

Commissioner, Washington, D. C.

1670-141 & 1678-4
September 18, 1953

District Director, Los Angeles, California

Mexican Border Control and the Removal of Mexican Illegal Entrants;
C.O. memorandum to Attorney General of 8/28/53 and C.O. radiogram #570
to Los Angeles District Office of 9/15/53

ATTENTION: ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, BORDER PATROL, DETENTION
AND DEPORTATION DIVISION

As requested, this report and recommendations is submitted on the proposed plan of operations following the construction of fences along certain designated portions of the Mexican border in this District.

I. FINDINGS OF THE ARMY ENGINEERS ON THE FENCE CONSTRUCTION

There is attached copy of report of reconnaissance survey dated September 14, 1953 submitted to the Chief of Engineers, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., by the Los Angeles Engineering Division. The cost of the project has been estimated at \$2,183,000 and it is said that ninety days and \$100,000 will be required to make surveys and prepare project plans and specifications. The estimated cost and survey do not include the acquisition of land or easements needed for the construction of the fence and the parallel service and patrol road.

II. PROPOSED PLAN OF OPERATION FOLLOWING CONSTRUCTION OF FENCE

The project provides for 26.4 miles of new fencing and 5.6 miles of reconstructed fencing, making a total of 32 miles of fence. There remains approximately 210 miles of unfenced border. The fenced area is to be guarded by an estimated twenty-five towers equipped with two-way radio facilities and searchlights. It is universally conceded that the fence and towers of themselves are no barriers to illegal entries. They must be adequately guarded, not only to afford the reasonable deterrent effect, but to prevent sabotage. The following courses of actions are proposed:

a. Manning of Towers

It appears mandatory to man most of twenty-five towers around the clock, seven days a week in order to give adequate protection to the fence and to provide surveillance of the fenced areas.

b. Interceptor Crews

To be effective, provision must be made for ground patrol of the fenced area. These officers operating for the most part in jeeps will be in constant radio communication with the officers in the towers and must be able to proceed at spotted attempted crossings to intercept and apprehend the fence jumpers.

C O P Y

c. Patrol of Areas between Fences

Experience has established that practically the only effect a guarded barrier has is to compel prospective jumpers to attempt entries at unfenced points. During the past month the fenced area in the El Centro Sector was reasonably well patrolled. It caused thousands of Mexican aliens to effect entry in the Yuma and Andrade area. This was evidenced by the apprehension of over 13,000 in the latter area during the month of August as compared with an average of 5,700 apprehensions prior thereto.

d. Back-up Stations

Even with the construction of the proposed fence and the strengthening of the line watch, back-up stations for checking pedestrian, automobile and train traffic will continue to be necessary. However, once reasonable control of the line is attained, the roadblocks may be substantially reduced. Until that millennium is reached, it is deemed necessary to maintain most of the present roadblocks.

e. "Mopping-up" Operation

Coincident with the establishment of a line control, a mopping-up operation in the border area and elsewhere in the District must be undertaken.

f. Anti-smuggling Operations

With a tight line control, organized smuggling of aliens is bound to increase. More ingenious methods of evading detection will be employed. Smuggling by air and sea will increase. We cannot, therefore, afford to relax our present anti-smuggling operations but, on the contrary, must increase our vigilance and activities along those lines.

g. Operation of Airlift or Some Other Means of Removing Mexican Nationals

As long as we continue to dump apprehended aliens only across the border, they remain a constant threat and challenge. The program must, therefore, be implemented by one to remove those aliens not resident of the border areas to the interior of Mexico.

III. PERSONNEL REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT PROPOSED PLAN OF OPERATION

A. Estimated Number of Officers Required to Man the Towers Along the Sections of the Fence

1. Chula Vista Sector

(a)	San Ysidro area	10 towers	45 officers
(b)	Tecate area	1 tower	5 officers
	Sector Total		50 officers

2. El Centro Sector

(a)	Calexico area including		
	Mt. Signal Section	- 11 towers	51 officers
(b)	Andrade area	1 tower	5 officers
(c)	San Luis area	2 towers	9 officers
	Sector Total		<u>65</u> officers
	District Total		115 officers

It is considered impractical to patrol the fence areas exclusively by aircraft. See discussion under subhead IV - "Possibility of Effective Patrol of Fence and Other Border Area by Air."

