

And it is not an education amendment. It is my understanding that an education amendment on our side is being objected to. We are going to have a vote here in a minute.

I want to, in closing, stress that this is a bipartisan proposal and one of the most dogged, persistent attempts to get this legislation passed with both Republican and Democrat components. The good Senator from New Jersey, Mr. TORRICELLI—and there are a number of Senators on the other side of the aisle—a good number—who want this legislation passed; 70 percent of it has now been designed by the other side of the aisle. They want to get to the substance of the education debate—the good Senator from Illinois. If we can get to the debate, it is going to have a chance. That is an education proposal. We handle it our way; they handle it their way. We will debate it. But what we are saying is, there ought to be a debate on education. We have spent an inordinate amount of time avoiding the debate.

Mr. President, I presume my time has expired.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator presumes incorrectly. He has 1 minute and 15 seconds.

Mr. COVERDELL. In deference to my colleagues, I yield my time.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provision of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 2646, the A+ Education Act:

Trent Lott, Paul Coverdell, Jeff Sessions, Connie Mack, Bill Roth, Judd Gregg, Christopher Bond, Tim Hutchinson, Larry E. Craig, Robert F. Bennett, Mike DeWine, Jim Inhofe, Bill Frist, Bob Smith, Wayne Allard, Pat Roberts.

CALL OF THE ROLL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the quorum call under the rule has been waived.

VOTE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 2646, the A+ Education Act, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are required under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 58, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 46 Leg.]

YEAS—58

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Abraham | Brownback | Collins |
| Allard | Burns | Coverdell |
| Ashcroft | Campbell | Craig |
| Bennett | Chafee | D'Amato |
| Bond | Coats | DeWine |
| Breaux | Cochran | Domenici |

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| Enzi | Jeffords | Sessions |
| Faircloth | Kempthorne | Shelby |
| Frist | Kyl | Smith (NH) |
| Gorton | Lieberman | Smith (OR) |
| Gramm | Lott | Snowe |
| Grassley | Lugar | Specter |
| Gregg | Mack | Stevens |
| Hagel | McCain | Thomas |
| Hatch | McConnell | Thompson |
| Helms | Murkowski | Thurmond |
| Hutchinson | Nickles | Torricelli |
| Hutchison | Roberts | Warner |
| Inhofe | Roth | |
| | Santorum | |

NAYS—42

| | | |
|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Akaka | Feingold | Lautenberg |
| Baucus | Feinstein | Leahy |
| Biden | Ford | Levin |
| Bingaman | Glenn | Mikulski |
| Boxer | Graham | Moseley-Braun |
| Bryan | Harkin | Moynihan |
| Bumpers | Hollings | Murray |
| Byrd | Inouye | Reed |
| Cleland | Johnson | Reid |
| Conrad | Kennedy | Robb |
| Daschle | Kerry | Rockefeller |
| Dodd | Kerry | Sarbanes |
| Dorgan | Kohl | Wellstone |
| Durbin | Landrieu | Wyden |

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 58, the nays are 42. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk on the pending Coverdell A+ Education Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provision of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 2646, the A+ Education Act:

Trent Lott, Paul Coverdell, Craig Thomas, Rod Grams, Chuck Hagel, Tim Hutchinson, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Mike DeWine.
Bob Bennett, John McCain, Don Nickles, Chuck Grassley, Mitch McConnell, Wayne Allard, Phil Gramm, John Ashcroft.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order. The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, this cloture vote, then, would occur on Monday of next week, at a time to be determined by the majority leader after notification of the minority leader. I presume that will be around our normal voting time, at 5:30 on Monday.

So I now ask consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S.J. RES. 43

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 43 regarding

Mexico decertification which includes a waiver provision, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration under the following terms: The time between now and 7:25 be equally divided between the two leaders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MEXICO FOREIGN AID DISAPPROVAL RESOLUTION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, in light of the objection, I now ask the Foreign Relation Committee be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 42, regarding Mexico decertification, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration under the same terms as described above for S.J. Res. 43.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, having just reached this agreement, I expect this rollcall vote to occur at 7:25 this evening or earlier if time can be yielded back. But the vote on the Mexico decertification issue will occur at 7:25.

I thank the leader for working with us on this, and also Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator COVERDELL. They have been very cooperative. I believe this is enough time to lay the issue before the Senate and have a vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 42) to disapprove the certification of the President under section 490(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding foreign assistance for Mexico during fiscal year 1998.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That pursuant to subsection (d) of section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291j), Congress disapproves the determination of the President with respect to Mexico for fiscal year 1998 that is contained in the certification (transmittal no. 98-15) submitted to Congress by the President under subsection (b) of that section on February 26, 1998.

The Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

Mr. BIDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, as the manager of this resolution—parliamentary inquiry, is there a division of time? Is there controlled time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time is equally divided between now and 7:25. So roughly 1 hour—

Mr. BIDEN. Roughly an hour and a half divided equally.

Mr. President, I say to those who support the position that I will be managing, which is that we should support the President's position and not support my good friend from California,

who thinks, along with others, we should decertify, I ask them to come to the floor and let me know if they wish to speak so we can, with some degree of rationality, allocate the time. I know Senator DODD, after the Senator from California makes her case, wants to speak in opposition to her position. I have told him I will recognize him first. But I say to other Senators who wish to speak in opposition to this decertification, please let me know. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). Who yields time?

Mr. COVERDELL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, what we have before us is a resolution that has special standing on the floor. It is a resolution that will take the certification that the President has called for in the case of Mexico's fully cooperating with the United States on the drug war, and this resolution, if it is adopted, would overturn that and it would decertify. That would be a statement that the cooperation had not been full and complete.

This Senator, the Senator from California and others have been deeply concerned about this matter for well over a year and believe that by saying Mexico should be certified, we are saying to the people of both the United States and Mexico that things are going along OK. It is a message of fulfillment. It is a message that we are making progress, and that is not true. That is not true.

The situation, by virtually any measurement, is less now than it was a year ago when the Senator from California and I began to raise the issue.

I am here reluctantly. I consider myself an ally of the people and the Government of Mexico, but we are losing this war, we are losing this struggle, and it is not appropriate to say otherwise. I wish it were possible for us to be here with a resolution that said certification could occur but there would be a waiver by the President for security reasons. That is not technically possible. The only resolution that has standing is this statement, but it must be made.

Let me say, I commend General McCaffrey for his efforts as our drug czar, and I commend President Zedillo for what appears to be laudable efforts. But we do not do the people of either country, nor the people of this hemisphere, justice by communicating a message of gain or accomplishment or fulfillment when it is the exact reverse.

My concern—although I am sure it will be interpreted to be pointed at Mexico—my concern is mutual, and it is pointed at this administration and Mexico.

On May 2, 1997, I and the Senator from California sent an open letter to the President of the United States. We enumerated 10 areas that should be

come benchmarks, measurements by which we can determine whether or not we are getting our arms around this thing that has captured, in the last 5 years, 2 million American children aged 12 to 17.

On May 14, 1997, the President responded to me and to the Senator from California, accepting the letter of May 2 and the standards that were in it, and he indicated they would report and that these were, indeed, benchmarks that would be sought.

Mr. President, in this letter, we said:

The Mexican Government should be able to take significant action against the leading drug trafficking organizations, including arrests and prosecution or extradition of their leaders, and seizure of their assets.

Virtually no progress.

Extraditions:

We said:

While Mexico has taken steps to allow the extradition of Mexican nationals, they have yet to extradite any Mexican nationals to the United States on a drug-related charge.

As we stand here tonight, there still has been no extradition of a Mexican national on a drug-related charge.

Law enforcement cooperation: Mexico should undertake to fully fund and deploy the Binational Border Task Forces. . .

Not done.

In addition, U.S. law enforcement officers working drugs in Mexico need to be granted the rights to take appropriate measures to defend themselves.

Not done.

Money laundering: We are anxious to see Mexico fully implement the money laundering laws and regulations. . .

Little progress.

Corruption: The decision to abolish the National Institute for Combating Drugs and replace it with a new agency known as the Special Prosecutor's Office. . . is an admission that the INCD had become hopelessly compromised. . . We need to see evidence that the new agency will not simply be a re-tread. . .

Not done.

Air and maritime cooperation: This is an area I think both the Senator from California and I concur has made some progress.

Mr. President, the Senator from California will address this, but she often makes the point that no intelligence is flowing from Mexico to the United States. We are not gaining any advice and counsel on this struggle.

I am going to yield momentarily. In the New York Times just today—just today—we have an extensive article, the headline of which reads: "U.S. Officials say Mexican Military Aids Drug Trafficking. Study Finds Closer Ties."

Some doubt new report, but many say army corruption makes drug war futile. United States analysts have concluded that the case shows much wider military involvement with drug traffickers than the Mexican authorities have acknowledged.

This report was in the hands of the administration in February of this year, following which the administration decided to certify—following this report.

I will say it again and again—I hope some of my friends in Mexico hear me out—the fault is mutually shared. Mexico owns considerable responsibility for the failure and the lack of improvement on all of these points, but so does the administration. Let's remember the administration just last year was here trying to repeal this system just for the remainder of its term—"Let's let some other President worry about it"—and more recently has given us a plan to fight the drug war that concludes itself in the year 2007 and for which there are no benchmarks during the remainder of this administration.

These are not messages of a serious confrontation with a crisis in our country, a crisis in our hemisphere that has the potential of destabilizing every democracy in the hemisphere and poses enormous threats to our ally to the south, the Republic of Mexico. It is time that the Congress, that Members of the Senate say we must be honest, this war is being lost and the costs are beyond description in human life, in property and the stability of the governments of this hemisphere.

I reluctantly will cast my vote, because of these conditions, for decertification and reality. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, if I may, I would like to continue the arguments that the Senator from Georgia has made and add some of my own. And, Mr. President, I do not make these arguments lightly, nor do I make them with any sense of pleasure.

It is never easy or pleasant to criticize a friend, a neighbor, and an ally. And Mexico is all of these. The United States and Mexico have a deep and complex relationship that spans every conceivable form of interaction across a 2,000-mile border. And we need to work together to solve problems that confront us.

I have heard many arguments—"Oh, this is all a United States problem." Well, Mr. President, the United States is trying to address that problem. Let me give you just two facts to corroborate that. One, in 1998, the U.S. Federal Government has spent or will spend nearly \$16 billion fighting drugs. Of that, on demand reduction alone, we will spend \$5.37 billion; on interdiction, \$1.62 billion; on domestic law enforcement, \$8.4 billion. And it all goes up next year.

One interesting fact is in 1985 prisoners on drug charges in Federal prisons were 31.4 percent of the total. Today, almost 60 percent of the Federal prison population is in prison on drug charges. So the number of people in Federal prisons for drug crimes in the United States of America has risen by over 30 percent in this decade.

We are trying. We may fail, but we do try. So this country does make a substantial effort—prevention, education, treatment, all of it.

"Full cooperation" means full cooperation. And there were six benchmarks, as Senator COVERDELL stated, that comprised the basic part of our concerns of last year: enforcement, dismantling the drug cartels, combating corruption, curtailing money laundering, extraditing Mexican nationals on drug-related charges, and law enforcement cooperation.

I would like to discuss each one of these areas in detail. But I want to make the point that I believe Mexico has fallen short of the mark of full cooperation in each of these areas.

On the day the certification decision was announced, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Gen. Barry McCaffrey, said, "I would just like to underscore the absolutely superlative cooperation we have received from Mexico." I thought a lot about that. What I finally realized is, you know, now I know what the problem is. Mexico's cooperation with the United States focuses primarily on the political level. Tragically, it does so at the expense of the much more important law enforcement level. The degree to which the administration emphasizes this political level of cooperation is evident by the State Department's statement of explanation on the certification of Mexico. The first two paragraphs focus exclusively on meetings held between senior officials, commitments they have made, documents they have signed, and so on.

In other words, the most compelling rationale for certifying Mexico this year that the administration can offer is based on political-level agreements. But if there is one truth about the war on drugs, it is that it is fought on the streets, not in the conference rooms and banquet halls. Handshakes between men and women in suits do not stop drug trafficking. Good intelligence and good police work can and do stop drug trafficking. Law enforcement cooperation, not political-level agreements, is where the rubber hits the road in counternarcotics. Until this exists in Mexico, the administration's certification of Mexico will have all the weight of an inflated balloon—impressive to look at, but hollow at the core and easily punctured.

So with this background, I would like to offer my response to the administration's rationale for its decision to certify Mexico, in hopes that the Senate will act to overturn this decision. And I will rely on the benchmarks we set last year.

The State Department statement of explanation says: "Drug seizures in 1997 generally increased over 1996 levels." Now, this is true, but it is only part of the picture.

Let us begin with this first chart. Yes; this is 1996, and as you can see, cocaine seizures have gone up from 23.6 metric tons to 34.9 metric tons. But look back at the peak in 1991 when it was 50.3 metric tons, look at the drop; look at 1993 when it was 46.2; and then look at it drop back down into the low

20s. Cocaine seizures today are still over 30 percent below where they were back in 1991 when the supply was not nearly as large as it is today.

Let us take a look at heroin seizures. Again, we are told they are much improved. But look at the heroin seizures by Mexico. Beginning in 1994 at 297 kilograms, they go down in 1995 to 203 kilograms, and they go up in 1996 to 363 kilograms; this year they have gone down all the way to 115 kilograms. I think this is very, very dramatic.

Let us take a look, if we can, at methamphetamine seizures by Mexico. 1994, 265 kilograms; 496 kilograms in 1995. It has gone steadily downhill—to 172 kilograms in 1996 and all the way to 39 kilograms in 1997—as the United States of America has been inundated with methamphetamine labs. I am ashamed to say my State, the largest State in this Union, has become a source country for the dissemination of methamphetamine now throughout the rest of the United States—the great bulk of it coming from one cartel, which I will point out. A great bulk of the labs are operated, regrettably, by Mexican nationals in this country illegally.

Let us take a look at ephedrine seizures. Ephedrine is a key chemical without which methamphetamine cannot be produced. Here were the seizures in 1996—6,697 kilograms. Look how high they were. Here are the seizures in 1997—only 608 kilograms, a drop of over 90 percent. This is clearly a great drop.

Now let us look at narcotics arrests of Mexican nationals by Mexico in Mexico.

In 1992, they arrested 27,369 people. Look at it in 1997—10,572 people. That is a two-thirds drop in arrests when we are putting all this pressure on, saying, "Go after the cartels. Stop the assassinations. Break it up." The arrests have actually dropped.

Take the next chart. Now, one of the major tests—not the only test; it is not 100 percent accurate—of supply is what street prices are. In Main Street, prices for drugs drop when the supply goes up. Every single narcotics officer that works undercover or works the streets of America will tell you that. So we went to the Western States Information Network, which surveys the findings of local police departments on the west coast. Let me share with you what we found.

Cocaine in the Los Angeles region has fallen from \$16,500 per kilo in 1994 to \$14,000 per kilo in 1997. It has leveled off this past year. But this is the drop over that period of time.

Now, let us talk about black tar heroin. Black tar heroin is Mexican heroin. In the Los Angeles area, look at the street prices in 1991. According to DEA, this is nearly the exclusive province of the Mexican family-operated cartels based in Michoacan. In Los Angeles, the price per ounce has dropped two-thirds, from \$1,800 in 1992 to \$600 in 1997. The price today is one-third of what it was 5 years ago. This is why we

see a tremendous increase in heroin addiction in this country. The supply overwhelms the demand, and the prices drop.

In San Francisco it is the same story. Black tar heroin—an average of \$3,500 per ounce in 1991. Today it averages \$600 per ounce, a dramatic drop in price.

And we see the same pattern with methamphetamine. In Los Angeles, the price per pound for methamphetamine averaged \$9,000 in 1991. Today it has dropped down—gone up and down—but dropped down to \$3,500 per pound. It is a two-thirds drop in price. That is enormous in the methamphetamine contraband market.

So these street price statistics tell the story of supply. And supply comes mainly flowing across our southern border.

Just this week, the March 23 edition of the San Diego Union-Tribune had an article entitled "Brazen Traffickers Want Run of the Border: Drug Flow From Mexico Now More Deadly, Frequent."

So in my view, low seizure figures, low arrest figures, falling street prices in our cities, and inundated Customs and Border Patrol agents are hardly indications of "full cooperation" by Mexico's authorities.

Let me speak about what the great danger is now. What I believe to be the biggest criminal enterprise in the Western Hemisphere is developing in Mexico, and that is the cartels.

There are essentially four major cartels: the Juarez cartel, known as the Carrillo-Fuentes cartel; the Sonora cartel, known as the Caro-Quintero cartel; the Tijuana cartel, known as the Arellano-Felix brothers; and the Amezcuca-Contreras brothers.

In testimony about a month ago, DEA Administrator Thomas Constantine left little doubt when he talked to the Foreign Relations Committee about Mexico's efforts to dismantle the cartels. He said:

Unfortunately, the Government of Mexico has made very little progress in the apprehension of known syndicate leaders who dominate the drug trade in Mexico and control a substantial share of the wholesale cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine markets in the United States.

