CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Today the world is face to face with the menace of illicit drug trafficking, its use and abuse. It is an age-old problem but never in the past has it afflicted so many nations. No country, large or small can claim to be absolutely free from this modern plague. It affects all nations from the poorest to the wealthiest, those who produce crops from which drugs are manufactured and those who consume it. The severity of affliction however differs from country to country. The United States is among the worst affected. As American awareness of the damage caused by the drug problem to the nation grew, the government of the United States increased its efforts to eliminate the problem. Although the drug trafficking is a worldwide phenomenon, this study is confined to the policy adopted by the United States Government to control the production, refining and trafficking of illicit drugs into America by the producer countries of Latin America, Southeast Asia and Southwest Asia. The study focuses on Reagan Administration’s policy and measures to bring the problem under control.

The history of men’s use of drugs goes back to as early as 5,000 B.C. when Sumerians reportedly prepared opium. Some
Egyptian manuscripts of approximately 1,000 B.C. contain references to opium. The Greek historian Herodotus spoke of the deliriant properties of *hasish* in the 5th century B.C. In the 18th Century B.C. Assyrians also used it. There are many references in the ancient texts regarding the use of opium for medicinal purposes by the ancient Greek and Roman physicians and writers. The Peruvian Indians considered cocaine obtained from coca leaves as a gift by a Goddess of the Incas to be used for divine purposes. The natives of Mexico revered the plant cactus Peyotl as a God because it was used to produce intoxicants.¹

**US Policy Before Reagan**

The earliest settlement in the United States used drugs. Consumption of marijuana in the American colonies dated back to the founding of Jamestown. By 1629 the drugs were in use in the Puritan colonies of New England. By 1765 George Washington was cultivating marijuana at Mount Vernon, presumably to alleviate the agony of an aching tooth. During the nineteenth century, the United States had become what

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Edward M. Brecher has described as a "dope fiend's paradise", opium could be purchased easily and cheaply. Two opium derivatives, morphine and heroin, were in common use by the later half of the century and "were as freely accessible as aspirin is today". But during this period there was no illicit use or trafficking of the drugs. Drugs were easily available in the market, in drug stores and grocery stores without any prescription, and there was no restriction on its importation or manufacturing. Since these opiates were addictive and used so widely, it can be argued in a strict sense that the United States had a drug problem even then. But neither the public at large nor the government perceived the drug use as a problem or menace.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, reformists in the progressive movement who tried to

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2 Dope Fiend's paradise was referred to a New Jersey state's lax narcotics regulations where the "dope doctors" could simply purchase drugs by mail and then dispense them to their "patients" thereby bypassing laws which relied on prescriptions and pharmacies to monitor drug use, which vitiated enforcement of New York's carefully framed legislation. See David F. Musto, M.D., The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p.9.

3 Edward M. Brecher, Licit and Illicit Drugs (Boston: Little Brown, 1972), p.3. Also see, Evan Thomas, "America's Crusade: What is Behind the Latest War on Drugs", Time (Chicago), September 15, 1986, p.64.
eradicate America's social ills began to consider the need for some form of regulation of drugs. Three factors were responsible for the change in public opinion. First, as a result of the Spanish-American war in 1898, the United States acquired the Philippine Islands and inherited a loose system for licensing addicts and supplying them with illegal opium. If the United States was truly going to civilize and extend western culture, the problem of narcotics addiction had to be brought under control. The second factor was the growing concern over the harmful effects of such drugs as opium and cocaine. The "muckraking" journalists, who had taken upon themselves the responsibility of exposing social evils and the nexus between crime and politics, highlighted addiction problems in newspapers and periodicals and sought intervention of the Federal government. All the publicity about drug abuse caused Americans to re-evaluate their thinking about the indiscriminate use of narcotics. Third, racism and xenophobia was probably of greater concern for Americans than the concern about uplifting the indigenous population of remote Philippines or the physical harm of

drugs. In the early 1900s, cocaine and opium became closely associated with blacks, Chinese immigrants, and criminal types. The white paranoia and anxiety produced a backlash against the use of narcotics. In 1910, testimony before the Congress and a federal survey confirmed far-fetched claims about superhuman feats by users of drugs. But no meaningful law restricting the use of drug was adopted.

