of prewar international levels, drove prices higher. On the other hand, the war set off an increase in the smuggling of a cheaper substance, marijuana. By 1942 organized gangs were reportedly distributing it in the United States. The risks were great; the number of seizures rose appreciably for the next few years.[75] Anslinger and his colleagues tried to bring this situation under control by appealing, where possible, to Latin American governments to improve their own control programs. There was little the United States could do legislatively. One law which was passed, an opium poppy control measure, prohibited domestic poppy cultivation except under a special license allowing cultivation for medical and scientific purposes. The government issued no such licenses during the war.[76]

A sense emerged in Washington that the global conflict had done much to reduce the number of addicts in the United States. The Bureau of Narcotics saw this as a continuation of a prewar trend initiated by its tough policies and vigilance in enforcement. A United Nations report echoed this sentiment.[77] This feeling of success renewed the unresolvable controversy about the number of addicts. Apparently, the figure fell somewhere between 20,000, which would have been slightly more than one addict per 10,000 people, the bureau's estimated ratio, and 48,000, the number given by the Public Health Service in 1948. Anslinger termed the lower figure "an irreducible minimum."[78] The evidently low level of addiction prompted Congress in 1948 to consider closing the federal narcotic farms, but Anslinger succeeded in keeping them open.[79] As always the precise extent of addiction was not possible to calculate; methods remained unreliable and self-serving. It is clear, however, that the level fell during the war, barely increased for the next two years, and then began a steady rise.[80]

When this increase was beginning, the bureau seemed to be

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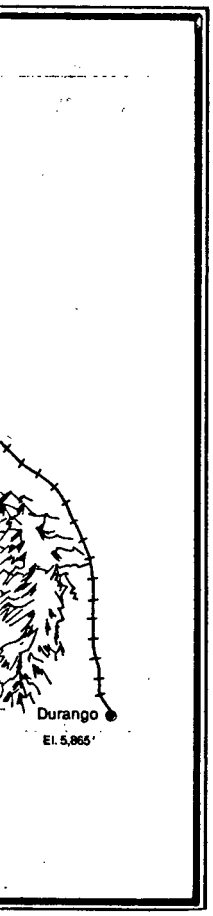
searching for a scapegoat to blame. "There has always been a climate of public opinion which has favored the spread of narcotic addition," Anslinger declared.[81] He especially feared that undue publicity might tempt people into narcotic use:

> It has been our observation that direct propaganda on drugs, particularly to the youth, is likely to be dangerous, because it "advertises" the use of drugs for nonmedical purposes and stimulates curiosity on the part of persons who would not otherwise have become interested.

Abuse among youngsters resulted not from "ignorance of consequences but because they had learned too much about the effects of drugs."[82] As one of the guardians of public morality, the bureau liked to have it both ways: in the 1920s an educational campaign played a significant role in the passage of the Marihuana Tax Act; a decade later public awareness impeded realization of the bureau's goals.

Anslinger's tenacity in the fight against drugs was unrivaled. The New York *Herald Tribune* reported in 1948 that he carried at all times a leather-bound book containing the names of thousands of persons possibly involved in the illegal drug trade.[83] In a book he coauthored, *The Traffic in Narcotics,* Anslinger disparaged many of the articles on narcotics appearing in the press. He found the reporting inaccurate and misleading, and he denounced the use of sensationalism for the sake of sales. As always, nonbureau information was regarded with skepticism, no matter how sophisticated the research. The acrimonious controversy over the 1944 La Guardia report offers a prime example.[84]

The commissioner claimed that the report contributed to the atmosphere favoring drug experimentation. "The Bureau immediately detected the superficiality and hollowness of its findings and denounced it." In the eyes of the bureau the damage had been done. Potential users believed marijuana to be harmless.[85] This error, Anslinger would argue in 1951, started many young people on the road to heroin. "They started there," he said, "and graduated to heroin; they took the needle when the thrill of marihuana was gone."[86] This position effectively reversed the bureau's stand during the hearings on marijuana control fourteen years earlier.[87] The war and immediate postwar years saw a continuation of the scientific debate on the effects of marijuana. At the very least, the



