

4 held in kidnap of U.S. drug agent

From Chicago Tribune wires

TIJUANA, Mexico—Mexican police, stung by U.S. charges that they allowed the escape of a prime suspect in the Feb. 7 kidnaping of an American drug agent, announced late Monday the arrests of the alleged mastermind of the abduction and three other men.

In custody were Tomas Morlett, a former agent of the Federal Department of Security who guarded visiting foreign dignitaries; Enrique Gonzalez, a former high-ranking federal traffic police officer; Eduardo Ramirez, a former

federal security chief; and Mariano Belazategoitia, a civilian.

Angel Villa Batron, commander of the Tijuana detachment of the judicial police, said Morlett is the person described over the weekend by Francis Mulien, administrator of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, as the "mastermind or intellectual author" of the kidnaping plot.

Morlett, Ramirez and Gonzalez were arrested Sunday on a road between Tijuana and Mexicali. No formal charges were announced against any of the

suspects, and no details of the case were made available.

Batron had charged that agents had earlier had permitted the escape of Rafael Caro-Quintero, prime suspect in the abduction of agent Enrique Camarena Salazar in Guadaluajara.

Seven U.S. citizens, including Camarena, have disappeared or been abducted since December in Guadaluajara. U.S. officials say the city, about 350 miles northwest of Mexico City, has become a major transit point for drug traffic into the U.S.