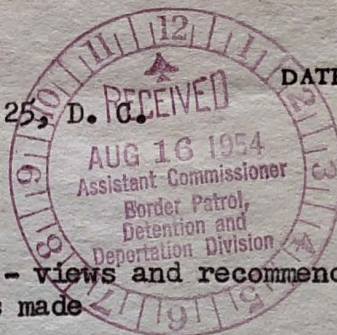


Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Commissioner
Central Office - Washington 25, D. C.

DATE: August 13, 1954

FROM : H. R. Landon, District Director
Los Angeles 13, California



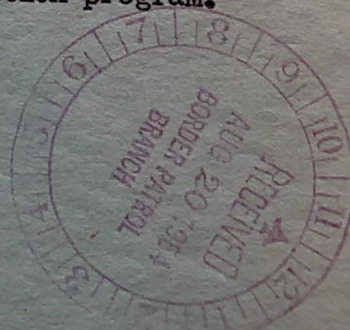
SUBJECT: Special Border Patrol Operation - views and recommendations as to the best method of holding the gains made

In the attached memoranda I have set out some background information on the "wetback" problem and outlined three plans of operation based upon the number of officers and the amount of equipment available. The first plan will entail an additional expenditure of \$2,246,000 for the employment of 703 men, \$490,000 for additional equipment and \$2,633,000 for construction of fences and towers. The second proposal, we believe, would provide reasonable control and would require an additional expenditure of \$1,051,493 for 218 men and \$220,650 for additional equipment. The third plan, which was submitted in connection with a budget proposal some time ago, involves an additional expense of \$526,000 for 110 men and \$124,950 for additional equipment. This plan contemplates, however, the construction, from other financial sources, of about 16 miles of fence at San Ysidro. This plan could be maintained in operation with no funds additional to that which is available in current appropriations and depends upon a redistribution of men and equipment which the Service now has.

I have also set out in the attached memoranda, as requested, comment regarding the effectiveness of holding the gains made through line and road block operations and comment and recommendations for future operations. Of particular note, I have urged that a continuous study be maintained, Service-wide, on the problems existing along the border with a view to a proper allocation of funds, men and equipment to meet the problems as they change from day to day, including what might be called a board of strategy to advise supervisory operation personnel.

Again, I should like to point out that so long as there continues to be a desire by large numbers of Mexican nationals to enter the United States illegally, the problem can be met only by the utilization of sufficient manpower for line, road block and mop-up operations, an adequate labor program, removal of apprehended wetbacks to central and southern Mexico and a vigorous prosecution and deportation program.

Enclosures



manpower as well as in transportation expenses of aliens apprehended, by permitting officers to arrest illegal entrants at the border and before they reach an interior destination. It is contemplated to have locked gates spaced approximately one mile apart on the longer sections of the fence, to permit patrol officers to cross the fence when necessary.

In addition to the construction of the 26.4 miles of fence indicated above, some repairs will be needed to the 5.6 miles of fence at Calexico, California.

The total cost of the California fence construction and repair plan will be approximately \$1,500,000.

b. San Ysidro Section

To be constructed from the western slope of the Otai Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, a distance of 14.9 miles.

c. Tecate Section

From a point 2.2 miles west of Tecate, California, to a point 2 miles east thereof, a distance of 4.2 miles.

d. Calexico Section

As indicated above, repairs to the 5.6 mile section at Calexico.

New construction from the ^(Western) terminus of the All American Canal to Signal Mountain, a distance of 2 miles.

e. Yuma Section

New construction from the eastern point where the All American Canal leaves the International boundary, to the port of entry at Andrade, a distance of .08 miles.

New construction from the Colorado River eastward past San Luis, Arizona, for a distance of 4.5 miles.

2. Texas Fence Project
(Lower Rio Grande Valley)

a. General Statement

The purpose and the proposed use of the fence in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas is identical with that of the fence recommended for California. At this time, only the construction of 10 miles of fence separating the towns of Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Mexico, is recommended. The cost of construction of this 10 miles of border fence for the Brownsville area will be approximately \$528,000. The type of fence constructed should be the same as the California fence, and wherever possible, the patrol road should be placed on the south side of the fence. This may be impractical in some sections of the Brownsville area.

In September of 1953, a survey team looked into the feasibility of constructing a border fence in the Brownsville and Hidalgo areas. This team was composed of a colonel from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, a member of the International Boundary and Water Commission, and Mr. Donald R. Kelley of this office. At that time, consideration was given to the building of the fence on the International Boundary and Water Commission levee, but due to the irregular course of the river, and the fact that the levee leaves many farms between it and the river, this was found to be impractical from an operational standpoint. At this time, it is not believed that a section of border fence should be constructed at Hidalgo, because it is felt that the fence in this area would serve only a limited purpose. The entire section of border between Hidalgo and Brownsville is thick, river-bank brush country. For this reason, unless the fence could completely close the gap between Hidalgo and Brownsville, it would not serve to divert illegal crossers to areas where they could be more easily apprehended.

The plan for the Brownsville area contemplates locating the fence a sufficient distance from the International boundary to permit the construction of a jeep road on the south side of the fence, and to have the fence patrolled 24 hours a day.

A large part of the land in the border area of Brownsville is controlled by individual farmers, and the Service can expect opposition to the building of a fence for the purpose of keeping out illegal crossers. It will be necessary in most of the area, with the possible exception of some stretches within the city limits of Brownsville, and where the fence follows the I.B.W.C. levee, to obtain the necessary land by condemnation proceedings and to reimburse the land owners for damages to the land and for the impairment of their riparian rights. This cost can be lowered considerably by permitting access to the water; however, it should be borne in mind that such access would also permit the farmer to bring illegal aliens through the fence.