To me, this is a very telling statement. The State Department would have us believe all is well in the Mexican effort against the cartels—and they will point out some arrests—but every one of these arrests is second and third level cartel participants, not top level. I believe Mr. Constantine's testimony tells the true story—very little progress. I hope my colleagues will take these words into consideration.

Let me begin with the Juarez cartel. Mr. Constantine stated:

The scope of the Carrillo-Fuentes cartel is staggering, reportedly forwarding \$20-\$30 million to Colombia for each major operation and generating tens of millions of dollars in profits per week for itself.

Meanwhile, the Carrillo-Fuentes cartel—that is the Juarez cartel—spreads

its tentacles into U.S. cities, where it recruits U.S. gang members to act as its agents. DEA has identified active Carrillo-Fuentes cells in cities around the United States—Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Phoenix, Houston, Dallas, Denver, Chicago, and most recently New York City.

Now, this is really interesting, because New York City used to be the preserve of the Colombian cartels who marketed their cocaine directly. But a DEA study in August of 1997 revealed that the Mexican distribution networks were rapidly moving into the east coast markets of New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, displacing the Colombians.

This trend was illustrated in a major DEA investigation—Operation Limelight—which uncovered a Chicago-based cell of the Carrillo-Fuentes organization that was delivering hundreds of kilograms of cocaine to a distribution network in New York. I believe my colleague from Illinois will, hopefully, speak to that.

Now, some felt that the death of Juarez cartel's leader—Amado Carrillo Fuentes—during attempted plastic surgery last May, could have set the stage for the weakening of the cartel.

One might even concede that Carrillo-Fuentes' death was as a result of his feeling under some pressure from the Mexican authorities, although this is far from proven.

But instead of getting weaker, the Juarez cartel is now stronger. Mexico didn't take any action whatever to capitalize on the opportunity provided by this death. Today the Juarez cartel continues to operate. This is in spite of a power struggle within the cartel that has produced an orgy of violence—50 drug-related murders in and around Juarez, which is clearly well beyond the Mexican authorities' ability to control.

There has been no effort to arrest the new leaders of this cartel, men such as Vincente Carrillo-Fuentes—Amado's brother—or Juan Esparragosa Moreno, a top aide, or Eduardo Gonzalez-Quirarte, a key manager of the organization's distribution networks along the border.

The other major drug trafficking cartel is the most violent and the most vicious. That is the Arellano-Felix cartel, operating right across the border from California in Tijuana. According to the DEA, "Based in Tijuana, this organization is one of the most powerful, violent, and aggressive trafficking groups in the world." They are active today, this year, in Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. Once again, no effort to arrest their leaders.

On September 11, the most violent of the Arellano-Felix brothers, Ramon Arellano-Felix, was added to the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List. He has been indicted in San Diego on drug trafficking charges. Why has there been no effort taken by the Mexican authorities to rein in the operations of the Arellano-Felix organization or to arrest its senior leaders?

I would like to talk about one other cartel. The first is the Jesus Amezcuia cartel. According to the DEA, "The Amezcuia-Contreras brothers, operating out of Guadalajara, Mexico, head a methamphetamine production and trafficking organization with global dimensions." This organization has established links to distribution networks in the United States in locations like California, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Iowa, Georgia, and North Carolina.

The U.S. law enforcement investigation, Operation META, concluded in December with the arrest of 101 defendants and the seizure of 133 pounds of methamphetamine and the precursors to manufacture up to 540 pounds more, along with 1,100 kilos of cocaine and \$2.25 million in assets.

I will go to the last three charts and then wrap up. This is very puzzling. This chart shows outstanding United States extradition requests for Mexican nationals wanted on drug charges. Now we have heard a lot about this, and Mexico has moved to be able to extradite some people, many of them on nonrelated drug charges. The two they have surrendered were deported, not extradited, because they were, in effect, dual citizens. They have not, to date, extradited a single Mexican national on drug-related charges, despite the fact that there are 27 extradition requests by this Government pending.

There is some good news. One reason for delay could be overcome if the United States Senate and the Mexican Congress ratify the protocol to the United States-Mexico extradition treaty which was signed just last November. I don't know why the administration has delayed submitting this protocol to the Senate. Once ratified, it will allow for the temporary extradition to take place for the purpose of conducting a trial while a defendant is serving prison time in his own country.

Extradition is clearly the key to stopping drug traffickers. A good place to start would be Ramon Arellano-Felix, who is wanted on narcotics charges in the United States. Another good start would be Miguel Caro-Quintero, who is head of the Sonora cartel, who last year at this time openly granted interviews to the Washington Post in Mexico. The Washington Post could find him. He has four indictments pending against him in the United States for smuggling, RICO statute, and conspiracy charges, but he cannot be found.

We have heard a lot about corruption. This is deeply concerning to me. This chart shows the Mexican Federal Police officials dismissed for corruption—there have been 870. Now, because of certain features of Mexican law, 700 have been rehired pending their appeals, and there have been no successful prosecutions. So if you are going to terminate somebody, they are going to get rehired, and you are not going to prosecute. Not a lot is accomplished.

Mr. President, to reiterate I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote to pass S.J. Res. 42 to disapprove the President's decision to certify Mexico as fully cooperating with the United States in the effort against drug trafficking. And I ask for the yeas and nays on the resolution.

I do not make these arguments lightly, nor do I make them with any sense of pleasure. It is never easy or pleasant to criticize a friend, a neighbor, and an ally—and Mexico is all of these. The United States and Mexico have a deep and complex relationship that spans every conceivable form of interaction across a 2,000 mile border. And we need to work together to solve the problems that confront us.

But we also must be honest with each other and with ourselves. Section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act, which is the law of the land, requires the President to judge whether drug producing and drug transit countries, like Mexico, have met the standard of "full cooperation."

"Full cooperation," I suppose, can be viewed subjectively. It probably means different things to different people. But there are probably some areas which everyone can agree are essential parts of full cooperation. Let me suggest a few of these areas.

Last year, when the Senate debated this issue, we established essentially six benchmarks for evaluating Mexico's counternarcotics performance. The Administration used these benchmarks to guide its report to Congress last September, and I believed that it would use them to form the basis of its decision on certification.

These benchmarks each comprise a fairly basic part of any meaningful counternarcotics effort. They are: enforcement (such as seizures and arrests); dismantling the drug cartels and arresting their top leaders; extradition; combating corruption; curtailing money-laundering; and, most importantly, law enforcement cooperation.

I will discuss each of these areas in detail, but I can assure my colleagues that in each of these areas, Mexico has fallen well short of the mark of "full cooperation", which is the standard of the law.

There has been insufficient progress—and in some cases, no progress at all—on key elements of a successful counternarcotics program in Mexico. Whether due to inability or lack of political will, these failures badly undermine the urgent effort to keep the scourge of drugs off our streets.

Ignoring these failures, or pretending they are outweighed by very modest advances, does not make them go away. We do Mexico no favors, nor any for our country and our people, by closing our eyes to reality. And the reality is that no serious, objective evaluation of Mexico's efforts could result in a certification for "full cooperation". Partial cooperation, perhaps. But that is not what the law calls for. The law calls for "full cooperation."

On the day the certification decision was announced, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, General Barry McCaffrey, said: "I would just like to underscore the absolutely superlative cooperation we have received from Mexico."

However, I think I understand his reasoning, and in fact, the reasoning behind the certification decision as a whole. The reason is that the Administration's approach to evaluating Mexico's cooperation focuses primarily, if not exclusively, on the political level. Tragically, it does so at the expense of the much more important law enforcement level. Let me explain what I mean.

There is no question that President Clinton, General McCaffrey, Attorney General Reno, and other senior U.S. officials enjoy positive working relationships with their Mexican counterparts. Presidents Clinton and Zedillo had a cordial exchange of visits. There is a High-Level Contact Group on Narcotics Control that meets two or three times a year. Documents were released, such as the "Declaration of the U.S.-Mexico Alliance Against Drugs" and the "Bi-National Drug Threat Assessment" and the "Bi-National Drug Strategy."

The degree to which the Administration emphasizes this political-level cooperation is evident by the State Department's "Statement of Explanation" on the certification of Mexico. The first two paragraphs focus exclusively on meetings held between senior officials, commitments they have made, documents they have signed, and so on.

In other words, the most compelling rationale for certifying Mexico that the Administration can offer is based on political-level agreements.

But if there is one truth about the war on drugs, it is that it is fought on the streets, not in conference rooms and banquet halls. Handshakes between men and women in suits do not stop drug trafficking. But good intelligence and policework can and does stop drug trafficking.

Law enforcement cooperation, not political level agreements, is where the rubber hits the road in counter-narcotics. Good intelligence and dedicated and trusting policework is what really makes a difference. Until this exists in Mexico, the Administration's certification of Mexico will have all the weight of an inflated balloon: impressive to look at, but hollow at the core, and easily punctured.

So, with this background, I will offer my response to the Administration's rationale for its decision to certify Mexico, in hopes that the Senate will act to overturn this decision. I will rely on the benchmarks we set last year.

ENFORCEMENT

The State Department's Statement of Explanation says: "Drug seizures in 1997 generally increased over 1996 levels." This is true, but it is just a partial picture.

Well, let's look at the record. It is true that Mexico's marijuana seizures were marginally higher in 1997, and it is also true of cocaine seizures. But the rise in cocaine seizures can only be considered progress as compared with the dismal seizure levels of the previous three years.

The 34.9 metric tons of cocaine seized in 1997 is an improvement over the previous three years, when cocaine seizures had dropped to about half of the 46.2 metric tons seized in 1993 and the 50 metric tons seized in 1991. This is a perfect example of lowering the bar. When we accept a dismal performance, as we did in 1994-1996, any improvement is given undue weight, even if it falls far short of Mexico's own proven capabilities, as the 1991-1993 figures indicate.

In several cases, drug seizures have declined sharply.

Take heroin for example. In 1997, Mexico's heroin seizures declined from 363 kilograms to 115 kilograms. That is a 68 percent drop.

The decline is even more pronounced in seizures of methamphetamine, and its precursor chemical ephedrine. Mexico's methamphetamine seizures fell from 496 kilograms in 1995, to 172 kilograms in 1996, and then to only 39 kilograms in 1997. Over two years, that is a 92 percent drop.

For ephedrine, we see the same pattern. Nearly 6,700 kilograms were seized in 1996. In 1997, that figure, amazingly, drops 91 percent, down to only 608 kilograms.

I am truly at a loss to understand how the State Department can cite increasing drug seizures as a rationale for its decision to certify, when its own statistics show Mexico's drug seizures declining by 60, 70, 80, and even 90 percent!! over the past 6 or so years.

In another important area of enforcement—narcotics-related arrests—we can see that Mexico's performance is getting worse, not better. In 1997, Mexico's narcotics arrests of Mexican nationals declined from 11,038 to 10,572.

This decline in arrests would be disturbing enough on its own. But it is even more so when one sees how far the bar has been lowered. We should be comparing this year's arrest figures not to last year's, which were only slightly less anemic, but to the 1992 level, which was more than double the current number.

While estimates vary, DEA believes that Mexico is the transit station for 50-70 percent of the cocaine, a quarter to a third of the heroin, 80 percent of the marijuana, and 90 percent of the ephedrine used to make methamphetamine entering the United States.

The 1997 seizure and arrest statistics, in my view, offer ample evidence that Mexico's enforcement efforts are simply inadequate. And the result, undeniably, is that more drugs are flowing into our cities, our schools, and our communities.

How do we know this? Just look at the street prices. The street value of

cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine are all dropping. According to the Western States Information Network, which surveys the findings of local police departments on the West Coast, the average street value of cocaine in the Los Angeles region has fallen from \$16,500 per kilo in 1994 to \$14,000 per kilo in 1997.

The drop is even more dramatic in the case of black tar heroin, which DEA has in the past reported to be nearly the exclusive province of Mexican "family operated cartels" based in Michoacan. In Los Angeles, the price per ounce has dropped from \$1,800 in 1992 to only \$600 in 1997. The price today is one-third of what it was five years ago.

In San Francisco, it is the same story. Black tar heroin averaged \$3,500 per ounce in 1991. Today, it averages only \$600.

We see the same pattern with methamphetamine. In Los Angeles, the price per pound for meth averaged \$9,000 in 1991. Today, it has dropped to \$3,500. In San Francisco, the average price per pound for meth has declined from a peak of over \$10,000 in 1993 to \$3,500 in 1997.

These street price statistics reflect in the main, the simple law of supply and demand. We know that demand remains high, unfortunately, so when the price drops, the obvious conclusion is that you have more supply.

So if we look at the beginning of the decade of the 90s, there's now much more cocaine, more heroin, more methamphetamine flowing across our southern border, while Mexico's enforcement efforts decline. In my mind, this combination makes a mockery of the concept of "full cooperation".

The evidence of increased trafficking can also be found by following events at the border. Just this week, in the March 23 edition of the San Diego Union-Tribune, Gregory Gross wrote an article called "Brazen Traffickers Want Run of the Border: Drug Flow From Mexico Now More Deadly, Frequent."

So in my view, low seizure figures, low arrest figures, falling street prices in our cities, and inundated customs and Border Patrol agents are hardly indications of "full cooperation" by the Mexican authorities in combating drug trafficking.

CARTELS

Let me speak about the cartels in Mexico. As evidence of Mexico's efforts to combat the cartels, the State Department's Statement of Explanation mentions the arrest of eight "major traffickers", including Joaquin Guzman Loera, Hector Luis Palma Salazar, Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo, and Raul Vallardes del Angel.

Not only are these examples of mostly second- and third-tier traffickers, not the cartel bosses, but who the Mexican authorities have failed to capture tells a much more important story. The State Department even admits that two legitimately "major"

traffickers were dealt with lightly: Humberto Garcia Abrego of the Gulf cartel was released from prison—and I would point out this release occurred hours after the President certified Mexico last year—and Rafael Caro-Quintero of the Sonora cartel succeeded in having his sentence reduced.

The simple truth is that after a year of Mexico's so-called full cooperation in combating the cartels, the situation remains completely out of the Mexican authorities' control. Somehow, the State Department construes this effort as sufficient.

But that is not how the United States' drug enforcement officials describe the efforts in Mexico. Let me share with my colleagues what our DEA officials say about it. When DEA Administrator Thomas Constantine testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 26, 1998, he described the four major cartels as the most powerful organized crime organizations in the hemisphere—much more powerful than anything the U.S. has ever faced. They are: the Juarez cartel, also known as the Carrillo-Fuentes cartel; the Sonora cartel, also known as the Caro-Quintero cartel; the Tijuana cartel, also known as the Arellano-Felix brothers; and the Amezcuas-Contreras brothers.

In his testimony, Mr. Constantine left little doubt about Mexico's efforts to dismantle the cartels. He said: "Unfortunately, the Government of Mexico has made very little progress in the apprehension of known syndicate leaders who dominate the drug trade in Mexico and control a substantial share of the wholesale cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine markets in the United States."

To me, this is a very telling statement. While the State Department would have us believe that all is well in the Mexican effort against the cartels, Mr. Constantine's testimony tells the true story: "very little progress" in arresting the key figures, who are well-known, and who run the drug trade. I hope my colleagues will take their words into account.

Even more chilling is Mr. Constantine's contention that the cartels are stronger today than they were one year ago. That's right. After a year of what the Administration calls full cooperation, the cartels have only increased their strength.

The most frightening part of the failure to actively confront these cartels is that they are increasingly penetrating into U.S. cities and marketing their drugs directly on our streets and to our kids.

Perhaps the most powerful of these cartels is the Juarez cartel, also known as the Carrillo-Fuentes organization. While trafficking in marijuana and heroin, the Juarez cartel specializes in cocaine. In particular, it has served as the distribution network for large shipments of cocaine arriving from Colombia. From regional bases in Guadalu-

jara, Hermosillo, and Torreon, the cocaine is moved closer to the border for shipment into the United States.

DEA Administrator Constantine testified that: "The scope of the Carrillo-Fuentes cartel is staggering, reportedly forwarding \$20-30 million to Colombia for each major operation, and generating tens of millions of dollars in profits per week for itself."

Meanwhile the Carrillo-Fuentes cartel spreads its tentacles into U.S. cities, where it recruits U.S. gang members to act as its agents. DEA has identified active Carrillo-Fuentes cells in cities around the United States: Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Phoenix, Houston, Dallas, Denver, Chicago, and most recently, New York City.

This is new. New York City used to be the preserve of the Colombian cartels, who marketed their cocaine directly. But a DEA study in August 1997 revealed that Mexican distribution networks were rapidly moving into the East Coast markets of New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, displacing the Colombians.

This trend was illustrated in a major DEA investigation—Operation Lime-light—which uncovered a Chicago-based cell of the Carrillo-Fuentes organization that was delivering hundreds of kilograms of cocaine to a distribution network in New York.

