DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

a tradition of excellence

1973-2003

This book is dedicated to those DEA employees and their families who, with honor and courage, have led the way for those who follow.

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Acknowledgments

DEA gratefully acknowledges the offices and employees who contributed photos, historical material and stories to this 30th Anniversary History Book. Many thanks to those people who helped create, compile and edit this book.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

In the spring and summer of 1973, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate heard months of testimony on Richard Nixon's Reorganization Plan Number 2, which proposed the creation of a single federal agency to consolidate and coordinate the government's drug control activities.

1970-1975

Drug use had not reached its all-time peak, but the problem was serious enough to warrant a serious response.

The long, proud, and honorable tradition of federal drug law enforcement began in 1915 with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. In the following decades, several federal agencies had drug law enforcement responsibilities. By the 1960s, the two agencies charged with drug law enforcement were the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control (BDAC) and the federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN). It was during this period that America underwent a significant change. The introduction of drugs into American culture and the efforts to "normalize" drug use started to take a terrible toll on the nation. Nevertheless, American children could still walk to school in relative safety, worrying only about report cards or the neighborhood bully. Today however, as children approach their schools, they see barbed wire, metal detectors, and signs warning drug dealers that school property is a "drug free zone." In too many communities, drug dealers and gunfire force decent, law-abiding citizens to seek refuge behind locked doors.

In 1960, only four million Americans had ever tried drugs. Currently, that number has risen to over 74 million. Behind these statistics are the stories of countless families, communities, and individuals adversely affected by drug abuse and drug trafficking.

Prior to the 1960s, Americans did not see drug use as acceptable behavior, nor did they believe that drug use was an inevitable fact of life. Indeed, tolerance of drug use resulted in terrible increases in crime between the 1960s and the early 1990s, and the landscape of America has been altered forever.

By the early 1970s, drug use had not yet reached its all-time peak, but the problem was sufficiently serious to warrant a serious response. Consequently, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was created in 1973 to deal with America's growing drug problem.

At that time, the well-organized international drug trafficking syndicates headquartered in Colombia and Mexico had not yet assumed their place on the world stage as the preeminent drug suppliers. All of the heroin and cocaine, and most of the marijuana that entered the United States was being trafficked by lesser international drug dealers who had targeted cities and towns within the nation. Major law enforcement investigations, such as the French Connection made by agents in the DEA's predecessor agency, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD), graphically illustrated the complexity and scope of America's heroin problem.

In the years prior to 1973, several important developments took place which would ultimately have a significant impact on the DEA and federal drug control efforts for years to come. By the time that the DEA was created by Executive Order in July 1973 to establish a single unified command, America was beginning to see signs of the drug and crime epidemic that lay ahead. In order to appreciate how the DEA has evolved into the important law enforcement institution it is today, it must be understood that many of its programs have roots in predecessor agencies.

On December 14, 1970, at the White House, the International Narcotic Enforcement Officers' Association (INEOA) presented to President Nixon a "certificate of special honor in recognition of the outstanding loyalty and contribution to support narcotic law enforcement." Standing with President Nixon were (from left) John E. Ingersoll, Director of BNDD; John Bellizzi, Executive Director of INEOA; and Matthew O'Conner, President of INEOA.

DEA Special Agents	**DEA Budget**
1973.....1,470	1973.....$74.9 million
1975.....2,135	1975.....$140.9 million

BNDD

John E. Ingersoll
Director, BNDD
1968-1973

***John E. Ingersoll** served as Director of the U.S. Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) from 1968 until 1973. He began his career as a patrolman and then sergeant for the Oakland, California, Police Department from 1956 until 1961, when he became the Director of Field Services for the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). He served with the IACP until 1966, when he became the chief of police for Charlotte, North Carolina, until his appointment as Director of BNDD in 1973. He was also the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs from 1969 to 1973. From 1973 to 1993, Mr. Ingersoll worked for the IBM Corporation, serving as Director of Security for IBM's International Business Unit and the IBM World Trade Subsidiary. Since April 1993, he has worked as an independent consultant to business and government.*

In 1968, with the introduction into Congress of Reorganization Plan No. 1, President Johnson proposed combining two agencies into a third new drug enforcement agency. The action merged the Bureau of Narcotics, in the Treasury Department, which was responsible for the control of marijuana and narcotics such as heroin, with the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control (BDAC), in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, which was responsible for the control of dangerous drugs, including depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens, such as LSD. The new agency, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD), was placed under the Department of Justice, which is the government agency primarily concerned with federal law enforcement.

Before the creation of the DEA in 1973, multiple law enforcement and intelligence organizations carried out federal drug enforcement policies.

According to the Reorganization Plan, "the Attorney General will have full authority and responsibility for enforcing the federal laws relating to narcotics and dangerous drugs. The BNDD, headed by a Director appointed by the Attorney General, would:

(1) consolidate the authority and preserve the experience and manpower of the Bureau of Narcotics and Bureau of Drug Abuse Control;

(2) work with state and local governments in their crackdown on illegal trade in drugs and narcotics, and help to train local agents and investigators;

(3) maintain worldwide operations, working closely with other nations, to suppress the trade in illicit narcotics and marijuana; and

(4) conduct an extensive campaign of research and a nationwide public education program on drug abuse and its tragic effects."

The BNDD became the primary drug law enforcement agency and concentrated its efforts on both international and interstate activities. By 1970, the BNDD had nine foreign offices—in Italy, Turkey, Panama, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Thailand, Mexico, France, and Colombia—to respond to the dynamics of the drug trade. Domestically, the agency initiated a task force approach involving federal, state, and local officers. The first such task force was set up in New York City.

In addition, the BNDD established Metropolitan Enforcement Groups, which were based on the regional enforcement concept that provided for sharing undercover personnel, equipment, and other resources from different jurisdictions. The BNDD provided training and operational support for these units. By February 1972, the BNDD's agent strength had grown to 1,361, its budget had more than quadrupled, and its foreign and domestic arrest totals had doubled. In addition, the BNDD had regulatory control over more than 500,000 registrants licensed to distribute licit drugs, and it had six sophisticated forensic labs.

SPECIAL

BNDD BULLETIN

Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs / U.S. Department of Justice

THE PRESIDENT

Proclamation 3981

DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION WEEK, 1970

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The past decade has seen the abuse of drugs grow from essentially a local police problem into a serious threat to the health and safety of millions of Americans. The number of narcotics addicts in the United States is estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands and the effects of their addiction spread far beyond their own lives.

Statistics tell but part of the tragedy of drug abuse. The crippled lives of young Americans, the shattered hopes of their parents, the rending of the social fabric—as addicts inevitably turn to crime in order to supply a costly habit—these are the personal tragedies, the human disasters that tell the real story of what drug abuse does to individuals and can do to our nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning May 24, 1970, as Drug Abuse Prevention Week.

I call upon officials of the Federal government, particularly in the Departments of Justice and Health, Education and Welfare, to join with educators and administrators of the academic community at large in establishing meaningful programs for the promotion of drug abuse prevention among young people. I urge State and local governments, as well as business, professional, and civil groups, to cooperate in such programs and to exercise their initiative in exploring new methods by which the potential dangers of drug experimentation can be communicated to the entire nation. The communications media can provide invaluable assistance in this regard, and I request their full support of this endeavor.

I encourage members of the clergy, and all those whose activities intervalate with young people, to make a special effort during this week to discourage drug abuse, to end drug experimentation, and to eliminate illegal drug traffic.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and ninety-fourth.

Richard Nixon

ABOVE: With Proclamation 3981, President Richard Nixon designated the week of May 24 as Drug Abuse Prevention Week in 1970.

BELOW: Vol.III No.I BNDD Bulletin

March-April 1971

BNDD BULLETIN

BUREAU OF NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS / U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUREAU OF NARCOTICS & DANGEROUS DRUGS

The seal for the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs is bold and contemporary in design, reflecting the Bureau's approach to the world of today. The words radiating around the outside show the U.S. Department of Justice on top, and the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs underneath.

The circle symbolizes unity and stability.

The eagle in full flight represents the traditional bald eagle in the official Presidential Seal. It is a dignified, strong bird who soars through the atmosphere, symbolizing the Bureau's unceasing vitality and energy, in surveillance of world-wide drug trafficking.

The globe is the eagle's territory, symbolizing the international scope of the Bureau's activities. The positioning of the globe shows the focal point of our Bureau, which is the United States of America.

The sunburst of radiating light is taken from the badge, worn proudly by the Special Agents of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, symbolizing enforcement through knowledge and enlightenment.

The Attorney General

ODALE

Myles J. Ambrose
Director, ODALE
1972-1973

On January 28, 1972, President Nixon created the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement (ODALE), within the Department of Justice by Executive Order 11641. The Office was headed by Myles Ambrose, who had served as U.S. Commissioner of Customs at the Treasury Department from 1969 until 1972. As Director of ODALE, Mr. Ambrose served as Special Assistant Attorney General and as Special Consultant to the President. ODALE was established for an 18-month period as an experimental approach to the problem of drug abuse in America. During that time, ODALE conducted intensive operations throughout the country, then evaluated their impact on heroin trafficking at the middle and lower distribution levels. ODALE's objective was "to bring substantial federal resources to bear on the street-level heroin pusher."

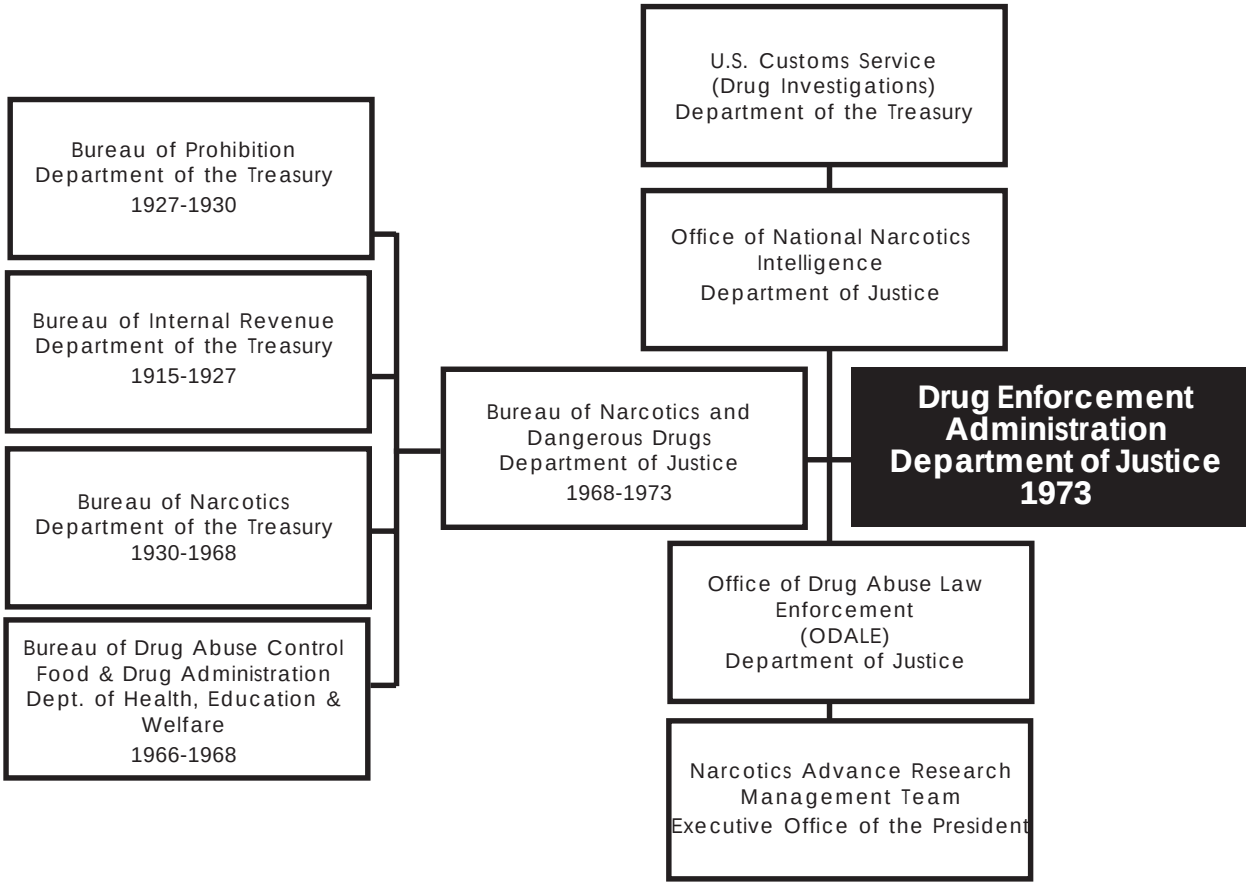
Organizationally, the office drew heavily upon the expertise of existing federal law enforcement agencies to coordinate and focus resources and manpower. ODALE programs involved close, full-time working relationships among participating federal, state, and local officers who, while reporting administratively to their respective agencies, took direction from ODALE.

ODALE provided common office space for the personnel assigned to it, and all salaries and other costs were borne by the parent organization on a nonreimbursable basis. Justice Department entities involved included the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Marshals Service, the Tax Division, and offices of the U.S. Attorneys in the cities where the heroin problem was concentrated. Treasury Department entities included the Internal Revenue Service, the Bureau of Customs, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. In addition, non-law enforcement federal agencies contributing personnel and other assistance included the Atomic Energy Commission, the U.S. Air Force, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Interstate Commerce Commission.

By 1972, ODALE headquarters had 79 authorized positions and nine regional offices. It targeted street-level drug dealers through special grand juries and pooled intelligence data for federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. Regional offices were based in Los Angeles, Denver, Houston, Kansas City, Chicago, Cleveland, Atlanta, New York City, and Philadelphia. ODALE task forces operated in 38 target cities through investigation-prosecution teams and special grand juries which considered indictments.

In 1998, Mr. Ambrose was with Arter and Hadden, LLP, in Washington, D.C.

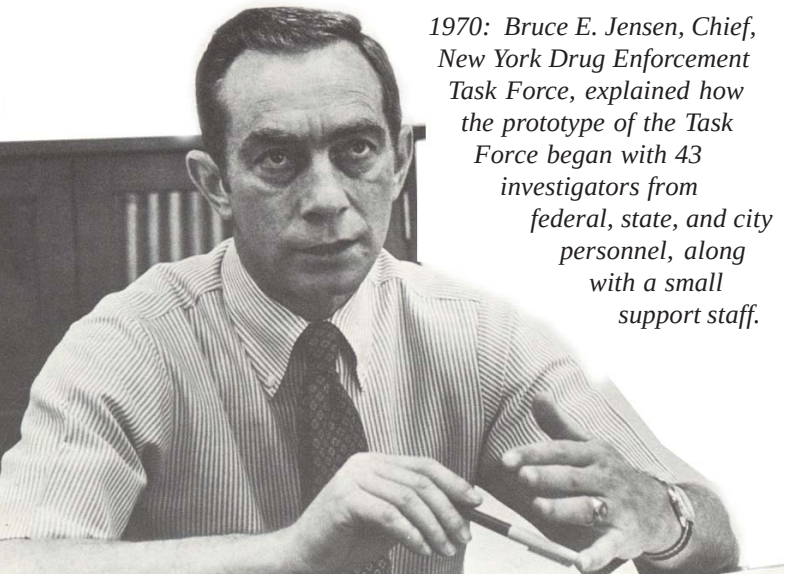
DEA Genealogy



Foreign Offices Opened

1960 Paris, France
1960 Rome, Italy
1961 Istanbul, Turkey
1963 Bangkok, Thailand
1963 Mexico City, Mexico
1963 Monterrey, Mexico
1963 Hong Kong
1963 Singapore
1966 Lima, Peru
1966 Seoul, S. Korea
1969 Guadalajara, Mexico
1970 Buenos Aires, Argentina
1970 Frankfurt, Germany
1970 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
1970 London, England
1970 Madrid, Spain
1970 Manila, Philippines
1970 Santiago, Chile
1970 Tokyo, Japan
1971 Ankara, Turkey
1971 Asuncion, Paraguay
1971 Caracas, Venezuela
1971 Chiang Mai, Thailand
1971 Brasilia, Brazil
1971 Hermosillo, Mexico
1971 Milan, Italy
1972 Bogota, Colombia
1972 Bonn, Germany
1972 Brussels, Belgium
1972 La Paz, Bolivia
1972 New Dehli, India
1972 Panama City, Panama
1972 Quito, Ecuador
1973 Islamabad, Pakistan
1973 Mazatlan, Mexico
1973 Ottawa, Canada
1974 Guayaquil, Equador
1974 Karachi, Pakistan
1974 Kingston. Jamaica
1974 San Jose, Costa Rica
1974 Songkhla, Thailand
1974 The Hague, Netherlands
1974 Vienna, Austria

New York Task Force (1970)



1970: Bruce E. Jensen, Chief, New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, explained how the prototype of the Task Force began with 43 investigators from federal, state, and city personnel, along with a small support staff.

In February 1972, the New York Joint Task Force seized $967,000 during a Bronx arrest. New York City Police Captain Robert Howe (left) and BNDD agent Theodore L. Vernier are shown counting the money.

In 1970, the first narcotics task force was established in New York under the auspices of the BNDD to maximize the impact of cooperating federal, state, and local law enforcement elements working on complex drug investigations. Bruce Jensen, former chief of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, described it "not as a monument...but a foundation firm enough to withstand the test of time." At the time, heroin was a significant problem, and law enforcement officials were seeking ways to reduce availability and identify and prosecute those responsible for heroin trafficking. Federal, state, and municipal law enforcement organizations put aside rivalries and agreed to collaborate within the framework of the New York Joint Task Force. The task force program also became an essential part of the DEA's operations and reflected the belief that success is only possible through cooperative investigative efforts. The BNDD, the New York State Police, and the New York City Police Department contributed personnel to work with Department of Justice lawyers and support staff. The rationale behind the Task Force was that each representative brought different and valuable perspectives and experiences to the table and that close collaboration among the membership could result in cross-training and the sharing of expertise. Since then, the Task Force expanded from the original 43 members. In 1971 it increased to 172 members, and by 2003 it had 211 law enforcement personnel assigned.

In April 1973, New York City Police and federal agents arrested 69 drug traffickers who were believed to be capable of distributing 100 kilograms of cocaine a week.

Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act (1970)

In response to America's growing drug problem, Congress passed the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), Title II of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970. It replaced more than 50 pieces of drug legislation, went into effect on May 1, 1971, and was enforced by the BNDD, the DEA's predecessor agency. This law, along with its implementing regulations, established a single system of control for both narcotic and psychotropic drugs for the first time in U.S. history.

It also established five schedules that classify controlled substances according to how dangerous they are, their potential for abuse and addiction, and whether they possess legitimate medical value. Thirty three years later, the CSA, though amended on several occasions, remained the legal framework from which the DEA derived its authority.

Members of a 1972 Compliance Investigator class were trained in drug identification.

1970: BNDD's Compliance Investigators frequently found that pharmacy violators of narcotics and drug laws also lacked professional responsibility in other areas. The unsavory sanitary conditions of the storage room pictured here were found during a BNDD pharmacy investigation in Louisiana.

Diversion Control Program (1971)

In the 1969 U.S. Senate hearings on the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), witnesses estimated that 50 percent of the amphetamine being produced annually during the 1960s had found its way into the illicit drug traffic. Following the passage of the CSA in 1970, it was imperative that the U.S. Government establish mechanisms to ensure that this growing diversion of legal drugs into the illicit market be addressed. In 1970, over two billion dosage units of amphetamine and methamphetamine were producing excessive amounts of pharmaceuticals.

Thus, the controls mandated by the CSA encompassed scheduling, manufacturing, distributing, prescribing, importing, exporting, and other related activities. They also provided the BNDD with the legal tools needed to deal with the diversion problem as it existed at that time. Prior to the CSA, investigations involving the diversion of legitimate pharmaceuticals were conducted solely by special agents as part of their enforcement activities. However, shortly after implementation of the CSA, BNDD management recognized that the investigation of diver-

sion cases differed significantly from investigation of traditional narcotics cases.

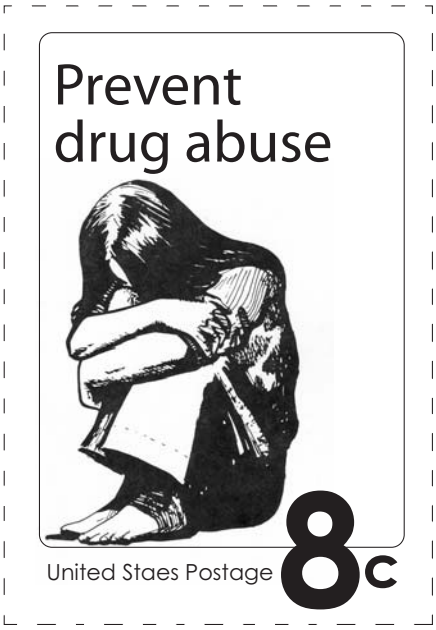
In late 1971, the Compliance Program, later renamed the Diversion Control Program, was created to provide a specialized work force that could focus exclusively on the diversion issue and take full advantage of the controls and penalties established by the CSA.

This work force developed an in-depth knowledge of the legitimate pharmaceutical industry and the investigative techniques needed to make cases that were essential to investigate legitimate organizations and professionals engaged in drug diversion. The program was placed under the BNDD's Office of Enforcement and staffed by compliance investigators, later called diversion investigators.

The first major challenge these investigators faced was the extraordinary amount of amphetamines and barbiturates being diverted at the manufacturer and distributor levels. The year the CSA went into effect, over 2,000 provisional registrations were issued to manufacturers and distributors who had been operating under the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914 and the Drug Abuse Control Amendments. In order to stem the diversion problem, it was necessary to enlist the support of manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, and pharmacists for regular inspections of records and premises. It was also necessary to establish a system of registration to ensure that law enforcement investigators had access to the records and physical plants maintained by those responsible for the manufacture and distribution of drugs.

The first inspections of registrants revealed instances where drug handlers were operating out of basements and garages with little or no security and were unable to account for the receipt or distribution of the drugs they handled. In order to ensure that the diversion of dangerous drugs did not continue, it was critical that meaningful punitive measures could be taken against the minority of registrants responsible for the diversion of drugs into the illegal market. Offenders were given the option of either surrendering their controlled substances registration or instituting strict controls necessary to prevent diversion in their offices and organizations. Establishments and individuals who continued to violate the law were subject to criminal, civil, or administrative actions.

As the program developed, it became clear that the diversion of drugs was not simply a domestic issue. It became essential that controls on international supplies of legal drugs also be established. In the early 1970s, there were several examples of foreign subsidiaries of U.S. drug manufacturers becoming the main suppliers of illicit drugs, such as amphetamine, to the black market in the United States. Through revocation of drug manufacturers' export licenses, the BNDD, and then the DEA, were able to successfully reduce the influx of illegal licit drugs into the United States.



