

## **D. Cowdrey's "Casebook" Notes**

### **Global Sister City Programs & Smuggling**

#### **Legal Trade Passages, Sister City Agreements, Mass Smuggling Events**

#### **Legal Trade Passages, Sister City Agreements = Mass Human Smuggling Events, Human Trafficking, Organized Crime, and Eventually Terrorism**

Laredo, Texas: ~41 (largest in the U.S. known) participates in the global Sister City Program: more than any other city in the nation.

Chicago, Illinois: ~28–29 agreements ← Same story, different city.

#### **Festivals, normalizing the hoisting of foreign flags, trafficking, smuggling**

#### **Why Laredo shows up in smuggling discussions**

1. It is the busiest commercial land border crossing in the U.S.

Laredo's port of entry handles more commercial traffic than any other U.S. border crossing, with millions of trucks carrying goods each year. Because of this volume, traffickers sometimes try to conceal illegal shipments among the massive amount of legal cargo.

Texas Comptroller

2. High volume creates more opportunities for smuggling to be attempted

Organizations that move contraband or smuggle people exploit high-traffic corridors where there are many vehicles and shipments, because it offers more chances to hide illicit goods among legitimate loads.

Department of Justice

3. It is part of a major Southwest border drug trafficking corridor

Federal analyses identify the South Texas region, including Laredo and its surrounding crossings, as one of the principal corridors used by Mexican drug trafficking organizations to move narcotics into the United States.

Department of Justice

4. Human smuggling attempts occur there too

Law enforcement has documented stash houses and interceptions of smuggled people in the Laredo sector of Border Patrol operations.

Customs and Border Protection

#### **In summary**

Laredo is one of the most trafficked border crossings and thus features prominently in smuggling statistics and enforcement activity, especially for drug and human smuggling attempts because of the sheer volume of legal trade passing through.

Department of Justice

**What do “dignitaries” and politicians have to do with it?**