Now some felt that the death of the Juarez cartel's leader—Amado Carrillo Fuentes—during attempted plastic surgery last May, could have set the stage for a weakening of the cartel. One might even concede that Carrillo-Fuentes' death was the result of his feeling under some pressure from the Mexican authorities, although this is far from proven.

But instead of getting weaker, the Juarez cartel, according to the DEA, is now stronger. Mexico clearly did not take any action whatsoever to capitalize on the opportunity presented by Carrillo-Fuentes's death, and today the cartel continues to operate as usual. And this is in spite of a power struggle within the cartel that has produced an orgy of violence—some 50 drug related murders—in and around Juarez, which is clearly well beyond the Mexican authorities' ability to control.

Yet there has been no effort to arrest the new leaders of the cartel, men such as Vincente Carrillo Fuentes—Amado's brother—or Juan Esparragosa Moreno, a top aide, or Eduardo Gonzalez-Quirarte, a key manager of the organization's distribution networks along the border.

The other major drug trafficking cartel is the Arellano-Felix organization. DEA Administrator Constantine described the cartel this way: "Based in Tijuana, this organization is one of the most powerful, violent, and aggressive trafficking groups in the world."

Because of its base in Tijuana, the Arellano-Felix organization—the most vicious and violent of the cartels—has dominated the drug distribution net-

works in the western United States, and—of particular concern to me—is especially strong in southern California. The DEA believes that the cartel uses San Diego street gangs as assassins and enforcers.

In other cities around the country, it is a similar story. The Arellano Felix organization recruits local gang members, who serve as the distributors and protectors of its drug shipments, which include cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and methamphetamine.

Once again, we can point to little effort on the part of the Mexican authorities to curtail this cartel's activity. Indeed, as Mr. Constantine tells us, the cartel is stronger today than it was one year ago.

Although there have been a few arrests of some second- and third-tier Tijuana cartel members, we would expect a country certified for full cooperation to have made some inroads against the top leaders of this cartel, who are well known, especially given the clear U.S. concern for their capture. On September 11, 1997, the most violent of the Arellano-Felix brothers, Ramon Arellano-Felix, was added to the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List. He has been indicted in San Diego on drug trafficking charges.

But has there been any action taken by the Mexican authorities to rein in the operations of the Arellano-Felix organization or to arrest its senior leaders? Despite the claim of full cooperation, I am unaware of any such efforts.

I will touch more briefly on the other two major cartels. The first is the Amezcuas-Contreras organization. I will quote Mr. Constantine's testimony: "The Amezcuas-Contreras brothers, operating out of Guadalajara, Mexico, head a methamphetamine production and trafficking organization with global dimensions."

Like the larger, more established cartels, this organization has established links to distribution networks in the United States in locations as far afield as California, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Iowa, Georgia, and North Carolina.

A U.S. law enforcement investigation, Operation META, concluded in December 1997 with the arrest of 101 defendants, the seizure of 133 pounds of methamphetamine and the precursors to manufacture up to 540 pounds more, along with 1,100 kilos of cocaine and over \$2.25 million in assets.

And despite this active methamphetamine trade, Mexico has done little to pursue this cartel. Recently, one of the brothers, Adan Amezcuas, was arrested on gun charges, but the true masterminds of the organization, Jesus and Luis Amezcuas, who are under federal indictment in the U.S., remain at large.

The other major cartel is the Caro-Quintero cartel, based in the state of Sonora. This cartel focuses its trafficking on marijuana, but it also trafficks in cocaine. Most of its smuggling takes place across various points on the Arizona border.

Like the other cartels, the Caro-Quintero organization has been successful because of widespread bribes made to federal officials at all levels. These bribes help explain how the head of the cartel, Miguel Caro-Quintero, was able to have his case dismissed when he was arrested in 1992. He has operated freely since. It also helps explain how his brother Rafael Caro-Quintero, who was implicated in the 1985 torture and murder of DEA Agent Kiki Camarena, recently had his sentence reduced.

The totally insufficient effort by the Mexican authorities to confront the cartels has emboldened them. Today, they are not only more powerful than they were a year ago, they are more brazen. A series of violent incidents on both sides of the border illustrates this new brazenness.

In April 1997 two agents assigned to Mexico's new Organized Crime Unit, who had investigated Carrillo Fuentes, were kidnapped and killed. They had been bound, gagged, beaten, shot in the face, and stuffed in the trunk of a car.

On July 17, 1997, Hector Salinas-Guerra, a key witness in a McAllen, Texas drug case, was kidnapped. His tortured body was found on July 22, and on July 25, the jury in the trial acquitted the seven defendants.

On November 14, 1997, two Mexican federal police officers investigating the Arellano-Felix organization were shot and killed while traveling in an official Mexican government vehicle from Tecate to Tijuana.

On November 23, 1997, a shooting incident at the Nogales point of entry into Mexico left one Mexican Customs official dead, and two defendants and another official wounded.

On January 27, 1998, Mexican federal police officer Juan Carlos De La Vega-Reyes and his brother Francisco were shot and killed in Guadalajara.

Only if they believe that they are able to operate with impunity would encourage the Mexican cartel operators to be so openly violent toward law enforcement officers and witnesses. But that is the reality in Mexico today. It is a far cry from the full cooperation that we seek.

There are other examples of brazen acts by the cartels. A May 1997 report by Operation Alliance, a coalition of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, found that drug traffickers were involved as the controlling parties in some commercial trade-related businesses in order to expedite their drug trafficking.

According to Operation Alliance, drug traffickers, moving to take advantage of the greater flow of trade occurring under NAFTA, are becoming involved in new transportation infrastructure upgrades, to expand their opportunities to get drugs across the border undetected.

And we now have the first documented case of a cartel attempting to buy control of a financial institution. Just this week, on March 24, 1998, the

Wall Street Journal reported that money-launderers with links to the Carrillo Fuentes organization, tried to acquire a controlling stake in a Mexico City Bank, Grupo Financiero Anahuac, for about \$10 million in 1995 and 1996. I ask unanimous consent that this article be made a part of the record at the conclusion of my remarks.

Clearly, the prospect of cartels moving into control of otherwise legitimate financial and trading entities is now established. And with each passing year, the cartels will grow bolder and bolder.

But, because of the reach of the cartels into our cities, the State Department's utter denial that the problem is getting worse, not better, is so dangerous. As much as these cartels are destroying Mexico, their reach into the United States is expanding. They have agents in many of our large and mid-size cities. Their drugs reach our children. The gangs they hire kill ruthlessly to protect their turf in our cities.

It is no exaggeration to say that the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of Americans are literally at stake in the war against the cartels.

EXTRADITION

The State Department Statement of Explanation says that "Mexico made further progress in the return of fugitives."

While it is true that Mexico has extradited non-Mexican nationals to the United States, and has deported dual citizens such as Juan Garcia Abrego who are wanted on drug charges, and has even deported a few Mexican nationals for non-drug charges (such as murder or child molestation), one fact remains undeniable: To date, Mexico has not extradited and surrendered a single Mexican national to the United States on drug charges. Out of 27 pending requests, not one has been extradited.

Now, it is important to be clear what we mean. In five cases, the Mexican Foreign Minister has signed extradition orders for Mexican nationals wanted in the United States on drug charges. These are: Jaime Gonzalez Castro, Jaime Arturo Ladino, Oscar Malherbe, Tirso Angel Robles, and Juan Angel Salinas.

However, none of these fugitives has been surrendered to the United States. In each case, a delay has taken hold of the case for one reason or another. In some cases, appeals are pending. In others, amparos, or judicial writs, are holding things up. In others, the Mexican national is serving a sentence in a Mexican jail.

There is some good news. This last reason for delay could be overcome if the United States Senate and the Mexican Congress ratify the protocol to the U.S.-Mexico Extradition Treaty signed last November. I do not know why the Administration has delayed submitting this protocol to the Senate. Once ratified, it will allow for temporary extradition to take place, for the purpose of

conducting a trial, while a defendant is already serving prison time in his own country.

But for now, all of these delays add up to the same end: no extraditions of Mexican nationals on drug charges. With judicial corruption still a major problem, appeals and other judicial mechanisms are highly suspect.

For whatever reason, either Mexico cannot overcome its reluctance, or simply refuses to extradite Mexican nationals to the United States on drug charges. I will be the first to acknowledge the first such extradition when it actually occurs, and the fugitive is surrendered. But to call the half-steps that have been taken "full cooperation" is to lower the bar to an unacceptable level.

Extradition is a key to stopping the drug traffickers, because they only fear conviction and incarceration in the United States. To have any deterrent value, it must be shown that it can actually happen.

A good place to start would be Ramon Arellano-Felix, who is wanted on narcotics charges in the United States, and has been named to the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List. Another good start would be Miguel Caro-Quintero, head of the Sonora cartel, who last year at this time was openly granting an interview to the Washington Post. He has four indictments pending against him in the United States for smuggling, RICO statute, and conspiracy charges.

CORRUPTION

The State Department's Statement of Explanation describes—again tepidly—Mexico's approach to combating corruption this way: "The Government of Mexico wrestled with very serious corruption issues in 1997. . ." Wrestled with them. It is not enough to wrestle with them. Mexico has to show a sustained commitment to rooting out corruption in the government, police, military, and judiciary. This is one tall order that will take decades to accomplish.

Again, it is important to acknowledge the progress that has occurred. Mexico did expose, arrest, and convict their former drug czar, General Gutierrez Rebollo, when it was shown that he was on the take from the Carrillo Fuentes organization. This was a painful move, and President Zedillo is to be commended for taking it forthrightly.

But the problems run so much deeper than a bad apple at the top of the heap. According to the DEA, in addition to the Gutierrez-Rebollo incident, which involve the arrest of 40 other officers, the following cases are indicative of the reach of cartel-funded corruption into the Mexican government:

On March 17, General Alfredo Navarra-Lara was arrested by Mexican authorities for making bribes on behalf of the Arellano-Felix organization. He offered a Tijuana official \$1.5 million per month—or \$18 million per year.

In September, the entire 18-person staff of a special Mexican military unit

set up to intercept air shipments of drugs was arrested for using one of its own planes to smuggle cocaine from the Guatemalan border to a hideout.

Bribery and corruption is believed to have been behind the withdrawal of Baja state police protection from a Tijuana new editor prior to his attempted assassination on November 27, 1997.

In December 1997, the appointment of Jesus Carrola-Gutierrez as Chief of the Mexico City Judicial Police was cut short when his ties to drug traffickers and human rights violations were made public.

The question of judicial corruption is a growing problem. Judges on the payroll of cartels can with the stroke of a pen undo the painstaking work of even the most honest and committed investigators and prosecutors. Yet it is totally out of control. According the testimony of the GAO at a joint House-Senate hearing last week at which I was present, U.S. law enforcement officials believe there is only one Mexican judge, in the entire country, who can be trusted not to compromise a wiretap investigation. One trustworthy judge. That is a devastating indictment of the level of corruption in Mexico.

Mexico has begun to take steps to deal with this problem. It has begun vetting officers for the most sensitive units, probing their backgrounds for hints of possible corruption. There has been some success in this process, but it is painfully slow going. And even some vetted agents have turned out to be corrupt.

But to make the argument that the very beginning of the implementation of a broad-based vetting program warrants the badge of "full cooperation" is to set the bar dangerously low. It sends a message to the Mexican government that partial measures are good enough, and it need not worry about carrying the program to its fullest implementation.

Perhaps the best possible measure of Mexico's commitment to combating corruption is how it deals with officials who have been found to be corrupt. Are they dismissed from their jobs? Are they then kept from other official work? Are they prosecuted?

Well, the story is not a good one. In an interview in December 1997, the Mexican Attorney General revealed that of 870 federal police officials dismissed for corruption, 700 of these were rehired because of problems in the Mexican legal system, which requires that the individuals remain at work during an appeal. In a police or military organization, this is a serious problem.

It gets worse. Not only were the vast majority of these corrupt officers reinstated, but not a single one of them was successfully prosecuted. Again, there is no way to read this statistic other than as a lack of seriousness in the fight against corruption. Can we really deem Mexico fully cooperative when it fails to make any serious effort to punish corrupt police officers?

Prosecuting corrupt officials is important because without fear of prosecution, there is little deterrence. Unfortunately, in 1997, there were only three police or military related corruption cases being prosecuted, including General Gutierrez Rebollo. Many more cases need to be brought to trial to have any deterrent effect.

MONEY-LAUNDERING

Money-laundering is another area in which, by lowering the bar significantly, the Administration has made it Mexico's certification a virtual foregone conclusion. Last year, the simple fact of the Mexican Congress having passed laws that made money-laundering a crime for the first time was enough to satisfy the Administration. It did not matter that the laws were being neither implemented nor enforced.

So this year, the State Department's Statement of Explanation highlights the publication of regulations needed to implement the new laws. It does not mention that there was a significant delay in the publication of these regulations.

But let us accept that the publication of these regulations is an important step that needed to be taken to advance Mexico's anti-money-laundering effort. The question then is, how well are these laws and regulations being implemented? And the answer is, we simply don't know yet.

While some investigations are underway, there has not yet been one successful prosecution on a charge of money-laundering under the new statutes. Perhaps it is too soon to expect such prosecutions to take place. But in that case, pronouncing the laws a success is wholly premature.

This is especially true when we know that there are questions about these regulations. For example, despite U.S. urging to make violations of the new banking regulations criminal offenses, Mexico has decided to make these offenses non-criminal violations, which severely undercuts their deterrent effect.

In addition, the fine to be imposed on banks who fail to report suspicious transactions—10 percent of the value of the transaction—may not be enough to pose a disincentive to cheat. Ten percent of the value of a transaction, and no criminal penalties, may be a pitance compared with the lucrative bribes often offered by the cartels.

My point is simply this: It is too early to look at Mexico's anti-money-laundering effort and declare it a success. There is no problem with acknowledging progress. But to declare full cooperation to have been achieved before there has been even one prosecution under the law, simply lowers the bar to an absurd level.

COOPERATION WITH U.S. LAW ENFORCEMENT

As I said before, law enforcement cooperation is where the rubber hits the road in counternarcotics, not in agreements reached at the political level. And this is a source of major concern

to me because, unfortunately, law enforcement cooperation from Mexico has been severely lacking.

The State Department's Statement of Explanation is largely silent on the subject of law enforcement cooperation. Well it should be. To describe the extensive cooperation between the two sides, the State Department cites meetings of the High-Level Contact Group, and the Senior Law Enforcement Plenary, and their various technical working groups.

But the truth is that all the high-level meetings in the world do not amount to a hill of beans unless there is cooperation and coordination on the ground between the law enforcement agencies of the two sides. Once again, the State Department's assertion that these meetings are a sign of real progress misses the point. Whether or not our leaders can work together is less important than whether our police and intelligence operatives can work together.

And with few exceptions at the moment, they cannot. Again, I would like to acknowledge progress. In contrast to last year, when DEA testified that there was not a single Mexican law enforcement agency with whom it had a completely trusting relationship, it is encouraging to learn that there are now some Mexican officials with whom DEA believes they can build a trusting relationship.

A key aspect of this institution-building process is vetting, leading to the development and professionalization of the new drug enforcement units in the Organized Crime Unit, and the Special Prosecutor's Office for Crimes Against Health.

This vetting process, if fully implemented, could go a long way toward providing U.S. law enforcement officials with the level of trust in their counterparts necessary for an effective bilateral effort.

But it is still in its infancy, and even some officials who have been vetted have subsequently been arrested in connection with traffickers. So while this effort is critically important, it is not evidence of full cooperation by a long shot.

The small number of officers in the two units with which DEA now has a tentative, case-by-case trusting relationship, is a beginning, but only that.

Take the much-vaunted Bilateral Border Task Forces, for example. These joint U.S.-Mexican units have been widely touted for some two years as "the primary program for cooperative law enforcement efforts."

Based in Tijuana, Cuidad Juarez, and Monterrey, each Task Force was supposed to include Mexican agents and two agents each from the DEA, FBI, and the U.S. Customs Service. The Bi-national Drug Strategy listed these task forces as one of the key measures of cooperation between our two nations.

Today, as this chart indicates and as the Washington Post reported on

March 9, 1998, this program is a shambles. The Task Forces exist only on paper. Why did this happen?

Unfortunately, as DEA Administrator Constantine explained to the Foreign Relations Committee, these Task Forces never really got started. Several of the Mexican agents who were assigned to these units, including commandantes, were suspected of, and even arrested for, corruption and ties to criminal organizations.

Ignacio Weber Rodriguez, commander of the Tijuana task force, was arrested for his alleged involvement in the kidnapping of Alejandro Hodoyan Palacios, a DEA informant.

In May, the Mexican commander and four members of one of the Task Forces were arrested for their alleged involvement in the theft of a half-ton of cocaine from the Mexican Attorney General's office in San Luis Rio Colorado.