Drug Abuse Prevention Commemorative U.S. Postage Stamp

On October 4, 1971, the U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp to commemorate the Prevention efforts of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. It was designed by Suzanne Rice and K. Gardner Perine of the BNDD Graphic Section.

French Connection

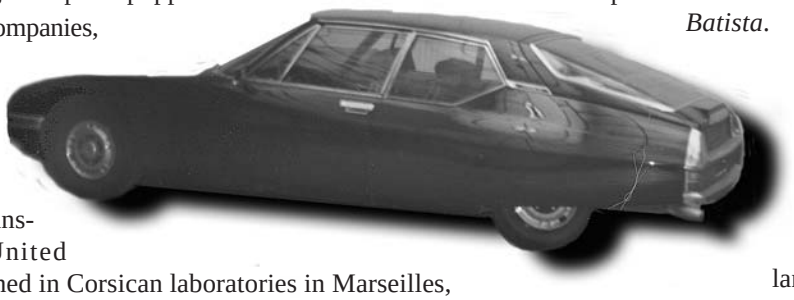
Diplomat-trafficker Mauricio Rosales, the Guatemalan ambassador to Belgium, was using his diplomatic status to smuggle in 100 kilos of heroin in these three suitcases.

At Idlewild Airport (now JFK) in New York, Etienne Tarditi, a French Corsican trafficker (trenchcoat),. He was coming to meet his drug courier, help deliver heroin to New York gangsters, and collect payment.

Bureau of Narcotics agents who worked on Rosales case pose with suitcases filled with heroin.

Illegal heroin labs were first discovered near Marseilles, France, in 1937. These labs were run by the legendary Corsican gang leader Paul Carbone. For years, the French underworld had been involved in the manufacturing and trafficking of illegal heroin abroad, primarily in the United States. It was this heroin network that eventually became known as the French Connection.

Historically, the raw material for most of the heroin consumed in the United States came from Turkey. Turkish farmers were licensed to grow opium poppies for sale to legal drug companies, but many sold their excess to the underworld market, where it was manufactured into heroin and transported to the United States. It was refined in Corsican laboratories in Marseilles, one of the busiest ports in the western Mediterranean. Marseilles served as a perfect shipping point for all types of illegal goods, including the excess opium that Turkish farmers cultivated for profit.



The convenience of the port at Marseilles and the frequent arrival of ships from opium-producing countries made it easy to smuggle the morphine base to Marseilles from the Far East or the Near East. The French underground would then ship large quantities of heroin from Marseilles to Manhattan, New York.

The first significant post-World War II seizure was made in New York on February 5, 1947, when seven pounds of heroin were seized from a Corsican seaman disembarking from a vessel that had just arrived from France.

It soon became clear that the French underground was increasing not only its participation in the illegal trade of opium, but also its expertise and efficiency in heroin trafficking. On March 17, 1947, 28 pounds of heroin were found on the French liner, *St. Tropez*. On January 7, 1949, more than 50 pounds of opium and heroin were seized on the French ship, *Batista*.

The first major French Connection case occurred in 1960. In June, an informant told a drug agent in Lebanon that Mauricio Rosal, the Guatemalan Ambassador to Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, was smuggling morphine base from Beirut, Lebanon, to Marseilles. Narcotics agents had been seizing about 200 pounds of heroin in a typical year, but intelligence showed that the Corsican traffickers were smuggling in 200 pounds every other week. Rosal alone, in one year, had used his diplomatic status to bring in about 440 pounds.

The FBN's 1960 annual report estimated that from 2,600 to 5,000 pounds of heroin were coming into the United States annually from France. The French traffickers continued to exploit the demand for their illegal product,

and by 1969, they were supplying the United States with 80 to 90 percent of the heroin consumed by addicts. The heroin they supplied was approximately 85 percent pure.

Because of this increasing volume, heroin became readily available throughout the United States. In an effort to limit the source, U.S. officials went to Turkey to negotiate the phasing out of opium production. Initially, the Turkish Government agreed to limit their opium production starting with the 1968 crop.

Following five subsequent years of concessions, combined with international cooperation, the Turkish government finally agreed in 1971 to a complete ban on the growing of Turkish opium, effective June 30, 1972. During these protracted negotiations, law enforcement personnel went into action. One of the major roundups began on January 4, 1972, when BNDD agents and French authorities seized 110 pounds of heroin at the Paris airport. Subsequently, traffickers Jean-Baptiste Croce and Joseph Mari were arrested in Marseilles.

In February 1972, French traffickers offered a U.S. Army Sergeant $96,000 to smuggle 240 pounds of heroin into the United States. He informed his superior who in turn notified the BNDD. As a result of this investigation, five men in New York and two in Paris were arrested with 264 pounds of heroin,

February 14, 1973: A 20-kilo heroin seizure in Paris, France. Pictured left to right are,S/A Pierre Charette, S/A Kevin Finnerty, and French anti-drug counterparts.

From a 1973 French Connection seizure in France, (pictured above) are 210 pounds of heroin worth $38 million .

which had a street value of $50 million. In a 14-month period, starting in February 1972, six major illicit heroin laboratories were seized and dismantled in the suburbs of Marseilles by French national narcotics police in collaboration with U.S. drug agents. On February 29, 1972, French authorities seized the shrimp boat, *Caprice de Temps*, as it put to sea near Marseilles heading towards Miami. It was carrying 415 kilos of heroin. Drug arrests in France skyrocketed from 57 in 1970 to 3,016 in 1972. The French Connection investigation demonstrated that international trafficking networks were best disabled by the combined efforts of drug enforcement agencies from multiple countries. In this case, agents from the United States, Canada, Italy, and France had worked together to achieve success.

First Female Special Agents

1933: Mrs. Elizabeth Bass was appointed the first of many female narcotics agents in the United States and served as District Supervisor in Chicago. A longtime friend of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, she played a prominent role in gaining political support for the Uniform Narcotic Drug Act.

1971: The DEA's predecessor agency, the BNDD, became one of the first federal agencies to implement a program for hiring female special agents.

1973: Ms. Mary Turner became the first female DEA special agent to graduate from the DEA's training program. She finished first in her class.

1974: Twenty-three female special agents were working in DEA field offices throughout the United States.

Creation of the DEA (July 1, 1973)

In 1973, President Richard Nixon signed the Executive Order which created the DEA.

No. 11727

July 10, 1973, 38 F.R. 18357

DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT

Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1973, which becomes effective on July 1, 1973, among other things establishes a ***Drug Enforcement Administration*** in the Department of Justice. In my message to the Congress transmitting that plan, I stated that all functions of the Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement (established pursuant to Executive Order No. 11641 of January 28, 1972) and the Office of National Narcotics Intelligence (established pursuant to Executive Order No. 16676 of July 27, 1972) would, together with other related functions be merged in the new Drug Enforcement Administration.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, including section 5317 of title 5 of the United States Code, as amended, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. The Attorney General, to the extent permitted by law, is authorized to coordinate all activities of executive branch departments and agencies which are directly related to the enforcement of laws respecting narcotics and dangerous drugs. Each department and agency of the Federal Government shall, upon request and to the extent permitted by law, assist the Attorney General in the performance of functions assigned to him pursuant to this order, and the Attorney General may, in carrying out those functions, utilize the services of any other agencies, federal and state, as may be available and appropriate.

Sec. 2. Executive Order No. 11641 of January 28, 1972,[1] is hereby revoked and the Attorney General shall provide for the reassignment of the functions of the Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement and for the abolishment of that Office.

Sec. 3. Executive Order No. 11676 of July 27, 1972,[1] is hereby revoked and the Attorney General shall provide for the reassignment of the functions of the Office of Narcotics Intelligence and for the abolishment of that Office.

Sec. 4. Section 1 of Executive Order No. 11708 of March 23, 1973,[2] as amended, placing certain positions in level IV of the Executive Schedule is hereby further amended by deleting—

(1) "(6) Director, Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement, Department of Justice"; and

(2) "(7) Director, Office of Narcotics Intelligence, Department of Justice."

Sec. 5. The Attorney General shall provide for the winding up of the affairs of the two offices and for the reassignment of their functions.

Sec 6. This order shall be effective as of July 1, 1973.

Richard Nixon
THE WHITE HOUSE,
July 6, 1973

In 1973, President Richard Nixon declared "an all-out global war on the drug menace" and sent Reorganization Plan No. 2 to Congress. "Right now," he pointed out, "the federal government is fighting the war on drug abuse under a distinct handicap, for its efforts are those of a loosely confederated alliance facing a resourceful, elusive, worldwide enemy. Certainly, the cold-blooded underworld networks that funnel narcotics from suppliers all over the world are no respecters of the bureaucratic dividing lines that now complicate our anti-drug efforts."

In the spring and summer of 1973, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate heard months of testimony on President Nixon's Reorganization Plan Number 2, which proposed the creation of a single federal agency to consolidate and coordinate the government's drug control activities.

At that time, the BNDD, within the Department of Justice, was responsible for enforcing the federal drug laws. However, the U.S. Customs Service and several other Justice entities (ODALE and the Office of National

Narcotics Intelligence) were also responsible for various aspects of federal drug law enforcement. Of great concern to the Administration and the Congress were the growing availability of drugs in most areas of the United States, the lack of coordination and the perceived lack of cooperation between the U.S. Customs Service and the BNDD, and the need for better intelligence collection on drug trafficking organizations.

According to the final report from the Senate Committee on Government Operations issued on October 16, 1973, the benefits anticipated from the creation of the DEA included:

1. Putting an end to the interagency rivalries that have undermined federal drug law enforcement, especially the rivalry between the BNDD and the U.S. Customs Service;

2. Giving the FBI its first significant role in drug enforcement by requiring that the DEA draw on the FBI's expertise in combatting organized crime's role in the trafficking of illicit drugs;

3. Providing a focal point for coordinating federal drug enforcement efforts with those of state and local authorities, as well as with foreign police forces;

4. Placing a single Administrator in charge of federal drug law enforcement in order to make the new DEA more accountable than its component parts had ever been, thereby safeguarding against corruption and enforcement abuses;

5. Consolidating drug enforcement operations in the DEA and establishing the Narcotics Division in Justice to maximize coordination between federal investigation and prosecution efforts and eliminate rivalries within each sphere; and

6. Establishing the DEA as a superagency to provide the momentum needed to coordinate all federal efforts related to drug enforcement outside the Justice Department, especially the gathering of intelligence on international narcotics smuggling.

DEA

John R. Bartels, Jr.
DEA Administrator
1973-1975

On September 12, 1973, the White House selected John R. Bartels, Jr., a native of Brooklyn, New York, a former federal prosecutor, and Deputy Director of the ODALE, to be the DEA's first Administrator. He was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on October 4, 1973. Prior to his employment with the ODALE and the DEA, Mr. Bartels had been an Assistant U.S. Attorney, Southern District of New York, from 1964-1968. From 1969-1971, he was an Adjunct Professor, Rutgers University School of Law. From 1972-1973, Mr. Bartels was the Chief of the Organized Crime Strike-Force, U.S. Department of Justice, Newark, New Jersey; Counsel to Governor Nelson Rockefeller; and Deputy Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division. He was later a delegate for the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 1974. He currently resides in White Plains, New York.

Early Developments in the DEA

When John R. Bartels, Jr., was confirmed as the DEA's first Administrator on October 4, 1973, he had two goals for the new agency: (1) to integrate narcotics agents and U.S. Customs agents into one effective force; and (2) to restore public confidence in narcotics law enforcement. From the very beginning, Mr. Bartels was faced with the unenviable task of unifying the efforts of several drug law enforcement entities. One of the most serious obstacles arose from conflicting philosophies of various agencies, particularly the BNDD and the U.S. Customs Service. To ease the process, U.S. Customs agents were placed in top positions throughout the DEA. For example, Fred Rody, Regional Director in Miami, became the DEA's Deputy Administrator in December 1979; John Lund was appointed as Deputy Assistant Administrator; and John Fallon named as Regional Director in New York. Administrator Bartels issued specific instructions to federal narcotics agents: "This Statement of Policy outlines the measures taken by the Drug Enforcement Administration to prevent incidents which might infringe on individual rights or jeopardize the successful prosecution of a case. The guidelines require clear-cut lines of command and control in enforcement situations and stress that operations must be carried out in a manner that is legally correct, morally sound, with full respect for the civil rights, human dignity of persons involved, and the sanctity of the home." The guidelines also restricted vehicular arrests and prohibited participation in raids by non-law enforcement personnel.

Creation of the DEA Intelligence Program (1973)

Intelligence had long been recognized as an essential element in the success of any investigative or law enforcement agency. Accurate and up-to-date information was required to assess the operations and vulnerabilities of criminal networks, to interdict drugs in a systematic way, to forecast new methods of trafficking, to evaluate the impact of previous activities, and to establish long-range drug strategies and policies. Included in the DEA mission was a mandate for drug intelligence. The DEA's Office of Intelligence came into being on July 1, 1973, upon implementation of Presidential Reorganization Plan No. 2. The Code of Federal Regulations charged the Administrator of the DEA with:

The development and maintenance of a National Narcotics Intelligence system in cooperation with federal, state, and local officials, and the provision of narcotics intelligence to any federal, state, or local official that the Administrator determines has a legitimate official need to have access to such intelligence.

To support this mission, specific functions were identified as follows:

- Collect and produce intelligence to support the Administrator and other federal, state, and local agencies;
- Establish/maintain close working relationships with all agencies that produce or use drug intelligence;
- Increase the efficiency in the reporting, analysis, storage, retrieval, and exchange of such information; and
- Undertake a continuing review of the narcotics intelligence effort to identify and correct deficiencies.

The DEA divided drug intelligence into three broad categories: tactical, operational, and strategic. Tactical intelligence provides immediate support to investigative efforts by identifying traffickers and movement of drugs. Operational intelligence provides analytical support to investigations and structuring organizations. Strategic intelligence focuses on developing a comprehensive and current picture of the entire system by which drugs are cultivated, produced, transported, smuggled, and distributed around the world. These definitions remain valid in 1998.

George M. Belk
Assistant Administrator for Intelligence
July 1973-July 31, 1975

To build upon its drug intelligence mandate in 1973, the DEA's Intelligence Program consisted of two major elements: the Office of Intelligence at Headquarters and the Regional Intelligence Units (RIU) in domestic and foreign field offices. The structure of the Office of Intelligence was divided into five entities: International and Domestic Divisions, Strategic Intelligence Staff, Special Operations and Field Support Staff, and the Intelligence Systems Staff. Its structure paralleled that of the Office of Enforcement.

The RIUs had four objectives: (1) Provide a continuing flow of actionable intelligence to enhance the tactical effectiveness of regional enforcement efforts; (2) Support management planning of the overall regional enforcement program; (3) Contribute to interregional and strategic collection programs of the Office of Intelligence; and (4) Facilitate exchange of intelligence information with state and local law enforcement domestically and with host-country enforcement abroad.

Initially, the Intelligence Program was staffed by DEA special agents, with very few professional intelligence analysts (I/As). In DEA's first I/A class in 1974, there were only eleven I/As. However, during the last 30 years, the Intelligence Program has grown significantly. From only a few I/As in the field and Headquarters in 1973, the cadre of I/As now numbers 730.

The Unified Intelligence Division (UID) (1973)

In October 1973, the DEA's first field intelligence unit based on the task force concept was created. The unit, named the Unified Intelligence Division (UID), included DEA special agents, DEA intelligence analysts, New York State Police investigators, and New York City detectives. Along with its unique status as an intelligence task force, the UID was also one of the first field intelligence units to systematically engage all aspects of the intelligence process, specifically collection, evaluation, analysis, and dissemination. This pioneering role expanded the horizons of drug law enforcement field intelligence units, which, at the time, were often limited to collecting information, maintaining dossiers, and providing limited case support. This proactive stance was immediately successful as UID was able to develop and disseminate extensive intelligence on traditional organized crime-related drug traffickers and identify not only the leaders, but also those who were likely to become leaders. UID also developed and disseminated intelligence throughout the federal, state, and local law enforcement community on the members, associates, and contacts of infamous heroin violator Leroy "Nicky" Barnes. Significant intelligence operations continued through the 1980s, with UID taking a leading role in providing intelligence on the crack cocaine epidemic and on Cali cocaine mafia operations in New York. The UID's proactive intelligence task force concept continues to build upon successes of the past.

Shortly after the creation of UID, the Drug Enforcement Coordinating System (DECS) was developed. DECS is a repository index system of all active drug cases in the New York metropolitan area. The DECS system connects agencies that have common investigative targets or common addresses that are part of their investigations. It was created to enhance officer safety and to promote greater cooperation and coordination among drug law enforcement agencies by preventing duplication of effort on overlapping investigations being conducted by member agencies. DECS, which began as a joint venture of DEA/NYSP/NYPD housed in the UID, now has a membership of 40 investigative units involved in drug law enforcement, and is the prototype for many similar systems that have since been developed across the country.

DEA Intelligence Analyst Training School #1

DEA Intelligence Analyst Training School #1 (November 1974)

SA Robert McCall
SA Thomas Shreeve
SA Leonard Rzcpczynski
SA Charles Henry
SA John Hampe
SA Thomas Anderson
SA Robert Janet
SA Christopher Bean
SA Michael Campbell
SA Donald Bramwell
SA Murry Brown
SA Donald Stowell
SA Arthur Doll
SA Frank Gulich
SA Norman Noordweir
SA Lynn Williams
SA Omar Aleman
SA Ron Garribotto
SA Angelo Saladino
IA Beverly Singleton
IA Ann Augusterfer
IA Adrianne Darnaby
IA Beverly Ager
IA Janet Gunther
IA Joan Philpott
IA Wiliam Munson
IA Brian Boyd
IA Joan Bannister
IA Jennifer Garcia-Tobar
IA Eileen Hayes

National Narcotics Intelligence System (NADDIS)

In 1973, the DEA developed the National Narcotics Intelligence System (NADDIS), which became federal law enforcement's first automated index. The creation of NADDIS was possible because the DEA was the first law enforcement agency in the nation to adopt an all-electronic, centralized, computer database for its records. NADDIS, composed of data from DEA investigative reports and teletypes, provided agents in all DEA domestic offices with electronic access to investigative file data. NADDIS searches could be conducted NADDIS contained approximately 4.5 million records, with 5,000 new records being added every week. NADDIS remains the largest and most frequently used of the 40 specialized information systems operated by the DEA.

Graduation of the First DEA Special Agents

The first DEA Special Agent Basic Training Class (BA-1) graduated on November 16, 1973. Reverend James W. McMurtie, Principal of Bishop Denis J. O'Connell High School in Arlington, Virginia, gave the Invocation honoring the 40 men and women of BA-1, and DEA Administrator Bartels gave the welcome and introductions. The Training Division chief was Paul F. Malherek, and the class counselors were Calvin C. Campbell of the Miami Regional Office, Allen L. Johnson of the New Orleans Regional Office, and Henry S. Lincoln of the San Diego District Office.

BA-1 Graduates

Ralph Arroyo
Terry T. Baldwin
Richard J. Barter
Richard E. Bell
Donald H. Bloch
Henry J. Braud, Jr.
Michael E. Byrnes
James W. Castillo
Andrew G. Cloke
George L. Coleman
Cruz Cordero, Jr.
Salvadore M. Dijamco
Clark S. Edwards
John H. Felts
Andrew G. Fenrich
Carliese R. Gordon
Annabelle Grimm
Bernard Harry
Richard Phillip Holmes
Antonio L. Huertas
Dennis F. Imamura
James Jefferies, Jr.
Richard C. Kazmar
Anthony V. Lobosco
Sherman A. Lucas III
John W. Lugar, Jr.
Edward C. Maher
Charles E. Mathis
Thomas L. Mones
Donald E. Nelson
Dennis A. O'Neil
Juan R. Rodriguez
Thomas J. Salvatore
Edward J. Schlachter
Arthur T. Tahuari
Frank Torres, Jr.
Mary A. Turner
Robert Bruce Upchurch
Adis J. Wells
James Hiram Williams

BA 2 graduate Michael Vigil accepts his certificate from William Dirken, Perry Rivkind, and Paul Malherek of DEA Training.

Joint Efforts with Mexico (1974)

By 1972, the quantity of brown heroin from Mexico available in the United States had risen 40 percent higher than the quantity of white heroin from Europe. Traditional international border control was no longer effective against the problem, and in 1974, the Government of Mexico requested U.S. technical assistance. On January 26, 1974, Operation SEA/M (Special Enforcement Activity in Mexico) was launched in the State of Sinaloa to combat the opium and heroin traffic. One month later, a second joint task force, Operation Endrun, began operations in the State of Guerrero, concentrating on marijuana and heroin interdiction. Meanwhile, a third effort, Operation Trident, focused on controlling the traffic of illegally manufactured dangerous drugs produced in Mexico. Despite the fact that law enforcement in Mexico had some successes, these early efforts did not, in the long term, prevent the development of powerful drug trafficking organizations based in Mexico.

Administrator John R. Bartels, flanked by two armed members of the Mexican Federal Judicial Police, made an on-the-spot inspection of the poppy eradication program during a 1974 visit to Mexico.

The Collapse of the DEA Miami Office Building (1974)

The DEA was still a new agency when tragedy struck the Miami Field Division. On August 5, 1974, at 10:24 a.m., the roof of the Miami office came crashing down, killing seven and trapping others in a pile of twisted steel and concrete. Between 125 and 150 people worked in the building. Those who died included: Special Agent Nicholas Fragos; Mary Keehan, Secretary to the Acting Regional Director; Special Agent Charles Mann; Anna Y. Mounger, Secretary; Anna Pope, Fiscal Assistant; Martha D. Skeels, Supervisory Clerk-Typist; and Mary P. Sullivan, Clerk-Typist. Although the people who were in the building thought it was an explosion or an earthquake, officials initially theorized that the dozens of cars in the parking facility on the roof were too heavy for the six-inch-thick slab of concrete supporting them. Later, it was found that the resurfaced parking lot, coupled with salt in the sand, had eroded and weakened the supporting steel structure of the building. The section that collapsed contained a processing room and a laboratory. The building was erected in 1925, and in 1968 had undergone a full engineering inspection, at which time it was cleared to house DEA offices.

Rescue workers took injured victims from the Miami building.