Appendix: Opium Poppy Destruction in Mexico, 1944

No. 942

AMERICAN CONSULATE
Durango, Durango, Mexico, June 27, 1944

AIR MAIL
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
Subject: Opium Poppy Fields in State of Durango Destroyed.
The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith copies, with translation, of a report of the destruction, under the supervision of the Servicios Sanitarios Coordinados (Public Health Service) of Durango, accompanied by kodak photographs, of the poppy fields and the work of destruction being carried on by the Federal troops and the men employed to assist in the work.

The poppy plantings mentioned in the enclosed reports are located at the villages of METATES, QUEBRADA HONDA, and

FRESNO which places are three days by horseback almost due west from Tepehuanes, the end of the railway line extending from Durango to Tepehuanes. These places are situated to the right of a line drawn from Topia to Copalquin, Durango, and about half way between those places. These villages are located in the heart of the Sierra Madre mountains and are very difficult to reach. In fact the only manner of reaching these villages is by horse or mule back. The people in that section of this state are quite uneducated and uncultured and whose [*sic*] standard of living is very low. It will be noted from the reports transmitted herewith that the poppy plantings were on small parcels of land. This is due to the fact that the amount of tillable land in that secluded part of the state is in small tracts located in small valleys between mountains. The pictures accompanying this report will give a better idea of the terrain in that section of the state.

The expedition covered by the enclosed report was made as a result of representations made to the local Servicios Sanitarios Coordinados by Mr. Salvador C. PENA, Treasury Representative assigned to the American Embassy, Mexico, D.F. The originals of the documents enclosed herewith were delivered to this Consulate by Dr. Casimiro VALLADARES PINEDA, Chief of the Servicios Sanitarios Coordinados, Durango, and this office transmitted them to the Treasury Representative mentioned through the Embassy.

It will be noted from the report submitted by Inspectors Juan Francisco CURIEL and Miguel Onesimo CALDERON that the 10th Military Zone, with headquarters in the city of Durango ordered Lieutenant Colonel of Cavalry Romulo Soto BURCIAGA, stationed at Tepehuanes, to accompany the inspectors designated by Servicios Sanitarios Coordinados, Juan Francisco Curiel and his assistant, Miguel Onesimo Calderon, to the region where it was reported there were plantings of poppy for the purpose of destroying them. Lieutenant Colonel Burciaga took a squad of 23 soldiers with him. It will be noted further from the report that there was a delay of one day in the expedition getting started from Tepehuanes. Whether the pretext offered for the delay was legitimate or not it is not known, but it is stated in the report that the people of these villages had been notified two days previous to their arrival that government employees were on their way. Although it cannot be verified, it is not improbable that the poppy growers were informed from Durango of the pending arrival of forces to destroy

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their fields prior to the time the inspector and his assistant departed from this city.

It will also be noted that the report of the inspector mentions a lack of cooperation on the part of the people along the trail to their destination, and upon their arrival at the villages mentioned they were almost depopulated. Although statements were taken from several persons, including principally women, but one individual, Ramon GAMIZ, was arrested and brought into Durango.

The enclosed photographs will show that but one or two soldiers assisted in the destruction of the poppy fields. Doctor Casimiro Valladares Pineda explained that the reason so few troops assisted in the destruction of these plantings was because the balance of the squad was guarding those who were working in order to prevent the natives from ambushing them. Doctor Valladares stated further that the reason that some of the women whose lands were planted to poppy were not arrested and brought into Durango was because Lieutenant Colonel Burciaga was afraid that if he arrested these women the natives would ambush the troops along the trail. Doctor Valladares further stated that his inspector and assistant informed him that they would not make another trip to that section. They are afraid that some of those whose poppy fields were destroyed may come into Durango and assassinate them. The Doctor further stated that if he is ordered to send inspectors to that section again to destroy poppy plantations, he will ask the Federal Government to send inspectors from Mexico City for that special purpose, so that his local inspectors will not be subject to the possibilities of being murdered in the city of Durango.