Horacio Brunt Acosta, a Mexican federal police officer in charge of intelligence operations for the Task Forces, was fired last year for allegedly taking bribes from drug traffickers.

Is it any wonder that, despite the creation of two small vetted units, the level of trust between DEA agents and their Mexican counterparts is very low?

After the arrest of General Gutierrez Rebollo, the old Task Forces were dismantled, and have since been rebuilt. But for months, the Mexican government did not provide the promised funding, leaving DEA to carry the full cost, which they did until last September.

Additionally, the issue of personal security for U.S. agents working with the Bilateral Task Forces in Mexico has not been resolved, and, as a result, the task forces are not operational and will not be until the security issue is resolved.

The bottom line is that the task forces cannot function properly without DEA and other federal law enforcement agents working side-by-side with their Mexican counterparts, as is the case with similar units in Colombia and Peru.

This critical joint working relationship is made impossible by Mexican policies that do not allow for adequate immunities or physical security for U.S. agents while working in Mexico. This is an inescapable sign of lack of cooperation.

A related problem for the Task Forces is the low quality of intelligence provided by Mexico. Mr. Constantine testified before the Foreign Relations Committee that he is not aware of a single occasion in the past year when meaningful intelligence leads from Mexican agents to their American counterparts led to a significant seizure of drugs coming across the border. Not one. Intelligence flows in only one direction—south.

U.S. law enforcement officials indicate that Mexico's drug intelligence facilities located near the Task Forces are manned by non-vetted, non-law en-

forcement civilians and military staff. These units have produced only leads from telephone intercepts on low-level traffickers. To date, none of the electronic intercepts conducted by the Task Forces have produced a prosecutable drug case in Mexican courts against any major Mexican criminal organization.

So when we look at the utter collapse of the primary joint law enforcement effort between our two countries, we see that it fell victim to a lack of trust, lack of concern for the security of U.S. agents, corruption on the Mexican side, and Mexico's insufficient commitment to the necessary funding.

Looking at all this evidence, I am baffled, to say the least, that anyone could describe our law enforcement cooperation with Mexico as "full cooperation."

I ask unanimous consent that the Washington Post article of March 9, 1998 be entered into the record following my remarks.

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE PASS THIS RESOLUTION?

I know that many of my colleagues are concerned about the prospect of imposing sanctions on Mexico if we pass this resolution of disapproval. Well, let me address this issue head on.

Senator COVERDELL and I, and our co-sponsors, have no desire to punish Mexico or impose sanctions on Mexico. Indeed, the resolution we would prefer to be debating makes that explicit. S.J. Res. 43 contains a Presidential waiver authority, which allows the President to waive any sanctions that would result from Congress' reversal of his decision.

But some of our colleagues objected to that resolution coming up. They did so because they knew it would stand a good chance of passage. So they have forced us to turn to the only resolution that is guaranteed a straight up or down vote—S.J. Res. 42, a resolution of disapproval no waiver.

I would hope that Senators would vote their concern about drugs in this country. In reality, there is little chance, I believe, that Mexico will actually be decertified.

I believe that a statement from the Congress that we are not satisfied with the level of cooperation we receive, will—after the shouting and posturing—produce a renewed effort to prove that full cooperation is being achieved. I believe that the limited progress that was made this year is due in large part to the outcry in Congress over last year's decision, and the pressure that was kept on by Congress throughout the year.

Some of my colleagues do not like the certification law. They think it antagonizes allies, and that may be true. But I think the law, while perhaps imperfect, serves an important purpose, and I am gratified to be able to add these views to the record.

The New York Times editorial of February 28, 1998 criticized the certification process, but said that "as long as certification remains on the books,

the Administration has a duty to report truthfully to Congress and the American people. It has failed to do so in the case of Mexico."

Clearly, the best option for Mexico, both last year and this, would have been to decertify but waive the sanctions on national interest grounds, as we did with Colombia this year. That is the appropriate category for an ally with whom we need to work, and who is making progress, but who has not met the standard of "full cooperation."

In the meantime, we should make very clear what we expect in the way of improved cooperation:

Improved enforcement and increased seizures and arrests across the board;

A strong and sustained effort to dismantle the cartels, including the arrest of their top leaders;

The actual extradition and surrender of Mexican nationals wanted on drug charges, without undue delays;

A sustained program to root out corruption, including more widespread vetting and prosecutions of corrupt officials;

Full implementation and enforcement of money-laundering statutes, with vigorous prosecution of violators; and

Cooperation at the law enforcement level that inspires trust and confidence in our agents, and includes intelligence sharing and adequate security measures.

If Mexico achieves each of these goals, or even makes significant and consistent strides toward them, the supply of drugs will undoubtedly be diminished. And I, for one, would be an enthusiastic supporter of Mexico's full certification.

While this is not the resolution I had hoped we would vote on, it is the Senate's only opportunity to render its verdict on the decision to certify Mexico. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution, and stand for genuine full cooperation.

I yield the floor at this time. I know others wish to speak.

Mr. BIDEN. Parliamentary inquiry. As I understand, I just learned that the allocation of time was based on Democrat-Republican, as opposed to supporting and opposing the amendment. Although I have a great affection and loyalty to my friend from California, I have a diametrically opposed position.

I ask unanimous consent the time she consumed be charged not to those in opposition to the amendment but those who support the amendment, meaning Senator COVERDELL. I am managing the time of those who are opposed to the amendment of Senators COVERDELL and FEINSTEIN.

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BIDEN. And I ask for that unanimous consent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. I will not object. I raise a point in that regard.

I am very strongly in support of the resolution to disapprove, and I am prepared to speak to that. I was not aware

there was a time agreement based on which side of the aisle you were on. I would very much like an opportunity to speak to this issue. I spoke earlier with Senator FEINSTEIN, and I thought there would be that opportunity.

At this point as you make your unanimous consent request, I would like to see if it is possible to reserve 15 minutes to speak to this issue.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I don't know if there is. I can almost assure the Senator that my friend from Georgia probably does not have 15 minutes.

Mr. COVERDELL. I have 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If the unanimous consent request of the Senator from Delaware is accepted, the Senator from Georgia will then control 16 minutes and the Senator from Delaware will control 32 minutes.

Mr. COVERDELL. In good conscience, the time had to be divided by side. So I accept it, and I will get with the remaining Senators on our side, and we will try to accommodate them as best we can.

I might also suggest that the vote is occurring at 7:25 in order to accommodate Senators. There is nothing that would prohibit Senators from continuing to speak on this following the vote. In fact, it is anticipated. I think some of the longer remarks, if you are prepared to speak for 15 minutes, could be made after the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. In that case, Mr. President, again, I will not object at this point, if I reserve the longer part of my remarks for following the vote, after the vote, or submitted in the RECORD, I would like an opportunity to be heard even briefly before the vote is taken. In that regard, I ask unanimous consent to have 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time in favor is under the control of the Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. That is fine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senator from Illinois will receive 5 minutes of the time of the Senator from Georgia.

Is there objection to the request of the Senator from Delaware?

Mr. TORRICELLI. Reserving the right to object, if I could inquire as to the knowledge of the Senator from Georgia about how many speakers he has, so we have some idea how this might be allocated.

Mr. COVERDELL. I have, counting the Senator from Illinois, seven. They will have to be very brief.

Mr. TORRICELLI. Indeed.

I have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the request of the Senator from Delaware?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BIDEN. Further parliamentary inquiry. Has anyone spoken in opposition to the amendment yet, other than the Senator from Delaware who, I believe, spoke about 2 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No.

Mr. BIDEN. I am confused then as to why I only have 32 minutes left. I thought there were 45 minutes on a side at the outset.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will confer with the timekeeper.

Mr. BIDEN. In the meantime, I yield to my friend from Connecticut 15 minutes.

Mr. DODD. I will try to abbreviate my remarks in light of the fact this is going to be a truncated debate.

Let me begin very briefly by saying we are back at this again year after year after year after year dealing with a fundamentally flawed procedure. It is so flawed in my view that Senator McCAIN and I tried last year to get rid of the current certification process and to try to encourage the administration to come up with some alternative mechanism by which we, as a body, in Congress could express our deep and legitimate concerns about the growing problem of drugs coming into our country, and their increased use throughout this country, without damaging the ability of the United States to obtain cooperation for other governments in combatting which is a transnational problem.

I fundamentally believe that while the certification process might have had some utility when it was first enacted in 1986, it has long ceased to be helpful in encouraging other governments to work with us in combatting the production, transit and consumption of illegal drugs. For those of us who were in the Senate at that time, we remember well why we crafted the existing statute. It was intended to get the attention of the executive branch on this issue, because at that time they were doing very little to work with other governments to put together credible bilateral counternarcotics programs.

The administration got the message, as have subsequent ones. Nevertheless, we continue to go through this process still. We find ourselves year in and year out coming back to this process again. Here we are again in a debate about whether or not we will cut off Mexico from getting IMF, World Bank, or Inter-American Development Bank assistance, which if we did would creating untold complications for us and for Mexico. Let's remember that Mexico is a close neighbor, one with which we share a 2000 mile border and a complex web of very important and complicated day to day relationships. Only one of these is the drug issue. It is a very serious issue, but only one of very many.

I see my colleague from New Mexico on the floor, and my colleague from Texas, both of whom are more well aware that most of us as to exactly what the nature of our overall relations with Mexico.

I hope, Mr. President—maybe in vain once again—to make a plea to our colleagues, as I did earlier today to representatives of the executive branch, to take some time this year, sit down with responsible people who care about this issue, and see if we cannot construct some better framework by which we can express our concerns about this issue. I want to ensure that we get the maximum cooperation with every

major producer and transit country in this hemisphere and elsewhere around the world. But the current system of certification isn't doing that.

My colleague from Georgia has heard me say many times that I believe he has proposed the framework of a very good idea with his suggestion that we form an alliance with other countries in order to tackle this problem. I think I am becoming a stronger supporter of the COVERDELL idea than Senator COVERDELL is himself at this point.

I think we need to have a little more balanced perspective about what the U.S. part of the problem. United States consumers spend \$55 billion annually on illegal drugs. Mr. President, \$55 billion in drug revenues comes from American pockets. American monies are helping to bankroll the very Mexican corruption that my good friend and colleague from California is talking about. This isn't being funded by Mexican dollars; it is funded by U.S. dollars. We are 5 percent of the world's population, yet we consume over 50 percent of the illegal drugs in the world in this country.

So when we debate this issue in the context of the annual certification process, we need to focus on ourselves as well as on the activities of producing and transit countries and money laundering countries. Yet somehow our culpability seems to get lost in the debate. It is time for us to take a good look in the mirror. If we as a nation didn't consume these illegal substances in such great quantities and at such enormous human and monetary cost, then it would not be as profitable a business as it has become. That is not to excuse our neighbors who also must bear responsibility for failing to maintain credible law enforcement institutions to cope with the supply side of the equation.

We need to try to keep this in perspective. As angry as we get about what happens in nations and countries in Asia and Latin America, and especially with respect to our neighbors to the south, it would be healthy if we also would take some time to recognize that children in Chicago, or Hartford, or Atlanta, or Los Angeles are not consuming this illegal drugs solely because somebody in Mexico wants them to. It is also because we are not during enough here at home, to address some of the underlying reasons why these children are driven to use drugs.

The idea that if we scream loud enough at these other countries, we are going to somehow solve the problem here at home without doing anything else ourselves, I don't believe is a foolhardy notion. We need to figure out a way in which to get far better cooperation with other nations in addressing the supply side of the equation while at the same time working here at home on demand.

There are a lot of statistics, Mr. President, which the administration and others have put together here. General McCaffrey is not a lightweight or a weakling when it comes to being tough with other nations in insisting upon genuine cooperation. His appointment as the drug czar was overwhelmingly supported by those in this body. He has done an incredible job as the director of the office for national drug control policy. He believes that the Mexican government has been cooperating and he works at this everyday. If he thinks that Mexico should have been certified, and he did, than I have to agree with him.

The decision that was made on certification was made in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the Director of the Office of National Drug Policy, General McCaffrey. All concurred—knowledgeable people who care deeply about this issue—and believe that to decertify Mexico would be a major, major mistake and cause us major, major problems.

I believe that the President's decision was based on a realistic assessment of what Mexican authorities were capable of accomplishing last year and what, in fact, they did accomplish. Perfection? No. But there was real progress. They need to continue to move in the same direction this year.

That assessment, I might point out, appropriately took into account the institutional constraints that faced Mexico—a great deal of poverty, budgetary constraints, a weak judiciary, and corruption, things that my colleague from California has identified. Mexico is a country that is struggling economically.

I will outline quickly some of the major issues that were measured.

Trustworthiness of law enforcement counterparts. We are all well aware that corruption is a serious problem in Mexico, generally within the law enforcement and the military. The Mexican government has confronted that problem head on.

The Mexican authorities discovered in 1997 that the head of their anti-drug agency, General Jose Gutierrez Rebollo, was implicated in major narcotics-related corruption with Amado Carrillo Fuentes, one of Mexico's most significant drug traffickers. They moved quickly to arrest and prosecute him.

They did so even though, at the time, this was a major embarrassment to the Zedillo government.

Recognizing that the drug mafia had extensively penetrated its National Counternarcotics Institute—its primary drug enforcement agency, which General Rebollo headed, the Zedillo government totally dismantled that agency because they felt he wasn't the only problem, there were others. That was done over the last year and a half. That is an indication of progress.

U.S. law enforcement agencies have helped Mexico to rebuild its drug en-

forcement apparatus. Progress against corruption is the most visible evidence that Mexico is serious about routing out corruption, as was the handling of the Rebollo matter. He was expeditiously tried, convicted and sentenced.

Let me comment briefly on the story that ran in today's New York Times concerning certain allegations made by General Rebollo against other members of the Mexican military. First, I tell you, Mr. President, that there is nothing new in the story. General Rebollo made these same allegations during his trial in an effort to get off the hook. To say things self-serving is an understatement.

I have to doubt that the timing of the selective leak of portions of a classified report is not coincidental. It was obviously intended to influence today's vote.

The administration has stated for the record that available intelligence information does not support the Rebollo accusations. And I believe we should accept that assessment.

With respect to the judiciary, Mr. President, the Zedillo government has instituted new procedures for the selection of judges. No longer can the Mexican supreme court arbitrarily appoint judges; judicial appointments are now made based upon examinations. Under new review procedures, three sitting judges have been removed from the bench to date.

Leaving aside the Rebollo issue, there is other concrete evidence of the Zedillo government's commitment to addressing government corruption and cronyism.

With respect to the judiciary, the Zedillo government has instituted new procedures for the selection of judges. No longer can the Mexican Supreme Court arbitrarily appoint judges, rather judicial appointments are now made based upon examinations. Under new review procedures, three sitting judges have been removed from the bench to date.

Finally, some 777 Mexican Federal Police have been dismissed from their jobs because of drug-related or corruption charges.

However, Mexico is not China where government officials rule by fiat. Rather, just as in the United States, Mexican law makes available grievance and other appeals procedures to dismissed government personnel. Because of these appeals, the government has been forced to reinstate some 268 of these individuals.

And, despite what some of my colleagues would have you believe, not one of these individuals has been assigned to counter narcotics or other sensitive law enforcement duties. They've been given what we call here in the U.S. "desk jobs," pending further action by Mexican authorities to seek to permanently dismiss them.

All of this represents progress on the corruption front.

EXTRADITION

With respect to extradition, for the very first time the Mexican govern-

ment has approved the extradition to the United States of five Mexican nationals—wanted in the U.S. on drug-related charges. As in the United States, these cases are subject to habeas review and are currently on appeal in Mexican courts.

I would also remind my colleagues that Mexican authorities have sought to cooperate in other ways with the United States in this very sensitive area. They have availed themselves of various procedures at their disposal and have used other means of turning over fugitives to us, including deportation or expulsion, when that has been legally permissible under Mexican law.

In fact, it was through the expulsion process that the United States obtained custody of a major drug figure, Juan Garcia Abrego—a leader in the Gulf Cartel and someone who had the dubious distinction of being on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List.

That is cooperation.

DRUG SEIZURES

There have been some real successes on the drug seizure front. Cocaine seizures were up by 48 percent over 1996—to 34.4 metric tons. This is the fourth year of improved cocaine seizure statistics.

Seizures of opium gums, a principle ingredient in heroin, were up as well, by 76 percent to 342 kilos. Again showing improvements over past years' performance.

Seizures of marijuana reached 1,038 metric tons last year, again a four year high and nearly double the quantities seized in 1994.

And let me point to another very interesting statistic. Based upon recent statistics of U.S. cocaine seizures on the Southwest border in comparison to Mexican cocaine seizures, for the first time, Mexican officials out performed U.S. border officials in the seizure of cocaine shipments.

ERADICATION

Opium eradication was also up last year to 17,416 hectares—a four year high. The eradication of marijuana crops was also on the rise. Some 23,385 hectares of marijuana fields were destroyed in 1997.