El Paso Intelligence Center (1974)

In 1973, with increasing drug activity along the Southwest Border, the BNDD found that information on drugs was being collected by the DEA, Customs, BNDD, FBI, and FAA, but was not being coordinated. The DEA and the INS were also collecting information on the smuggling of aliens and guns. In 1974, the Department of Justice submitted a report from that BNDD study entitled, "A Secure Border: An Analysis of Issues Affecting the U.S. Department of Justice" to the Office of Management and Budget that provided recommendations to improve drug and border enforcement operations along the Southwest Border. One of the recommendations proposed the establishment of a regional intelligence center to collect and disseminate information relating to drug, illegal alien, and weapons smuggling to support field enforcement agencies throughout the country. As a result, in 1974, the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) was established to provide tactical intelligence to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies on a national scale. Staffed by representatives of the DEA and the INS, EPIC has since expanded into a national drug intelligence center supporting U.S. law enforcement entities that focus on worldwide drug smuggling.

Drug Abuse Warning Network (1974)

In 1974, the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) was designed and developed by the scientific staff of the DEA's Office of Science and Technology. DAWN was created to assist the federal government in identifying and evaluating the scope and extent of drug abuse in the United States. It was jointly funded with the National Institute of Drug Abuse. DAWN incorporated data from various sources of intelligence within the DEA and from such outside sources as federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, the pharmaceutical industry, and scientific literature. Over 1,300 different facilities supply data to the program.

Beginning in the early 1970s, DAWN collected information on patients seeking hospital emergency treatment related to their use of an illegal drug or the nonmedical use of a legal drug. Data were collected by trained reporters (nurses and other hospital personnel) who reviewed medical charts. They

monitored notations by the hospital personnel who treated the patients that drug use was the reason for the emergency visit.

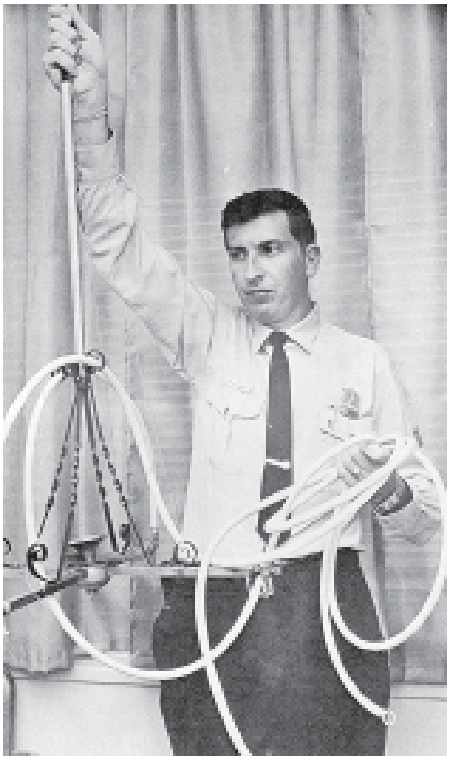
Hospitals participating in DAWN are non-federal, short-stay general hospitals that feature a 24-hour emergency department. Since 1988, the DAWN data was collected from a representative sample of these hospitals located throughout the United States, including 21 specific metropolitan areas. The data from this sample were used to generate estimates of the total number of emergency department drug episodes and drug mentions in all such hospitals.

Narcotic Addict Treatment Act (1974)

Public Law 93-281

The Narcotic Addict Treatment Act was passed in 1974 and amended the Controlled Substances Act to provide for the separate registration of doctors and other practitioners who used narcotic drugs in the treatment of addicts. It also provided physicians who were treating narcotic addiction with specific guidelines and medications. This act eliminated the indiscriminate prescription of narcotics to addicts and reduced the diversion of pharmaceutical narcotics.

In 1972, Timothy Leary (center) was brought to justice by DEA Special Agents Don Strange (right) and Howard Safir (left). Leary, a psychology instructor, was fired from his post at Harvard University as a result of his experimentation with LSD. In 1969, he founded a clandestine drug-trafficking ring, known as the Brotherhood of Eternal Love, that became the largest supplier of hashish and LSD in the United States.



A 1970 raid on a Washington, D.C., apartment by metropolitan police officers resulted in the seizure of LSD and marijuana, as well as the unusual antique chandelier pictured above. The light fixtures on the chandelier had been removed and replaced with rubber hose, creating a giant marijuana pipe.

Aviation

In 1971, the BNDD launched its aviation program with one special agent/pilot, one airplane, and a budget of $58,000. The concept of an Air Wing was the brainchild of Marion Joseph, an experienced former United States Air Force pilot and a veteran special agent stationed in Atlanta, Georgia. Over the years, Special Agent Joseph had seen how the police used aircraft for surveillance, search and rescue, and the recapturing of fugitives. His analysis led him to conclude that a single plane "could do the work of five agents and five vehicles on the ground."

As drug trafficking increased nationwide, it became evident that it had no boundaries and that law enforcement needed aviation capabilities. Although Special Agent Joseph convinced his superiors of the merits of his idea, no funding was available. Management told Agent Joseph that if he could find an airplane, they would further consider the Air Wing concept. At this point, Special Agent Joseph approached the United States Air Force, and under the Bailment Property Transfer Program that allows the military to assist other government entities, he secured one airplane—a Vietnam war surplus Cessna Skymaster.

The benefit of air support to drug law enforcement operations became immediately apparent, and the request for airplanes grew rapidly. By 1973, when the DEA was formally established, the Air Wing already had 41 special agent pilots operating 24 aircraft in several major cities across the United States. Most of these aircraft were fixed-wing, single-engine, piston airplanes that were primarily used for domestic surveillance.

Training

The National Training Institute, the DEA's first training program, was located at DEA headquarters, 1405 "Eye" Street in Washington, D.C. At that time, training was divided into three major divisions: special agent training, police training, and international training.

Training was carried out in a three-story bank building adjacent to DEA headquarters that had been converted for training purposes. The building had a gymnasium located on the first floor, lockers and showers in the basement, and a 5-point firing range on the second floor. Special agent trainees were housed in hotels within walking distance of DEA headquarters.

In the absence of the realistic "Hogan's Alley," a life-sized, simulated neighborhood of today, training practicals were conducted on public streets. The DEA had leased a 20-acre farm near Dulles Airport in rural Virginia, as well as a house in Oxen Hill, Maryland, to practice raids and field exercises. Basic Agent training lasted 10 weeks, and the Training Institute supported three classes, with 53 students per class, in session at all times. Graduations occurred every three weeks. Coordinators were from the headquarters staff, and counselors were brought in from the field for temporary training duty. In addition to training basic agents, the DEA also offered training programs for compliance investigators, intelligence analysts, chemists, supervisors, mid-level managers, executives, technical personnel, state and local police officers, and international law enforcement personnel.

Trainee John Wilder

Technology

Over the years, the combination of technology and law enforcement have solved some of the biggest criminal cases in the world. However, by 1998, the DEA's technology ranked among the most sophisticated. That was not always the case. During the DEA's formative years, technical investigative equipment was limited both in supply and technical capabilities. In 1971, the entire budget for investigative technology was less than $1 million. This budget was used to buy radio and investigative equipment and to fund the teletype system.

1975: After seized drugs were used as evidence, they were burned by DEA evidence technicians using special ovens in the presence of responsible witnesses.

Video surveillance was rare because of the size and expense of camera equipment. Cameras were tube type, required special lighting, and could not be concealed. Early video tape recorders were extremely expensive and were reel-to-reel or the very early version of cassettes called U-Matic.

Pen registers, or dialed number recorders, were more advanced than the older versions, which actually punched holes in a tape, similar to an old ticker tape, in response to the pulses from a rotary dialed phone. Pen registers were also limited because federal law at the time required the same degree of probable cause as was required for a Title III Wire Intercept.

Title IIIs were conducted with reel-to-reel tape recorders. However, the DEA did not conduct many Title IIIs because they were labor intensive, and the agency seldom had sufficient personnel to work the intercepts.

In 1973, *body-worn recorders* used by agents during investigations had advanced from large belt packs to smaller versions. However, reliability was always a concern. These old belt types, called KELsets, consisted of a transmitter and a belt of batteries worn by the undercover agent. Unfortunately, the belt was not easily concealable, and the batteries would occasionally overheat and burn the backs of the agents.

When the BNDD was formed it did not have a radio system, but in 1971, the agency began installing a nationwide UHF *radio system* for operations. (The DEA's radio system was installed in 1973.) When an early facsimile machine was installed in 1972, it took six minutes to transmit one page, and pages often had to be re-sent due to communication failures. No paging equipment was available because dedicated frequencies had to be used for each pager. Only doctors and a few select individuals could obtain pagers.

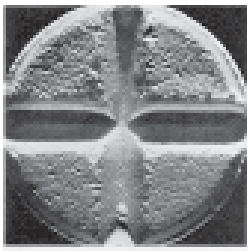
Although *cellular phones* did not exist, there was a mobile telephone service. However, only the DEA Administrator had a mobile phone, and the service was slow and unreliable.

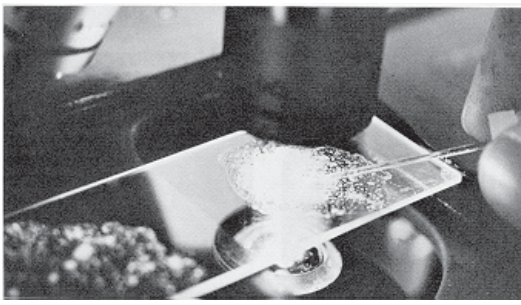
Laboratories

Creation of the Federal Drug Laboratory System

One of the essential functions carried out by the DEA and its predecessor agencies was providing laboratory support. The success of cases made against major drug traffickers depended in part upon analysis of the drug evidence gathered during narcotics investigations. The DEA's laboratory system, one of the finest in the world, has roots in the DEA's predecessor agencies. Although the two predecessor agencies, BDAC and FBN, did not have laboratories under their direct supervision, lab support was available within their respective departments. Ultimately, the DEA's laboratory system began to take shape through the consolidation and transfer of several lab programs within the U.S. Government. The first laboratory personnel transferred to the BNDD came from the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Division of Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Microanalytical Group in Washington, D.C. They were primarily responsible for performing the ballistics analyses of tablets and capsules, identifying newly-encountered compounds found in drug traffic, and conducting methods development. According to the agreement with the FDA, the new agency would take control of one of the FDA labs. In August 1968, six chemists formed what eventually became the Special Testing and Research Laboratory. The first of the five regional DEA laboratories was the Chicago Regional Laboratory that opened in December 1968. The New York, Washington, Dallas, and San Francisco Regional Laboratories were formed in April 1969. The original chemist work force for these laboratories came from several field laboratories run by government agencies. The professional staffing of the six laboratories consisted of 36 "bench" chemists doing physical lab research, supplemented by five supervisory chemists. In 1970, the first full year of operation, the laboratories analyzed almost 20,000 drug exhibits. During the next two years, the laboratories' work load increased by 46 percent and 19 percent, respectively. To meet the increased work load demand, staffing more than doubled to 94 by 1972 (including laboratory and BNDD headquarters management personnel.) In 1971, both the Washington and Dallas Regional Laboratories moved to larger facilities, and in January 1972, the BNDD opened its sixth regional laboratory in Miami. After the DEA was created, a seventh field laboratory was opened in San Diego in August 1974.

DEA forensic chemist Dr. Albert Tillson is shown analyzing an illegal drug.





The analysis of seized drugs performed by DEA forensic chemists provides evidence that is often essential for the successful prosecution and conviction of drug traffickers.

The Original DEA Forensic Chemists

Headquarters
Frederick Garfield, John Gunn, Richard Frank, and William Butler.
Special Testing and Research Laboratory
Director Stanley Sobol, Albert Tilson, Joseph C. Koles, Victor A. Folen, Robert Ferrera, Francis B. Holmes, and Albert Sperling.
Chicago Regional Laboratory
Director Jerry Nelson, Roger B. Fuelster, Ferris H. Van, David W. Parmalee, Nora L. Williams, Lawrence O. Buer, Dennis E. Korte, and James P. Done.
New York Regional Laboratory
Director Anthony Romano, Elinor R. Swide, Robert Bianchi, Roger F. Canaff, and Paul DeZan.
Washington DC Regional Laboratory
Director Jack Rosenstein, Richard Moore, Thaddeus E. Tomczak, Richard Fox, and Benjamin A. Perillo.
Dallas Regional Laboratory
Director Jim Kluckhohn, Buddy R. Goldston, Charles B. Teer, John D. Wittwer, Richard Ruybal, and Michael D. Miller.
San Francisco Regional Laboratory
Director Robert Sager, Robert Countryman, Claude G. Roe, James Look, James A. Heagy, and John D. Kirk.

Killed in the Line of Duty

Hector Jordan
Died on October 14, 1970
Working as a Supervisory Special Agent with the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, Special Agent Jordan died in Chicago in an unprovoked attack by a roving gang.

Gene A. Clifton
Died on November 19, 1971
Palo Alto, California Police Officer Clifton died from injuries received during a joint operation with the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs.

Frank Tummillo
Died on October 12, 1972
Working in the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, Special Agent Tummillo was killed during an undercover operation in New York City.

George F. White
Died on March 25, 1973
Special Agent Pilot White of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs was killed when his plane hit a power line near Tucson, Arizona.

Richard Heath, Jr.
Died on April 1, 1973
Special Agent Heath of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs died in Quito, Ecuador, from a gunshot wound received during an undercover operation in Aruba, Netherlands Antilles.

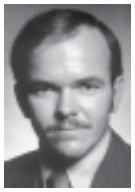
Emir Benitez
Died on August 9, 1973
DEA Special Agent Benitez died from a gunshot wound he received during an undercover cocaine investigation in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Gerald Sawyer
Died on November 6, 1973
Detective Sawyer of the Los Angeles, California Police Department, was killed while working in a joint undercover investigation with the DEA.

Leslie S. Grosso
Died on May 21, 1974
Investigator Grosso of the New York State Police was shot during an undercover operation in New York City. He was assigned to the DEA's New York City Joint Task Force.

Nickolas Fragos
Died on August 5, 1974
DEA Special Agent Fragos was killed on his first day of work as a DEA Special Agent. He died as a result of the collapse of the Miami Regional Office Building.

Mary M. Keehan
Died on August 5, 1974
Ms. Keehan, secretary to the Acting Regional Director of the DEA's Miami Regional Office, died as a result of the collapse of the Miami Regional Office building.



Charles H. Mann
Died on August 5, 1974
DEA Special Agent Mann was killed on his first day of work after returning from an overseas assignment. He died as a result of the collapse of the Miami Regional Office building.

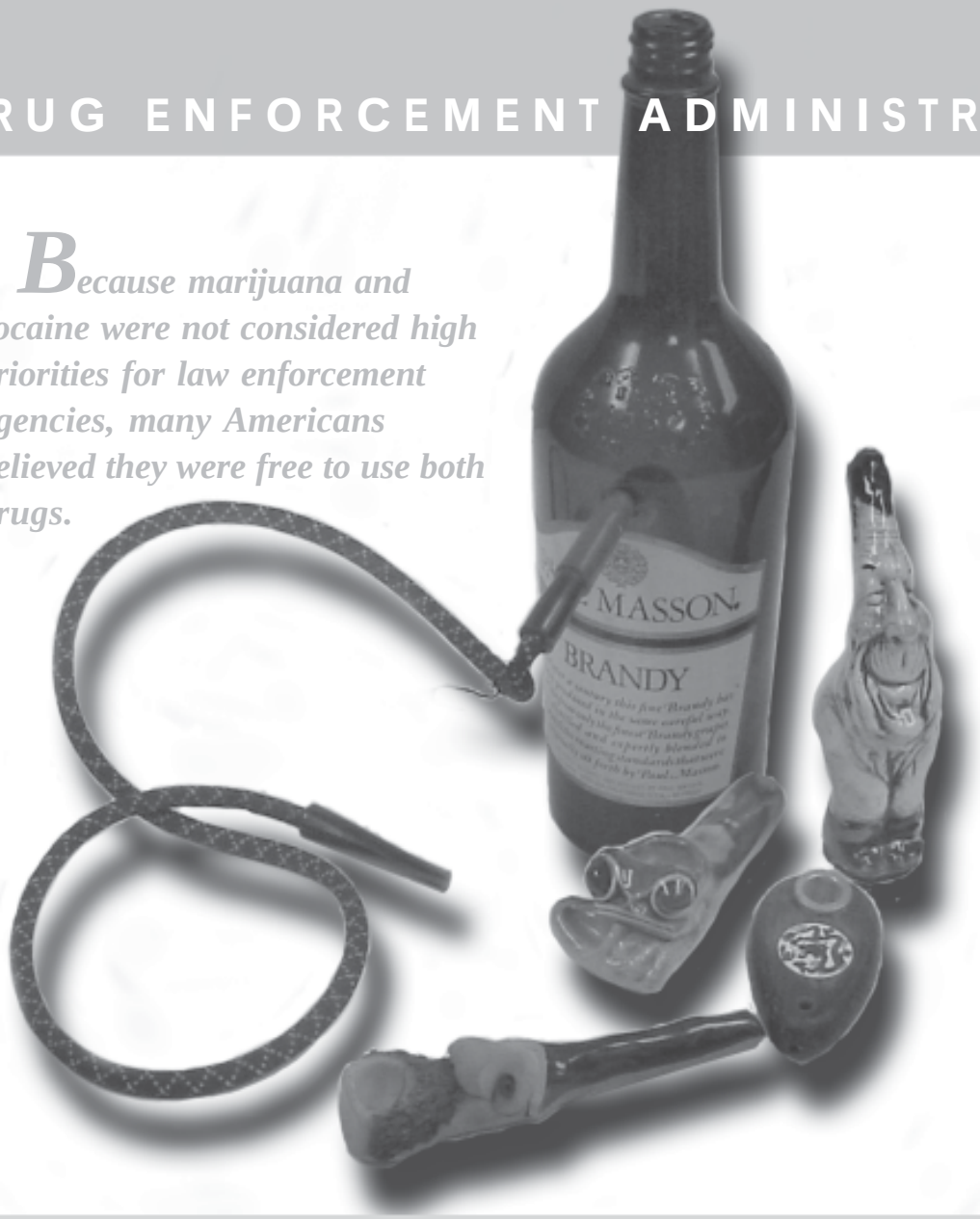
Anna Y. Mounger
Died on August 5, 1974
Ms. Mounger, a secretary at the DEA's Miami Regional Office, died as a result of the collapse of the Miami Regional Office building.

Anna J. Pope
Died on August 5, 1974
Mrs. Pope, a fiscal assistant at the DEA's Miami Regional Office, died as a result of the collapse of the Miami Regional Office building.

Martha D. Skeels
Died on August 5, 1974
Ms. Skeels, a supervisory clerk-typist at the DEA's Miami Regional Office, died as a result of the collapse of the Miami Regional Office building.

Mary P. Sullivan
Died on August 5, 1974
Ms. Sullivan, a clerk-typist at the DEA Miami Regional Office, died as a result of the collapse of the Miami Regional Office building.

Because marijuana and cocaine were not considered high priorities for law enforcement agencies, many Americans believed they were free to use both drugs.



1975-1980

DEA

Henry S. Dogin
Acting
Administrator
1975-1976

Henry S. Dogin was appointed Acting Administrator by Attorney General Edward H. Levi on May 30, 1975, following the resignation of Administrator Bartels. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Dogin was Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division and was responsible for directing the Department of Justice's organized crime strike forces as well as overseeing prosecutions related to narcotics. Dogin served as Acting Administrator until January 23, 1976, when he assumed the position of Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Criminal Justice Services for the State of New York.

DEA Special Agents
1975.....2,135
1980.....1,941

DEA Budget
1975.....$140.9 million
1980.....$206.6 million

By 1979, 26 million Americans were considered regular drug users.

During this period, drug use in America escalated, and by 1979, 26 million Americans were considered regular drug users. Government policies urged law enforcement organizations to de-emphasize marijuana and cocaine investigations in favor of increased heroin enforcement activities. Because marijuana and cocaine were not considered high priorities for law enforcement agencies, many Americans believed they were free to use both drugs. Consequently, cocaine and marijuana use became widespread throughout the United States.

The White House White Paper

In early 1975, drug abuse was escalating and the nation faced new challenges on the drug front. By September 1975, President Ford set up the Domestic Council Drug Abuse Task Force, chaired by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, to assess the extent of drug abuse in America and to make recommendations for handling it. The resulting report, the White Paper, maintained that "all drugs are not equally dangerous. Enforcement efforts should therefore concentrate on drugs which have a high addiction potential..." This report deemed marijuana a minor problem and declared that cocaine was not a problem. "Cocaine," the report stated, "is not physically addictive...and usually does not result in serious social consequences, such as crime, hospital emergency room admissions, or death." The report recommended that "priority in both supply and demand reduction should be directed toward those drugs which inherently pose a greater risk—heroin, amphetamines...and mixed barbiturates."

Specifically, the panel recommended that the DEA and U.S. Customs Service de-emphasize investigations of marijuana and cocaine smuggling and give higher priority to heroin trafficking. This policy shifted enforcement efforts, resources, and manpower away from cocaine cases towards heroin. The report recommended that agents focus on Mexico, a source

of both heroin and dangerous drugs, rather than on domestic posts, such as Miami, where they are more likely to "make a cocaine or marijuana case."

Government policy makers were primarily concerned with heroin, and to a lesser extent, amphetamines and barbiturates. Marijuana was still considered by many to be a harmless recreational drug, typically used by college students, and cocaine wasn't considered a serious drug problem. This lack of emphasis on marijuana and cocaine meant that the marijuana smugglers from Colombia and cocaine traffickers faced minimal law enforcement opposition. Moreover, it allowed the traffickers from Colombia to lay the foundations for what would become the powerful Medellin and Cali drug cartels. Both were to pose significant threats to the United States by the late 1970s and early 1980s. Having already established marijuana distribution networks along the East Coast, they were easily able to add cocaine to their illegal shipments.

Central Tactical Units (1975)

In April 1975, the DEA created the first of its central tactical units (CENTAC) to concentrate enforcement efforts against major drug trafficking organizations. Prior to this, due to lack of coordination on a national level, many drug investigations were terminated following the arrest of low-level dealers or an occasional top figure, who was quickly replaced. However, CENTAC targeted major worldwide drug trafficking syndicates from a central, quick-response command post in Washington, D.C. Eight CENTACs investigated heroin manufacturing organizations in Lebanon, Asia, and Mexico. Three other CENTACs targeted large cocaine organizations from Latin America that operated in the United States. Yet other CENTACs dismantled criminal groups that manufactured and distributed LSD, PCP, and amphetamines.

DEA Miami special agents pose with 854 pounds of cocaine seized in May 1980. Pictured from left are: Special Agents Richard Fiano, Rafael Saucedo, John Lawler, Richard Vandiver, David Kunz, and David Gorman.

One CENTAC, 16, was split into West Coast and East Coast investigations, and extended its investigations into Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. It dismantled a major international heroin organization, three import groups, and five major New York distribution networks. In addition, it seized approximately $1 million and reaped another $1 million in bail left by fleeing defendants. CENTAC 16 ultimately indicted 100 major traffickers, along with 61 lesser criminals.