To solve the problem of opium addiction in the Philippines, the Reverend Charles H. Brent, Episcopal bishop of the Islands, recommended that narcotics be regulated by international laws, which would give the United States greater input, not only in the Far East, but around the globe. Dr. Hamilton Wright, an official in the State Department, shared the Reverend’s views and lobbied for stricter domestic legislation and greater participation for the United States in international control. Because of Dr. Wright’s influence in the State Department, President


6 Dr. Wright waged a battle for restricting drug abuse but he felt that alcohol was not detrimental to health. He came in conflict with Secretary of State William J. Bryan, who himself an ardent advocate of restricting the use of alcohol wanted Dr. Wright to take an oath of abstinence. When Dr. Wright refused, he was dismissed. See in Musto, n.2, p.61.
Theodore Roosevelt appointed both of them, along with Charles C. Tenney, a Chinese missionary, as American Representative to an international opium conference in Shanghai. Though in this conference no concrete result was obtained, but a spirit of cooperation developed which led to a second conference at the Hague in 1911. The Hague International opium Convention of 1912 produced the first international opium agreement. Thus, the beginning of the modern movement for the suppression of narcotics trafficking began with US involvement in the Philippines.

The first step by the US Federal Government was the enactment of the Harrison Act of 1914 completely banning the sale of cocaine and the opiates. Marijuana became the subject of federal legislation in 1937, when the Congress passed the Marijuana Tax Act, restricting the sale of marijuana.

7 Ibid.


The Harrisson Act of 1914

This act redeemed American government’s pledge to international community to bring the traffic in opiates and cocaine under control.10 The main points covered by this act were:

- Registration of firms and individuals who manufacture or deal in narcotics; special tax duties on narcotics dealers; requirements to keep special records of dealings in narcotics, severe penalties for illegal possession of or trafficking in narcotics.11

Representative Harrison told Congressman James R. Mann in Illinois on June 24, 1913, that the measure was not intended primarily to generate revenue but to prevent the manufacture of smoking opium in the United States. Two days later the bill was presented for debate in the House. No one opposed it. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Finance just before the thanksgiving recess. On December 20, 1913 the bills passed the Senate. A month later, on January 17, 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed the bill to take effect from March 1.12 The act imposed the maximum penalty of five year of imprisonment or a $2,000 fine or both13 for

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10 Musto, n.2, p.61.
11 Imlah, n.1, p.25.
12 Inciardi, Handbook of Drug Control, n.4, p.31.
13 Ibid.
narcotics offenses. The Harrison Act was formally entitled, "An Act to provide for the Registration of, with Collectors of Internal Revenue, and to impose a special tax upon all persons who produce, import, manufacture, compound, deal in, dispense, sell, distribute, or give away opium or coca leaves, their salts, derivatives, or preparations, and for other purposes." 14

The law provided the machinery through which federal government was able to control the distribution of narcotic drugs within the country. Specifically, manufactures, importers, pharmacists, and physicians prescribing narcotics were required to be licensees and pay a graduated occupational tax. The most significant provision of the act was the collection of revenue, which as Harrison had pointed out originally was not the objective. The Harrison Act regulated the dispensation of narcotics through a revenue tax but did not prohibit the use of narcotics among which Chloral hydrate (a depressant), and most notably marijuana were not included. More immediate and tangible consequence of this act was that it made the regulated drugs much more expensive.