DISRUPTION OF TRAFFICKERS

We all recognize that the best way to disrupt drug organizations is to apprehend their mid-level and top leaders. There is clearly progress to report on that score as well.

Perhaps the most remarkable event last year was the death of drug kingpin Amado Carrillo Fuentes, the infamous head of the Juarez cartel, as he underwent surgery to alter his appearance in order to evade Mexican law enforcement authorities. Had he not felt that these authorities posed a credible threat, he would never have undergone this procedure. His death was a severe blow to the Juarez cartel organization.

I ask unanimous consent that a chart be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the chart was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MAJOR DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARRESTED—STATUS OF CASE

| Name | Cartel | Role | US Status | MX status |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Oscar Malherbe de Leon | Gulf/Juarez | Ops manager | US warrant | Extrad. Approved |
| Adan Amezcuia Conteras | Amezcuia/Colima | Lieutenant | US warrant | Extrad. Approved |
| Jaime Arturo Ladino Avila | Colima | Financier | US warrant | |
| Manuel Bitar Tafich | Juarez | Money Launder | US warrant | Extrad. Approved |
| Jaime Gonzales-Castro | Juarez | Middle Mng | US warrant | |
| Noe Brito Guadarrama | Juarez | Security | Extrad Req'd | Decision Pending |
| Arturo E. Paez-Martinex | Tijuana | Key LT | US warrant | Extrad. Approved |
| Rodrigo Villegas Bon | Tijuana | Assassin | US warrant | Pending |
| Tirso Angel Robles | Sonora | | 19 yrs, 6 mos. | |
| Rafael Carrillo Quintero | Sonora | | 21 yrs. | |
| Hector Palma Salazar | Gulf | | 40 yrs. | |
| Joaquin Guzman Loera | Guzman-Loera | | 12 yrs.. | |
| Arturo Martinez Herrera | Gulf | | 29 yrs. | |
| Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo | Tijuana | | 19 yrs. | |
| Raul Valladares del Angel | Gulf | | 9 yrs. | |
| Jose Luis Sosa Mayorga | Gulf | Arrested 1995. | | |
| Gaston Ayala Beltran | Gulf | Released 0000. | | |
| Humberto Garcia Abrego | Gulf | | | |

Mr. DODD. As you can see from the chart printed above, a number of major well known second-tier cartel figures, including Oscar Malherbe of the Gulf/Juarez Cartel, Adan Amerzcua of the Amezcuia/Colina Cartel, and Manuel Bitar Tafich of the infamous Juarez cartel have also been arrested by Mexican authorities and their extraditions have been approved.

In addition, if you look further down on the same chart, seven major traffickers, including Felix Gallardo of the Tijuana Cartel, are behind bars and serving sentences anywhere from nine to forty years. Moreover, thanks to joint operations between United States and Mexican authorities, there have been extensive indictments of key players in the Tijuana cartel.

These events all represent significant advances in disrupting the major drug cartels.

ISSUE 7—MONEY LAUNDERING

In 1996, the Mexican Congress enacted new statutes criminalizing money laundering—heretofore, as in the case of many other countries, it was not a crime. The complicated regulations implementing that law were issued just last year.

Currently, Mexican authorities have more than seventy cases under investigation based upon these money laundering statutes—sixteen of them, jointly with U.S. Treasury officials.

Clearly that represents progress in the area of money laundering.

ISSUE 8—CHEMICAL CONTROLS

Last December, the Mexican Congress passed comprehensive legislation designed to regulate precursor and essential chemicals as well as equipment for making capsules and tablets. This law is very broad in scope, and once fully implemented should be very effective in monitoring and regulating important ingredients in the illegal drug trade.

ISSUES 9 AND 10—OVERFLIGHT AND MARITIME COOPERATION AND ASSET FORFEITURE

Overflight and maritime cooperation has steadily improved. Similarly the Mexican Congress is in the process of considering legislation to permit Mexican authorities to utilize asset seizures and forfeitures as tools in their prosecutions of drug criminals.

Mr. President, this has been a somewhat lengthy and detailed accounting

of what has happened with respect to U.S.-Mexican counter narcotics cooperation during the past year. I believe that it paints a clearer and more accurate picture of what has transpired with respect to Mexican counter-narcotics cooperation. I believe that it demonstrates a clear pattern of genuine cooperation between our two governments. I would hope that my colleagues will ultimately come to the same judgement.

IMPLICATIONS OF PASSING RESOLUTION

Mr. President, as our colleagues digest the statistics and details of what has transpired over the past year, I would hope they would keep in mind the “big picture” as well.

What do I mean by that? I mean that first and foremost we should remind ourselves why the Congress enacted the drug certification law in the first place—namely to ensure that the United States would seek meaningful cooperation from other governments in the counter narcotics area.

And why did we seek to promote international counter narcotics cooperation?

We sought to do so, as Mr. Thomas Constantine, DEA Administrator testified in February of this year because, “It is difficult—sometimes nearly impossible—for U.S. law enforcement to locate and arrest these (drug cartel) leaders without the assistance of law enforcement in other countries.” Clearly Mr. Constantine must have had Mexican law enforcement in mind when he made that statement.

There are some very fundamental questions that I believe we should ask ourselves as we decide how to vote on the pending resolution. Will cutting offer economic assistance to that country improve counter narcotics cooperation? Will voting against loans to Mexico in the IMF, the World Bank, or the InterAmerican Development Bank encourage cooperation?

Will suspending export trade credits from the U.S. Export Import Bank or the Commodity Credit Corporation encourage cooperation? Most importantly, will voting to overturn the President's decision with respect to Mexico improve cooperation between Mexico and the United States?

I think the answer to each one of these questions is fairly obvious—No!

Each one of the sanctions that I have just enumerated will go into effect if the Senate passes the pending resolution and it is enacted into law.

Ironically, the sponsors of this resolution have stated that they don't want the Administration to implement any of the sanctions I have just mentioned. If that is the case, then I am at a loss as to why we are debating this resolution today. Moreover, Mr. President, it is all the more reason why our colleagues should vote against this resolution when we vote on it later today. In conclusion, Mr. President, I believe that the President made the right decision with respect to Mexico. I hope my colleagues have come to share that view as well.

Mr. BIDEN. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. President. How much time remains in the control of the Senator from Delaware?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware has 20 minutes left.

Mr. BIDEN. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia has 5 minutes 35 seconds.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I will do it any way the Senator from Georgia wishes. We usually go back and forth. Since he has so little time, would he like me to use up some more time?

Mr. COVERDELL. Let me yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. KERRY. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. President. Is the remaining time divided between proponents and opponents, or Democrats and Republicans?

Mr. BIDEN. Proponents and opponents.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas is recognized.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I have a 20 minute speech I am going to condense to 2 minutes. I had no idea we had so little time. It is unfair to the others—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair states that debate is expected to continue after the vote, and statements can be made after the vote. He could be recognized for that purpose.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I was interested in things that my good friend, the Senator from Connecticut, said. He said that the standard we were setting for Mexico was a standard of perfection. He said that twice, as if we

had held up some impossible standard for Mexico to meet. Well, if you look at the text of the Presidential determination certifying Mexico, signed by President Clinton, it is not a standard of perfection that we ask of Mexico. It is this:

I hereby determine and certify that Mexico has cooperated fully with the United States, or has taken adequate steps on their own to achieve full compliance with the goals and objectives of the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs. . .

That is the standard—"cooperated fully and taken adequate steps." I suggest to my colleagues that we have a moral and a legal obligation to measure this vote by that standard. It is not some standard of perfection. It is a standard of whether they have fully cooperated and whether they have taken adequate steps. I further suggest that if you look plainly and clearly at the compelling evidence, by every standard and measure Mexico has failed to fully cooperate and they have failed to take adequate steps.

The government of Mexico has yet to extradite or surrender a single Mexican national to the United States on drug charges, despite the fact that there are 27 outstanding requests. In fact, no Mexican national has been surrendered.

The Bilateral Border Task Force, which was described by the administration last September as the "cornerstone of U.S.-Mexico cooperative enforcement efforts" has yet to become fully operational, and has been completely ineffective. This failure is due to a lack of funding by the government of Mexico, corruption, and the failure of the Mexican Government to allow DEA agents to carry weapons. Is this what we consider "cooperating fully and taking adequate steps?"

According to the Deputy Attorney General testifying before Congress, "None of the senior members of the Arellano Felix Organization (AFO) has been arrested." In short, the AFO, part of the Tijuana Cartel—the second most powerful drug cartel in Mexico, continues to operate unimpeded. Is this what we consider "taking adequate steps?"

Mr. President, the answer is obvious—the Government of Mexico has not cooperated fully in this most important war for the lives of our citizens, and has not taken adequate steps to engage in this war on their own.

In fact, seizures of methamphetamines in Mexico in 1997 was less than one-fourth the levels attained in 1996 and seizures of heroin have been cut in half. In all, Mexico's record of drug seizures this past year are far short of adequate and are best characterized as a dismal failure.

Coupled with these poor seizure rates, the number of drug related arrests were down in 1997—and were almost a third of the arrests made in 1992. Again, not adequate, but wholly inadequate—not progress but retrogression.

The failure of the Government of Mexico to move against the major drug producing and transporting Mexican

Cartels, their failure to make significant drug seizures and arrests, and their failure to cooperate fully with U.S. counter-narcotic efforts has led to a dramatic increase in the supply of drugs entering the United States.

The results of these failures are both known and predictable. As the supply of drugs goes up, their prices go down. Street prices for cocaine, heroin and methamphetamines are at their lowest levels in years—making these deadly drugs more affordable for our children and more available for the troubled addicts lining our country's shattered neighborhoods. This cheap price may be why heroin use is increasing so rapidly—with those under the age of 25 being the largest new heroin user population. Likewise, according to the administration, cocaine use is again on the climb. With the new users falling in the age of 12 to 17.

Mr. President, there are real faces of real children behind these stark numbers. They live in urban and rural in Arkansas, and across the country. This was is one that we cannot afford to loose. Drugs are the hidden impetus to much of this country's crime, poverty and violence. Every day more children start down the drug path to ruin. If we lose this war, it will be lost on the backs of our children and our families.

Today's debate is too important to call a totally inadequate effort—adequate! We must not lower our standards in this test of international will to win the war on drugs. Based on the facts, I would urge a vote for the resolution to decertify Mexico.

If words have meaning at all, and they do, Mexico has failed—they have not taken "adequate steps" and they have not "cooperated fully." If the annual certification of Mexico is anything more than an empty political exercise, one must vote to decertify in view of the clear and convincing evidence. We must not be like the ostrich—head in the sand—pretending everything is O.K.

Mr. President, honesty demands a yes vote on this resolution to decertify.

So, Mr. President, I could go on and on. Senator FEINSTEIN did it very well. By every measure, Mexico has failed. It is not a standard of perfection. Have they cooperated? Have they taken steps? They have not. We do not have not some fantasy obligation; we have a moral and legal obligation. If words mean anything, we must judge Mexico simply by whether they have cooperated and whether they have taken adequate steps. And they have not.

My friends, if this is anything more than a political exercise that we go through every year, anything more than a political joke, we have a moral and legal obligation to vote yes on this issue of decertification.

I thank the Senator from Georgia for the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes to my distinguished friend from New Mexico, who should have 20 minutes, but there is not much time left.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I don't need more than 3 minutes. Mr. President, my State borders Mexico. A year and a month ago, I was on the floor of the Senate complaining about a failure on the part of Mexico to do its job in terms of restricting drugs coming across the border. We all got into a tremendous argument with the republic of Mexico. And, as a matter of fact, it did no good whatsoever.

So to those who have taken the time of the U.S. Senate, in very brilliant ways, with wonderful charts, and told us how badly Mexico has failed to pass the test, I just ask this: If we vote to decertify them, are they going to get better? Is there a correlation between saying they should not be certified and getting some real cooperation out of Mexico? I ask any Senator who says, "let's go ahead and decertify and say to Mexico, you are not cooperating," to stand up and tell the Senate that if we did that, things would really get better.

As a matter of fact, Mr. President, there is a good chance, because this process is so outrageously stupid, that if we decertify Mexico, things will get worse. All of these things people are worried about—and I see them in my State and I am worried about them, too—are just going to get worse rather than better. If you pound the Mexican economy and penalize Mexico because they haven't been cooperating, do things like take away IMF, the World Bank, and other assistance, all in the name of making Mexico cooperate, do you know what will happen? Every headline across their country will clearly state: "Los Americanos no quieren los Mexicanos," "They don't like Mexicans." That is what it will say in big headlines this thick. That is not going to result in cooperation.

What we need to do is repeal the certification statute. It is useless. And we need to replace it with something that will measure cooperation by law enforcement people.

Let me ask you one more time. If things are not going well between Mexico and America regarding drugs, you stand up and tell the U.S. Senate that you will vote with us to de-certify and things will get better. You stand up and say that—any Senator. Just give us a minute or two so we can get up and tell you they will get worse, and that is because this certification law is some kind of an anomaly that doesn't really fit the relationship between Mexico and America today.

Let me close. For the Mexicans who are listening, don't think the Senator from New Mexico is excusing your lack of performance. I was the first one to jump on Mexico for not extraditing Mexican drug lords back here to be tried.

But let me tell you, they have to do better. I don't believe they will do one bit better if we decertify. I don't believe the President ought to sign the

decertification, and we ought to get on with doing something constructive, instead of destructive which will cause no good to America or Mexico.

Thank you for the time.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from Illinois.

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. I thank the chairman.

Mr. President, I rise today to strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution to disapprove the certification of Mexico under the Foreign Assistance Act for Fiscal Year 1998.

On February 26th, the President certified that Mexico had "fully cooperated" with the United States in its drugfighting activities.

Even a cursory examination of Mexico's recent anti-drug record demonstrates that it has clearly not earned that certification.

Because it has become so plentiful in our country, in many areas it is easier to purchase cocaine than cigarettes. Drugs are destroying our children's futures and eating away at the fabric of our society.

Yesterday it was announced that a new anti-drug strike force created by the city of Chicago and Cook County seized 700 pounds of cocaine worth \$40 million in a single home in a Chicago suburb.

Cook County States Attorney Dick Devine said that the cache of drugs seized was enough to "provide a hit for every man, woman, and child in Chicago."

I applaud the strike force for hitting the jackpot in this seizure. They have given law enforcement and our community some hope that we have not become complacent in our efforts to get this poison off of our streets.

It is plentiful. It is poison.

The raid was the fourth, and the largest, that the new strike force has conducted since it was created last January.

To date, it has seized nearly 1,200 pounds of cocaine valued at \$66.6 million, along with \$4.4 million in cash, jewelry and cars.

But consider what that strike force is up against. It is astonishing that 700 pounds of cocaine was seized in a single home. Imagine the amount of illegal drugs that are out on the street if the police could seize that much in one residence.

Local police forces cannot be expected to stand as the primary bulwark against a major international scourge—those drugs should never have been able to make their way into the United States.

A significant degree of the blame for the fact that huge quantities of drugs continue to enter our country can be directed at the impotence of Mexican government's antidrug efforts.

Mexico is the primary transit country for cocaine entering the United States from South America, as well as a major source of heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamines.

The truth is, the Mexican government's efforts to stop the flow of drugs into our country have been insufficient. Consider the fact that last year, heroin seizures in Mexico fell by 68 percent compared with 1996 (from 363 kilos to 115 kilos), and that last year, methamphetamine seizures in Mexico fell by 77 percent compared with 1996 and 92 percent compared with 1995 (from 496 kilos to only 39).

There is more to this story than just the declining amount of drugs seized by Mexican authorities. Consider the Mexican government's disgraceful institutional response to the problems of drug trafficking and drug-related police corruption:

Despite the existence since 1980 of a mutual extradition treaty between the United States and Mexico, the Mexican government has not yet surrendered a single one of its nationals to the U.S. Government for prosecution on drug charges. Currently there are 27 outstanding requests for extradition.

How can Mexican officials argue that it is making progress in the fight against illegal drug trafficking and the corruption that it breeds when, of a total of 870 Mexican federal agents that have been dismissed on drug-related corruption charges, 700 have been rehired and none have been prosecuted?

In a recent hearing, Benjamin Nelson of the Government Accounting Office stated that "No country poses a more immediate narcotics threat to the United States than Mexico." He was testifying regarding a recently-released GAO report stating that drug-related corruption of Mexican officials remains "pervasive and entrenched within the criminal justice system."

Bilateral Border Task Forces have been crippled by inadequate funding by Mexico, a shortage of full-screened Mexican agents, and the refusal of Drug Enforcement Administration agents to participate so long as Mexico denies them permission to carry firearms for their own protection. Certification for Mexico would clearly represent a slap in the face of DEA agents who have communicated their feeling that little is being done to combat drug trafficking in that nation.

I am aware that, in a few areas, a degree of progress has been made. For instance, Mexico has instituted new vetting procedures for the hiring of police officers and it has entered into an agreement with the United States regarding a bilateral drug strategy.