The CENTAC program was considered extremely successful. According to a 1980 General Accounting Office Report, "The results of CENTAC investigations have been impressive, not only in terms of the number of high-level traffickers arrested, but also the sentences the traffickers have received...CENTAC results are particularly impressive in light of the small percentage of the DEA's enforcement effort CENTAC comprised." Using only 3 percent of the DEA's enforcement staff and 1.3 percent of its expenditures for information and evidence, CENTAC arrested 2,116 traffickers. This total represented over 12 percent of all Class I violators arrested by the DEA over a three-year period.

Operation Trizo (1976)

In 1976, the DEA and the Mexican government began a poppy eradication program called Operation Trizo. The operation called for Mexican nationals to fly helicopters donated by the U.S. State Department to spray herbicides onto poppy fields in the states of Durango, Sinaloa, and Chihuahua.

By the end of 1977, approximately 22,000 acres of poppy, enough to be processed into eight tons of heroin, had been destroyed. Because of Operation Trizo, by 1979 the purity of Mexican heroin fell to just five percent, its lowest level in seven years. In addition, 4,000 members of organizations in Mexico were arrested. Operation Trizo lessened the demand for Mexican heroin in the U.S. market.

The large numbers of arrests that resulted from Operation Trizo caused an economic crisis in the poppy-growing regions of Mexico. In order to reduce the social upheaval, the Mexican government formally asked the DEA to stop participating in the surveillance flights. Operation Trizo was called off in the spring of 1978 at the request of the Mexican government. While successful in the short term, the operation did not prevent the growing sophistication of these drug organizations and their distributions systems in the United States.

DEA

Peter B. Bensinger
Administrator
1976-1981

".....I met with the executive staff members and people and found a lot of talent, dedication, and great ability. I was very impressed with the investigative skills...."

On December 9, 1975, Peter B. Bensinger, a native of Chicago and graduate of Yale University, was nominated as DEA Administrator. Peter Bensinger became the second DEA Administrator, following John Bartels, who had resigned in May 1975. He immediately followed Henry Dogin, who had served as acting head of the DEA, filling in until Administrator Bensinger took office. When tapped for the job, Mr. Bensinger was serving as the first director of the Illinois Department of Corrections. In this position, he was in charge of all state penitentiaries, reformatories, training schools, parole supervision, and jail inspection. Previously, he had served as chief of the Crime Victims Division of the Illinois Attorney General's Office and executive director of the Chicago Crime Commission. He was also the general sales manager (Frankfurt, London, Chicago) with the Brunswick Corporation (1958-1968). He became Acting Administrator on January 23, 1976, was confirmed by the Senate on February 5, 1976, and was sworn in on February 23, 1976.

Mr. Bensinger began his term by writing a mission statement for the agency, and then he launched efforts to repair the DEA's image with the public and with Congress. Administrator Bensinger stated that " (I did not come to the DEA) to reorganize everything right away...I arrived and set about doing work and listening...[I] met the executive staff members and people and found a lot of talent, dedication, and great ability. I was very impressed with the investigative skills that were clearly there and the type of work that was done. But the agents didn't have the sense that they were appreciated. And I felt there was a lack of communication with both the public and Congress. So one of the first steps I tried to take was to put out a mission statement that the DEA was here to protect the lives of the citizens of the United States and to curb drug abuse through effective enforcement, investigations, regulation of legitimate drugs, and through reaching to our counterparts overseas, at the state and local law enforcement, and in other branches of the government."

Mr. Bensinger also began to focus the agency's investigations away from a statistical emphasis on arrest and seizure totals, to a focus on arresting major traffickers who had a large impact on the drug trade. He stepped down as Administrator on July 10, 1981. Currently, Mr. Bensinger is president and chief executive officer of Bensinger, DuPont & Associates, a privately owned professional services company.

Jaime Herrera-Nevares

Jaime Herrera-Nevares was the patriarch of a huge criminal syndicate based in the mountain top village of Los Herreras, Durango, Mexico. As far back as 1957, the Herrera organization ran a farm-to-the-arm heroin operation that cultivated opium poppy plants, processed and packaged heroin in Mexico, and transported it to Chicago. There it was either sold locally or distributed to other U.S. cities. This group was extremely difficult to penetrate because family members controlled the entire heroin process from top to bottom.

U.S. law enforcement agencies were well acquainted with the Herrera organization and its "Heroin Highway," a drug trafficking network that stretched from Durango to Chicago. The family frequently smuggled heroin in their invention, the "Durango drive-shaft," a sleeve-like device that surrounded the vehicle's drive-shaft and held several kilos of heroin. They also used compartmentalized gas tanks and door panels to conceal the contraband.

While criminal syndicates such as the Jaime Herrera organization were trafficking heroin into the United States, cocaine trafficking was also a major problem facing law enforcement officials. In September 1977, DEA agents at JFK Airport in New York seized 85 pounds of cocaine that had been concealed in 4,500 pounds of chocolate bars. Special Agent Michael J. Tobin displayed how the cocaine had been hidden in the candy bars.

At one time, Chicago area law enforcement agencies believed the Herreras controlled as much as 90% of local heroin distribution. The DEA estimated that the Herrera organization imported 746 pounds of pure heroin into the United States each year. When cut, this amounted to over eight tons of five-percent pure heroin. The Herreras were considered the largest heroin trafficking organization in Mexico, with profits estimated at $1 million a year. They returned the majority of their profits to their home in Mexico, using neighborhood currency exchanges to send money orders back to Durango. In the mid-1970s, the DEA traced just under $2 million from these exchanges and Western Union records. This figure represented approximately one percent of the total cash transferred to Mexico by the Herrera organization annually.

By 1978, the Chicago Herreras were grossing $60 million a year and had established branches in Denver, Los Angeles, Miami, and Pittsburgh. By 1980, the family had established connections in South America and had diversified into cocaine. By the mid-1980s, the family's gross income had reached approximately $200 million a year.

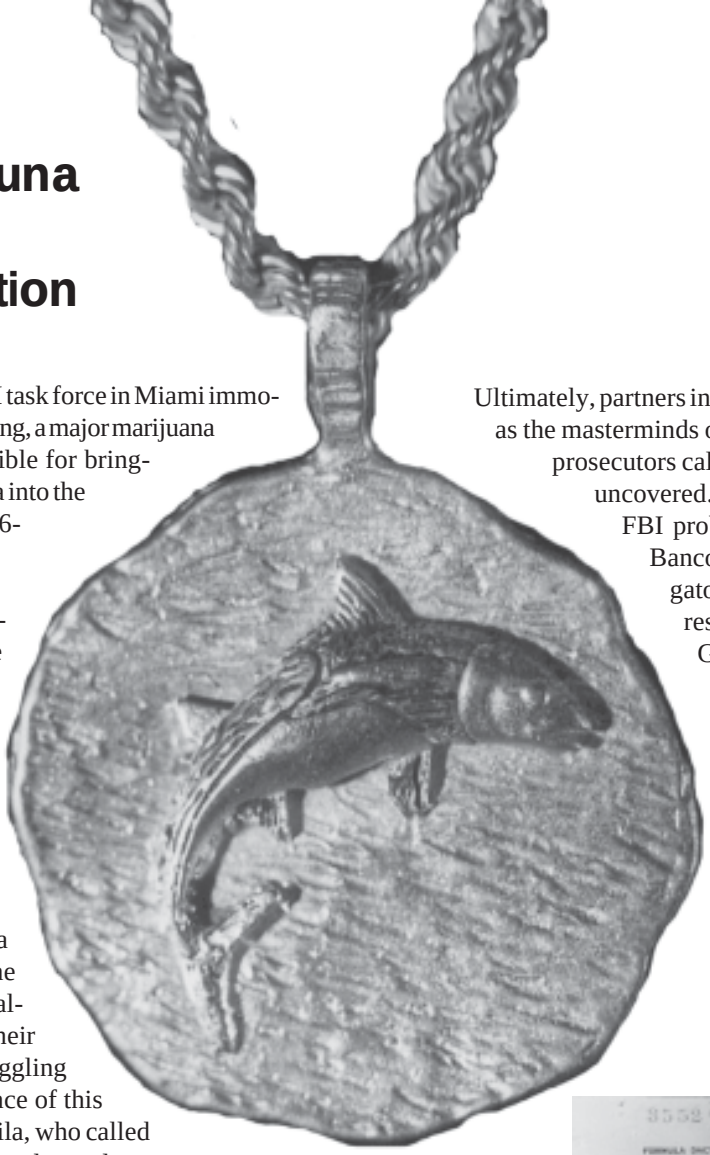
CENTAC 19, launched in 1979, targeted the Herrera family trafficking organization and eventually resulted in the seizure of 39 kilograms of heroin, as well as the arrest and long-term incarceration of three key Chicago-based members of the Herrera organization.

During the 1980s investigations against the Herreras continued. On July 23, 1985, as a result of a two-year investigation called Operation Durango, between 450 and 500 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers in Chicago, Illinois, and Gary, Indiana, arrested 120 traffickers (of the 132 indicted) connected to the polydrug trafficking Herrera and Zambrana families. Officers seized 10 pounds of heroin, 13 pounds of cocaine, 47 properties, and $300,000. In August 1988, the Mexican leaders of the organization, Jaime Herrera-Nevarez, Sr., and Jaime Herrera-Herrera, Jr., were arrested in Mexico on drug charges and remain incarcerated in Mexico City. They continued being listed as DEA fugitives based on prior indictments in Miami, Florida.

Fire at DEA Headquarters (1976)

In October 1976, a small fire erupted on the second floor of DEA headquarters at 14th and "Eye" streets in Northwest Washington, D.C. Through the quick actions of DEA employee Marc Cunningham of the Forensic Science Division, the fire was brought under control, limiting the damage to a corner of the room in which it started. As D.C. firefighters arrived on the scene, DEA headquarters was evacuated and no injuries were reported as a result of the incident. Nevertheless, the fire prompted a thorough review and an updating of the DEA's Facility Self-Protection Plan.

The Black Tuna Gang and Operation Banco



In 1979, a joint DEA/FBI task force in Miami immobilized the Black Tuna Gang, a major marijuana smuggling ring responsible for bringing 500 tons of marijuana into the United States over a 16-month period.

The Black Tuna gang derived its name from the radio code name for a mysterious Colombian sugar grower and drug dealer, Raul Davila-Jimeno, who was the major supplier of the organization. Many of the gang members wore solid-gold medallions bearing a black tuna emblem. The medallions served as a talisman and symbol of their membership in this smuggling group. With the assistance of this small private army, Davila, who called himself a sugar, coffee, and petroleum exporter, virtually ruled Santa Marta, Colombia, where the majority of Colombian marijuana was grown. It was a highly organized ring, with gang members maintaining security and eavesdropping on radio frequencies used by police and U.S. Customs officials.

The Black Tuna gang operated, at least briefly, from a suite in Miami Beach's Fontainebleau Hotel and arranged bulk deliveries to a moored houseboat. They were affiliated with the vice-president of a prestigious Ft. Lauderdale yacht brokerage and were thus able to obtain specialized boats that could carry tons of marijuana without sitting suspiciously low in the water. The contraband was transported in these modified boats and unloaded at a series of waterfront "stash houses" in posh neighborhoods.

The Black Tuna Gang ran an elaborate operation, complete with electronically equipped trucks used to maintain contact with the freighters and to monitor law enforcement channels. They were also creative. As a signal that they were ready to proceed with a drug deal, the smugglers sent Davila a box of disposable diapers. This meant, "the baby is ready, send the mother."

Ultimately, partners in a Miami used car agency were indicted as the masterminds of the Black Tuna Gang, which federal prosecutors called the "biggest and slickest" gang yet uncovered. It was the meticulous work of a DEA-FBI probe of Florida banks called Operation Banco, which began in 1977, that led investigators to the auto dealers and ultimately resulted in the downfall of the Black Tuna Gang. Operation Banco traced the group's drug profits through South Florida banks until members of the Black Tuna Gang made a large cash deposit in Miami Beach Bank. This case was notable as the first combined investigation by the DEA and the FBI on drug profits behind the marijuana trade.

Raul Davila-Jimeno's fingerprint chart.

Year	Foreign Office Opened
1975	Copenhagen, Denmark
1975	Guatemala City, Guatemala
1976	Merida, Mexico
1977	Lahore, Pakistan
1979	Nassau, Bahamas

Heroin from Mexico

For decades, traffickers based in Mexico had been involved in the production and smuggling of drugs. During World War II, when fighting cut the Allies off from other legal sources of drug supplies, Mexico became a source of morphine for the legal market and heroin for the illegal market. The war also created a need for hemp fiber for rope, which led to large-scale cultivation of marijuana in both Mexico and the United States. Until the 1960s, when major traffickers began operating in Mexico, the marijuana issue was not considered a very serious one.

By the late 1960s, Mexico was a major source of both heroin and marijuana, as well as barbiturates and amphetamines. As a result, many U.S. enforcement efforts were directed toward stemming the tide of drugs coming across our southern border. In 1969, in an effort to stop trafficking across the Southwest Border, the Nixon Administration ordered that each person and vehicle crossing the border be inspected. However, Operation Intercept, as the project was called, tied up border traffic, angered the Mexican government, and disturbed the economy on both sides of the border. As a result, Operation Intercept was soon terminated. Recognizing that interdiction alone was not a successful strategy, the United States Government subsequently increased aid to Mexico, and offered greater cooperation and technical assistance to eradicate cannabis and opium poppy plants.

It was not until 1972, with the dismantling of the French Connection, that heroin market structures and distribution patterns radically shifted. At that point, drug trafficking from Mexico expanded and the cultivation of opium poppy fields increased. "Mexican mud," or brown heroin, was suddenly in great demand and from 1972 through 1976, groups from Mexico dominated the heroin trade and supplied an ever-increasing demand for marijuana. By 1974, traffickers from Mexico controlled three-fourths of the U.S. heroin market.

Development of the Heroin Signature Program (1977)

In 1977, the DEA developed the Heroin Signature Program (HSP). This program classified samples of heroin according to the process by which they were manufactured, enabling investigators to determine the geographic areas where the samples were produced. Data from the HSP were used in conjunction with investigative intelligence, drug production, and seizure data to develop an overall assessment of heroin trafficking to and within the United States. The Special Testing and Research Laboratory conducted the analysis for the program and developed the protocol that revolutionized the way analytical data were used for tracking the origins of heroin exhibits. With this information, law enforcement was alerted to emerging drug problems and developed strategies to counter them. For example, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the HSP documented the decrease in the proportion of Mexican heroin seized in the United States and the concomitant increase in heroin seized from Southwest Asia.

Shown above are brand name labels of heroin sold in the illicit market in Southeast Asia during the late 1970s.

Tighter PCP Controls (1977)

In the mid-1970s, the abuse of phencyclidine (PCP) was an increasing problem. PCP-related deaths had increased 60 percent from 1976 to 1977, and PCP was involved in 35 of the 36 deaths attributed to hallucinogens for that year. In addition, the number of PCP laboratory seizures during 1977 was 42 percent higher than the combined totals of the two previous years.

In 1977, Administrator Bensinger recommended to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare that PCP, an animal tranquilizer, be rescheduled from Schedule III to Schedule II of the Controlled Substances Act of 1970. In 1977, the Food and Drug Administration's scientific and medical evaluations confirmed the necessity for this action, and effective February 24, 1978, PCP was moved from Schedule III to the Schedule II classification.

The DEA also combated escalating nationwide manufacture and abuse of PCP or "angel dust" by creating a new Special Action Office (SAO/PCP) in 1977. During its first 18 months, the SAO/PCP was responsible for initiating 96 PCP investigations and arresting 149 defendants. In addition, more than 5.1 million dosage units of PCP and 23 clandestine labs were seized.

Carlo Boccia (right), coordinator of a special operation that targeted PCP distribution and abuse, was photographed consulting with Special Agent Joe Brzostowski, who helped initiate the operation in 1978.

The DEA's success in curbing PCP trafficking continued on December 17, 1978, when it completed one of the largest PCP seizures in the agency's history. In a pre-dawn search, more than 50 special agents and several deputies confiscated $300 million worth of PCP in a clandestine lab in Los Angeles. Upwards of 900 pounds of PCP, in either the finished or intermediate stage, was seized. This quantity of PCP would have yielded 36 million dosage units. A large amount of lab equipment, including a sophisticated high-speed pill press, was also seized. Five suspects were arrested at the scene.

The lab was by far the largest of its kind ever dismantled in the West and one of the largest of any type ever seized in the United States. The seizures and arrests concluded a year-long joint investigation between the DEA and the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department.

Colombian Marijuana

In the mid-to-late 1970s, trends in drug abuse were beginning to change. In fact, drug smuggling was taking on an entirely different scope. Cocaine and Colombian marijuana had become the drugs of choice, and the burgeoning drug organizations in Colombia took full advantage of new markets in the United States. It was no longer unusual for law enforcement to seize cocaine in 100-pound shipments. Also, marijuana was being shipped to the United States in ton quantities, as evidenced by a 113-ton seizure from a single ship off the northeastern coast of Florida in August 1978.

Colombian marijuana, or "Colombian Gold," a highly potent marijuana, was reaching the United States in "mother ships," which were large maritime vessels that carried bulk shipments of marijuana to prearranged points off the U.S. coast. These ships were moored far enough away from the shore to avoid notice, and off-loaded smaller quantities of the drug to smaller yachts, "go fast" boats, and fishing vessels that could smuggle the drug ashore less conspicuously and avoid detection by law enforcement. During the mid-to-late 1970s and early 1980s, the DEA conducted a number of notable operations targeting the organizations behind these mother ships. One such program, Operation Stopgap, was created in December 1975. As part of this program, DEA pilots flew up and down the coast of La Guajira, Colombia, which was a major source of drug smuggling. They reported suspect vessels to the DEA's El Paso Intelligence Center, which then relayed the information to U.S. Coast Guard cutters. The operation also used U.S. Navy satellites to track the suspect vessels.

Pictured above are porcelain vases concealing thai-sticks (marijuana) that were confiscated as part of a 1977 seizure of 100 pounds of thai-sticks in Tijuana, Mexico.

By 1978, Operation Stopgap effectively reduced the flow of marijuana from Colombia to the United States by at least one-third. The Stopgap program seized over one million pounds of marijuana. These significant seizures caused the price of

marijuana in Colombia to increase from $20 a pound to as much as $80. In addition, more than 220 people were arrested, almost all of whom were Colombian nationals.

SAC Charles Hill of the San Diego District Office helped unload a 2.5 ton marijuana seizure in 1977.

The Arrest of Nicky Barnes

Leroy "Nicky" Barnes, convicted on December 2, 1977.

Leroy "Nicky" Barnes, a former street addict and common thief turned multi-millionaire drug lord, was the subject of one of the DEA's most significant investigations of the 1970s. Since the 1940s, African-American criminal groups had controlled portions of the heroin traffic in New York City, and their influence increased significantly after the French Connection in the early 1970s. Growing up in Harlem, Barnes saw that people who controlled the drug trade had considerable power. While in his 20s, Barnes became a mid-level drug dealer until sent to prison in 1965. There, he teamed up with gangster "Crazy Joey" Gallo who taught him how to operate a drug trafficking organization. Gallo had wanted to be a major force in the Harlem drug trade, but he lacked the personnel. He urged Barnes to recruit African-Americans into the business. With the help of a lawyer provided by Gallo, Barnes' conviction was reversed and he was released from prison. Barnes went back to the streets of New York and began establishing his own trafficking network.

Barnes' organization was among the first of a new trend of African-American and Hispanic trafficking groups which took over from long-entrenched Italian organizations. His syndicate made enormous profits by cutting and packaging low-quality heroin. Barnes controlled heroin sales and manufacture throughout New York State and extended his business into Canada and Pennsylvania. By 1976, he had at least seven major lieutenants working for him, each of whom controlled a dozen mid-level distributors, who in turn supplied up to 40 street-level retailers.

Barnes modeled his growing empire after some of the more successful organized crime families and built administrative layers between himself and his crimes. Even though he was arrested numerous times, few charges against Barnes himself were able to stick, which earned him the nickname of "Mr. Untouchable." Barnes reveled in his nickname. He developed an aggressive style when dealing with police, often leading surveillance teams on hundred-mile-an-hour car rides into New York City and then out again with no apparent purpose. Also, he would make scores of pointless stops, just to aggravate his surveillance officers.

In 1976, he estimated that his trafficking income was at least several million dollars, and like most organized crime leaders, he lived a life of extravagant self-indulgence. He owned five homes, wore expensive, hand-tailored outfits and furs, owned luxury cars, and surrounded himself with a half dozen bodyguards.

In 1977, a New York Times article reported that Barnes owned 300 suits, 100 pairs of shoes and 50 leather coats. His fleet of cars included a Mercedes-Benz, a Citroen-Macerate, and several Thunderbirds, Lincoln Continentals, and Cadillacs. To prevent his cars from being seized and forfeited, Barnes set up phony leasing companies to make it appear that the cars he drove were not owned by him, but merely rented. Eventually federal agents unraveled his scheme and proved that his front companies were phony.

Working closely with the U.S. Attorney in New York, DEA agents infiltrated the Barnes syndicate and put together a case that led to his conviction. On January 19, 1978, in the Federal District Court in Manhattan, Leroy "Nicky" Barnes was sentenced to life in prison on a federal charge that he headed, in the words of the prosecutor, "the largest, most profitable and venal drug ring in New York City." For many DEA agents, the arrest of Leroy "Nicky" Barnes was the most significant of their careers, the result of almost four years of dangerous undercover work.

The Office of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs

In October 1976, the DEA established the Office of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs, under the direction of Kenneth Durrin. The office was created to provide a specialized work force that could focus exclusively on the diversion of legitimate drugs and take full advantage of the controls and penalties established by the Controlled Substances Act (CSA).

From 1971 through 1978, 33 previously uncontrolled drugs of abuse were brought under CSA control. The best known of these drugs was methaqualone, which was controlled in Schedule II. An additional 11 drugs, including amphetamine, methamphetamine, and the fast-acting barbiturates were rescheduled from lower schedules into Schedule II, where the tightest security, import, record-keeping and reporting controls were applied. For example, a Schedule II drug could only be distributed on official order forms between registrants, exported only by official permit, and produced only in limited quantities. This significantly curtailed the amount of many popular drugs that were available for diversion.

While the DEA had been successful in regulating manufacturers and distributors, it now had the opportunity to work cooperatively with doctors and pharmacists at the retail level. The 1979 National Institute on Drug Abuse survey showed that non-medical use of prescription drugs was second only to marijuana use. More startling statistics came from the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), which measured hospital emergency room episodes and medical examiner reports concerned with specific drugs.

