

The original documents are located in Box 11, folder “Drug Abuse - Meeting with the President, March 4, 1976” of the James M. Cannon Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT

Thursday, March 4, 1976

10:30 a.m.

Oval Office

RE: 1976 Fiscal Appropriation
International Drug Control
Aid

Drug

Drug has put in an Amendment

Cedentary ^{and other} - alerting by Van Hoff

should make presentation
support.

letter drug - but not essential

Program - get secrets to put
it in -

But only \$57.5 authorized
in secret

and money not authorized
about program.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 3, 1976

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I was deeply disturbed to learn of the House Appropriations Committee's action on Monday to reduce the FY 1976 appropriation for international narcotic control from \$42.5 million to \$25 million. I am writing to ask you to do everything you possibly can to assure approval of the full amount I requested for this important program when the Foreign Assistance Appropriations Act comes before the full House.

As you know, drug abuse is one of the most serious problems this country faces. Its cost to the nation in terms of ruined lives, broken homes and divided communities is staggering. It is, moreover, a major cause of crime. Tragically, this problem is not only increasing, but it is spreading from urban centers to our smaller communities.

Combating drug abuse is a major priority of my Administration, and I believe it is imperative that there be no slackening at this time of our efforts to stem the flow of illicit drugs into the United States.

Most of the serious drugs of abuse originate in foreign countries and are smuggled into this country. Our capability to deal with supplies of drugs available in the United States therefore depends heavily on the interest and capability of foreign governments to control the illicit production and shipment of drugs. For this reason, a certain element of our overall program to control drug abuse in America has been to assist foreign governments in strengthening their own narcotic control efforts. A vital part of this cooperative effort is providing equipment and technical assistance to our allies in the fight against drugs.

For example, Mexico, which has become the primary source of heroin reaching the United States, has been the principal recipient of our international narcotic control aid over the past several years. Using transportation equipment (mostly helicopters) supplied by us, the Mexican government has been able to mount an increasingly effective campaign to eradicate opium poppies in the western mountains and to interdict trafficking within Mexico. Without our assistance, a program of this magnitude simply would not have been possible.

Thus, while the international narcotic control assistance program is contained in the Foreign Assistance Appropriations Act, it is unique in that it has a direct and immediate bearing on a serious domestic problem. If we cut back on this program now, I believe it would seriously impede our ability to deal with the drug problem in the United States and might very well be misread by foreign governments as a signal of declining American interest in combating drug abuse. This would almost certainly result in a reduction of their efforts as well.

In my view, the requested \$42.5 million is extremely modest when compared to the estimated \$17 billion-a-year cost of drug abuse to our society. I would appreciate your help in restoring the full appropriation.

Sincerely,

The Honorable
The Speaker
The U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 3, 1976

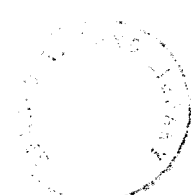
Dear John:

I was deeply disturbed to learn of the House Appropriations Committee's action on Monday to reduce the FY 1976 appropriation for international narcotic control from \$42.5 million to \$25 million. I am writing to ask you to do everything you possibly can to assure approval of the full amount I requested for this important program when the Foreign Assistance Appropriations Act comes before the full House.

As you know, drug abuse is one of the most serious problems this country faces. Its cost to the nation in terms of ruined lives, broken homes and divided communities is staggering. It is, moreover, a major cause of crime. Tragically, this problem is not only increasing, but it is spreading from urban centers to our smaller communities.

Combating drug abuse is a major priority of my Administration, and I believe it is imperative that there be no slackening at this time of our efforts to stem the flow of illicit drugs into the United States.

Most of the serious drugs of abuse originate in foreign countries and are smuggled into this country. Thus, our capability to deal with supplies of drugs available in the United States depends heavily on the interest and capability of foreign governments to control the illicit production and shipment of drugs. A certain element of our overall program to control drug abuse in America, therefore, has been to assist foreign governments in strengthening their own narcotic control efforts. A vital part of this cooperative effort is providing equipment and technical assistance to our allies in the fight against drugs.



For example, Mexico, which has become the primary source of heroin reaching the United States, has been the principal recipient of our international narcotic control aid over the past several years. Using transportation equipment (mostly helicopters) supplied by us, the Mexican government has been able to mount an increasingly effective campaign to eradicate opium poppies in the western mountains and to interdict trafficking within Mexico. Without our assistance, a program of this magnitude simply would not have been possible.

Thus, while the international narcotic control assistance program is contained in the Foreign Assistance Appropriations Act, it is unique in that it has a direct and immediate bearing on a serious domestic problem. If we cut back on this program now, I believe it would seriously impede our ability to deal with the drug problem in the United States and might very well be misread by foreign governments as a signal of declining American interest in combating drug abuse. This would almost certainly result in a reduction of their efforts as well.

In my view, the requested \$42.5 million is extremely modest when compared to the estimated \$17 billion-a-year cost of drug abuse to our society. I would appreciate your help in restoring the full appropriation.

Sincerely,

The Honorable John Rhodes
Minority Leader
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 3, 1976

Dear Charlie:

When we spoke last December about the serious drug problem this nation faces, you emphasized the critical importance of international cooperation in our efforts to cut off the flow of drugs into the United States. I agree with that emphasis and I have discussed mutual drug control efforts with the leaders of several countries, including President Echeverria of Mexico, President Lopez of Colombia and Prime Minister Demirel of Turkey. Thus, I was deeply disturbed to learn that the House Appropriations Committee has cut from \$42.5 million to \$25 million the Fiscal 1976 appropriation for international narcotic control aid.

You know, of course, that most of the serious drugs of abuse originate in foreign countries and are smuggled into this country. Our capability to deal with supplies of drugs available in the United States, therefore, depends heavily on our ability to strengthen the narcotic control capability of foreign governments. This is precisely what we are trying to do with our international narcotic control assistance program.

A cut of the magnitude suggested by the Committee's action on Monday could cripple this program and might very well be misread by foreign governments as a signal of declining American interest in drug abuse. We must avoid both of these results.

Accordingly, I hope you will do everything you can to assure approval of the full \$42.5 million

appropriation when the Foreign Assistance
Appropriations Act is taken up by the full
House.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
The House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515