Unfortunately, these measures are not sufficient to offset Mexico's otherwise exceptionally poor anti-drug record.

What is really at issue here is not whether Mexico has met the requirements of the Foreign Assistance Act. It clearly has not. The reason that some hesitate to decertify Mexico is that many other aspects of our relationship with Mexico would change if it were not certified.

In aid, in trade and in commerce, billions of dollars in public and private money are at risk with this issue.

For fiscal year 1998, the U.S. has appropriated \$15.38 million in standard foreign assistance to Mexico that would be cut off. This assistance includes funding for programs which seek to stabilize population growth; assist health education initiatives; encourage the environmentally sound use of resources; engender legal reforms related to NAFTA; and strengthen democracy.

In indirect assistance, Mexico could lose billions of dollars. Mexico's economy would likely be severely affected as financial markets react to the United States vote of no confidence in the government. The United States would be required to withhold support for multilateral development bank loans to Mexico. Also at stake are hundreds of millions of dollars of export financing through the export-import bank. In fiscal year 97, the ExIm Bank authorized \$1.05 billion for Mexico that would not be available.

There would be other financial ramifications, and it would change the nature of our relationship.

The law providing for certification states in Section 490 of the Foreign Assistance Act, that the President must submit to Congress by March 1 of each year a list of major illicit drug producing and transiting countries that he has certified as fully cooperative and therefore eligible to continue to receive U.S. foreign aid and other economic assistance. This sets in motion a 30-calendar day review process in which Congress can disapprove the President's certification and stop U.S. foreign aid and other benefits from going to specific countries. The ball is now in our court.

If we are concerned about sending signals, disrupting commerce, or chilling our economic partnership with Mexico, then we should admit that this law is not enforceable and we should amend or repeal it.

Perhaps, under current law, the President's choices are too limited. I know that Senator HUTCHISON and Senator DOMENICI would like to pass a law creating a new option for the President that would be known as "Qualified Certification."

But if we are going to follow the dictates of the current law, the answer is not to pretend that the facts are other than what they clearly are.

Mexico has simply not met the standards necessary to qualify for certification.

We have an obligation to the people of the United States to do everything in our power to stop drugs from coming into the United States.

So, until Mexico gets tough with its drug traffickers, we must get tough with Mexico.

Mr. President, this is why I stand here. I have seen firsthand the effects of the poison that is coming across our borders in community after community after community. I have seen families destroyed by the prevalence of cocaine and heroin methamphetamine to the extent that in some communities it

is almost easier—the popular wisdom is that it is easier—to get cocaine than it is to get cigarettes.

We have to at some point stand up and say reality is what it is. We as the Senate have a responsibility to say, our relationships notwithstanding, that you have to do better. And the only way we are going to get that process started is to pass this resolution.

Last year this debate went on, and we were going to give them a pass for another year. It hasn't gotten any better, Mr. President.

I encourage strong support for the resolution.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I yield 7½ minutes to my friend from Massachusetts.

Mr. President, how much time do I have left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 16 minutes 50 seconds.

Mr. BIDEN. I yield 8 minutes to my friend from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I come at this somewhat differently from a number of my colleagues. I do not agree with those who say that the certification process does not work. I have been involved in this issue deeply for all the years that I have been in the Senate. I think the debate we had in the Senate last year sent a very clear signal to the Mexican government that we expected some real movement on the counter narcotics front this year and that certification could be in jeopardy if there was no movement. I think they got the message.

Last year, I believed very strongly that the President should not certify that Mexico was fully cooperating because I believed that the Mexican government's performance did not measure up to the standard. During the Senate's debate I argued that if he was going to do anything, he should certify Mexico on the basis of a national interest waiver. That would have more accurately reflected the situation that we found ourselves in at that time and the real rationale underlying the certification decision. The President didn't do that. We had a vigorous debate here on the Senate floor and ultimately, we expressed our concern about the lack of progress through a joint resolution which was overwhelmingly supported. And I supported it. But it was because of that effort that I believe we are, in fact, in a different position this year.

For those who say that the certification process doesn't work, just look at Colombia. This year the President was able to certify Colombia with a national interest waiver. Nobody is here screaming about decertifying Colombia, because, in fact, because of the prior years' decertification, we finally were able to elicit some progress from Colombia.

So I am not in that camp that comes to the floor suggesting that certification has no meaning and cannot affect behavior. I am in that group that comes to the floor suggesting that the debate we had last year did send the signal to Mexico, and that, in fact, there are differences that you can measure this year, which in fairness we ought to measure and make a judgment about.

I have the deepest respect for the Senator from Georgia and the Senator from California. I think they do a great service by pointing out all of the weaknesses. I think the Senator from California has done an incredible job of researching, understanding, and laying out for the Senate the very clear set of deficiencies which need to be addressed. But when we come to the floor one year and criticize them for corruption in their law enforcement agencies, and then they reconstitute their whole structure for law enforcement in an effort to reverse years of corruption, we cannot come back this year and suggest that what they have done is not enough and will not enable them to make progress on the rest of the things that we want them to do.

I believe that the Mexican government has made a genuine effort over the last year and that Mexico's record has improved in a way that is measurable. By no means is Mexico's performance anywhere near perfect, but I believe that the responsible action by the U.S. Senate is to say to them that they are on the right track and to give more time to see if they can make further improvements. I believe that the balance sheet before us today is significantly different from the one before us a year ago. If my colleagues look at this balance sheet fairly, I think they will agree that decertification is not the right approach this year.

As my colleagues know, last February, shortly before President Clinton made his decision on certification, Mexican authorities arrested General Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo, then head of the National Counternarcotics Institute (INCD). Gutierrez Rebollo, as we now know, was on the payroll of one of Mexico's most powerful and notorious drug traffickers, Amado Carillo Fuentes. The arrest of Gutierrez symbolized the endemic drug corruption among Mexican law enforcement officials including those charged with fighting the war on drugs. As the facts of the case emerged, it became apparent that Gutierrez had arrested only those traffickers who worked for rivals of Carillo Fuentes—a development which suggested that arrests were more a product of inter-cartel rivalries than legitimate law enforcement activities. As I have said, only time and further investigation will demonstrate whether there were alliances between other senior military officials and major traffickers involved in this case.

Throughout 1996 the Mexican government had taken no meaningful steps to address the problem of drug corruption

within the law enforcement agencies. Although federal police officers were fired for corruption, none had been successfully prosecuted. Nor was Mexico's performance much better with respect to other indicators such as extraditions to the US, drug related arrests or implementation of laws dealing with money laundering and organized crime.

The threat posed to the United States in 1998 from drug trafficking organizations in Mexico is little different from that posed in 1997. What is different, however, is the effort made by the Mexican government over the last year to deal with the primary obstacle to successful counter narcotics efforts: drug corruption within its own ranks.

After the arrest of Gutierrez Rebollo on corruption charges, the Mexican government moved to reconstitute its drug law enforcement structure and to institute new vetting procedures to deal with the problem of corruption. The National Counternarcotics Institute (INCD), Mexico's leading anti-drug agency, was abolished and a new agency, the Special Prosecutor for Crimes Against Public Health (FEADS), was created under the Office of the Attorney General (PRG). A new Organized Crime Unit (OCU), established pursuant to the 1996 Organized Crime Law, has been established in the FEADS headquarters under the Attorney General's Office. When fully constituted, the OCU will have sub-units for each of the areas covered by Mexico's organized crime law including organized crime, money laundering, narcotics, kidnapping and terrorism.

A Financial Crimes Unit has been set up under the Ministry of Finance, air-mobile special counter-drug units now operate under the Secret of National Defense and riverine units under the Mexican Navy. The Mexican government is also rebuilding the Bilateral Border Task Forces, although at present it is fair to say that the accomplishments in this area are few and that our own Drug Enforcement Agency refuses to allow American agents to cross the border for fear of their own security.

Changing of the organizational chart means little unless steps are taken to ensure that the individuals working in these agencies are not corrupt. Since August 1996 the Mexican government has dismissed 777 federal police for corruption. Of these 268 have been ordered reinstated because of procedural errors in the dismissal process. However, it is important to note that their charges on drug corruption have not been dropped, and they have not been reassigned to counterdrug jobs. I know my colleagues who oppose certification regard these reinstatements as evidence of Mexico's failure or lack of political will to deal with the corruption problem.

While I understand their skepticism, and perhaps share some of it, I believe

that it is too early to rush to this judgment. Our own Civil Service law provides an appeals process for US government employees who have been dismissed, and our Foreign Service Act allows officers who have been dismissed to remain in the job throughout the appeals process. The real test on this issue is the ultimate fate of these individuals who have been reinstated and whether they are dismissed for corruption in the end and whether they are prosecuted.

Last year the Office of the Attorney General opened corruption or abuse of authority cases against over 100 members of the federal judicial police and over 20 federal prosecutors. Links between the traffickers and judges as well as the judiciary's lenient attitude toward narco-traffickers and others brought up for drug related offenses are major obstacles to an effective counter narcotics effort in Mexico. The Mexican government has finally begun to deal with this problem. The National Judicial Council has recommended that charges be brought against three sitting judges for corruption and five judges have already been dismissed. The selection process for Supreme Court judges has now been changed to provide for judicial appointments based on examination. Last year the first group of judges selected by this method was seated. Admittedly these are small steps, but they are positive ones.

The Mexican government has also put into place new, more rigorous processes for vetting those who will work in the newly established law enforcement structures. The Attorney General's office requires that all personnel assigned to FEADS (the Special Prosecutor's Office) pass suitability examinations. Those in sensitive units like the Organized Crime Unit are now screened through procedures which include extensive background checks; psychological, physical, drug and financial examinations; and polygraphs. According to Mexican officials, these checks will be repeated periodically during their tenure. Ultimately all employees working in the Attorney General's office are to be screened but those working in most sensitive units like FEADS and the OCU are the first to be screened. To date, 1300 have been through the screening process.

US law enforcement agencies including DEA, the FBI and the Customs Service are assisting the Mexican government, at its request, in establishing comprehensive vetting processes and training those who conduct polygraphs and other technical examinations. For example, according to DEA Administrator Constantine, DEA has provided assistance to the Organized Crime Unit in the development of personnel selection systems and provided extensive narcotics enforcement training to the new OCU agents.

I believe the very fact that US law enforcement agencies are working closely with Mexican government officials on this vetting process is enor-

mously important to the ultimate goal of establishing corruption-free law enforcement agencies in Mexico. That cooperation could be seriously jeopardized if we decertify Mexico at this point.

Since the Mexicans have chosen to put thorough screening processes in place, these new law enforcement entities are not fully staffed, and as a result their capacity to undertake investigations is somewhat limited. Nevertheless, by the end of last year, FEADS was conducting investigations and enforcement actions both unilaterally and in conjunction with US law enforcement agencies.

Only time will tell whether these entities will be up to the task and whether the vetting processes now being followed will eliminate the corruption that has thwarted the Mexican government's ability to deal with drug traffickers effectively. However, I believe fairness requires that we recognize the effort Mexico has made in this last year to revamp its structure and personnel and that we give it some time to produce results. This year, in my judgment, is a transitional year for Mexico. If these entities are not fully staffed and functioning and if they fail to make some major inroads on the trafficking problem, then this Senator, for one, will find it very difficult to support certification next year.

I know that many of my colleagues who oppose this year's certification make the argument that Mexico's cooperation is only at the political level and that at the working level, it is simply insufficient to warrant certificates. They cite various arguments including the fact that Mexico has not extradited and surrendered one Mexican national to the US on drug charges, that none of the top leaders of the Carrillo-Fuentes, Arellano-Felix, Caro-Qunitero or Amezcu-Contreras cartels have been arrested; and that seizures of heroin and methamphetamines and its precursor chemicals are down.

I totally agree with their argument that Mexico needs to do more in these areas, but I believe if you look at the overall record, it is mixed. Take extraditions. In 1997 Mexico ordered more extraditions to the United States (27) than in the previous two years—a positive step. Fourteen of these are fugitives, whose extradition has been complicated by pending appeals or the need to complete sentences. Five of the 14 are Mexican nationals wanted for drug crimes but none of these have yet been surrendered. Notwithstanding these circumstances, the fact remains that Mexico has yet to turn over a Mexican national wanted for drug crimes to the US. Clearly we need improvement in this area.

Turning to the question of arrests, it is true that Mexican officials have not apprehended the leadership of the major trafficking organizations. However, it is also true that pressure from Mexican law enforcement agencies forced the head of the Carrillo-

Fuentes organization, Amado Carrillo-Fuentes, to disguise his appearance through cosmetic surgery—an operation which resulted in his death—and move some of his organization's operations. Mexican law enforcement operations, many in cooperation with US law enforcement officials, have resulted in the some significant arrests of middle level cartel operators, such as: Oscar Malherbe de Leon, operations manager for the Gulf cartel; Adan Amezcu-Contreras, a lieutenant in the Amezcu organization which trafficks in methamphetamine; Jamie Gonzales-Castro and Manuel Bitar Tafich, middle manager and money launderer respectively of the Juarez cartel; and Arturo E. Paez-Martinex, a key lieutenant in the Tijuana cartel. While these individuals are not the kingpins, their apprehension has kept some pressure on the cartels and caused some disruption. Another test for Mexico's new law enforcement institutions in the next year will be their ability and willingness to go after the kingpins.

I have always been skeptical of seizure statistics because they are valid only if one knows the universe of product available and often we do not. Nevertheless, the conventional wisdom seems to be that statistics have a story to tell so I will take a moment to review some of the statistics relevant to this debate. Although heroin seizures were down last year, seizures of opium increased. Mexican eradication efforts led to a decrease in the number of hectares of opium poppy and consequently the potential amount of opium and heroin on the market. Mexican efforts to deal with marijuana production are similar. Mexican eradication efforts decreased the number of hectares of marijuana dramatically; at the same time, seizures went up to the highest level ever. Seizures of cocaine increased by 48 percent in 1997 as well. What is noteworthy in all of these areas is that Mexican efforts demonstrate a positive, upward trend. However, the statistics for seizures of methamphetamine and ephedrine, its precursor chemical, are down, as some of my colleagues have pointed out. Given the growing methamphetamine market in the US, we must insist that Mexico's efforts in this area improve. I, for one, am persuaded that seizures alone will not address the problem. The producers and traffickers must be targeted.

Mexico has taken some steps to improve its ability to deal with money laundering, including the passage of a money laundering law and the subsequent promulgation of regulations for currency transaction reports. Regulations to deal with suspicious transactions are said to be imminent. Laws and regulations, regulations are meaningful only if they are implemented. Mexico has reopened some 70 cases and entered into 16 joint investigations with the US. I am prepared to give Mexico some time in this area, with the caveat that we must see some results by this time next year.

Mr. President, last year, when the certification of Mexico was allowed to stand, we made it clear that genuine progress had to be made in 1997 if Mexico was to be certified again this year. On balance, I believe that Mexico has made progress and that fairness requires us to recognize that fact. If we decertify Mexico now, in the face of that progress, we run the risk of jeopardizing that progress and of cutting off the very cooperation with US law enforcement agencies that has encouraged and helped Mexico to make progress this year. That outcome makes no sense in terms of our counter narcotics goals.

I am prepared to see the President's certification stand this year. However, it is essential that we make it clear that this is a transitional year for Mexico—a year in which to build its new law enforcement agencies into effective institutions unaffected by drug corruption and dedicated to making some serious progress on the ground. The vetting process must be accelerated. Greater efforts must be made to target the leadership of the cartels. The problem of security for US agents working across the border must be adequately addressed and the border task forces must be reconstituted in a meaningful, productive manner. Prosecutions of those charged with drug corruption or drug related crimes must take place and efforts to root out drug corruption in all Mexican agencies dealing with counter narcotics activities must be accelerated. Absence progress in these critical areas, it will be difficult for Mexico to be certified next year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. McCAIN). The Senator's time has well expired.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes to my colleague from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, the question is not whether we are winning the war on drugs. If that were the question, the answer would be no, and everybody who has spoken would be in agreement. The question is, What is our best strategy to win the war against drugs? I just submit to you that the answer is not making an enemy of Mexico. Mexico is not 2,000 miles from our border. Mexico is our border. Mexico is our second largest trading partner.

We are not dealing with an easy issue. The sophistication of the drug dealers who are coming in from South America through Mexico into our country is phenomenal. We have found tunnels as deep as 60 feet below ground through solid rock across our border. We have found stashes of illegal drugs buried on the beaches. We have found high-performance boats and satellite communication.

It is not like someone isn't trying. It is a very difficult problem. If we are going to win the war on drugs, or have any chance, the only way we can do it

is through cooperation. And I don't think harsh rhetoric against our neighbor is the best way to do it.

Do I think we are successful? No; we are not successful. We are not successful in controlling demand. And certainly Mexico has not been successful in controlling supply.

Mr. President, it isn't the time to start hurling charges back and forth across the Senate Chamber to solve this problem. What we must do is try to sit down in cooperation.