B. Interceptor Crews

Estimated number of officers required to provide effective ground patrol of the fenced areas:

1. Chula Vista Sector

(a) San Ysidro area: 15.1 miles

5 - "2-man" crews on two of three	
8-hour shifts, 7 days per week	- 60 officers
2 - "2-man" crews for third shift	
(daylight hours), 7 days per week	- 6 officers

(b) Tecate area: 2 miles

1 - "2-man" crew, 24 hours per day,	
7 days per week - - - - -	9 officers
Sector Total	<u>75</u> officers

2. El Centro Sector

(a) Calexico area including Mt. Signal Section: 7.6 miles

3 - "2-man" crews, 2 shifts per day,	
7 days per week - - - - -	18 officers
1 - "2-man" crew, one shift per day,	
(daylight hours) - - - - -	3 officers

(b) Andrade area: .2 mile

1 - "2-man" crew, 24 hours per day,	
7 days per week - - - - -	9 officers

(c) San Luis area: 4.5 miles

2 - "2-man" crews, 24 hours per day,	
7 days per week - - - - -	18 officers
Sector Total	<u>48</u> officers
District Total	123 officers

C. Ground Patrol of Areas in the District Between Fences

1. Chula Vista Sector

- (a) From eastern terminus of fence on Otay Mesa to eastern boundary of Sector (near Jacumba):

3 - "2-man" crews, 24 hours per day,
7 days per week - - - - - 27 officers

Sector Total 27 officers

2. El Centro Sector

- (a) From western boundary of Sector (near Jacumba) to vicinity of Grays Well (approximately 15 miles west of Andrade):

3 - "2-man" crews, 24 hours per day,
7 days per week - - - - - 27 officers

- (b) Grays Well to approximately 10 miles south of Yuma on Colorado River:

3 - "2-man" crews, 24 hours per day,
7 days per week - - - - - 27 officers

- (c) From point 10 miles south of Yuma on the Colorado River to eastern limits of District, about 45 miles southeast of San Luis, Arizona:

3 - "2-man" crews, 24 hours per day,
7 days per week - - - - - 27 officers

Sector Total 81 officers

District Total 108 officers

To provide an adjunct to the manning of the towers and the surveillance of unfenced areas in the District as well as aiding in the "mopping-up" operations on ranches near the border, it is estimated that four additional pilots and two additional aircraft will be required. See statement under subhead "E" - "Additional Auxiliary Personnel."

D. Activities Other than Line Patrol

1. Chula Vista Sector

(a) Oceanside--roadblock: highway traffic inspection, U.S. Highway 101 - - - - -	24 officers
(b) Temecula area--roadblock: highway traffic inspection:	
(1) On U. S. Highway 395 - - - - -	14 officers
(2) On De Luz Canyon - - - - -	9 officers
(3) On State Highway 71 - - - - -	9 officers
(c) Aguanga--roadblock: highway traffic inspection - - - - -	9 officers
(d) Chula Vista area--train, bus and highway traffic inspection in various locations including San Diego, Linda Vista, etc. -	18 officers
(e) Colton area--train and bus traffic inspection - - - - -	18 officers
(f) "Mopping-up" activities--mobile force for use within Sector and/or other locations in this and other Districts -	17 officers
(g) Anti-smuggling - - - - -	<u>14</u> officers
Sector Total	132 officers

2. El Centro Sector

(a) Yuma area: train, highway, road and trail traffic inspection (U.S. Highway 80), Quartzite Road, Ogilby Road, Southern Pacific RR, etc. - - -	27 officers
(b) Indio area: train, highway, road and trail traffic inspection - - - - -	27 officers
(c) Brawley area: railroad, highway, road and trail traffic inspection - - - -	18 officers
(d) Niland area: railroad, highway, road and trail traffic inspection - - - -	36 officers
(e) "Mopping-up" activities: railroad, highway, road and trail traffic inspection - - - - -	45 officers
(f) Anti-smuggling - - - - -	10 officers
Sector Total	<u>163</u> officers
District Total	295 officers

E. Additional Auxiliary Personnel

1. Chula Vista Sector

Pilots, GS-11	2
Engineering Aide, Radio, GS-7	1
Clerk-Stenographers, GS-3	3
General Mechanics, CPC-5 (for repair and maintenance of fence)	5
Chief Radio Operator, GS-5	1
Automotive Mechanics, CPC-6	2
Sector Total	14