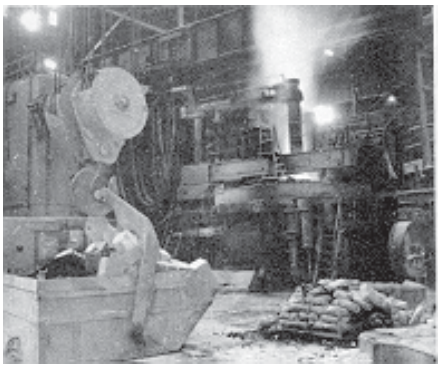
In 1980, legally produced drugs accounted for 15 of the 20 most frequently mentioned controlled drugs in DAWN emergency mentions and 75 percent of total mentions of controlled drug use. In addition, legally produced drugs constituted 74 percent of controlled substance mentions in deaths reported by medical examiners.

Up until then, diversion by unscrupulous practitioners had not been the major investigative focus of the DEA because the huge quantities of drugs diverted at the manufacturer and distributor level had overshadowed this problem. However, when estimates indicated that 80-90 percent of diversion was now occurring at the practitioner level, it became time to increase efforts against practitioner diversion. Because practitioners and pharmacies had emerged as the main sources of diverted controlled substances, the Office of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs changed its priorities to deal with this problem. This was a daunting challenge for a work force of about 200, because by the late 1970s, there were over 550,000 practitioners and pharmacies registered under the CSA. An example of practitioner-level abuse in the mid-1970s occurred at "weight" clinics where "patients" were able to obtain many diverted drugs. In October of 1979, the DEA initiated Operation Script, a pilot program designed to focus the DEA's technical, investigative, and legal expertise on this problem. A total of 94 priority targets in 23 cities were identified by analyzing drug sales data reported to DEA by manufacturers and distributors through a system known as the Automated Reports and Consummated Orders System (ARCOS). This ARCOS system contained information for estimating drug requirements and alerted investigators to sources of diversion in the legal drug distribution chain. In September 1980, a DEA internal review of Operation Script showed that investigations had resulted in 28 convictions, 10 additional indictments, 5 surrenders or revocations, and 17 state board actions.

An important aspect of the overall investigative program was that data developed through these investigations was used to initiate significant regulatory actions. For example, the maximum quantity of commonly abused drugs that could be manufactured legally was reduced through the quota process. Manufacturing quotas were applied to Schedule I and II substances and limited production to the actual amount necessary for legitimate medical and scientific need. Information documenting the diversion of these substances was used to justify reductions in these quotas, greatly reducing the amount of drugs available for diversion.

The DEA also actively pursued the enhancement of state-level investigative capabilities by funding Diversion Investigation Units (DIUs). The DIUs combined state law enforcement and regulatory bodies into a single unit dedicated to investigating and taking action against practitioners who were diverting controlled substances.

By the late 1970s both the U.S. Congress and the General Accounting Office (GAO) recognized the significant contributions that DEA's efforts had achieved in eliminating diversion at the manufacturer and distributor level. These efforts were able to successfully shore up the weakest portions of the upper end of the distribution chain. Drug manufacturers and distributors either improved their controls or ceased controlled substance activity altogether. The Office of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs was ultimately changed to the Office of Diversion Control in 1982.



This was the Kansas City plant where drugs that had been surrendered to compliance investigators were burned in blast furnaces at multi-thousand degree temperatures.

South Florida

By the mid-1970s, Miami had become the drug capital of the Western Hemisphere because of its geography and cooperative international banks. Within a short time, South Florida was overwhelmed by violent cocaine and marijuana traffickers from Latin America.

In 1975, the U.S. Customs Service seized 729 pounds of cocaine, up from only 108 pounds in 1970. During that same period, in Miami Airport alone, cocaine seizures increased from 37 pounds to over 271. By 1979, the South Florida illegal drug trade was the state's biggest industry and was said to be worth $10 billion a year wholesale. "There is so much money, they weigh it instead of counting it," commented Administrator Bensinger. In what had once been a tranquil vacation spot, violence was becoming commonplace. In July 1979, an incident that occurred in the Dadeland Mall, Florida's largest shopping center, offered a startling glimpse of the emerging drug trade in South Florida. In broad daylight, two gunmen exited a paneled truck, entered a liquor store, gunned down two men and wounded the store clerk. The dead men were eventually identified as a Colombia-based cocaine trafficker and his bodyguard.

The disguised truck that the two gunmen exited before murdering two men and wounding another in a liquor store.

One of the two bodies found in the Dadeland Mall massacre.

1976-77

Heroin was a major problem in 1976, but cocaine was gaining in popularity. As a result, the DEA was featured in ABC-TV's five-part television report on cocaine, titled "Snow Blind: The Cocaine Connection." Shown here are two publicity posters for the series that aired in 1977.

1978

1978 lab seizure.

1979

Special Agent Bob Parks posed with a 1964 Rolls Royce seized during the June 1979 arrest of 20 heroin traffickers.

Paraphernalia Law (1979)

As drug use grew in America, especially on college campuses, the paraphernalia industry developed to support the drug culture. Retailers sold items such as "bongs," "roach clips," and specialized razor blades purchased to enhance the use of marijuana, hashish, heroin, cocaine and a variety of other drugs. These "head shops," as they were called, became big business. In 1980, it was estimated that 25,000 retail outlets for drug paraphernalia grossed up to $3 billion annually in sales. The sale and advertising of drug paraphernalia glamorized the drug culture, promoted drug use, and undermined educational and community programs designed to prevent drug abuse among our youth.

In 1979, in response to the growing problem, President Carter asked the DEA to draft a model anti-drug paraphernalia law which could be adopted by state and local governments. Early state laws aimed at controlling drug paraphernalia were ineffective because they had dealt with the problem on a piecemeal basis, and were so vaguely worded they could not withstand a constitutional attack. In contrast, the Model Act, which was designed by Harry Myers in the DEA's Office of Chief Counsel, was clear and comprehensive and contained a detailed definition of "drug paraphernalia." It also included lists of criteria that courts could use in order to determine if particular objects should be considered paraphernalia.

The Model Act made the possession of paraphernalia, with the intent to use it with illicit drugs, a crime. Manufacturing and delivering paraphernalia was a crime, and the delivery of paraphernalia to a child by an adult was a special offense. In addition, the publication of commercial advertisements promoting the sale of paraphernalia was unlawful.

By mid-1981, 20 states had enacted DEA's Model Drug Paraphernalia Act. However, the head shops did not go without a legal fight. One Illinois business challenged a drug paraphernalia ordinance on the grounds that it was unconstitutionally broad and vague. However, on March 3, 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the ordinance did not violate the head shop owner's First Amendment rights nor was there a danger of arbitrary enforcement, which is necessary to render a law void for vagueness. As more and more states adopted these anti-drug measures, thousands of paraphernalia shops were essentially legislated out of business.

Cocaine

By the late 1970s, a flood of cocaine was entering the country in Miami and being transported north to New York City and to cities and towns all along the East Coast. Cocaine, however, was not yet considered a major threat because many believed that its use was confined to the wealthy.

Cocaine Use: However, statistics indicated otherwise: by 1974, 5.4 million Americans acknowledged having tried cocaine at least once. By 1979, cocaine use was at its peak. That year, the Household Survey showed that almost 20 percent of Americans had used cocaine in the past year, and 9.3 percent had used cocaine in the previous month. By the early 1980s about 22 million Americans admitted to having tried cocaine.

The rise in drug use was fueled, in part, by the tolerant attitudes prevalent in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Many people saw cocaine as a benign, recreational drug, celebrated for its "pleasureability" in the media. Dr. Peter Bourne, drug advisor to Jimmy Carter and Special Assistant for Health Issues, wrote, "Cocaine...is probably the most benign of illicit drugs currently in widespread use. At least as strong a case could be made for legalizing it as for legalizing marijuana. Short-acting....not physically addicting, and acutely pleasurable, cocaine has found increasing favor at all socioeconomic levels." This was an attitude shared by the public at large.

Cocaine Trafficking: In 1974 the DEA began to make connections between cocaine seizures and realized that cases that appeared to be isolated were actually linked. It became obvious that a well-organized smuggling effort was being orchestrated from abroad. Traffickers from Colombia monopolized the cocaine business in Queens and Manhattan, New York. However, a large-scale cocaine problem was still believed to exist only in Miami.

In January 1980, a joint investigation by the Peruvian Investigation Police and the DEA Lima and Mexico City Offices resulted in the seizure of 506 kilograms of cocaine base and the arrest of 11 defendants. DEA Special Agents Russell Reina (left) and Gary Wheeler are shown pointing out Chosica, Peru, where the cocaine convoy was intercepted.

The DEA estimated that Colombia-based traffickers had been processing 70 percent of the cocaine entering the United States each year, which was estimated to yield approximately $150 million in gross profits to the dealers. In more and more investigations around the nation, the DEA encountered trafficking networks controlled from Colombia, who were running stash houses, moving money, and developing drug market networks for their suppliers back home.

Initially, traffickers from Cuba controlled the distribution organizations in South Florida and New York. Eventually, however, through violence and the so-called "cocaine wars," Colombia-based traffickers wrested control of the cocaine business. Other groups were allowed into the cocaine business, but strictly on terms set by the traffickers from Colombia who controlled the market. Meanwhile, law enforcement continued to make small seizures that were viewed as isolated, independent cases.

Carlos Lehder (left) is shown using cocaine with his former prison buddy Steven Yakovac on Norman's Cay in 1978.

The Origins of the Medellin Cartel

The 1979 incident at Dadeland Mall in Florida that had received national attention was the first visible evidence of the growing presence of a network of Colombia-based drug dealers in the United States. This drug alliance had been conceived by Carlos Enrique Lehder-Rivas, who had met George Jung, a drug trafficker, while in prison. Jung had been transporting tons of marijuana in private planes. Noting how successful this method of smuggling marijuana had been, Lehder reasoned that cocaine could also be moved in ton quantities.

In the late 1970s, Carlos Enrique Lehder-Rivas began cooperating with other Colombia-based traffickers in the manufacturing, transportation, and distribution of tons of cocaine to the United States and around the world. Lehder's idea evolved into of the most lucrative, powerful, and deadly partnerships known—the Medellin cartel. Its membership included some of the most notorious drug lords of the 1980s—Jorge Ochoa, Pablo Escobar, Griselda Blanco, Gustavo and Benjamin Herrera, and Jose Rodriguez-Gacha.

By the summer of 1976, Jung and Lehder were out of jail and in the cocaine business. Lehder bought Norman's Cay, an island in the Bahamas, which served as a base for air smuggling between Colombia and the United States. Lehder was just one of the hundreds of Colombia-based traffickers expanding the cocaine business.

By the mid-1970s, these traffickers, already active in marijuana trade, had established a virtual monopoly over cocaine distribution. The Andean city of Medellin, Colombia's second largest city, was home to most of these traffickers. With cooperation, the cartels began processing even greater amounts

Lehder purchased Norman's Cay, shown here in 1981, to facilitate his smuggling operations.

of cocaine—from 25 tons in the late 1970s to 125 tons by the early 1980s. In the United States in 1978, a kilo of 12-percent purity cocaine had sold on the street for an average of $800,000. But by early 1984, cocaine was so plentiful that there were substantial price reductions in many U.S. cities. Prices for a kilo of cocaine dropped as low as $30,000 in New York City and $16,000 in South Florida.

Major Cocaine Seizures

In late 1979, the DEA and the U.S. Customs Service conducted a two-part drug air interdiction campaign in the Turks and Caicos islands near the Bahamas. The campaign, which was called Operation Boomer/Falcon, mostly focused on South Caicos island. The island had become an established transhipment and refueling point for drug smugglers from South America because many corrupt South Caicos government officials were easily bribed.

One phase of the operation involved a covert surveillance of nearby uninhabited West Caicos island, which was also used as a transhipment point. When aircraft laden with illicit drugs landed on the island, DEA agents and local law enforcement officers were on-hand to seize the aircraft and arrest the pilots. The other phase of the operation was an undercover investigation used to collect intelligence about aircraft transporting drugs. Two DEA agents posing as mechanics lived in a DEA DC-3 plane for six weeks. During that time, they collected identification information about planes that were smuggling drugs and relayed this information to a command post in Miami, Florida. Using this information, which included the tail identification numbers and take-off times of planes transporting illicit drugs, the command post launched aircraft to intercept the traffickers.

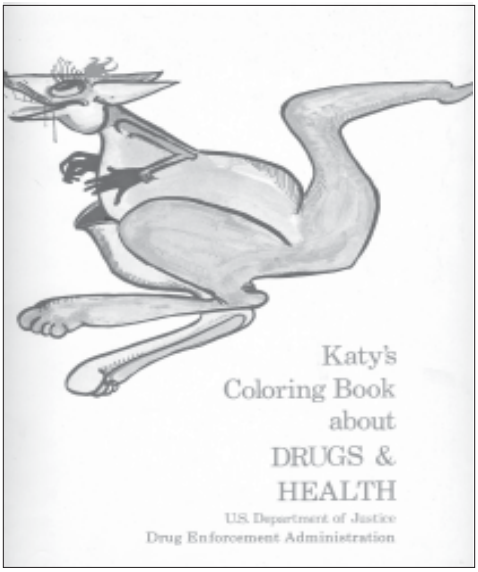
The operation was enormously successful and resulted in the seizure of 27 aircraft, 1,203 pounds of Quaaludes and almost 8 tons of marijuana, as well as the 1985 arrest and conviction of the Prime Minister of South Caicos, Norman Saunders, who had accepted bribes from drug traffickers. Operation Boomer/Falcon was responsible for the seizure of a total of 785 pounds of cocaine, of which two seizures were of record quantities—329 and 384 pounds. Previously, agents rarely seized more than 10-20 pounds at a time. These large seizures alerted law enforcement of the increase in cocaine trafficking from South America.

In addition to significant cocaine cases, the DEA also confronted major heroin trafficking. In this photograph, DEA New York Regional Director John Fallon (right) examined 24 kilograms of high-quality heroin confiscated at Kennedy Airport in 1980.

U.S. Drug Use Peaks (1979)

Drug use by Americans reached its all-time high in 1979. With relaxed attitudes regarding the harmfulness of marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal substances, young people recklessly experimented with these drugs and suffered severe consequences as a result. According to the 1979 National Survey on Drug Abuse, more than two-thirds of young adults, age 18-25, reported experience with an illicit drug. About three in ten youth, age 12-17, and one in five older adults, age 26 and older, reported having used an illicit drug. These statistics sent shock waves through the law enforcement, civic, and educational communities. As a result, in subsequent years, anti-drug campaigns and concerted efforts were launched by governments and communities across the nation aimed at decreasing teen drug use.

Katy's coloring book was originally conceived and illustrated by Suzie Rice in 1970. It was innovative in that it was the first publication which addressed the subject at a child's level.



Domestic Cannabis Eradication and Suppression Program (1979)

Marijuana was the only major drug grown within U.S. borders, and since the 1960s, had been the most widely used drug in the United States. In the late 1970s, it was estimated that the United States was producing almost 25 percent of all the marijuana consumed domestically. During the two-year period from 1977 to 1979, the demand for it was confirmed by the percentage of adults who admitted to ever having tried marijuana in their lifetime. These rates increased from 59.9 percent to 68.2 percent for young adults, and from 15.3 percent to 19.6 percent for older adults.

In 1979, an estimated 10-15,000 tons of marijuana were consumed in the United States. It is believed that up to 10 percent of that amount was cultivated in the United States, a majority from California and Hawaii. In response to this serious problem, the DEA began its Domestic Cannabis Eradication and Suppression Program in 1979 with only two states participating, California and Hawaii. The DEA provided three special agents to work with local authorities in California on case development and intelligence gathering.

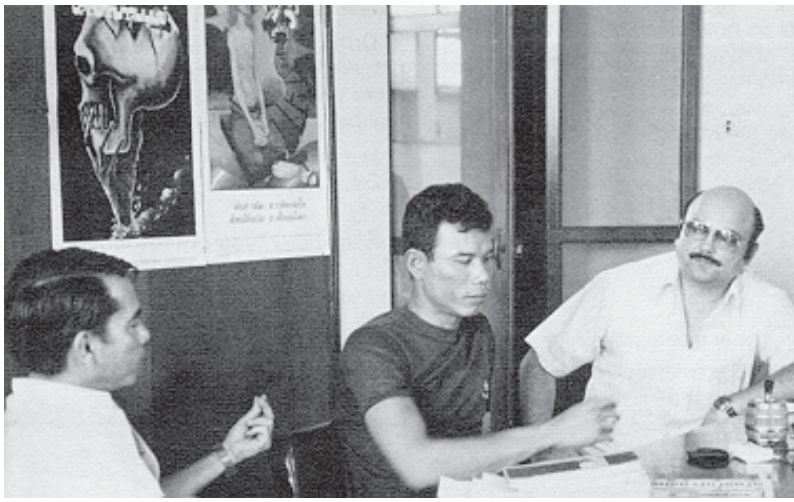
The DEA Air Wing also provided aircraft and pilots as part of the search effort, and local police received aerial search techniques instruction. In the same year, three DEA agents also worked with the U.S. Customs Service and U.S. Coast Guard in Operation Green Harvest that targeted marijuana growers in the Hawaiian Islands. More and more states joined the cannabis eradication program and by 1982, 25 states had joined.

This program was established as a partnership of federal, state, and local agencies. In addition to cultivating an illegal drug that contributed to wholesale abuse, marijuana growers presented other problems to law enforcement and the environment. They encroached on national forests and parks and threatened innocent people. To protect their marijuana crops, many growers equipped their marijuana patches with booby traps, trip wires, and explosives. Marijuana growers also threatened the environment by using pesticides, building harmful dams for irrigation, and cutting down trees. By 1982, 25 states were participating in the cannabis eradication program.

Women Competing

Four DEA women ran in the 10,000 meter Bonnie Belle Classic in Washington, D.C. Over 1500 women competed in the race which was held at Haines Point. Colleen Finnegan, Cardie Dalton, Dee Zugby and Eileen Scire all finished the race in about an hour.

International Cooperation



Cooperative international law enforcement efforts allowed the DEA to stop the flow of drugs at the source. Pictured above, Colonel Choktip (left) of the Thai Office of Narcotics Control Board and DEA Case Agent Paul Salute (right) questioned a defendant after the 1980 arrest of 10 morphine traffickers in Thailand.

Training

In 1975, the DEA began adjusting the focus of its Basic Agent training class, and by 1977 the length of the course had increased from 10 weeks to 12 weeks. Students trained from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and were given only five days off, receiving what would be equivalent to 16 weeks of training. The rigorous schedule insured that DEA agents-in-training would be prepared to face the challenges ahead of them. Other changes to the training class included an increase in field training and report writing exercises, as well as the addition of a three-day conspiracy school. Students also spent more hours studying law than did their predecessors. These changes were made in response to the DEA's increasing focus on conspiracy cases and to a survey to agents in the field that indicated more training was needed. Starting in June 1977, basic agents received increased training in law, the use of technical investigative aids, and new conspiracy techniques. Training was still performed at the National Training Institute, which was located at DEA Headquarters, 1405 "Eye" Street in Washington, D.C.

In April 1978, the Philadelphia District Office staff designed and implemented a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory school that proved to be a catalyst for similar seminars conducted throughout the United States. This school combined laboratory exercises with realistic, practical exercises on the street.

A major improvement in lab training occurred in April 1979, when the DEA began clandestine laboratory synthesis training, coordinated by Forensic Chemist Alan B. Clark of the Southwest Regional Laboratory. Groups of three agents per class were trained in the synthesis of PCP and methamphetamine, the two substances most frequently produced in clandestine lab operations. Previously, new agents were trained only in the investigative aspects of clandestine labs, but had little or no training in chemical synthesis. With this new training, they were better equipped to identify what substances were being synthesized and which procedures were being used in the clandestine labs they encountered. This training not only increased agents' investigative capabilities, but also improved safety by increasing their knowledge of the toxic dangers encountered in clandestine labs.

At a firearms instruction school held in May 1977, instructor Neal Crane demonstrated a Remington Model 870P 12-gauge shotgun.

Firearms classes were originially conducted in two inside ranges in the "bank" building on Eye Street.

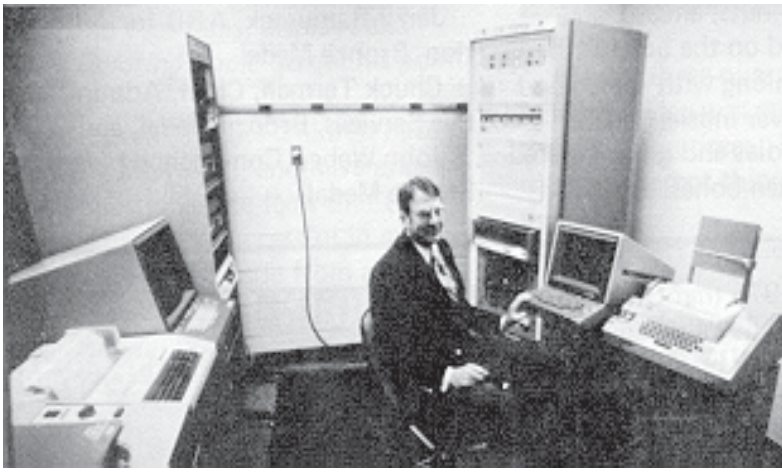
Physical Fitness was also a part of training given to state and local police officers. The gymnasium was located in a former bank, which was next door to the original Headquarters building at 14th and Eye streets in Washington, D.C.
Police officers from these classes would often later become DEA Agents. This is class P-19, 1978.

Technology

During the period 1975 through 1980, the DEA continued to take advantage of the latest in law enforcement technology. For example, in 1976, the DEA employed the Policefax DD-14, a new system for transmitting information about criminals. The system, a precursor to modern-day fax machines, transmitted photo-quality fingerprints over the conventional telephone network. This communication tool served as a link between DEA field offices and the DEA's Central Identification Bureau. Transmitting fingerprints via Policefax DD-14 allowed the field offices to quickly determine if suspects had previous records and obtain those records, when necessary.

These Policefax machines required several hours to transmit data to a receiving machine, which would then take 14 minutes per page to print eight-inch square reproductions of the original fingerprint card. Nevertheless, according to Dr. Al Glass of the DEA's Office of Enforcement, the new system was the fastest way to send fingerprints and significantly reduced the time spent waiting for 'rap sheets.'