If President Zedillo was saying, "Go fly a kite, we are not going to work with you," that would be one thing. He isn't. He is trying desperately. He doesn't want a criminal element in Mexico any more than we want a criminal element on the schoolgrounds of America.

So I hope we will not do something intemperate, which is not what the U.S. Senate normally does. I hope we will not act in haste and do something that would hurt our cause more than it would help.

Mr. President, I am urging my colleagues to vote against the Coverdell-Feinstein resolution because I think the better way is cooperation.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I would like to begin my remarks by commending the distinguished senior senator from California, Senator FEINSTEIN, for her hard work and leadership on this important issue.

Each year, the President must make a determination with respect to every nation that has been identified as either a major drug-producing or drug transit nation. He has three options: he can (1) certify that the country is fully cooperating with the U.S. or has taken steps on its own against drug activities; (2) decertify the country for failing to meet the "fully cooperating" standard; or (3) find that the country has not met the requirements, but that it is in the "vital national interest" of the U.S. to waive the requirement.

For the country to continue receiving U.S. aid of various kinds, it must either be certified as "fully cooperating" or a national interest waiver must be provided.

Last year, I opposed certification of Mexico. The evidence at that time was clear that Mexico had not cooperated fully with the United States in fighting drug activities, either within Mexico or on our mutual border.

While Mexico made some progress in 1997 in its anti-drug efforts, I believe it has not been enough to warrant certification.

Mexico is still a major transit point for cocaine shipments from South America. It is a major producer of marijuana and heroin, most of which is shipped to U.S. markets.

Most disturbing, the drug cartels based in Mexico are as powerful as ever. While some cartel members have been arrested, according to the head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, "unfortunately, the Govern-

ment of Mexico has made very little progress in the apprehension of known syndicate leaders."

In fact, the cartels are getting stronger. According to the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs the Mexican drug trafficking organizations' criminal activities and corrupting influence are "significant enough to threaten Mexico's sovereignty and democratic institutions. . . . They have developed such a level of influence and intimidation in Mexico that the Government classifies them as the nation's principal national security threat."

In light of this extremely dangerous situation, I believe the efforts made by the Government of Mexico to respond are inadequate. New laws on money laundering have been adopted, but have not been put into effect. Bilateral Border Task Forces were created to be the primary program for cooperative Mexico-U.S. law enforcement efforts, but were never really implemented, due to corruption, lack of security for U.S. officials, and the failure of Mexico to bear its fair share of the costs.

Mexico can and must do better in the fight against drugs in order to merit a full certification under our drug law.

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, no President of the United States would declare war on a foreign nation and send young Americans into harm's way overseas without ensuring that they were properly armed and that they had a clear objective.

And yet, here at home, the Clinton Administration has declared war on illegal drugs while pursuing a policy of defeatism that is turning young children into sitting targets for international drug lords and domestic suppliers.

The President has utterly failed to announce worthy goals or to commit sufficient resources to fighting drug use. We are left with the rhetoric—but not the reality—of a war on drugs.

The President's decision to certify Mexico is just the latest sign of surrender in the drug war. Since taking office, the Clinton Administration's record on combating illegal drugs has been a national disgrace.

The first sign of surrender in the President's war on drugs came within weeks of his first inauguration. After attacking President Bush for not fighting a real drug war, President Clinton announced that he was going to slash the Office of National Drug Control Policy staff from 146 to 25.

The ONDCP, commonly known as the Drug Czar's office, is singularly responsible for coordinating our nation's anti-drug efforts and the new President's first act was to cut the agency by more than 80 percent.

But the reductions in the Drug Czar's office foreshadowed more dangerous cuts in federal law enforcement and interdiction agencies. In its fiscal year 1995 budget, the Clinton Administration proposed cutting 621 drug enforcement positions from the DEA, INS,

Customs Service, FBI, and Coast Guard.

Even worse, between 1992 and September 1995, the Drug Enforcement Administration—the nation's primary drug-fighting agency—lost 227 agent positions, a reduction of more than 6 percent of its force.

Mr. President, the Clinton Administration by 1996 had cut the drug interdiction budget 39 percent below the level spent during the last year of the Bush Administration—the same Administration that, four years earlier, candidate Clinton attacked for being soft on drugs.

But the signs of the Clinton Administration's surrender are not found solely in budget tables and staffing decisions.

The power of the President to curb illicit drug use within our country can also be found in the President's unique platform from which he can implore, persuade, and encourage the American people to make good and moral decisions. He can use what Teddy Roosevelt called the bully pulpit to call Americans to their highest and best, rather than accommodate behavior at its lowest and least.

Yet, in this regard, the signs of surrender are everywhere.

After more than five years in office, this President's most memorable pronouncements on drug use remain his admission to smoking, but not inhaling marijuana and his later clarification—provided live before MTV's largely teen audience—that if given the opportunity to do it again, he would have inhaled. The President laughed as he made the latter remark.

I plan to discuss the consequences of the Administration's drug war surrender in just a moment, but let me just make one point here. Since President Clinton's first year in office, marijuana use among 8th graders has increased 99 percent. I have the feeling the parents of those 8th graders are not laughing, Mr. President.

The President also can use his appointment power to influence public policy. Indeed, the President has the authority to choose the Surgeon General of the United States, a person we often hear referred to as our nation's family doctor.

When it comes to issues of human health and welfare, the Surgeon General enjoys a bully pulpit similar to that of the President.

The President's first choice for Surgeon General was Dr. Jocelyn Elders. Dr. Elders will long be remembered as the Condom Queen for her vocal support of condom distribution in elementary schools.

But when Dr. Elders was not busy distributing condoms in schools or extolling the "public health benefits" of abortion, she found the time to call for a study of drug legalization, a truly dangerous idea.

Until very recently, the President also failed to use his office's power of persuasion to chart an international drug control strategy that included

specific performance measures and identifiable goals.

As recently as the end of last year, the President and his allies were criticizing the House-passed plan to reauthorize the Drug Czar's office because the plan included hard targets for the Administration to achieve.

The only way Members of Congress—and more importantly, American taxpayers—can judge whether or not a government agency is doing its job effectively is to compare its performance to identifiable goals. We spend more than \$16 billion annually on anti-drug programs and we need a way to determine whether or not we are getting our money's worth.

Although the Administration finally conceded that performance goals are needed, they objected to the standards passed by the House. Among the specific targets the President found objectionable:

By the year 2001, overall drug use should be cut in half, down to 3 percent; The availability of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine should be reduced by 80 percent;

The purity levels for the same drugs should be reduced by 60 percent; and drug-related crime should be reduced by 50 percent.

After the House passed these targets, the Clinton Administration balked. General McCaffrey said the goals were unrealistic and would be counterproductive to the anti-drug effort.

Now I recognize that these goals will be difficult to achieve. But it seems to me, Mr. President, that if our goal is to save children from lives marked by drugs, crime, and violence, we have no choice other than to strive for the noble, not just the doable.

The Clinton Administration contends that it should set its own objectives and targets. Unfortunately, this Administration does not set the bar high enough.

Judging from the goals and targets recently proposed by the Drug Czar's office, it is clear that this Administration has no confidence in its ability to counteract the rise in illegal drug use.

Whereas overall teen-age drug abuse has doubled since 1992, the Clinton Administration now proposes to cut such abuse during the next 5 years by just 20 percent. In other words, by 2002—two years after he has completed his second term—the President hopes to reduce youth drug use to 130% of the level when he first took office. If that is victory, I would hate to experience the President's idea of defeat.

Unfortunately, if we look around us, we can see overwhelming evidence of defeat. The Clinton Administration's cease-fire in the war on drugs has had all-too-predictable consequences:

The proportion of 8th graders using any illicit drug in the prior 12 months has increased 56 percent since President Clinton's first year in office. Marijuana use by 8th graders has increased 99 percent over that same time.

Since President Clinton took office, cocaine use among 10th graders has

doubled, as has heroin use among 8th graders and 12th graders.

LSD use by teens has reached the highest rate since record-keeping started in 1975.

The list goes on and on, and yet, Mr. President, the numbers don't tell even half the story. The young lives lost to overdose, the marriages and families torn apart by drug abuse, the high-school dropouts, the children born with little hope of surviving because of her mother's deadly addiction, the victims of crime-filled inner-city streets . . . these are the real casualties of the President's surrender in the drug war. And their numbers are growing.

Seen against this history of failure, it becomes clear that the President's decision to certify Mexico is just the latest sign of the President's surrender.

Consider for a moment the following:

Over the last year, there has not been a single extradition of a Mexican national to the United States on drug charges.

Drug-related corruption among Mexican law enforcement officials continues to escalate, with the most obvious and devastating example being the arrest and conviction of Mexico's drug czar on charges of drug trafficking, organized crime and bribery, and association with one of the leading drug-trafficking cartels in Mexico.

The Mexican Government also failed to make progress in dismantling drug cartels. In testimony given before a Senate Subcommittee a month ago, DEA Director Thomas Constantine said that major drug cartels in Mexico are stronger today than they were a year ago.

Mexican seizures of heroin and methamphetamine were down sharply last year and drug-related arrests declined from an already low level.

By any objective criteria, the efforts of the Mexican Government over the past year do not warrant certification.

The Senate today could reverse the President's judgment and vote to decertify Mexico, but if history is any guide, we won't. Congress has never overridden a Presidential certification.

It seems that some of my colleagues are reluctant to do anything that might possibly embarrass the Mexican Government. Every year, they take to the floor to denounce the corruption and the lack of cooperation by the Mexican officials, but then get weak-kneed when it comes time to withhold the smallest amount of foreign aid or actually sanction Mexico.

While these towers of timidity propose launching another warning shot across the bow of the Mexican ship of state, they fail to see that our own culture is sinking under the weight of an illicit drug supply that flows through our porous Southwest border.

The facts prove conclusively that the Mexican government has not "cooperated fully" with U.S. narcotics reduction goals nor has it taken "adequate steps on its own" to achieve full compliance with the goals and objectives

established by the 1988 U.N. anti-drug trafficking convention. Under current law, this is the standard by which we are to decide whether or not to certify a foreign government.

Mexico's efforts over the past year do not come close to warranting certification. The time for threats and warning shots is over. We should vote today to disapprove of the President's inexplicable decision to certify Mexico.

We cannot afford to surrender the war against drugs in America through policies of accommodation and defeatism. Rather than challenging America to her highest and best, the Clinton Administration's drug policy accommodates behavior at its lowest and least. We can and must do better.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on February 26, 1998, the White House announced that it had certified Mexico as a partner in combating international drug trafficking, stating that the Mexican government was "fully cooperating" in the war on drugs. However, in stark contrast to this claim, an assessment by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) prepared in January and obtained by the New York Times states that, "the Government of Mexico has not accomplished its counter narcotics goals or succeeded in cooperation with the United States Government * * * The scope of Mexican drug trafficking has increased significantly along with the attendant violence."

I believe the yearly certification process is a misguided way to deal with the international drug problem. It applies a black and white standard to a complex problem that, more than anything else, is caused by the seemingly insatiable demand for drugs here in our own country. I am encouraged by Senator DODD's efforts and of other senators to pursue a new approach. I want to support that effort. In addition to bipartisan criticism in the Congress, foreign officials have called the certification process demeaning and ineffectual. However, until that process is changed—and I hope it is—it remains U.S. law and the administration is bound to implement it in good faith.

There are examples of cooperation by the Mexican Government in reducing narcotics trafficking. Opponents of this resolution have mentioned several ways in which the Mexican Government has made progress. The administration reports increases in drug seizures, improved anti-narcotics intelligence, and implementation of new laws on money laundering, asset forfeiture, electronic surveillance and witness protection. Yet drug-related violence and corruption at the highest levels of the Mexican anti-narcotics police continues unabated—affecting every aspect of life and every level of society in Mexico and spilling over the border into the United States. We also receive persistent reports of human rights abuses by Mexican security forces.

I have a great deal of respect for General Barry McCaffrey. He has taken on

the immense job of directing our drug control program with enthusiasm and boundless energy and the best of intentions. I particularly support the efforts he has made to emphasize the importance of drug prevention and treatment. However, I have to respectfully disagree with his assessment of the cooperation between the United States and Mexico as "absolutely superlative."

According to a February 26, 1998, article in the New York Times the DEA reports that none of the changes by and to Mexican law enforcement institutions "have resulted in the arrest of the leadership or the dismantlement of any of the well-known organized criminal groups operating out of Mexico." In addition, no Mexican national was extradited to the United States to face drug charges, and the corruption of Mexican law-enforcement officials, judges, and government employees continues to frustrate United States efforts to build cases and apprehend drug traffickers. Mr. President, if the administration deems this to be "superlative" cooperation, I am concerned. And that is why I will support the resolution to decertify Mexico. I do not believe that a faithful interpretation of the law can lead to any other conclusion than that the Mexican Government has failed to fully cooperate with United States drug control efforts.

Mr. President, I support this resolution reluctantly. It is very important that we continue to work with the Mexican Government in the fight against drug trafficking. I applaud the May 1997 Declaration of the United States-Mexico Alliance Against Drugs, signed by President Clinton and President Zedillo, and the ongoing collaborative efforts between American and Mexican law enforcement officers. I do not minimize the efforts the Mexican Government is making. However, it falls far short of full cooperation. And while I am mindful that decertification could strain relations between our two nations, that is not a justification for interpreting the law in a manner that is not supported by the facts. I am hopeful that Mexico will not view this decision as a condemnation of its counter-narcotics efforts, but as a challenge to work more closely with the United States to improve them.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for S.J. Res. 42, a resolution to disapprove the President's certification that Mexico is fully cooperating in the War on Drugs.

Last year, the Administration convinced Congress not to vote on a similar resolution, arguing that voting on such a resolution would hinder cooperative efforts with Mexico. So here we are, one year later, and the situation in Mexico is the same, if not worse than it was last year.

Just today, a front page New York Times story cites a Drug Enforcement Administration report that indicates that the Mexican military is helping

drug traffickers. As one anonymous official observed, if the indications of wider military involvement with traffickers are borne out, "it points to much of our work in Mexico being an exercise in futility."

Mr. President, I have not seen this report so I can't say how accurate this story is, but it does raise the same concerns I had last year about the level of corruption in Mexico.

Last year, I joined 38 of my colleagues in signing a letter initiated by Senators COVERDELL and FEINSTEIN, the sponsors of today's resolution, calling on the President not to certify that Mexico was cooperating fully in anti-narcotics efforts. That letter went through in detail 6 examples of where Mexico was unable or unwilling to deal with drug trafficking problems effectively. Those areas were: cartels; money laundering; law enforcement, cooperation with U.S. law enforcement; extraditions; and, corruption.

Based on the information I have received, it does not appear that the situation is improved in any of these 6 areas: Mexican cartels continue to expand their ties, operations, and violence in the U.S.; anti-money-laundering legislation is on the books, but is not being enforced; concerns about the safety of DEA agents in Mexico remain unresolved; the much-touted cooperative Bilateral Task Forces are not operational; no Mexican nationals whatsoever have been extradited to the U.S. on drug-related charges; and corruption remains chronic at every level in the military, the police and the government.

Therefore, I think the President made the wrong choice to simply say that Mexico was "fully cooperating" in efforts to combat international narcotics trafficking.

Mr. President, I do not make this decision lightly. Mexico is an important neighbor and we share a 1600 mile border. I do not want to cut off our relations with Mexico over this issue, but I also think we make a mockery of our law by simply glossing over issues to make a certification.

I believe we would be better off if the President would say that Mexico is not fully cooperating, but then exercise his authority to waive the restrictions on bilateral assistance on national security grounds, as he did with Colombia this year.

Unfortunately, the President did not choose that path, and we in Congress are left with only one option—a straight up or down vote on decertifying Mexico. Although it is not a perfect solution, I will vote for telling the truth to Mexico. She can and must do better to combat the nagging problem plaguing our borders.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I am confident that all Senators—indeed millions of Americans—are deeply grateful to the able Senator from Georgia, Mr. COVERDELL, for his remarkable leadership on the drug issue. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee

with jurisdiction over international narcotics affairs, Senator COVERDELL has developed an expertise here at home and overseas. He is a credit to both the Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate.

The joint resolution that Senator COVERDELL and I have brought before the Senate today concerns a very complex issue. But, it can be boiled down in terms of its significance to 6 words: "The President should tell the truth."

The subject before us is Mexico—specifically, the President's unwise and unjustified decision to certify to the U.S. Congress that the Government of Mexico is "cooperating fully" with America's anti-drug efforts. That is precisely what Mr. Clinton told us on February 26.

Since then, we have heard the rest of the story. Regarding the role Mexico plays in the drug trade, the President's own State Department tells us that "Mexico is a major transit point for U.S.-bound cocaine shipments from South America," and "(Mexico) is a major producer of marijuana and a significant producer of heroin, most of which is destined for the U.S.," and "Criminal organizations based in Mexico are now the most significant wholesale and retail distributors of methamphetamine."

