

# Operation Intercept

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MEXICO CITY (DF)—Mounting resentment against “Operation Intercept”—the U.S. effort to halt illegal drug traffic by thorough inspection of cars at border points has been voiced by border officials, business organizations and the Mexican press.

“Whoever dreamed up this witch hunt should have his head examined,” said Mexico City’s *News*. “By last night a million people had been hurt by it to net a handful of two-bit pushers.”

Mexican government officials in border areas claim “Operation Intercept” is harming the tourist trade, causing unnecessary inconvenience to innocent travelers and spawning “anti-Americanism” among Mexican border dwellers.

Officially the government has not voiced any complaints. But Foreign Minister Antonio Carrillo Flores was to meet today with U.S. Secretary of State William P. Rogers, presumably to ask U.S. authorities to “ease off.”

The Confederation of Chambers, a business group, asked the government to intervene, claiming the border delays while cars are searched for drugs affect “a half-million people every day.”

Among those searched Wednesday was the Mexican consul in El Paso, Tex.

He complained to the Mexican Foreign Ministry that U.S. customs officials refused to accept his diplomatic papers and searched him and his car after telling him he “looked suspicious.”

One report said the consul, Roberto Urrea, said he was beaten by U.S. narcotics agents when he tried to resist.

## Related

See “Out of the hands of the People” in this issue.



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