Initially enforcement of the Harrison Act was assigned to the Bureau of Internal Revenue in the Treasury Department and remained there until 1918, when the Volstead Act was passed that provided for the enforcement of prohibition. The Volstead Act was passed over President Wilson's veto. With the added burden of enforcing prohibition, Treasury officials realized that the existing bureaucratic apparatus was inadequate for prosecuting both narcotics and liquor law violations. A special committee appointed by Secretary of the Treasury, William McAdoo recommended the creation of separate agencies: one to handle the enforcement of the Harrison Act, the other to enforce prohibition. As a result, a special Narcotics Division within the Prohibition Bureau was created.\textsuperscript{15} In response, the Congress removed the responsibility for enforcing the federal drug laws from the Bureau of Prohibition, which was itself incorporated into the Department of Justice. Drug enforcement was transferred in 1930 to a newly created Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN) within the Department of the Treasury, which was headed by a Commissioner of Narcotics.\textsuperscript{16} The primary responsibility of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Musto, n.2, p.135. Also see, Inciardi, \textit{Handbook of Drug Control}, n.4, p.32.
  \item \textsuperscript{16} President's Commission on Organized Crime, \textit{America's Habit}, n.14, pp.204-205.
\end{itemize}
the Commissioner was to enforce the Harrison Act.

Although the FBN was primarily responsible for the enforcement of the Harrison Act and related drug laws, the task of preventing and interdicting the illegal importation and trafficking of drugs remained with the Bureau of Customs\(^{17}\) resulting in fragmentation of functions and authorities.

Harry J. Anslinger became the first Commissioner of Narcotics in 1930, although he had had only limited experience of narcotics control. Prior to the 1930s marijuana was not considered to be a dangerous drug. As late as January 1937, Commissioner Anslinger was quoted as saying that the distribution of marijuana was an intrastate problem and that hope for its ultimate control lay in adoption of uniform narcotic laws.\(^{18}\)

**Marijuana Tax Act, 1937**

Marijuana was not made subject to the Harrison Act or to the Narcotic Drugs Import and Export Act, also known as

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\(^{17}\) Ibid., p.205.

the Jones Miller Act of 1922. The Great Depression years heightened people's anxieties and insecurities. Many Americans forced out of their jobs and homes were frustrated and bitter. Since it was not possible to lay the blame for their dismal condition on any one factor, they were inclined to look for a scapegoat. Marijuana was an easy, convenient target.\(^{19}\) It should have been brought under the drug control regime of the Harrison Act. In the earlier years of the thirties it was known to police departments and civic leaders, particularly those in association of with Mexican immigrants who were taking this drug, and even among scientific investigators, as a dangerous drug. This situation led naturally to pressure on the federal authorities to take some action.\(^{20}\) In 1932, the FBN strongly endorsed a new uniform state narcotic act and repeatedly stressed that the problem could be brought under control if all the states adopted it.\(^{21}\)

\(^{19}\) Inciardi, *Handbook of Drug Control*, n.4, p.35.


By 1937 every state restricted marijuana use. Forced by continuing intensive lobbying efforts the FBN became an ardent supporter of marijuana legislation, which was finally enacted as the Marijuana Tax Act 1937\textsuperscript{22} that came into force on October 1, 1937.

The Marijuana Tax Act was nominally a revenue measure patterned after the Harrison Act. It required person whose business related to marijuana to register and pay a special tax. In addition, the transference of marijuana had to follow a written order of the Secretary of the Treasury and the transferee was required to pay a tax of $12 per ounce if he had registered and $100 per ounce if he had not. Finally, the act made the transferor liable for the transfer tax if a transfer were made without an order form and without payment of the tax by the transferee.\textsuperscript{23}

From the late 1930s upto 1950s, enforcement efforts of FBN were directed almost solely at disrupting the illegal importation of drugs into the United States and to file cases against distributors and dealers. As far back as 1942

\textsuperscript{22} President’s Commission on Organized Crime, \textit{America’s Habit}, n.14, p.206.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p.207.
the FBN was forced to recognize that it was necessary to eradicate crops in Mexico if its interdiction efforts were to achieve greater success. It was thus realized that if the US wanted to control the supply of drugs in the country its efforts had to extend beyond its own borders. In that same year the Congress enacted the Opium Poppy Control Act of 1942, which, among other things, prohibited the domestic production of the poppy without permission from the FBN.