The EXCELSIOR, one of the principal Mexico City dailies, published an article a short time ago to the effect that Governor Rodolfo LOAIZA, of the State of Sinaloa, which [*sic*] occurred in Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico, during the Carnival last Feburary was assassinated by individuals belonging to a ring handling opium grown in the State of Sinaloa in the vicinity of Badiraguato who claim that Governor Loaiza double crossed them. That notice published in the paper has created even a greater fear in the minds of the local inspectors of the Servicios Sanitarios Coordinados.

The area visited by the inspectors making the enclosed report to the Chief of Servicios Sanitarios Coordinados is but a few miles in extent, and since the terrain of the entire western part of this State is practically the same as that in which opium poppy was being

grown, and as considerable plantings of this poppy have been destroyed in the vicinity of Badiraguato, Sinaloa, located to the west of the plantings in this State, and since that section is quite isolated, it is not improbable that there may be other plantings in that district which have not been reported.

It is difficult to arrive from the report of Doctor Valladares at the exact acreage of poppy planting destroyed by the inspectors, but it appears that the acreage destroyed, and already harvested prior to their arrival, amounted to approximately 232 hectares (1 hectare equals 2.47 acres), or 573.04 acres which is quite a sizeable acreage planted to this drug producing plant.

It will be noted from some of the enclosed reports that a part of the poppy plantings visited by the inspectors mentioned above had already been harvested when the inspectors arrived. It has been learned that opium poppy is planted in the district around Metates during the month of October. In order to prevent plantings from maturing it appears necessary that authorities visit that section three times a year; one time in December after the plants planted then have had time to come up and begin growing; another time in February so as to destroy a second planting; and another time during the latter part of April in order to destroy any fields which may have been missed on the two previous trips.

This Consulate has been informed through the correspondent which first reported the existence of opium poppy to the Federal Health Department, Mexico City, whose name is mentioned in Doctor Valladares' report, that a Major Gorgonio ACUNA, assigned to the 9th Military Zone with headquarters at Culiacan, Sinaloa, and who is a native of Metates, is the go-between for the growers and the purchasers for the opium which finds an outlet on the west coast. It was further reported that Major Acuna is associated with an American, name not known, who purchases for 1,000 pesos per kilogram (1 kilogram equals 2.2046 pounds) all the opium which finds an outlet to the west coast, and that this American smuggles the opium into Los Angeles. As stated above, the name of this American is not known, but it is reported that Major Gorgonio Acuna acts as his go-between with the producers, so he can disclose the name of this party, if he can be made to talk. It is also reported that this American visits Mazatlan quite frequently. It is further reported that he advances money to the producers of opium in Sinaloa and Durango with which to clear additional lands for

planting to poppy. It appears that a part of the opium produced in the district mentioned finds its way to the United States through Guanacevi, Durango; Parral, Chihuahua; and El Paso, Texas.

It is believed that the enclosed copies of reports submitted by the inspector of Servicios Sanitarios Coordinados present conclusive evidence that opium poppy has been cultivated on a somewhat extensive scale in the immediate district visited, but that but little real effort was made to break up the ring of producers. Due to the fact that it was late in the season when these officials visited that district, a part of the crop had already been harvested. The fact that the growers were tipped off two days before the arrival of these authorities indicates that they have lookouts in Tepehuanes, and quite possibly in the city of Durango in the same office to which these inspectors pertain.

As a precaution for greater safety, this report is being forwarded to the American Embassy, Mexico, D.F. for transmission by that office to the Department by courier.

Respectfully yours,

E. W. Eaton
American Vice Consul