These facts warn us that the United States simply cannot let the Mexican government off the hook when it comes to fighting drugs.

When the President certified Mexico's full cooperation, he told us, "The U.S. is convinced of the Zedillo Administration's firm intention to persist in its campaign against the drug cartels."

A few weeks later, the story changed. Mary Lee Warren, a senior Justice Department official, told a House Committee on March 18, "None of the senior members of the (Tijuana Cartel) has been arrested."

She also noted that charges dating from 1992 against the head of the Sonora Cartel "were dismissed."

And, she said that "Mexico had not charged or apprehended any principal" of Mexico's third cartel (the Amezcuas organization).

Senators surely will ask themselves, why does the President tell us that Mexico will "persist in its campaign against the drug cartels" when his own Justice Department and his own DEA tell us that Mexico is not waging such a campaign?

In certifying Mexico, the President told us, "Drug seizures in 1997 generally increased over 1996 levels."

Not true. The State Department's statistics tell a different story. Mexico's 1997 seizures of heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine are at, or well below, 1996 levels.

Although cocaine seizures are up from last year, they total well below the 50 metric tons of cocaine seized in 1991. And, despite the growing role of Mexican traffickers in the methamphetamine market, Mexico's seizure of that product has dropped signifi-

cantly to one-fifth of 1996 levels and one-tenth of 1995 levels.

Another troubling subject is extradition. Most of us believe that Mexico will become a safe-haven for drug kingpins as long as that government refuses to turn over Mexican drug lords to face justice in American courts.

All told, there are about 120 requests for "provisional arrest" and "extradition" pending in Mexico.

But, not one Mexican national was extradited and surrendered to U.S. custody on drug charges throughout 1997 and so far this year. In fact, no Mexican has been surrendered to U.S. custody on any crime since April 1996. The State Department reports that all 5 Mexican nationals approved for extradition on drug charges have appealed their extradition orders.

There is, obviously, a pattern here. A Mexican wanted for child molestation can be surrendered to U.S. justice. A foreigner wanted for drug crimes may be handed over, as well. But a Mexican drug trafficker is made to feel very much at home in Mexico.

Another problem is corruption. Mr. President, we must not forget the February 1997 scandal when Mexico's drug czar was found to be on the payroll of one of Mexico's most blood-thirsty cartels.

The Administration has cited repeatedly Mexico's handling of this scandal as evidence of Mexico's commitment to ferreting out corruption. Indeed, a senior Justice Department official told Congress just law week, "The [corrupt drug czar's] arrest is a noteworthy testimony to President Zedillo's anti-corruption commitment."

In light of these rosey commendations, we were surprised by a report in today's New York Times that U.S. law enforcement officials have concluded privately that this scandal and the way the Mexican government handled it may be just the tip of the iceberg of drug corruption in Mexico's military.

One unnamed U.S. official told the New York Times that this news of deeper corruption "point to much of our work in Mexico being an exercise in futility."

According to this published report, U.S. officials discussed these findings with Attorney General Janet Reno more than 2 weeks before the President's certification of Mexico.

The fact that this assessment comes to Congress' attention through the media and not in the President's "certifications" to the Congress suggests an appalling lack of candor on the part of the Administration. The Committee on Foreign Relations intends to investigate this revelation.

More recent examples of alleged corruption border on being countless.

Mexico's attorney general admitted last September that he had to turn to the military for law enforcement because, in his words, he "couldn't find civilians who could demonstrate the honesty and efficiency for the work."

But military men—as well as civilian police—have themselves been accused

of stealing cocaine that had been seized by the government. Also, last year, the federal police commander in charge of intelligence for the border task forces—which are supposed to cooperate closely with our DEA—was accused of taking bribes and trafficking in drugs in Arizona.

Such flagrant examples of corruption remind us that meaningful anti-drug cooperation will never be possible without honest, competent people with the skills and resources to do their job.

Beginning 12 months ago, Mexico's anti-drug forces were dismantled entirely. It takes time to put these units back in place—which is what we have been helping the Mexicans do for most of last year.

Today, fewer than one-third of the 3,000 employees of the special anti-drug prosecutor's office are on duty. About one-third of the 300 staff members of the organized crime unit are in place. And only two-thirds of the small border task forces staff have been cleared for duty.

It is fair to point out that these new anti-drug units also lack the experience and the resources to do their jobs.

It is fair to ask whether Mexico has the ability to "cooperate fully" to fight drugs—even if it had the political will to do so, which it obviously does not.

Finally, Mr. President, let's turn to an issue that speaks eloquently to the Mexican government's lack of political will to work with us. Despite numerous threats and several attacks on U.S. and Mexican police, President Zedillo has insisted that our DEA agents cannot carry weapons for their self-defense while in Mexico. The Mexicans argue that this is a question of "sovereignty."

Baloney. I have two questions for the officials in Mexico City: Where were these questions of sovereignty in the 1970s and 1980s, when the Mexican government allowed Marxist Central American guerrillas to operate freely in Mexican territory?

And, why does that government fear having a couple of dozen American DEA and FBI agents carrying weapons for their own protection?

Mr. President, I hope Senators will consider the facts so clearly evident. Under the law, the President of the United States has the duty to certify a country's full cooperation when there has been "full cooperation." The sad truth is that there has been no "full cooperation."

Therefore, Senate Joint Resolution 42 deserves the support of all Senators who truly want to bring drug trafficking under control. This will send a message to the Mexican government that it can no longer be A.W.O.L. in the war on drugs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I yield 3 minutes to the good Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized for 3 minutes.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I would have to say at the outset that I believe the certification process is a mistake because clearly it isn't working. But the fact is that as long as we have it, we ought to have integrity in it. And the fact is that, if we are going to look at the question of whether or not there has been an effort to comply that meets the terms of the certification process by Mexico, we would have to conclude that they have failed.

We can wish that they had complied. We can hope that they had complied. We can say as a matter of public policy we truly wanted them to comply. But the fact is that they have not complied. To claim they have complied is to delude ourselves. Essentially it would be the same as suggesting that the Red Sox are going to win the World Series. We want it to happen, but we know it isn't going to happen. The fact is that Mexico and the core elements that are necessary for us to pursue the drug war in Mexico have been undermined by the cartels which earn so much money from the sale of drugs.

The real problem here isn't Mexico, though. The real problem is ourselves. We could use that phrase, "We have met the enemy and it is us." The fact is that our consumption of narcotics has corrupted not only much of the mechanism of Mexico but has corrupted the mechanism of Belize, Colombia, a series of countries in the Central American area, Peru, and in the Caribbean. We, as a nation, should truly be ashamed of what we are doing to these nations.

Were I a Mexican or were I a citizen of Belize or Colombia or Peru, or a citizen of many of our Caribbean neighbors, I would be angered and outraged at the fact that my nation and the government of my nation, as a result of the demand for drugs in this country, the United States, has become so debilitated. It is really our utilization of those drugs which has undermined those nations. But the fact is that we do have the certification process, and the integrity of the certification process requires that we at least comply with its terms. Under the terms of the certification process, there is no way that we should be certifying Mexico.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. I yield 4 minutes to the senior Senator from South Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to legislation that would completely decertify Mexico as being fully cooperative in the war against drugs.

I certainly agree with the sponsors of this resolution that Mexico is not adequately fulfilling its role in fighting international narcotics trade: they have failed to take serious action against the Juarez, Tijuana, and Sonora Cartels which dominate the drug trade; there has been no substantial

progress to prosecute the leaders of major narcotics trafficking groups, even those indicted by U.S. prosecutors; the number of heroin, methamphetamine, and ephedrine seizures are down from the 1996 levels; in all of 1997 and thus far in 1998, not one Mexican national has been extradited and surrendered to U.S. custody on drug charges. In addition, corruption within their law enforcement community, government institutions, and criminal justice system is rampant. This is just not acceptable.

However, Mr. President, if we decertify Mexico, the problem will not go away but will only be exacerbated. The progress that Mexico has made thus far, albeit modest, will come to a standstill. With the assistance of the Department of Defense (DoD), Mexico has countered extensive drug-related official corruption with unprecedented reform efforts, including identifying and punishing corrupt Mexican officials; increased their effectiveness against drug trafficking, significantly disrupting a number of organizations; completely overhauled their counterdrug law enforcement agency; and participated in interdiction and information sharing.

It is of vital importance that the DoD continue to provide assistance to the Mexican military to combat drugs. If the Senate votes to disapprove the certification of Mexico, the progress that the DoD has made will be seriously undermined.

As such, I ask my colleagues to join me in opposition to S.J. Res. 42.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I yield 2 minutes to the Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I think we all wish we had additional options, but the law is very clear. The law says, have they cooperated fully? Have they taken adequate steps?

For 12 years, knowing that the answer to both of those questions was no, I voted yes because I thought we wanted to encourage Mexico, we wanted to work with Mexico. I still want to work with Mexico. I still want to encourage Mexico. But you reach a point where it cannot be good public policy to say publicly something that is clearly untrue.

I am going to vote tonight to decertify Mexico. I know the strategy we are following today is failing. I know from 12 years of hoping, wishing the best, that hoping and wishing the best does not change reality. We are either going to change strategy or we are going to lose the war. That is why I intend to vote to decertify. I hope by doing that we can induce Mexico to do more.

I am not apologizing for what we are doing. I think our war on drugs is phony and a sham and an embarrassment. We have taken no real efforts to try to stop people from consuming

drugs in this country, and we have, from the point of view of public policy, a more serious, more dedicated policy to stop people from smoking than we do to stop people from using illegal drugs. But the point is, the law is very clear. Have they cooperated fully? Have they taken adequate steps? And the answer to both those questions, regrettably, is, "No." Maybe by telling the truth, maybe by saying "No," in the future the answer will be "Yes." And I hope it will be.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Whatever time I have left I yield to my friend from Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I thank my distinguished colleague from Delaware.

Mr. President, I rise this evening not to offer a ringing endorsement of Mexico's cooperation on drug interdiction in the last year, but to make the simple observation that we should proceed with extraordinary care before using the stick of decertification on a good friend and ally. Initially, I gave serious consideration to supporting the effort to decertify based on the lack of any tangible results on extradition: not a single Mexican national has yet been extradited to the United States for drug trafficking. Not one, even though I realize progress is being made.

Notwithstanding my concerns on that singular issue, however, and the fact that progress on stemming the flow of drugs has been modest at best, I believe it's important to continue working in close quarters with President Zedillo in hopes of building a better record over the long-term.

Let's not fool ourselves, Mr. President. Harsh rhetoric, threats, and punitive actions taking the form of decertification will not create goodwill between Mexico City and Washington—just the opposite: bilateral tensions will rise, drug cooperation will decrease, and once more America will be perceived as a sanctions bully.

That is not a healthy approach to sustaining a crucial relationship with a country that sits right on our border. It's one thing to let unilateral sanctions fly in distant countries and places, but we ought to be very careful to not stir the pot of anti-Americanism, an inevitable result of decertification, with our nearest neighbor. We simply don't need to increase tensions and decrease cooperation with a country with which we share a 2,000 mile border.

The basic point is as follows: breaking down the Mexican drug cartels is critically important, but let's forego the short-term political bashing of Mexico, Mr. President, and agree to work harder and better with our friends South of the Border.

I won't review all the minutiae—methamphetamine seizure rates, drug related arrests, Mexican cartel behavior, prosecution of corruption, street

pricing of heroin, cocaine and all the rest—because I think that misses the point. There are a few simple considerations that come to mind in judging whether to decertify Mexico.

First, do we believe that the political leadership in Mexico is honestly committed to solving this problem and working with us toward that goal? I believe the answer is "yes". President Zedillo appears willing to engage in comprehensive efforts to seize and eradicate drugs destined for our streets. He's committed to arresting and prosecuting major traffickers and kingpins . . . and I understand that such individuals have received stiff sentences recently, ranging from 9 to 40 years. He's scrapped the discredited National Drug Control Institute and replaced it with a new Special Prosecutor's Office. He's begun the process of weeding out corrupt officials in the Mexican judicial system, dumping three judges so far. He's helped to increase marijuana eradication to record levels, and armed law enforcement allowing cocaine seizure rates to jump 47%. And Mexico has worked closely with us in developing new overflight clearance procedures, while common ground is being established in the areas of money laundering controls and asset forfeiture issues.

Second, will economic and diplomatic sanctions on Mexico improve our chances of stemming the tide of drugs? The answer is no.

Let's be clear on this point: sanctioning Mexico will likely invite retaliation in a variety of forms . . . anti-Americanism . . . additional political ostracism in the hemisphere . . . and could, over the long-term, have the consequence of creating a broader national security threat right on our border.

Third, a Democrat House colleague thoughtfully observed in today's Los Angeles Times that "It's hard for the United States to cast the first stone." Perhaps it's time we take a stone-cold look in the mirror and admit that until we take massive, comprehensive steps to address the demand side of this problem, trying to sort it out, principally on the supply side is doomed to failure.

Fourth and lastly, sometime soon I hope we can carefully examine whether we should annually engage in this painful exercise in self-flagellation by openly ripping countries with which we might have strong disagreements on the drug issue but share a great deal in common as well. The present mechanism for evidencing our concerns is self-defeating when it comes to Mexico and deleterious, I believe, to the overall relationship.

Mr. President, Mexico's record on drug interdiction has to improve, and I don't fault colleagues in the Senate for demanding results. Many of their concerns are legitimate and deserve to be heard. Like them, I am particularly concerned about the lack of extraditions of Mexican nationals from Mexico, and have been personally assured by officials at the highest level of our

government that they will redouble their efforts to get the ball moving in this area. I understand five individuals are presently appealing their extraditions, and I intend to watch closely to see that the Mexican government lives up to its part of the bargain should those appeals fail.

For now, however, I believe decertifying Mexico will do more to reverse the limited progress we've made to date, and virtually eliminate any hope we have about future cooperation. That's a risk too great to take.

Let's treat Mexico as a friend and partner in this process, instead of blaming it for a problem that starts and ends with the insatiable appetite for drugs on our own streets.

We are just about to vote on this particular issue. Mr. President, I must confess I came very close to agreeing with the decertification provision that we are going to be voting on this evening. But upon more mature reflection, I have decided that the consequences for our friends in Mexico and the efforts that President Zedillo and others are putting forward, that would be counterproductive for a neighbor with whom we share a 2,000 mile border and for the kind of reaction that it would elicit from not only our neighbors in Mexico, who are trying, but from neighbors throughout South America.

So I urge my colleagues on this particular resolution to vote against the resolution, notwithstanding the fact that I share very real concerns, particularly the failure to extradite a single Mexican national to the United States on drug charges to date. I know there are some in the pipeline. Hope springs eternal. I may come to a different conclusion on this same resolution next year.

With that, Mr. President, I yield any time remaining to the distinguished Senator from Delaware and I yield the floor.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I yield the time remaining.

Mr. BIDEN. I yield back whatever time is left.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Are the yeas and nays requested?

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced, yeas 45, nays 54, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 47 Leg.]

YEAS—45

| | | |
|-----------|------------|---------------|
| Allard | Faircloth | Moseley-Braun |
| Ashcroft | Feingold | Murkowski |
| Bond | Feinstein | Murray |
| Boxer | Frist | Nickles |
| Brownback | Gramm | Santorum |
| Byrd | Grams | Sessions |
| Coats | Gregg | Shelby |
| Collins | Harkin | Smith (NH) |
| Conrad | Helms | Snowe |
| Coverdell | Hollings | Specter |
| Craig | Hutchinson | Stevens |
| D'Amato | Kempthorne | Thomas |
| Dorgan | Kohl | Thompson |
| Durbin | Leahy | Torricelli |
| Enzi | McConnell | Wyden |

NAYS—54

| | | |
|----------|------------|-------------|
| Abraham | Ford | Lieberman |
| Akaka | Glenn | Lott |
| Baucus | Gorton | Lugar |
| Bennett | Graham | Mack |
| Biden | Grassley | McCain |
| Bingaman | Hagel | Mikulski |
| Breaux | Hatch | Moynihan |
| Bryan | Hutchison | Reed |
| Bumpers | Inouye | Reid |
| Burns | Jeffords | Robb |
| Campbell | Johnson | Roberts |
| Chafee | Kennedy | Rockefeller |
| Cleland | Kerrey | Roth |
| Cochran | Kerry | Sarbanes |
| Daschle | Kyl | Smith (OR) |
| DeWine | Landrieu | Thurmond |
| Dodd | Lautenberg | Warner |
| Domenici | Levin | Wellstone |

NOT VOTING—1

Inhofe

The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 42) was rejected.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the resolution was rejected.

Mrs. BOXER. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, March 25, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,544,337,068,114.14 (Five trillion, five hundred forty-four billion, three hundred thirty-seven million, sixty-eight thousand, one hundred fourteen dollars and fourteen cents).

One year ago, March 25, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,374,777,000,000