While continuing to warn of the dangers of drug use, the FBN, especially during its earlier years "adopted a more moderate approach in its dealings with the Congress as well as the American people". It did not pressure the Congress to enact more stringent law for controlling the drug abuse. The Bureau's approach in fact reflected the attitude of the American public, which appeared to consider the problem to be restricted to small groups at the periphery of society.\textsuperscript{24}

\textbf{The Boggs Act, 1951}

As the drug abuse started growing rapidly, no more confined to the periphery of the society, in the period

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., p.211.}
after the second world war, the popular mood changed. The people became seriously concerned. This dramatic change in the popular perception led to the enactment of the Boggs Act of 1951. This act which was signed into law by President Harry S. Truman was passed on November 2, 1951. It generally increased the penalties for violations of narcotic and marijuana laws.

The Narcotics Bureau’s scare tactics, a prevailing fear of Communism in the McCarthy era, and Congressional response to the public’s anxiety about drug addiction prevented any significant advances in either treating drug addicts or slowing illegal narcotics trafficking. The common and popular perception of the drug addict was not that of a victim but as a lowly person who deserved punishment. Therefore the preferred solution was stringent laws that would deter drug smugglers. Neither approach alleviated the problem of drug abuse.26

25 President Truman who was badly disturbed by the drug situation wrote a letter to the Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance in support of Narcotics Control Bill on August 24, 1951. He wrote, "However, in the narcotics field there are specific steps which the Federal Government can take to stamp out the illicit traffic in dangerous drugs". See Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman: 1951 (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1965), p.486.

26 Inciardi, Handbook of Drug Control, n.4, p.40.
Despite evidence that further narcotics legislation was unnecessary, two factors led to the enactment of the Boggs Act. The bill was sponsored by Congressman Hale Boggs (D., La.). During 1950-51 Senator Este Kefauver became the Chairman of a Committee on Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce. The dynamic Kefauver succeeded in focusing national attention on the hearings before the Committee. Director of the FBN Anslinger revealed in his testimony before the Committee that organized crime syndicates were heavily involved in drug trafficking. In response to public outrage at the revelations before the Committee several anti-narcotics bills were introduced in the Congress finally resulting in the Boggs Act in 1951. Reflecting Anslinger's "get tough" attitude and growing Congressional support for a more punitive approach, this legislation increased the already severe penalties against narcotics violators. Not only did the Act make it easier for prosecuting attorneys to secure convictions but it also stipulated that the first time offender would be subject to a sentence of not less than two years or more than five with the possibility of probation. Second offenders received a mandatory five to ten years with no probation or suspension of the sentence permitted. Third time offenders faced a mandatory twenty years with no probation or suspension of the sentence. Prior
to the Boggs Act the maximum penalty was a ten year sentence. All offences also carried fines upto $2,000. 27

Narcotics Control Act of 1956 (NCA)

After the Boggs Act, the Congress passed the Narcotics Control Act, the most severe anti-drug legislation, which further increased the penalties for drug violations. In addition to making the possession of marijuana a felony the NCA doubled the sentences in the Boggs Act and included mandatory minimum sentences for the first conviction. Its most notable feature, however, was the inclusion of the death penalty in some cases. 28

It was believed that the stringent penalties prescribed by the Boggs Act were succeeded in decreasing drug addiction. The 84th Congress concluded that the imposition of even more severe penalties would be the strongest and


most effective deterrent to narcotics addiction and illicit drug traffic. Finally, the Congress was of the view that the Narcotic Control Act of 1956 would result in "suppression of illicit drug traffic", the most important contribution that the Federal government could make to the successful and permanent rehabilitation of drug addicts. The Congress thus sought to reduce the demand for drugs through reducing their supply.29 The emphasis on supply side of the drug problem was still lacking in the US approach.