2. El Centro Sector

Pilots, GS-11	2
Engineering Aide, Radio, GS-7	1
Clerk-Stenographers, GS-3	3
General Mechanics, CPC-5 (for repair and maintenance of fence)	5
Chief Radio Operator, GS-5	1
Radio Operator, GS-4	1
Automotive Mechanics, CPC-6	2
Sector Total	15
District Total	29

F. Additional Equipment

Sedans	20
Jeeps	24
1/2-ton Pickup Trucks	10
1-ton Panel Trucks	20
50-passenger Busses	10
House-trailers	3
Airplanes (Cessna 170, or similar)	2
Two-way Mobile Radio Transmitters and Receivers	106
Binoculars	50 pair
30-06 Rifles	50
38-cal. Border Patrol Revolvers	400
Handcuffs	400 pair
Flashlights (3-cell)	1000
Handie-Talkies, FM radio	10
Ammunition (cost per year)	\$50,000.00

Above figures are for the entire District.

IV. POSSIBILITY OF EFFECTIVE PATROL OF FENCE AND OTHER BOUNDARY AREAS BY AIR

This has been discussed at length among appropriate District staff officers. It is concluded that an effective patrol of the fenced and unfenced areas of the border by air is not feasible. Among the factors considered are these known facts:

- a. It has been established by years of operation and experience that aircraft will spot illegal traffic only during daylight hours and cannot be utilized to intercept and apprehend violators. It is not even considered an effective deterrent.
- b. The border area west of the Coastal Range is fogged-in during daylight hours approximately 14% of the time. In the extreme heat of summer (over four months of the year) low-flying in the desert areas is not possible except in early morning and late afternoon hours. This is because of overheating of engines at low elevations in extremely high temperatures and ineffectiveness of low-level observation due to air turbulence.
- c. Rough, brushy terrain in mountainous areas restricts or prevents low-level flying with resulting impairment of visibility of ground activity. Brush and structures in congested areas further embarrass the effectiveness of patrolling the fenced and unfenced areas by air.

It is well established that aircraft will serve as an adjunct to ground operations in any and all activities. For that reason provision has been made for an increase in the number of aircraft and pilots for carrying on the proposed plan.

V. NEW PROBLEMS THAT WILL ARISE AS A RESULT OF THE PROPOSED OPERATION

1. Due to sabotage, rain-storms and other natural causes, repair and maintenance of the fences and patrol roads will be a serious problem.
2. It is our belief that a strict control of unassisted illegal entrants will be the direct cause of an increase in organized smuggling, especially by air and sea and by more ingenious methods than have been detected heretofore. It is also believed that illegal entry of aliens through ports of entry by fraud and misrepresentation may be expected to increase.
3. The operation will immediately cause a great increase in the number of people in populated areas in Mexico adjacent to this District, namely, Tijuana, Tecate, Mexicali, Algodones (opposite Andrade) and San Luis, Sonora. Therefore the plan of operation must be implemented by a method of removing apprehended aliens

to interior points in Mexico unless the Mexican Government will accomplish this removal effectively. At the present time resumption of the airlift appears to be the most economical method of carrying on this program. However it appears that at least one shipping concern is presently interested in providing transportation of removed Mexican aliens from sea ports in this District to remote sea ports in Mexico.

4. In order to support and make the proposed operation effective, a program of vigorous prosecution of violators of the Immigration and Nationality Act must be initiated and maintained. This contemplates fingerprinting of all arrested aliens and increased formal deportation proceedings.
5. In addition to the above, it is essential that a more workable program of the importation of Mexican or other foreign agricultural laborers be established and maintained.

VI. ELIMINATION OR LESSENING OF EXISTING PROBLEMS

It is the consensus of all concerned here that the construction of a fence or fences will have no great immediate effect on current problems in this District. However, it is believed that within a year, more or less, after this proposed plan of operation has been placed in effect and after most of the Mexican aliens presently residing illegally in this District have been arrested and removed, there can be a substantial reduction in the border patrol personnel and equipment required to maintain an adequate control of the situation as it will then exist.

The reduction will probably be possible first in the interior stations and in the personnel required for "mopping-up" operations. It is believed that a relatively small well-trained and highly mobile force to provide intelligence and to combat smuggling and other illegal entries will be found to be sufficient. The cost of maintenance and operation of vehicles, maintenance of aliens in custody and other related costs will be reduced in the same proportion.

Additionally, at such time as an adequate control of the border is established and maintained, it will be possible to release many investigators and a limited number of other personnel for case-load work in the District, including anti-subversive operations.