

## PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

This report deals with one component of the Nation's war on drugs—specifically, the effort to interdict drugs en route to or across the Nation's borders. More than half the recent Federal expenditures on drug law enforcement are devoted to interdiction. OTA estimates that in Fiscal Year 1986 drug interdiction expenditures amounted to almost \$800 million. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-570) and a number of Administration proposals will substantially increase this number.

The precise effect of the present interdiction effort is difficult to determine, but interdiction plays a significant role in the national strategy to combat drug abuse. For example, interdiction can deter at least some inexperienced smugglers and, when seizures result, subsequent investigations may lead to the break-up of smuggling organizations.

However, given the worldwide glut of drugs and the expert view that the United States is the favored market for drugs, interdiction alone will probably never result in more than a short-term reduction in drug supply.

This study is concerned with the availability, performance, and use of technologies that can contribute to the interdiction effort. Thus, this study focuses major attention on the technologies available and the Federal organizations that use those technologies and their strategies. The procurement and operation of technologies used to support drug interdiction represent the largest share of Federal expenditures aimed at the prevention of smuggling. This study investigates the range of choices among technologies and the alternative ways of using those technologies.