After the Narcotic Control Act the Congress passed the Drug Abuse Control Amendments of 1965, which were passed because of perceived serious problems associated with the diversion of depressant and stimulant drugs from illicit channels. To carry out the new enforcement obligations imposed by the Drug Abuse Control Amendments of 1965 another agency was created. The Bureau of Drug Abuse Control (BDAC) was established on February 1, 1966, within the Department's Food and Drug Administration. The Bureau of Customs, however, retained the responsibility for the enforcement of laws relating to the importing and exporting of depressant and stimulants drugs. With the creation of the BDAC, the Department of Treasury's virtual monopoly of the enforcement

29 President's Commission on Organized Crime, America's Habit, n.14, pp.213-14.
of Federal drug laws ended.\textsuperscript{30}

On April 7, 1968 the Department of justice was given a major responsibility for the enforcement of the Federal drug laws for the first time in the history by creating within it, a Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD). The FBN was abolished and its drug enforcement duties and responsibilities were shifted to the BNDD; the BDAC was also abolished, and its drug enforcement duties and responsibilities were transferred to the Department of Justice.\textsuperscript{31} Thus, before Richard M. Nixon entered the White House the bureaucratic structure dealing with the problem had been reorganized.

\textbf{Nixon Administration's Initiative on the War on Drugs}

Although the drug use had been the part of American life since the mid 19th century, it did not become a burning issue until the 1960s, when it was embraced by students and young people protesting against the conventional American values -- the counter culture people. Besides, it came to be known that the use of drug among soldiers fighting in

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p.217.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p.222.
Vietnam had reached an alarming proportion. Though the predecessor US governments took steps to check this problem but in the real sense 'war on drugs' was started by President Richard Nixon because this problem became acute only in the late 1960s. The United States was one of the main targets for the world's supply of illegal drugs because it provided to the smugglers a very large market. The governments carried on constant war against organized criminal rings which controlled the supply of illicit drugs. Of all international crime, smuggling was the most widespread and the trafficking of narcotics the most profitable. No administration prior to Nixon had shown special interest in the international dimensions of the drug problem. It was the Nixon Administration which revolutionized the role of drug issue in both domestic and international politics. This decision was taken because the use and abuse of illicit drugs in the United States had reached an alarming proportion and people were seriously concerned. Politicians also became aware that they could capitalize on this concern. On October 24, 1969, President Nixon called a press conference to issue the initial declaration of war.

Nixon's "war on drugs" showed the way to the succeeding administrations. Most important between 1969 and 1973 drug enforcement was declared to be a matter of US "National Security", The Carter administration attached same importance to the war against the drug and the Reagan Administration signed the Anti Drug Abuse Act of 1986, declaring international drug trafficking as a threat to "national security".

In 1968, President Nixon concentrated his presidential campaign around the law and order theme. He also declared war on drugs. To wage that war in the following years he set up the Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control in August 1971 which was to coordinate the "global war" on drugs. This step was followed by the creation of the Office of Drug Abuse and Law Enforcement (ODALE) in January 1972 and the Office of National Narcotics Intelligence (ONNI) in August 1972. In 1973 he initiated Reorganization Plan No.2 under which the five year old BNDD became the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in July 1973. All federal

drug enforcement authority came to be concentrated in the DEA within the Department of Justice. The authority which prior to the creation was fragmented between the Justice and Treasury Departments was unified in a single agency. Responsibility for interdicting narcotics at the US borders, remained, however, with the Bureau of Customs, presently named the Customs Services, in the Treasury Department.