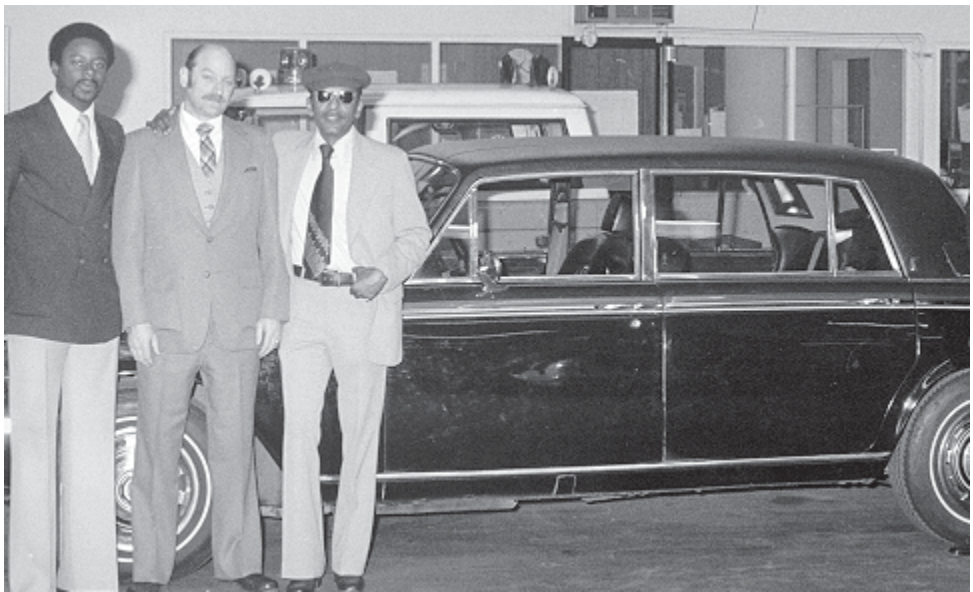
The DEA also made use of the best available communication technology at its improved its communication centers. The Dallas Regional Communications Center (DRCC), which began providing around-the-clock support in February 1976, was one of the first to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The center provided tactical, near-real-time response support for agents in the field, as well as day-to-day support for regional and district offices. DEA personnel used the center to quickly access intelligence sources such as NCIC, driver's license checks, and NADDIS. This center was the first fully operational DEA network, with 16 manned sub-stations and 11 unmanned base-repeaters, and covered the entire Texas and Oklahoma area. In addition to Dallas, similar DEA communications centers began operating in the Los Angeles, New York and Seattle regions.



Herb Thompson of the Research and Engineering Division in Merrifield, Virginia, was photographed working on his CAT system, which tracked suspect vehicles in real time.

In 1978, Special Agents Steve Prator (left) and Ron Hall examined chemical equipment seized from a clandestine methamphetamine lab in Shreveport, Louisiana.

1980



The 1980 arrest of Leroy Butler, one of the most significant heroin traffickers in New York City, also led to the seizure of the $40,000 Rolls Royce shown here. Posing with the car are, from left to right: SA Lewis Rice, SA Thor Nowozeniuk, and GS Fred Gormandy.

Aviation

By the mid-1970s, the DEA Air Wing was comprised of 38 pilots stationed across the country. Many had commercial flight experience, or had flown in Vietnam or World War II. Air Wing service became available to every DEA regional and district office in the continental United States.

Supervision of Air Wing operations was divided between the chief pilot, Marion Joseph, at the central Air Wing facility in Addison, Texas, and four regional air coordinators. The air coordinators were responsible for the four Air Wing regions—Eastern, Central, Midwestern, and Western—that were centered in Miami, Dallas, Denver, and Los Angeles, respectively. The chief pilot had jurisdiction over the aircraft, while the air coordinators supervised personnel. This division of supervision over Air Wing resources made it difficult to coordinate aircraft and personnel for Air Wing missions. In 1975, supervision was centralized and the chief pilot at Addison became responsible for both the Air Wing personnel and aircraft. The program became more structured as it grew, and eventually included uniform safety and flight procedures. While the Addison facility handled the coordination of resources, headquarters established and standardized administrative procedures and developed an official aviation manual. When additional air support was needed, planes and pilots were rescheduled on a temporary duty basis or were provided by the Central Air Wing in Addison.

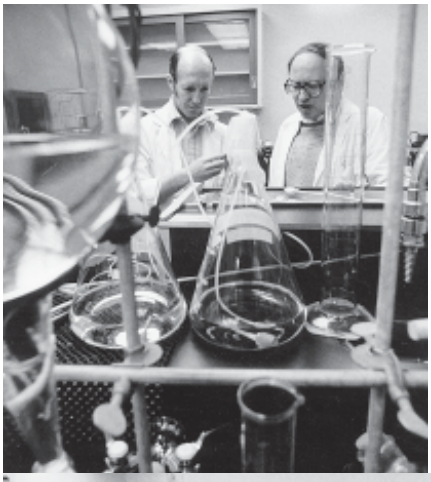
In 1978, the chief pilot position was reassigned to headquarters to focus on program management, budget, and policy. The deputy chief pilot assumed responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Addison Aviation Facility. At the same time, four area supervisor positions were transferred to Addison from regional offices to improve management structure. Shortly thereafter, a full-time safety/training position was created at Addison. By the late 1970s, Air Wing operations provided eradication support and transportation of prisoners, personnel, and evidence. Air Wing employees also performed undercover work and surveillance.

Laboratories

In early 1975, the DEA was busy constructing a new regional lab in the San Diego area. The impetus behind the decision to build it was the dramatic increase in heroin trafficking from Mexico into the southwestern United States. For two years, San Diego lab employees worked in a temporary facility, the old U.S. Customs Bureau Laboratory, while their new lab was being designed and constructed. The new building, which was completed in July 1976, featured the latest in safety and efficiency features. The fact that the structure was only one-story high allowed for safer utilization of extremely heavy equipment. The building also contained a vault space that was four times larger than that in any other DEA lab at that time.

Another important event for DEA laboratories occurred in the fall of 1976, when chemists from around the world studied in DEA lab facilities as part of the International Forensic Chemist Seminar. Fourteen chemists from Hong Kong, Germany, France, Iran, Belgium, and the Netherlands spent two weeks at the DEA's Special Testing Research Lab in McLean, Virginia. They also visited the DEA's Southeast Regional Lab.

The program included advanced training for the already proficient chemists. Courses covered such subjects as the history of drug abuse and control, advanced techniques, and ballistics.



1977: DEA Chemists Chuck Harper and Al Spurling analyzed findings at the Special Testing and Research Lab.

1977: Chemists at the Special Testing and Research Lab supported many DEA investigations. From left to right: Phil Patterson, Ted Kram, Jim Moore, and Joe Koles.

Mexico City Management Team June 1980

Left to right back: CA Rudy Ramirez, Costa Rica CO, RAC Richard Canas, Monterey RO, RAC Ruben Salinas, Mazatlan RO, CA Guatemala, RAC William Rochon, Guadalajara RO, RAC William Farnan, Merida RO, RAC Thomas Telles, Hermosillo RO. Left to right front: GS Charlie Lugo, Mexico City,Asst. Regional Director Frank Macolini, Mexico City, DEA Administrator Peter Bensinger, Regional Director Edward Heath, Mexico City, GS Freank Cruz, Mexico City

Killed in the Line of Duty

Larry D. Wallace
Died on December 19, 1975
DEA Special Agent Wallace, of the Tokyo District Office, died at the Naval Regional Medical Center in Guam from gunshot wounds received during an undercover drug investigation.

Ralph N. Shaw
Died on May 14, 1976
DEA Special Agent Shaw, of the Calexico, California District Office, died in a plane crash north of Acapulco during an operations flight in support of Mexico's opium eradication program.

James T. Lunn
Died on May 14, 1976
DEA Special Agent Lunn, a pilot assigned to the Office of Enforcement at DEA headquarters, died in a plane crash north of Acapulco during an operations flight in support of Mexico's opium eradication program.

Octavio Gonzalez
Died on December 13, 1976
DEA Special Agent Gonzalez was the Country Attache in Bogota, Colombia, when he was shot and killed in the office by an informant.

Francis J. Miller
Died on March 5, 1977
DEA Special Agent Miller, a Group Supervisor at the Newark Division, was killed in an automobile accident in New York.

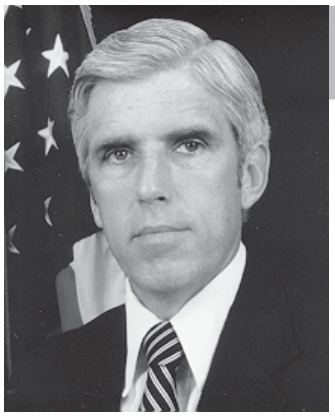
Robert C. Lightfoot
Died on November 23, 1977
DEA Special Agent Lightfoot died in a firearms accident in Bangkok, Thailand.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

During the 1980s, international drug trafficking organizations reorganized and began operating on an unprecedented scale. The rise of the Medellin cartel, the influx of cocaine into the United States, and the violence associated with drug trafficking and drug use complicated the task of law enforcement at all levels.

One of the first wireless phones to be used in enforcement.

1980-1985



DEA

Francis M. Mullen, Jr.
Administrator, DEA
July 10, 1981 (acting)- March 1, 1985

Francis M. "Bud" Mullen, Jr., a career FBI agent of almost 20 years, was appointed Acting Administrator of the DEA on July 10, 1981. He began his FBI career in May 1962 at the Bureau's Los Angeles office, serving from 1963 to 1969. From there, he was assigned to the Administrative Services Division in Washington (1969-1972), the Planning and Inspection Division (1972), and was Assistant Special Agent in Charge in Denver, Colorado (1973-1975). Later, he served as Special Agent in Charge in Tampa, Florida (1975-1976) and in New Orleans, Louisiana (1976-1978), and he was the FBI's Inspector and Deputy Assistant Director, Organized Crime & White Collar Crime (1978-79); Assistant Director, Criminal Investigative Division (1979-80); and Executive Assistant Director, Investigations from 1980 until his appointment to DEA Administrator. He continued to serve in an acting capacity from July 1981 until he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on September 30, 1983, and sworn in as the DEA's third administrator on November 10, 1983. He is currently the Director of Mohegan Tribal Gaming Commission in Uncasville, Connecticut.

Administrator Mullen began his term at a time when the tremendous impact of drug abuse was being felt across the United States. The problem was especially acute in southern Florida, where unprecedented drug-related violence accompanied the cocaine transit routes of the Colombian cartels. It was clear to the Reagan Administration that U.S. drug fighting agencies needed help.

Acting Administrator Mullen stressed multi-agency cooperation with other members of the enforcement and intelligence communities. He made the policy official in a July 14, 1981, memo to DEA employees: "On policy, strategy and tactical levels, your cooperation with other agencies in all current and future DEA efforts is hereby ordered."

Special Agents	**DEA Budget**
1980.....1,941	1980.....$206.6 million
1985.....2,234	1985.....$362.4 million

During the early 1980s, international drug trafficking organizations reorganized and began operating on an unprecedented scale. The rise of the Medellin cartel, the influx of cocaine into the United States, and the violence associated with drug trafficking and drug use complicated the task of law enforcement at all levels. Violent crime rates rose dramatically during this period and continued to rise until the early 1990s. The "normalization" of drug use during the previous two decades continued as the U.S. population rediscovered cocaine. Many saw cocaine as a benign, recreational drug. In 1981, *Time* magazine ran a cover story entitled, "High on Cocaine" with cover art of an elegant martini glass filled with cocaine. The article reported that cocaine's use was spreading quickly into America's middle class: "Today...coke is the drug of choice for perhaps millions of solid, conventional and often upwardly mobile citizens." Drug abuse among U.S. citizens in the early 1980s remained at dangerously high levels.

The Rise of the Medellin Cartel

By the early 1980s, the drug lords of the Medellin cartel were well established in Colombia, where they used murder, intimidation, and assassination to keep journalists and public officials from speaking out against them. Law enforcement officers and judges were favored targets of these brutish drug cartels that controlled entire towns and economies to support their criminal business. By 1985, Colombia had the highest murder rate in the world. In Medellin alone, 1,698 people were murdered, and the following year, that number more than doubled to 3,500. The Medellin cartel was fast becoming the richest and most feared underworld crime syndicate the world had ever encountered.

During the period 1980 through 1985, the Medellin mafias delivered to the United States a large measure of the wholesale violence and terror that their drug trafficking activities had inflicted on their home country. In a grim parody of their campaign to control Colombia, they insinuated themselves into legitimate, and useful, sectors of the U.S. economy, such as the banking and import industries. The United States suffered badly from the cartel's presence as local drug gangs began to form, communities were terrorized, and drug use among teens continued to climb.

Colombian Marijuana

Colombian marijuana continued to be a problem in the early 1980s as Colombia-based traffickers brought boatloads of high-potency marijuana to the shores of the United States. Consequently, the DEA ran several investigations targeting these smugglers, including Operations Grouper and Tiburon.

In 1981, Operation Grouper was conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard and 21 other federal, state, and local government agencies. It was one of the largest enforcement operations launched against marijuana traffickers from Colombia. The operation targeted 14 separate Florida, Louisiana, and Georgia-based trafficking organizations that were smuggling large-scale, multi-ton quantities of marijuana and millions of dosage units of methaqualone into the United States. For 22 months, nine DEA special agents operated undercover, some posing as off-loaders to a number of smuggling organizations. The smuggling network had negotiated deliveries to states as far away as Maine and New York. As a result of the operation, agents ultimately arrested 122 out of the 155 indicted subjects, and seized more than $1 billion worth of drugs, and $12 million worth of assets, including 30 vessels, two airplanes and $1 million in cash.

The following year, the DEA concluded Operation Tiburon, another major operation targeting marijuana smuggling from Colombia. Tiburon resulted in the arrest of 495 people and the seizure of 95 vessels, 1.7 million pounds of marijuana in the United States, and 4.7 million pounds of marijuana in Colombia. U.S. Attorney General William French Smith praised this operation as a "classic example of how agencies, and indeed entire governments, can work together sharing intelligence and expertise and zeroing in on the sea and air routes used by major smugglers."

Operation Swordfish (1980)

In December 1980, the DEA launched a major investigation in Miami aimed against international drug organizations. The operation was dubbed Operation Swordfish because it was intended to snare the "big fish" in the drug trade. The DEA set up a bogus money laundering corporation in suburban Miami Lakes that was called Dean International Investments, Inc. The DEA agents teamed up with a Cuban exile who had fallen on hard times and was willing to lure Colombian traffickers to the bogus bank. In addition to spending time in Cuban prisons after the Bay of Pigs invasion, the exile had also served jail time in the United States for tax fraud and was heavily in debt to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. During the 18-month investigation, agents were able to gather enough evidence for a federal grand jury to indict 67 U.S. and Colombian citizens. At the conclusion of the operation, drug agents seized 100 kilos of cocaine, a quarter-million methaqualone pills, tons of marijuana, and $800,000 in cash, cars, land, and Miami bank accounts. Operation Swordfish was a significant attack on South Florida's flourishing drug trade.

On February 20, 1981, DEA Miami Field Division special agents of Group No. 1 and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) seized 826 pounds of cocaine—a record seizure at that time. Florida Governor Bob Graham (center) applauded their success.

In 1981, DEA Albuquerque, the New Mexico State Police, and the Taos Police Department seized the first cocaine processing laboratory in the Southwest. Pictured (left) are special agents and 7.5 pounds of cocaine, which had been impregnated into articles of clothing.

Members of DEA Philadelphia Group 1 seized 20 pounds of methamphetamine in a joint DEA/FBI investigation of organized crime in 1981. From left are SAs Dennis Malloy, Richard B. Shapiro, and William McGinn.

International Security & Development Cooperation Act of 1981

The International Security and Development Act, Public Law 97-113, was passed in 1981. Among its provisions, this act authorized appropriations for the International Narcotics Control program under section 482 of the Foreign Assistance Act, specifically, $37.7 million for each of the fiscal years 1982 and 1983. The act allowed for the use of herbicides in drug crop eradication while requiring the Secretary of Health and Human Services to monitor any potentially harmful impacts of the use of such herbicides. Finally, the act directed the President to make an annual report to Congress on U.S. policy for establishing an international strategy to prevent narcotics trafficking. This mandated report was the forerunner of the International Narcotics and Controlled Strategy Report (INCSR), which the President issues every March and which highlighted the drug control efforts in every foreign country that receives aid from the United States.

Concurrent Jurisdiction with the FBI (1982)

In January 1982, Attorney General William French Smith announced a federal law enforcement reorganization. In an effort to bolster the drug effort with more anti-drug manpower and resources, the FBI officially joined forces with the DEA. The DEA would continue to be the principal drug enforcement agency and continue to be headed by an administrator, but instead of reporting directly to Associate Attorney General Rudy Giuliani, as Administrator Bensinger had, Administrator Mullen would report to FBI Director William H. Webster. Therefore, the FBI gained concurrent jurisdiction with the DEA over drug offenses. This increased the human and technical resources available for federal drug law enforcement from 1,900 agents to almost 10,000.

Administrator Mullen was the first FBI special agent to head the DEA. The Administration intended to increase cooperation between the two agencies by combining the street savvy of DEA agents with the variety of unique FBI investigative skills, especially in the area of money laundering and organized crime.

During the previous summer, high-ranking Justice Department officials had formed a committee to study the most effective method of coordinating the efforts of the DEA and FBI. Although the committee had considered an outright merger of the two agencies, they decided that formalizing a closer working relationship would be the most effective way to enhance the nation's drug fighting effort.

In order to implement concurrent investigations, the two agencies began an intensive cross-training program, and similar programs were established to coordinate intelligence gathering efforts and laboratory analyses. Several DEA executives were reassigned to make room for additional FBI agents who assumed managerial responsibility for the DEA.

Over time, the FBI and the DEA shared many administrative practices, and the years between 1981 and 1986 proved to be a time of growth and development for both agencies. The DEA expanded its global responsibilities and placed greater emphasis on conspiracy and wiretap cases.

Southwest Asian Heroin

After years of aggressive law enforcement efforts aimed against heroin traffickers, several significant benefits were achieved. During the 1970s, the heroin addict population was reduced from over a half million to 380,000 addicts; heroin overdose deaths dropped by 80 percent; and heroin-related injuries decreased by 50 percent. In 1981, it was estimated that there was 40 percent less heroin available than in 1976. But, by the early 1980s, a new wave of heroin from the poppy fields of the "Golden Crescent" countries in southwest Asia—primarily Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan—began to flood the U.S. East Coast. Heroin traffickers reopened the notorious French Connection drug route of the 1970s, using many of the same organized crime smugglers in Italy, France, and West Germany. In 1980, DEA and U.S. Customs intercepted one of the largest illicit shipments of heroin since the French Connection. In Staten Island, New York, U.S. Customs detector dogs pointed to a shipment of furniture imported from Palermo, Italy. Inside the furniture, officers discovered 46 pounds of 65 percent-pure southwest Asian heroin. DEA agents then posed as truck drivers to make a controlled delivery of the furniture in New York City and Detroit, resulting in the Detroit arrest of a naturalized U.S. citizen from Sicily. In addition, three others were arrested in New York City.

Year	Foreign Office Opened
1981	Athens, Greece
1981	Tegucigalpa, Honduras
1982	Cairo, Egypt
1982	Barranquilla, Colombia
1982	Curacao, Netherlands Ant.
1982	Nicosia, Cyprus
1982	Peshawar, Pakistan
1982	Santo Domingo, Dom. Rep.
1984	Bern, Switzerland
1984	Santa Cruz, Bolivia

Chemist Romulo Reyes reviewed a drug analysis at the Southwest Regional Laboratory.

Methaqualone (1982)

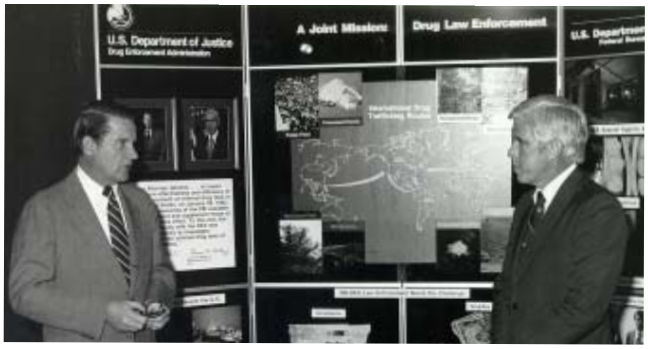
Methaqualone, also called "Quaalude," was first marketed in the United States in 1965 as a sedative. By 1972, methaqualone had become one of the most popular drugs of abuse in the United States. Methaqualone abuse then increased suddenly in the late 1970s and early 1980s. According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) survey, methaqualone abuse in 1979 increased almost 40 percent.

One contributing factor to the increase of methaqualone abuse was the establishment of "stress clinics" in New York, New Jersey, and Florida. The sole purpose of these clinics was to issue prescriptions for methaqualone. Investigation of these clinics was complicated by the fact that patients underwent physical examinations so that there was a facade of legitimate medical treatment.

Responding to the alarming increase in methaqualone abuse in the early 1980s, the DEA targeted the major stress clinics. By mid-1982, these investigations resulted in 38 indictments. In addition, Florida and Georgia placed methaqualone in Schedule I, eliminating its medical use in those states.

At the peak of the U.S. methaqualone problem in the early 1980s, an estimated 85 percent of the methaqualone tablets that were being abused in the U.S. were counterfeit Quaalude tablets from overseas sources. In response, the DEA Diversion Control Program (renamed in 1982 from the Office of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs), in cooperation with the U.S. Department of State, launched a series of successful diplomatic initiatives with the major drug manufacturing and exporting countries in Europe and Asia. As a result, five source countries placed more stringent controls on the exportation of methaqualone. Also, cooperative investigations with foreign law enforcement agencies and the development of a "Drug and Chemical Watch Manual" by the DEA and the U.S. Customs Service resulted in more effective interdiction measures.

By the end of 1982, there were clear signs that the comprehensive effort against methaqualone diversion was working. Then, in 1984, Congress rescheduled methaqualone into Schedule I, effectively eliminating its domestic production and medical use. That same year, the United Nations reported that there were only two countries in the world manufacturing methaqualone. By 1985, there were so few methaqualone emergency room mentions (down 83 percent from 1980 levels) that it no longer showed up on the DAWN Top 20 controlled substance list. The results of the coordinated domestic and international actions were described as a total victory against methaqualone abuse.



1983: FBI Director WIlliam Webster (left) and DEA Acting Administrator Francis Mullen are shown at the unveiling of an exhibit focusing on the cooperative DEA/ FBI efforts to enforce drug laws.

Reorganization of DEA Headquarters Functions

In 1982, when the FBI gained joint jurisdiction over drug investigations with the DEA, CENTAC was replaced with drug-specific operations, and the headquarters functions of the DEA were restructured into major drug enforcement investigations sections, known as the heroin, dangerous drugs, cocaine, and cannabis "drug desks." Each drug desk assumed responsibility for the direction, funding, and coordination of worldwide investigations for that drug category. Individual CENTAC investigations were renamed Special Enforcement Operations (SEOs), were removed from any central, overall control, and assigned to the drug desks. The new structure replaced the former geographical organization (domestic and foreign) with the expectation that it would improve the control and coordination of major investigations.

