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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

FOR RELEASE: Monday 21 September, 1970

FROM: Kika de la Garza

WASHINGTON, D C---Concepts of border control between the United States and Mexico must be updated to meet the needs of the 1970s, Rep Kika de la Garza declared in an address today in the House of Representatives.

"The Immigration Border Patrol, the United States Customs Service and the concepts of border control, both as to wetbacks and contraband, are for the most part today products of the 1920s and 1930s," Representative de la Garza said. "There have been no basic changes in four decades and the 1970s demand something better than that."

The South Texas Congressman, pointing out that the Mexican Government extends full cooperation to the United States in the return to Mexico of nationals who have illegally entered this country, decried the fact that the Border Patrol "Seems to be a neglected instrument of the government, no matter what administration occupies the seats of authority in Washington." He stated that the number of Border Patrolmen on the Mexican border now is only slightly greater than it was three decades ago.

"Surely," he said, "if we intend to cope with a problem which is disturbing to many conscientious people because they see the impact of the illegal alien on the economy, something should be done to augment and support the men who are charged under law with responsibility for the security of our border."

Mr de la Garza warned that control on the border is not solely the product of a border police function. "The problem will not respond to purely a police operation," he declared. "It is a job which cannot be done without a blending of border police operations, employment concepts and adjustments in our country and, where possible, the achievement of economic balances between our country and Mexico."