**Operation Intercept and Operation Cooperation in Mexico**

The Nixon Administration laid great emphasis in its international drug policy on two countries i.e., Mexico and Turkey which had long proven most worrisome to the United States international drug control efforts. Marijuana became one of the most popular drugs in the 1960s particularly among the rebellious college students and counter culture people. The federal government devised a plan to crack down on the influx of the drug.

Increasing amounts of Mexican marijuana and a consistent supply of heroin entered the United States during 1960s. Responding to mounting drug problems, the Nixon Administration began new diplomatic initiative which were aimed to resolve the drug problem by curtailing the growing of drug crop, its manufacture and trafficking at its foreign
source. While Turkey became the primary target of Washington's heroin diplomacy, Mexico came under increasing diplomatic pressure as the principle supplier of marijuana.\(^\text{34}\) Despite its effort usage of drugs continued to grow in the United States. The United States felt frustrated and tended to blame it on the inability of the Mexican government to act. This eventually led to the Nixon Administration launching 'Operation Intercept', in early September 1969. Some 2,000 customs and patrol agents were posted along the border in what was announced by the American officials as "the largest peace-time search and seizure operation by civil authorities."\(^\text{35}\)

Though the drug trade was temporarily reduced, the results of the "border blockade" were less than spectacular; not a single major shipment of heroin or marijuana was intercepted. At the same time, Operation Intercept became a major source of tension between the United States and Mexico. The latter became angry because the United States gave no prior warning to the Mexico City which implied that

\(^{34}\) Guadalupe Gonzalez and Marta Tienda, \textit{The Drug Connection in US-Mexican Relations} (San Diego: University of California, 1989), p.73.

it could not be relied on to keep it a secret. Consequently, Mexico perceived it as an affront to its national honour. Moreover, the blockade along the border, that paralyzed traffic for several days, threatened across the border trade and commerce. Business interests in the United States also found the situation harmful to their businesses and protested against it. G. Gordon Liddy, then a Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Law Enforcement, commenting on the operation contended that it was a success and that the actual objective was something quite different:

"Operation Intercept has been called a failure -- but only by those who never knew its objective. It was actually a great success. For diplomatic reasons the true purpose of the exercise was never revealed. Operation Intercept, with its massive economic and social disruption, could be sustained far longer by the United States than by Mexico. It was an exercise in international extortion, pure, simple, and effective, designed to bend Mexico to our will. We figured Mexico could hold out for a month; in fact they caved-in after about two weeks and we got what we wanted. Operation Intercept gave way to Operation Cooperation."

Liddy's statement only showed how little respect he had for Mexico and its sensibility. Even in a matter of mutual concern he could only think of "bending Mexico to our will." The United States finally relented and eased pressure along the border. An agreement was concluded between the two governments with the United States providing Mexico with $1,000,000 to eliminate both opium poppies and marijuana plantations. This indicated the transition made from Operation Intercept to Operation Cooperation.\(^\text{39}\)

Nonetheless, Operation Intercept was successful in one major way. It inspired the Mexican Government to cooperate against the drug traffic wholeheartedly. US assistance, which had been flowing to Mexico since 1961, was greatly increased as the Mexican government launched what became known as 'La Campana Permanente' (the permanent campaign).\(^\text{40}\) For the remaining years of the Nixon Administration, Mexico remained out of the spotlight of US international drug control rhetoric.

\(^{39}\) MacDonald, *Dancing on a Volcano*, n.37, p.72.

Success in Turkey

Nixon had more success when he started fighting the drug war far from US shores. During the 1960s, the use of heroin in the United States had increased along with the use of other illegal drugs. Nearly 80 per cent of the US heroin was supplied by Turkey at that time. Just two years before Nixon took office, Turkey had agreed to phase out the illegal portion of its opium production in 1967 but the Turkish government did not enforce the agreement. The Nixon Administration objected to that and threatened to cut off US military and economic assistance. This forced Turkey to ban poppy cultivation entirely for two years. After that it permitted cultivation but introduced strict controls to prevent diversion. The Turkish crackdown and the arrest in 1972 of members of a major heroin trafficking ring based in Marseilles, the famous "French Connection", blocked the heroin supply line to the United States.41