Centralizing Operations (1982)

With the FBI being assigned concurrent jurisdiction, Administrator Mullen reorganized the nine-year-old DEA structure to centralize operations. Upper-level management positions were moved from the regional offices to headquarters. Field divisions reported directly to headquarters in accordance with FBI management procedures. Administrator Mullen also raised the qualifications bar for new recruits, making college degrees mandatory for new agents, and reorganized the office responsible for investigating internal cooperation. Cross-training programs were developed and each of the 10 field offices received a training coordinator (previously, training coordinators were located only at the five regional offices). The major policy shift, however, was to eliminate quotas or arrest goals once mandated for all DEA regions, and then to establish pursuing major traffickers as an agency-wide goal. "In the past," Mullen explained, "we concentrated on arrests. Now we're concentrating on convictions at the highest levels."

Task Force on South Florida (1982)

As the drug trade grew in South Florida, murder and crime rates soared. In 1979, there were 349 murders—almost one drug killing per day in Miami. By 1981, murders had climbed to 621. Local law enforcement and politicians pleaded for help. In February 1982, President Reagan announced that "massive immigration, rampant crime, and epidemic drug smuggling have created a serious problem" in South Florida. Soon, hundreds of additional federal agents were detailed to the Southern Florida Task Force. The DEA added 20 agents and the FBI 43 agents to their Miami offices. The U.S. Treasury Department contributed 20 analysts to track drug money, and for the first time, the U.S. armed services became involved in drug interdiction. Meanwhile, because drug traffickers were also establishing offshore banks to facilitate their money laundering, the U.S. Government heightened its emphasis on financial investigations. Vice-president Bush stated that "Our investigative efforts will be as stringent on bankers and businessmen who profit from crime, as on the drug traffickers, the pushers, the hired assassins, and others. There will be no free lunch for the white collar criminal."

Domestic Marijuana

By the 1980s, more than 60 percent of American teenagers had experimented with marijuana and 40 percent became regular users. Supply also continued to increase. In addition to the smuggling of Colombian marijuana across U.S. borders, domestic cultivation of marijuana continued to be a problem. As cultivation techniques improved, the potency of marijuana (THC content) also climbed from 3.68 percent in 1979 to 7.28 percent in 1985. To counter this trend, the Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program, initiated by Hawaii and California in 1979, rapidly expanded to encompass all 50 states by the close of 1985.

Administrator Mullen cuts cannabis plants during South Dakota seizures in 1983.

Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (1982)

On October 14, 1982, Attorney General William French Smith announced an 8-point program (see side-bar) to crackdown on organized crime, particularly syndicates involved with illegal drug trafficking. One highlight of the program was to establish 12 additional Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF), modeled after the successful South Florida Task Force, which was initiated under the leadership of Vice President George Bush. The President explained that "these task forces...will work closely with state and local law enforcement officials.

Following the South Florida example, they'll utilize the resources of the federal government, including the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), the DEA, the IRS (Internal Revenue Service), the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms), Immigration and Naturalization Service, United States Marshal Services, the U.S. Customs Service, and the Coast Guard. In addition, in some regions, Department of Defense tracking and pursuit capability will be made available...These task forces will allow us to mount an intensive and coordinated campaign against international and domestic drug trafficking and other organized criminal enterprises."

OCDETF was one of the first multi-jurisdictional task forces to combat drug trafficking, and over the years, the DEA has participated in 85 percent of all OCDETF investigations.

8-Point Crackdown on Organized Crime

- **Establish 12 additional task forces, modeled after the South Florida Task Force, in key areas of the United States.**
- **Create a 15-member panel to monitor organized crime's influence, hold public hearings on the findings for legislative recommendations and to heighten public awareness.**
- **Launch a project to enlist the nation's governors' support to strengthen criminal justice reforms against organized crime.**
- **Bring under a cabinet-level committee, chaired by the Attorney General, all federal agencies and law enforcement bureaus to bring a comprehensive attack on organized crime. The committee will review interagency and intergovernmental cooperation and report the findings directly to the President.**
- **Found a national center for state and local law enforcement training at the federal facility in Glynco, Georgia.**
- **Open a new legislative offensive aimed to reform criminal statutes concerning bail, sentencing, criminal forfeiture, exclusionary rule, and racketeering.**
- **Direct the Attorney General to submit an annual report on the fight against organized crime and organized drug trafficking groups.**
- **Allocate millions of dollars for prison and jail facilities.**

Scheduling of Dangerous Drugs

The scheduling of dangerous drugs and precursor chemicals has long been a mainstay in DEA's arsenal in curtailing drug trafficking. For example, in early 1980, phenylacetone (P2P), a precursor chemical favored by outlaw motorcycle gangs in manufacturing methamphetamine, was placed in Schedule II, which forced drug traffickers to search for alternative chemicals that were more difficult to obtain and synthesize.

50th State Joins EPIC (1984)

On October 24, 1984, the State of Pennsylvania signed a participation agreement with EPIC, becoming the 50th state to do so. A signing ceremony and news conference were held at the Pennsylvania State Police Headquarters in Harrisburg. Also announced at the conference was the opening of the DEA's new Harrisburg office, comprised of a supervisor and three agents.

Fitness for EVERYONE

Deputy Administrator Jack Lawn and Administrator "Bud" Mullen stretch before a fitness run.

OPBAT (1982)

Operation Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands (OPBAT), launched in 1982, continued in the 1990s to combat the flow of illegal drugs through the Caribbean into the southeastern United States. Historically, the United States had an excellent working relationship with both the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands (as a dependent territory of the United Kingdom). The DEA, along with U.S. Coast Guard, Department of State, Army, Customs Service, Southern and Atlantic Military Commands, actively supported the Royal Bahamas Police Force and Royal Turk and Caicos Police Forces in combating drug trafficking through 100,000 square miles of open water surrounding 700 islands with a land mass of 5,382 square miles. With increasingly effective law enforcement efforts along the Mexican border, there had been a resurgence of smuggling through the Caribbean. The traffickers used turboprop twin-engine aircraft, large "go fast" high-powered vessels, global positioning systems, cellular telephones, and Cuban territorial air and seas as cover for their trade. All of these factors made OPBAT's law enforcement operations exceedingly difficult.

Joint DEA/FBI SAC Conference (1983)

In March 1983, the first joint DEA/FBI Special Agent in Charge Conference was held. Attorney General William French Smith joined the assembly for the first day of the conference. In his address, the Attorney General expressed his personal satisfaction with the progress of the DEA/FBI relationship, and commended those present for working to ensure the program's success. The Attorney General also spoke about the significance of drug law enforcement in the Reagan Administration's overall crime control program and acknowledged the danger inherent in the drug control mission.

First Joint DEA/ National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (1983)

In March 1983, President Reagan announced the formation of the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) to interdict the flow of narcotics into the United States. NNBIS was headed by then Vice President George Bush, and had an Executive Board made up of members from the State Department, Treasury, Defense, Justice, Transportation, Central Intelligence Agency, and White House Drug Abuse Policy Office. Acting Administrator Mullen also participated as a member of the board.

Special Agents Mark Johnson (left) and Dempsey Jones (right) met with Vice President George Bush during his 1984 trip to the National Narcotic Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) at Long Beach, CA.

NNBIS was designed to coordinate the work of those federal agencies with existing responsibilities and capabilities for interdiction of seaborne, airborne, and cross-border importation of narcotics. The role of NNBIS was to complement, but not to replace, the duties of the regional Drug Enforcement Task Forces operated by the Department of Justice. NNBIS monitored suspected smuggling activity originating outside national borders that targeted the United States, and coordinated the seizure of contraband and the arrest of suspects involved in illegal drug trafficking. The DEA committed one agent and one analyst to each of the six regional centers (South Florida, Los Angeles, El Paso, New Orleans, Chicago, and New York City) in liaison capacities.

Career Board (1983)

The Career Board was established in 1983 by Acting Administrator Francis M. Mullen, Jr., as a way to ensure a more comprehensive career mobility system within the DEA. In the words of Administrator Mullen, "the Career Development Program has been designed to reinforce the concepts of equal opportunity for advancement, mobility, diversity of assignment and centralized selection of managerial personnel. The objective of the special agent career ladder is to assist DEA criminal investigators in attaining the highest level of competence while, at the same time, developing a highly capable managerial corps." When formed, the Career Board was composed of the Deputy Administrator (as chairman) and three Assistant Administrators. A Senior Special Agent at the GS-15 level was selected to serve as Executive Secretary for the Career Board to provide administrative and technical support. This configuration assured diversity and tried to ensure that the most qualified personnel for promotions were selected. To do so, the Board evaluated each employee's overall record of experience and expertise, the Special Agent in Charge's personal recommendations, the overall needs of the DEA, and most important, the fair and equitable treatment of each individual.

Operation Pisces (1984)

In 1984, the DEA set up an undercover money laundering operation called Operation Pisces with the IRS and several state and local agencies.

This two-year, undercover intelligence investigation successfully revealed a direct connection between the Colombian cartels, including drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, and street gangs in the United States, as well as deals negotiated in Denmark and Italy.

During the operation, DEA agents, posing as money launderers, also discovered that the drug lords were moving a ton of cocaine per week and reaping profits of almost $4 million a month. The organizations used check cashing businesses to launder the enormous proceeds from the sale of cocaine. When the operation ended in 1987, law enforcement had arrested 220 drug dealers and seized $28 million in cash and assets and more than 11,000 lbs. of cocaine in Southern California. The investigation was further proof of the continuous flow of drugs and money between Colombia and the United States.

Operation Pipeline (1984)

As drug traffickers established their networks within U.S. borders, they began to rely heavily on the highway system to move their wares from entry points to distribution hubs around the country. Beginning in the early 1980s, New Mexico state troopers grew suspicious when they noticed a sharp increase in the number of motor vehicle violations that resulted in drug seizures and arrests. At the same time, and unknown to the troopers in New Mexico, troopers in New Jersey began making similar seizures during highway stops along the Interstate-95 "drug corridor" from Florida to the Northeast. Independently, troopers in New Mexico and New Jersey established their own highway drug interdiction programs. Over time, as their seizures mounted, law enforcement officers found that highway drug couriers shared many characteristics, tendencies, and methods. Highway law enforcement officers began to ask key questions to help determine whether or not motorists they had stopped for traffic violations were also carrying drugs. These interview techniques proved extremely effective. The road patrol officers also found it beneficial to share their observations and experiences in highway interdiction.

The success of the highway interdiction programs in New Jersey and New Mexico led to the creation of Operation Pipeline. This DEA-funded training program featured state police and highway patrol officers with expertise in highway interdiction who provided training to other officers throughout the country. Pipeline, a nationwide highway interdiction program, was one of DEA's most effective operations and continued to provide essential cooperation between the DEA and state and local law enforcement agencies. The operation was composed of three elements: training, real-time communication, and analytic support. Each year, state and local highway officers delivered dozens of training schools across the country to other highway officers. These were intended to inform officers of interdiction laws and policies, to build their knowledge of drug trafficking, and to sharpen their perceptiveness of highway couriers. Training classes focused on: (1) the law, policy, and ethics governing highway stops and drug prosecution; and (2) drug trafficking trends and key characteristics, or indicators, that were shared by drug traffickers. Also, through EPIC, state and local agencies shared real-time information with other agencies, obtained immediate results to their record checks, and received detailed analysis of drug seizures to support their investigations.

In December 1984, over 1,600 pounds of cocaine were seized in the New York area as a result of a six-month investigation by the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force. Pictured with the cocaine seized are, from left to right: Raymond Jones, Chief of the Organized Crime Control Bureau, New York City Police Department; Thomas A. Constantine, Deputy Superintendent of the New York State Police; Raymond Dearie, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; New York Field Division SAC Bruce Jensen; and John Luksic, U.S. Customs SAC at the JFK airport office.

The Crime Control Act (1984)

In 1984, the Crime Control Act targeted various aspects of civil and criminal sanctions related to drug trafficking. Specifically, federal criminal and civil asset forfeiture penalties were expanded and increased. The law also established a determinate sentencing system for drug offenses. In addition, it amended the Bail Reform Act to target pretrial detention of defendants accused of serious drug offenses. The National Drug Policy Board was created by the Act to coordinate international and criminal justice issues related to drugs. Chaired by the Attorney General and composed of members of the Departments of Treasury and Defense, it was the forerunner to the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Explorers wait for a signal from DEA agents participating in a mock exercise at the 1984 National Law Enforcement Explorer Conference at Ohio State University. This was the third year that the DEA took part in the conference, which is sponsored by the Boy Scouts of America.

Tranquilandia (1984)

In March of 1984, another very important discovery signaled just how sophisticated the Medellin cartel's operations had become. Colombian law enforcement officials conducted a raid against Tranquilandia or "Quiet Village." It was much more than a cocaine lab located 160 miles south of San Jose del Guaviare. What they found was a fully equipped cocaine factory, complete with living quarters for 100 people, several storage rooms for chemicals and supplies, and workshops for automobiles and airplanes. With this efficient production line, traffickers were synthesizing 20 tons of cocaine a month, putting $12 billion in the coffers of the Medellin cartel in only two years. Authorities seized more than 10 tons of cocaine and cocaine base at Tranquilandia and found more labs and similar compounds in the surrounding jungle. The police destroyed drugs and material conservatively estimated to be worth $1.2 billion.

This startling discovery had actually begun when the DEA country attache in Bogota asked for a study on chemical imports, especially ether and acetone entering Colombia. The study determined that 98 percent of the imported ether (90 percent originating from the United States and West Germany) was being used to make cocaine. Due to the findings of the chemical report, the DEA contacted U.S. chemical companies to ask for their cooperation in alerting law enforcement about unusually large chemical orders.

When an individual from Colombia walked into the chemical company office in New Jersey requesting to pay cash for nearly two metric tons of ether—an amount equivalent to half of all the legitimate ether imports for the entire country of Colombia for 1980—the chemical company notified the DEA.

The processing of cocaine base to paste.

A cache of precursor chemicals near a South American cocaine processing lab.

Seizing this opportunity, the DEA set up a sting in Chicago code-named Operation Scorpion. A front company called North Central Industrial Chemical (NCIC), purposely using the same initials as the National Crime Information Center, was established and contacted the individual with an offer to fill his order. Eventually, 76 drums of ether were sent to New Orleans. Two of the drums had been wired with electronic tracking devices. By satellite, agents were able to monitor the movements of the chemicals. After several days, the chemicals were traced to a dense jungle area in Colombia. The DEA worked with the Colombian National Police to help raid the site, never anticipating the magnitude of the operation.

The DEA had long understood the vital link of chemicals and drugs. Without chemicals, traffickers could not manufacture their drugs. One of the DEA's early attacks on the chemical trade had occurred in 1982 with Operation Chem Con, short for Chemical Control. The DEA gradually expanded its efforts to control chemicals essential to the processing of coca to cocaine with governments worldwide, and it was this chemical tracking that led to major laboratory seizures in South America, including Tranquilandia.

Owners and Commissioners of Professional Sports Leagues met with President Ronald Reagan to express their support and to participate in prevention efforts. DEA sponsored a series of posters featuring the Washington Redskins which augmented Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" campaign.

Drug Prevention Programs

With skyrocketing drug seizures, trafficker arrests, and drug use, public awareness about the drug issue was greatly heightened. Concerned citizens called on their elected officials to do more to control the destructive tide of drugs washing across the country. Parents of teens and young children were particularly alarmed, and some 4,000 formal parent organizations formed all over the United States. It was this national awareness and outcry that led to First Lady Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" program that was formally announced in February 1985.

The DEA realized that the unharnessed energy of parents, teachers, and other concerned citizens in communities across the nation could be a vital asset in reducing drug use among teens. Over the next few years, the DEA ventured into a new and very important aspect of our nation's drug problem—prevention and education. The DEA had long understood the important equation between supply and demand, and knew that enforcement efforts alone would not solve the drug problem. Law enforcement officials recognized that without a dramatic reduction in the U.S. public's demand for illegal drugs, the problem would never go away.

In September 1984, President Reagan signed a proclamation for National Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Week, saying, "We are on the right track."

In June 1984, the DEA joined forces with the National High School Athletic Coaches Association in a cooperative education and prevention program that focused on 5.5 million high school athletes. The Sports Drug Awareness Program, as the program was called, began with Frank Parks, a high school coach in Washington, D.C., who believed that high school athletes, with their coaches as leaders, could serve as positive role models to help young people resist the temptation of drugs. More than 40 organizations of professional, college, and high school sports joined the program. The DEA also recruited and trained many professional athletes to work with the Sports Drug Awareness Program. These popular sports figures captured the attention of the children and helped instill the message that drug use was dangerous.

1984 Amendment to the Controlled Substances Act

Legislation passed in 1984 addressed many of the problems that had emerged since passage of the CSA in 1970. The most important amendment was the inclusion of a "public interest revocation" provision. This amendment provided additional authority for the denial or revocation of a practitioner controlled substance registration based on a demonstration that such registration was contrary to the public interest.

This is the same authority that the DEA always had under the CSA with respect to manufacturers and distributors. However, the DEA needed the tools to eliminate a source of diversion without solely relying on a state regulatory action or having to go through a lengthy and labor intensive criminal prosecution. For the practitioner, this provision also provided a means of removing controlled substance privileges without affecting their medical license or giving them a criminal record.

After the Public Interest Revocation (PIR) program was initiated, revocations and surrenders rose from less than 100 per year, prior to PIR authority, to more than 400 per year. Subsequently, by 1989, DAWN emergency room mentions for prescription drugs had dropped to 33 percent of total mentions for all controlled substances.

Under the provisions of the CSA, the formal administrative scheduling process could take years to complete. In the interim, the DEA was unable to take effective action against the traffickers responsible for these new and often dangerous drugs. The amendments provided for one-year emergency scheduling of a drug if the abuse of that drug constituted an "imminent hazard to the public safety," while normal scheduling procedures were being pursued. As a result of this amendment, incidents of controlled substance analogue abuse significantly declined.

Training

Until 1981, the DEA continued its training at the National Training Institute, located at DEA Headquarters, 1405 "Eye" Street, in Washington, D.C. That year, DEA's Domestic Training Division was moved to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Georgia. In addition to Basic Agent training, the program included subject matter training, such as intelligence collection, executive development, and technical skills, as well as occupational training for compliance investigators, intelligence analysts, chemists, supervisors, mid-level managers, state and local police officers, and international law enforcement officers. With the exception of FBI training, all other federal law enforcement training was conducted at FLETC. The first FBI/DEA firearms instructor school was held in November 1984 at the FBI Academy in Quantico. Training included current firearms training concepts practiced by the FBI, and practical training in various combat shooting courses utilizing revolvers and semiautomatic pistols. Shoulder weapons training included shotgun, M-16, and H&K and K-MP5 machine guns. Additional training included stress obstacle shooting courses, building entry and clearance, arrest, and handcuff procedures.

Vehicle stops and ammunition ballistics were also addressed and applied to practical situations. This was the first of several such schools that fostered the sharing of ideas and concepts in the application and training of firearms in federal law enforcement.

Special Agent Jerry Jensen, the Regional Director of Los Angeles, headed up the new institute in Glynco. Special Agent Frank Monastero, who had served as director of training, was reassigned to the position of chief pilot.

On December 17, 1982, the DEA graduated its first class of Basic Agents from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) located at Glynco, Georgia. The BA-18 class was composed of 32 men and 2 women who ranged in age from 23 to 35. The 34 members of BA-18 were selected from a pool of more than 4,000 candidates. Admission to BA-18 was a highly prized honor because it had been two years since the graduation of the previous BA-17 class. The DEA continued to train at Glynco until it moved its training facilities to the FBI Training Academy at Quantico, Virginia, in 1985.

Participants in DEA's first firearms instructor school held at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, in 1984.

Aviation

In March 1980, the DEA Air Wing completed its 20,000th airborne law enforcement mission. Working in close support of domestic regional and district offices, Air Wing personnel daily provided a unique surveillance and role enhancement capability. Additionally, aviation resources and special agent / pilots were called upon to support special operation both domestically and overseas. Focusing on maximum use of current aircraft and assignment personnel, the Air Wing brought this valuable support element to many priority investigations.

During fiscal year 1983, the DEA Aviation Wing logged more than 12,000 hours of flight time in support of domestic and overseas enforcement missions. Because the missions were progressively more complex, demanding, and hazardous, a new safety program was implemented. The Aviation Safety Council, which was a five-member group, composed of four agents and one maintenance specialist, met on a regular basis for the purpose of eliminating conditions which represented hazards to DEA aviation operations.

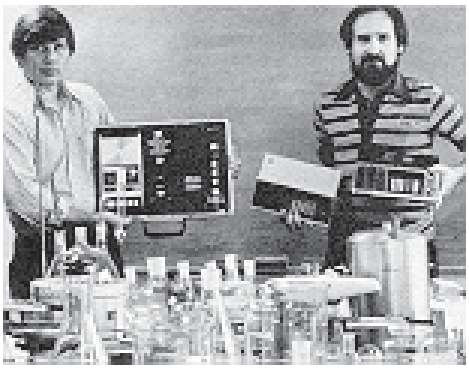
Rocky Andresano and Vance Huffman in a DEA Aero Commander.

Technology

In 1981, the DEA, in coordination with the Department of State, represented by Thomas M. Tracy, Assistant Secretary for Administration, signed an agreement that provided the DEA with telecommunication facilities supporting automated data processing (ADP) in the DEA's foreign offices.

The ADP support safeguarded the DEA's computerized data holdings worldwide. This program formulated the procedures for the protection of DEA sensitive and administratively controlled information promulgated by other federal agencies. This automated support also provided for the rapid interchange of vast amounts of information with other federal and state law enforcement agencies.

In May 1994, Special Agent Bob Johannsen showed Deputy Administrator Lawn the Title III room during a Washington Field Division briefing.



Special Agents Charles R. Henderson (left) and Dennis E. Checkoway displayed technological equipment seized during the 1981 raid of a clandestine amphetamine laboratory in Campe Verde, Arizona. Shown above are a voice stress analyzer, a telephone scrambler, two scanners, and lab equipment capable of producing six pounds of amphetamine a day.

Laboratories

In 1977, field laboratory and headquarters personnel prepared the first edition of the Clandestine Laboratory Guide for Agents and Chemists. This was the first compilation of illicit drug manufacturing procedures and investigative techniques published in a single volume. The Guide was revised and reissued in 1981. This publication has since been revised several times to keep up with changing clandestine laboratory practices and newly encountered illicitly manufactured drugs.

DEA tape librarian Dorothy Dupree from the Office of Information Services prepared tapes for use in support of DEA investigations and prosecutions.

In the early 1980s, communications equipment operator Bobbie Peters transmitted messages on this teletype machine.

