

GOP Embraces a New Foreign Policy: Bomb Mexico to Stop Fentanyl

Republicans suggest everything from terrorist labels to an invasion to decimate drug cartels in Mexico.

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A growing number of prominent Republicans are rallying around the idea that to solve the fentanyl crisis, America must bomb it away.

In recent weeks, Donald Trump has discussed sending "special forces" and using "cyber warfare" to target cartel leaders if he's reelected president and, per Rolling Stone, asked for "battle plans" [to strike Mexico](#). Reps. Dan Crenshaw (R-Texas) and Mike Waltz (R-Fla.) introduced a bill seeking authorization for the use of military force to "[put us at war with the cartels](#)." Sen. [Tom Cotton](#) (R-Ark.) said he is open to sending U.S. troops into Mexico to target drug lords even without that nation's permission. [And lawmakers](#) in [both chambers](#) have filed legislation to label some cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, a move supported by GOP presidential aspirants.

"We need to start thinking about these groups more like ISIS than we do the mafia," Waltz, a former Green Beret, said in a short interview.

Not all Republican leaders are behind this approach. John Bolton, Trump's third national security adviser who's weighing his own presidential run, said unilateral military operations "are not going to solve the problem." And House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Mike McCaul (R-Texas), for example, is "still evaluating" the AUMF proposal "but has concerns about the immigration implications and the bilateral relationship with Mexico," per a Republican staff member on the panel.

But the eagerness of some Republicans to openly legislate or embrace the use of the military in Mexico suggests that the idea is taking firmer root inside the party. And it illustrates the ways in which frustration with immigration, drug overdose deaths and

antipathy towards China are defining the GOP's larger foreign policy.

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