The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) had intelligence that the principal trafficking route of heroin from Turkey to the United States was through the "French

Connection". At the same time that the Demirel government in Turkey was beginning to feel the American pressures. The Pompidou government in Paris was under similar pressure. In November 1969, Nixon wrote directly to Pompidou proposing increased cooperation in drug enforcement. BNDD Director John Ingersoll met with French officials in Paris exploring further cooperation. Following his visit, in December 1969, an inter-governmental task force was established to coordinate law enforcement efforts. In February 1970, the drug matter was brought in during President Pompidou’s visit to Washington. In July of that year, discussions between French Interior Minister Marcellin and Attorney General John Mitchell in Washington focused on drug enforcement. Little substantive progress in severing the drug connection and arresting the traffickers was made, however, until 1971.42 And it was only in 1972 that the members of Marseilles gang were arrested.

Until early 1973, when the Watergate scandal began to paralyze Nixon’s White House, the Nixon Administration continued to accord its high priority to the issue of

international drug control. Egil Krogh, Jr., Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs, had the primary responsibility of coordinating the effort. The State Department was however, not deprived of its function in this area as it had been in others. because President's Advisor on National Security Affairs' dominance over foreign policy. The Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control, established in August 1971 to coordinate the drug effort, was formally chaired by the Secretary of State. More importantly, a New Jersey politician, Nelson Gross, was appointed that same month as Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State and Coordinator for International Narcotics matters. He was described by one senior drug enforcement administrator as "a very effective man, although a bull in a China shop -- not the diplomat", he "got the program on the road". He travelled extensively stressing the importance which Nixon attached to drug enforcement in his meetings with US ambassadors and high level foreign officials including Presidents and interior ministers.43

Gross remained in office for one-and-a-half-years. He had a fairly broad mandate from the White House to take a

tough posture with foreign leaders. He became a strong advocate within the State Department for threatening aid cut offs and US vetoes of International bank loans as the most effective means of getting cooperation from other countries. Throughout the Third World, in Southeast and Southwest Asia and Latin America, governments were pressured to change their drug laws, create drug enforcement units, acknowledge domestic drug abuse problems and generally give greater attention and visibility to international drug control. Perhaps Gross gave a most blunt warning to the President of Paraguay, Alfredo Stroessner, who had indicated his reluctance to extradite a major heroin trafficker, Auguste Ricorde, to the United States. His threat to cut off all US aid and assertion that President Nixon would go to any lengths to secure the drug traffickers apparently had the desired result.44 The French-born trafficker, who reportedly had played a major role in coordinating the Latin American route of the French Connection, was extradited to face charges despite provision in Paraguayan law45 to the contrary.

The Nixon Administration's efforts in the international realm were not, without some results. It was largely responsible for introducing far-reaching changes in drug laws around the world, for inspiring the creation of drug enforcement units and the adoption of their investigation techniques, for obliging governments to deal with domestic drug abuse problems and for greatly increasing the scope and intensity of attentions devoted to the drug issue by international institutions. During the Nixon presidency the US federal drug enforcement agency emerged as the first national police agency with a global, operational presence.

President Nixon had made the word against a heroin "epidemic". There was evidence of a substantial increase in US heroin use around 1970, but researchers questioned whether the use was as widespread as Nixon claimed. They accused his administration of systematically distorting addiction statistics to create the illusion that Nixon was getting tough with crime in order to strengthen his re-election bid. Governments frequently distort the data on drugs for political reasons. The critics alleged that President Nixon used the issue of drugs for political ends.

46 Merrill Collett, n.41, p.22.
There were also hints of corrupt practices. These charges cannot be proved or disproved. But the fact was that in nearly five years he was in office, the drug addiction in the United States increased rather than decreased. Therefore, the charge that Nixon was exaggerating the danger of drug abuse does not appear to be valid. But there was something more in the charge of political corruption.

The House and Senate opened investigations in the early 1970s of the DEA and the CIA. The Rockefeller Report on the CIA discussed, cursorily, the agency's relationship with drug traffickers. Two books, Alfred McCoy's *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia* (1973) and Edward J. Epstein's *Agency of Fear* (1977), examined how anti-drug efforts had been compromised by the United States intelligence and White House operatives. The findings of these inquiries in the mid 1970s, if less than exhaustive was indicative of something fishy inside Nixon Administration's drug war. The DEA was found to be remarkably corrupt at its highest levels. 47 John Ingersoll, Director BNDD, at one point in 1971, refused point blank a White House request to boost the number of narcotics arrests for the sake of Nixon's re-election

47 Mooley and Byrne, n.33, p.40.
Within days of the creation of the DEA in July 1973, the new agency received credible reports from a reliable undercover agent about a $300,000 heroin deal financed by Robert Vesco. This financier-conman employed two relatives of President Richard Nixon and had contributed $200,000 to the Nixon Campaign Fund. The DEA immediately closed its investigation of the case and withdrew the undercover agent. The Senate investigation of the Vesco cover-up eventually led to a broader investigation of the DEA, which concluded in 1975 that the agency's "environment was conducive to corrupt and irregular practices." By that time Nixon was out of office and Gerald Ford was the President. People were willing to believe the worst about Tricky Dick.

Despite all that, the Nixon Administration's efforts can also be seen as the first sustained effort by the United States government to internationalize both its concern over drug abuse and its approach to drug policy in particular its preference for more stricter, law enforcement-oriented

48 Ibid., p.41.
49 Ibid., p.42.
50 Ibid.
politics. Although allegedly the Nixon Administration used the drug issue for blatant political ends, certainly many of its policies were essential for dealing with what was perceived as a drug epidemic in the United States. Many of the guiding assumptions of US drug policy were institutionalized at that time, to be moderated thereafter by the Carter and then by the Reagan Administration.\(^{51}\)

**Ford and Carter Administrations**

The reason why these two administrations did not pursue the anti-drug policy vigorously related to shifting public opinion. While there was no perceptible decline in the illegal use of drugs, the public concern with the issue had eased. The governments of Mexico and Turkey both adopted measures which pleased the United States. The Turkish government made it more difficult for opium to be converted into heroin and the government of Echeverria in Mexico agreed in November 1975 to expand its drug enforcement and eradication efforts. The US was more unhappy with the cooperation extended by the government of Thailand. Corruption frustrated measures against drug trafficking.

Despite it the US did not threaten the Thai government. During the Carter administration there was no significant change from the policies pursued by the two previous administrations. At the end of his tenure, President Carter was infuriated by the Cocaine coup in Bolivia on July 17, 1980. In response $127,000,000 foreign aid was suspended and the United States Ambassador Marvin Weisman was withdrawn.

Reagan Administration's War on Drugs

By the early 1980s, the drug use rather abuse was no longer limited to a single group of people but had become so widespread that there was hardly any social group which was completely free of the abuse. Obviously, drugs were taken by those who were rich and successful in life as well as by those who had not been able to do so well and sought relief from their frustration. Around 30 million Americans were estimated to be using drugs in one form or another and there had been an inflow of drugs into the United States due to the international smuggling on an unprecedented scale when the Reagan Presidency began. But the most adverse impact of

52 Ibid.
53 MacDonald, Dancing on a Volcano, n.37, p.57.
drugs on American society was the establishment of a nexus between the drug intake and the rise in crime. It was established beyond the shadow of doubt that there was a definite relationship between the two. It was due to this state of affairs that, Americans started perceiving drug traffic as the single most important issue dominating their foreign policy even though other issues like terrorism, Central America, Arab-Israeli conflict, nuclear non-proliferation and oil continued to worry Americans.