The workload of DEA laboratories increased in the early 1980s. When the Attorney General of the United States announced that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) would be given concurrent jurisdiction with DEA over federal drug law violations in 1982, DEA laboratories became responsible for conducting analysis of all drug evidence purchased or seized by FBI agents in connection with their investigations. Also, a dramatic increase in the number of exhibits submitted by the District of Colombia Metro Police Department as a result of "Operation Clean Sweep" gave rise to a period of mandatory Saturday overtime, as well as reinforcement and support from the Special Testing and Research Lab in McLean and the North Central Laboratory in Chicago.

Killed in the Line of Duty

Thomas J. Devine
Died on September 25, 1982
DEA Special Agent Devine, a Group Supervisor at the Newark Field Division, died in Passaic, NJ, from gunshot wounds received during an undercover investigation in New York City.

Larry N. Carwell
Died on January 9, 1984
DEA Special Agent Carwell of the Houston District Office died in a helicopter crash during an operations flight near the Bahamas.

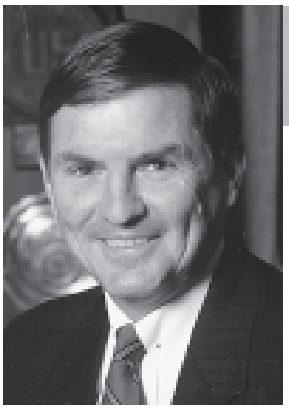
Marcellus Ward
Died on December 3, 1984
Detective Ward of the Baltimore, Maryland Police Department was shot and killed while working on an undercover assignment. He was assigned to the DEA's Baltimore District Office Task Force.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Many U.S. communities were gripped by violence stemming from the drug trade.

The Hot Box was the first means of "field testing" heroin and cocaine. By placing a small amount of the drug onto the metal element, the drug could be identified by its melting temperature.

1985-1990



DEA

John C. Lawn
July 26, 1985-
March 23, 1990

On March 1, 1985, Francis M. Mullen retired and John C. "Jack" Lawn, Deputy Administrator since 1982, became Acting Administrator. On April 4, 1985, he was nominated as DEA Administrator. Mr. Lawn was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on July 16, 1985, and sworn in on July 26, 1985, as the DEA's fourth Administrator. Before coming to the DEA, Mr. Lawn had been an FBI Agent for 15 years. As FBI Special Agent in Charge in San Antonio from 1980 to 1982, he had directed the successful investigation into the assassination of Federal Judge John H. Wood, Jr. Before this historic case, Mr. Lawn had supervised all FBI civil rights cases, including allegations of police brutality and color of law complaints. In addition, he was responsible for background investigations of White House officials, federal judges, and U.S. attorney nominees. He also served in the Criminal Division of FBI headquarters where he supervised Congressional review of the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and President John F. Kennedy. From 1990-1994, Mr. Lawn served as vice-president and chief of operations of the New York Yankees. In 1998, he was serving as the chairman and CEO of The Century Council, a national organization dedicated to fighting alcohol abuse.

DEA Special Agents

1985.....2,234
1990.....3,191

DEA Budget

1985.....$362.4 million
1990.....$769.2 million

During the late 1980s, the international drug trafficking organizations grew more powerful as the cocaine trade dominated the Western Hemisphere. Mafias headquartered in the Colombian cities of Medellin and Cali wielded enormous influence and employed bribery, intimidation, and murder to further their criminal goals. Many U.S. communities were gripped by violence stemming from the drug trade. At first, the most dramatic examples of drug-related violence were experienced in Miami, where cocaine traffickers fought open battles on the city streets. Later, in 1985, the crack epidemic hit the United States full force, resulting in escalating violence among rival groups and crack users in many other U.S. cities. By 1989, the crack epidemic was still raging and drug abuse was considered the most important issue facing the nation. DAWN data showed a 28-fold increase in cocaine-related hospital emergency room admissions over a four-year period.

The Crack Epidemic

In the early 1980s, the majority of cocaine being shipped to the United States was coming through the Bahamas. Soon there was a huge glut of cocaine powder in these islands which caused the price to drop by as much as 80 percent. Faced with dropping prices for their illegal product, drug dealers made a shrewd marketing decision to convert the powder to "crack," a smokeable form of cocaine. It was cheap, simple to produce, ready to use, and highly profitable for dealers to develop. As early as 1981, reports of crack appeared in Los Angeles, San Diego, Houston, and in the Caribbean.

At this time, powder cocaine was available on the street at an average of 55 percent purity for $100 per gram, and crack was sold at average purity levels of 80-plus percent for the same price. In some major cities, such as New York, Detroit, and Philadelphia, one dosage unit of crack could be obtained for as little as $2.50. Never before had any form of cocaine been available at such low prices and at such high purity. More important from a marketing standpoint, it produced an instant high and its users became addicted in a very short time. Eventually, Caribbean immigrants taught young people in Miami how to produce crack, and they in turn went into business in the United States.

With the influx of traffickers and cocaine, South Florida had become a principal area for the "conversion laboratories" that were used to convert cocaine base into cocaine HCl, the form in which cocaine is sold. The majority of these labs were found in South Florida, but they also appeared in other parts of the country, indicating the expansion of Colombian trafficking. For example, in 1985, four conversion laboratories were seized in New York State [see "Minden Lab" on page 65], four in California, two in Virginia, and one each in North Carolina and Arizona. One year later, 23 more conversion labs were seized in the United States.

The first crack house had been discovered in Miami in 1982. However, this form of cocaine was not fully appreciated as a major threat because it was primarily being consumed by middle class users who were not associated with cocaine addicts. In fact, crack was initially considered a purely Miami phenomenon until it became a serious problem in New York City, where it first appeared in December 1983. In the New York City area, it was estimated that more than three-fourths of the early crack consumers were white professionals or middle-class youngsters from Long Island, suburban New Jersey, or upper-class Westchester County. However, partly because crack sold for as little as $5 a rock, it ultimately spread to less affluent neighborhoods.

The crack epidemic dramatically increased the numbers of Americans addicted to cocaine. In 1985, the number of people who admitted using cocaine on a routine basis increased from 4.2 million to 5.8 million, according to the Department of Health and Human Service's National Household Survey. Likewise, cocaine-related hospital emergencies continued to increase nationwide during 1985 and 1986. According to DAWN statistics, in 1985, cocaine-related hospital emergencies rose by 12 percent, from 23,500 to 26,300; and in 1986, they increased 110 percent, from 26,300 to 55,200. Between 1984 and 1987, cocaine incidents increased fourfold.

Approximately 5,000 pounds of cocaine, valued at $250 million, were seized in Chicago in July 1987. The cocaine was smuggled in 130 banana boxes. Pictured in front of the seized cocaine are, left to right, Chicago ASAC John T. Peoples; Police Superintendent Fred Rice; Attorney General Edwin Meese III; Chicago SAC Philip V. Fisher; and ASAC Garfield Hammonds, Jr.

By this time, the Medellin cartel was at the height of its power and controlled cocaine trafficking from the conversion and packaging process in Colombia, to the transportation of cocaine to the United States, as well as the first level of wholesale distribution in U.S. communities. While the Medellin cartel had established a foothold in U.S. communities, its rival, the Cali mafia, began to dominate markets in the Northeastern United States. The Cali mafia was less visible, less violent, and more businesslike than the Medellin cartel. Operating through a system of cells, where members were insulated from one another, the Cali mafia steadily began establishing far-reaching networks that eventually ensured that they would dominate the cocaine trade well into the 1990s.

By early 1986, crack had a stranglehold on the ghettos of New York City and was dominated by traffickers and dealers from the Dominican Republic. Crack distribution and abuse exploded in 1986, and by year-end was available in 28 states and the District of Columbia. According to the 1985-1986 National Narcotics Intelligence Consumers Committee Report, crack was available in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, Kansas City, Miami, New York City, Newark, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis, Dallas, Denver, Minneapolis, and Phoenix.

By 1987, crack was reported to be available in the District of Columbia and all but four states in the Union. Crack was *abundantly* available in at least 19 cities in 13 states: Texas (Dallas), Oklahoma (Tulsa, Oklahoma City), Michigan (Detroit), California (Los Angeles, Riverside, Santa Barbara), Florida (Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Tampa), New York (New York City), Oregon (Portland), Washington (Seattle), Missouri (Kansas City), Minnesota (Minneapolis), Colorado (Denver), Nevada (Las Vegas), and Maryland (Hagerstown, Salisbury). By 1988, crack had replaced heroin as the greatest problem in Detroit, and it was available in Los Angeles in multi-kilo quantities.

Meanwhile, wholesale and retail prices for cocaine had declined, while purity levels for kilogram amounts of the drug had remained at 90 percent or higher. Street-level gram purity rose from 25 percent in 1981, to 55 percent in 1987, to 70 percent in 1988. By the late 1980s, over 10,000 gang members were dealing drugs in some 50 cities from Baltimore to Seattle. The crack trade had created a violent sub-world, and crack-related murders in many large cities were skyrocketing. For example, a 1988 study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that in New York City, crack use was tied to 32% of all homicides and 60% of drug-

related homicides. On a daily basis, the evening news reported the violence of drive-by shootings and crack users trying to obtain money for their next hit. Smokeable crack appealed to a new group of users, especially women, because it did not have the stigma associated with needles or heroin, and because it was smoked, many mistakenly equated crack with marijuana. As a result, a generation of addicted children were born to—and frequently abandoned by—crack-using mothers. By the late 1980s, about one out of every 10 newborns in the United States (375,000 per year) had been exposed in the womb to one or more illicit drug.

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In October 1986, Attorney General Edwin Meese explained the U.S. anti-crack strategy: "The most effective long-term way to reduce crack trafficking is to reduce the amount of cocaine entering this country. The federal government's main priorities against cocaine are reducing production in source countries, interdicting shipments entering the United States, and disrupting major trafficking rings." Thus, the DEA attacked the major trafficking organizations, primarily the Medellin and Cali cartels, which were producing cocaine and smuggling it into the United States. To help accomplish this, the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 allocated $8 million for domestic cocaine enforcement. A portion of this budget was used to establish DEA Crack Teams. Each of these teams consisted of two DEA special agents who assisted state and local law enforcement agencies in the investigation of large-scale violators and interstate trafficking networks.

The agents either worked with existing DEA-funded state and local task forces or with local law enforcement agencies that had established their own special crack groups. In addition, DEA Crack Teams were also deployed to states experiencing extensive crack problems. Examples included Arizona, which was vulnerable to a rapid influx of crack dealers from Los Angeles street groups, and Louisiana, where traffickers from

1985: Chicago Division personnel were photographed with the results of raids developed through Operation Durango. The 6-month investigation into the Chicago and Durango, Mexico-based polydrug trafficking group led to the arrest of 120 defendants and the seizure of heroin, cocaine, marijuana and $25 million in assets.

Haiti were dealing to migrant workers in rural areas. Another significant source of support for the Crack Teams was the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984 that provided for asset forfeiture sharing with state and local law enforcement agencies.

Paz where they developed daily situation reports and drafted a strategic intelligence report. In addition, their analysis of ledgers found at three laboratory sites helped identify several major Bolivian violators. On the day of the law enforcement action, six U.S. military Black Hawk helicopters, operated by U.S. Army pilots and support personnel, transported the strike teams to the suspected laboratory sites. Eight cocaine laboratories and one shipment location were located and destroyed. Some of the labs destroyed had been capable of producing 1,000 kilograms of cocaine per week. At least one lab had been in operation since 1982. Operation Blast Furnace brought cocaine production to a virtual standstill in Bolivia. Traffickers fled the country and coca paste buyers from Colombia stayed away. The coca leaf market collapsed and quantities that had previously sold for $1.50 dropped to 10 cents. Following the success of Operation Blast Furnace, many coca farmers approached the U.S. Agency for International Development asking for assistance in planting legal substitute crops.

Trafficking Via Mexico

During the latter half of the 1980s, the role of traffickers based in Mexico and the use of Mexican territory increased dramatically. Mexico's strategic location, midway between source and consumer nations, and an increasingly powerful international drug mafia headquartered in Mexico made it an ideal transit point for South American-produced cocaine. Mexico's topography offered several seaports along its Pacific and Gulf coasts and countless airstrips scattered across its interior allowed vessel and aircraft refueling to be quickly and easily accomplished. Equally significant was Mexico's 2,000-mile land border with the United States, over 95 percent of which had no fences or barricades. Moreover, the remoteness of many border areas made patrolling and surveillance exceedingly difficult. Cocaine traffickers from Colombia expanded their trafficking routes to include Mexico, and increasingly used Mexico as a shipping point.

Meanwhile, the Guadalajara mafia was formed in Mexico with close ties to Colombian mafia, to ship heroin, marijuana, and cocaine to the United States. Included in these shipments would be smaller quantities of Mexican black tar or brown powder heroin, piggybacked on the larger Colombian drug loads. Drug-laden private aircraft from Colombia began using thousands of registered and unregistered airstrips located throughout Mexico to deliver their product. However, the preferred method of smuggling drugs remained the overland routes, and 90 percent of cocaine seizures made by U.S. law enforcement on the southwest border in 1989 were land seizures. Cocaine seizures made by U.S. law enforcement increased from under 2,000 kilograms in 1985 to over 40,000 kilograms in 1989.

Employee Assistance Program Expanded (1985)

Recognizing the importance of meeting the unique needs of DEA agents, support personnel, and families, the DEA had created an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in 1978, which was expanded in 1985. By April 1986, the EAP provided each of the DEA's field divisions with access to an area clinician and at least one backup clinician, enabling all DEA employees and their families to become eligible to receive professional, confidential assistance in marital/family/parenting and relationship concerns, alcohol and drug abuse, job stress and other emotional/psychological problems, as well as guidance regarding financial and legal concerns. The DEA also implemented a program whereby each division had a team of personnel trained to assist employees and their families following traumatic incidents related to the dangerous nature of working in drug law enforcement. This Trauma Team program was originally established in 1978, when Yvonne Conner, the head of the EAP, conducted extensive research to determine the special needs of DEA personnel. This enabled her to design a professional and confidential program that is uniquely responsive to DEA employees and their families.

Drug-Free Workplace (1986)

On September 15, 1986, President Reagan issued Executive Order 12564, The Drug-Free Federal Workplace Program. He called on all federal employees to refuse drugs and instructed each federal agency to set up programs to "test for the use of illegal drugs by employees in sensitive positions."

By March 1988, the DEA established its own Drug-Free Workplace Program. The Drug Deterrence Staff, along with a state-of-the-art contract laboratory, conducted almost 2,000 drug tests at 51 DEA sites. Over 1,600 of those tests were conducted by the unannounced, random test method using a computer-generated program to select employees for testing.

National Security Decision Directive 221

On April 8, 1986, President Reagan proclaimed that drug production and trafficking constituted a threat to the security of the United States, and extended executive sanction to an active war on drugs with National Security Decision Directive 221.

Foreign Office Opened

1986 Cochabamba, Bolivia
1987 Canberra, Australia
1987 Lagos, Nigeria
1987 Port-au-Prince, Haiti
1988 Bridgetown, Barbados

The Murder of DEA Special Agent Enrique Camarena

Perhaps no single event had a more significant impact on the DEA than the abduction and murder of Special Agent Enrique Camarena in Mexico in 1985. His murder led to the most comprehensive homicide investigation ever undertaken by the DEA, which ultimately uncovered corruption and complicity by numerous Mexican officials.

Known as "Kiki" to his friends, Special Agent Camarena had a reputation for believing that the actions of each and every individual made a difference in the drug war. He was assigned to the DEA's Guadalajara Resident Office in Mexico, and was working to identify drug trafficking kingpins when he left his office to meet his wife for lunch on February 7, 1985. A late-model car pulled up beside Camarena and four men grabbed him, threw him into the back of the car, and sped off. Hours later, Alfredo Zavala Avelar, a Mexican Agriculture Department pilot working with anti-drug authorities, was also abducted.

Immediately after Mrs. Camarena reported her husband missing, the DEA Guadalajara Resident Office made every effort to locate him. After determining that Special Agent Camarena's disappearance had no innocent explanation, Resident Agent in Charge James Kuykendall promptly notified his superiors and began attempting to enlist the support of the Mexican police. Meanwhile, special agents assigned to the Guadalajara Resident Office began to query confidential informants and police contacts for information about the whereabouts of Special Agent Camarena. Mexico Country Attache Edward Heath then requested assistance from U.S. Ambassador Gavin, who called the Mexican Attorney General and requested his assistance in resolving the disappearance of the special agent. Next, all DEA domestic SACs and country attaches in Latin America were notified of the agent's disappearance and were requested to query all sources knowledgeable about Mexican trafficking organizations for any intelligence that might lead to his rescue. DEA headquarters then quickly established a special group to coordinate the investigation and 25 special agents were sent to Guadalajara to assist in the search for Special Agent Camarena.

Throughout February 1985, the DEA continued its efforts to locate Special Agent Camarena. Witnesses were interviewed and numerous leads were followed. Searches of several residences and ranches in Mexico. Based on the information that was developed, the DEA requested the Mexican Federal Judicial Police (MFJP) to consider Rafael Caro-Quintero, Miguel Felix-Gallardo, and Ernesto Fonseca-Carrillo as suspects in the kidnapping. All three were notorious narcotics traffickers based in Guadalajara, and were believed to have the resources and motive to commit such an act.

On February 9, 1985, Rafael Caro-Quintero was confronted by MFJP officers at the Guadalajara Airport as he was preparing to leave on a private jet with several of his associates. After an armed stand-off, the Mexican officer in charge, an MFJP Comandante, spoke privately with Caro-Quintero and then allowed him and his associates to depart.

Administrator Lawn comforted Geneva Camarena, widow of Agent Enrique Camarena.

Subsequently, a local farm worker discovered two bodies in a field adjacent to a busy road about one kilometer from a ranch in Michoacan, Mexico. The bodies, which apparently had been dumped there, were identified as those of Special Agent Camarena and Captain Zavala. Soil samples taken from the two bodies by FBI special agents in Mexico proved the bodies had

"Kiki" Camarena with Nicole Telles,(daughter of RAC Tom Telles, in Hermosillo, Mexico). SA Camarena stayed in the Telles home for security reasons while he helped launch an operation against a Mexican marijuana trafficking organization.

previously been buried elsewhere and then moved. On March 7 and 8, 1985, a U.S. pathologist and forensic team analyzed the discovery site and performed an autopsy. The pathologist's findings made positive identifications and indicated that death in both cases was due to blunt force injuries to the head.

On March 8, 1985, Agent Camarena's body was returned to the United States for burial. For the DEA and the American public, the 1985 torture and murder of Agent Camarena marked a turning point in the war on drugs. His violent death brought the American public face-to-face with the vicious brutality of drug trafficking.

Camarena Investigation Leads to Operation Leyenda

On March 14, 1985, the DEA was notified by MFJP officials that they had taken into custody five Jalisco State Police officers who were believed to have participated in the abduction of Special Agent Camarena. However, the DEA was neither advised in advance of this operation, nor invited to participate in the subsequent interviews of the suspected Jalisco State Police officers.

Under Mexican police questioning, the Jalisco officers gave statements implicating themselves and others in the abduction of Special Agent Camarena. One suspect died during the interrogation. The statements of the Jalisco officers implicated Caro-Quintero and Fonseca-Carrillo, among others, in planning and ordering the abduction of Special Agent Camarena.

On March 17, 1985, Mexican newspapers reported that 11 individuals had been arrested by the MFJP for the kidnapping of Special Agent Camarena. Arrest orders were also issued for seven international drug traffickers, including Caro-Quintero, on kidnapping and murder charges.

The DEA subsequently discovered that Caro-Quintero was in Costa Rica. On April 4, 1985, the DEA Office in San Jose, in conjunction with the local authorities in Costa Rica, located and apprehended Caro-Quintero and seven of his associates. The Mexican Government then sent MFJP officials to Costa Rica after persuading the Costa Rican Government to expel Caro-Quintero to Mexico on immigration violations. On April 5, 1985, Caro-Quintero and the others arrested with him left Costa Rica for Mexico aboard two jets belonging to the Mexican Government. In Mexico City, Caro-Quintero was interrogated for several days by police officials. Ultimately he gave a statement implicating himself and others in the abduction of Special Agent Camarena.

But Caro-Quintero denied any knowledge of who actually killed Special Agent Camarena or how he died. He also denied any knowledge of the abduction and death of Captain Zavala.

On April 7, 1985, drug trafficker Ernesto Fonseca-Carrillo and several of his bodyguards were arrested by Mexican police officials and military forces in Puerto Vallarta and taken to Mexico City for questioning. Fonseca and his right-hand man, Samuel Ramirez-Razo, gave statements to the MFJP implicating themselves in the abduction of Special Agent Camarena. However, neither individual admitted having any knowledge of Camarena's death or Captain Zavala's abduction.

Although there were some discrepancies in the testimony of Caro-Quintero, Fonseca-Carrillo, and Ramirez-Razo, all claimed that they had nothing to do with the death of the DEA agent and further stated that these crimes were probably the work of another narcotics trafficker, Miguel Angel Felix-Gallardo.

Meanwhile, in April 1985, the DEA learned that certain members of the Mexican Government had in their possession a series of audio tapes of Camarena's torture and interrogation. These tapes allegedly had been seized by Mexican military authorities from Fonseca during his arrest in Puerto Vallarta. When the DEA confirmed that the voice on the tape was Camarena, the Mexican Government, after great pressure from the U.S. Government, turned over copies of all five tapes.

On April 12, 1985, a team of one DEA and four FBI agents arrived in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, via DEA aircraft. These agents were advised that the house where Special Agent Camarena was alleged to have been taken after his abduction had been located by the MFJP in Guadalajara.

On May 3, 1985, a new DEA investigative team was established to coordinate and investigate the abduction of Camarena and Captain Zavala. This investigation was given the name Operation Leyenda (the Spanish word meaning "lawman"). Through evidence gained from cooperating individuals and relentless investigative pursuit, this team was able to ascertain that five individuals abducted Special Agent Camarena and took him to a house at 881 Lope de Vega in Guadalajara on February 7, 1985. Ultimately, the agents were successful in securing the indictments of several individuals connected to the abduction and murder. The hard work, long hours, and total agency commitment had yielded positsive results.

In retrospect, Operation Leyenda was a long and complex investigation, made more difficult by the fact that the crime was committed on foreign soil and involved major drug traffickers and government officials from Mexico. It took several years to develop the facts, to apprehend the perpetrators, and to finally bring them to justice.

Red Ribbon Campaign

The National Red Ribbon Campaign was sparked by the murder of DEA Special Agent Enrique Camarena by drug traffickers. Within weeks of his death in March of 1985, Camarena's Congressman, Duncan Hunter, and high school friend Henry Lozano launched "Camarena Clubs" in the Imperial Valley, California, Camarena's home. Hundreds of club members pledged to lead drug-free lives to honor the sacrifices made by Camarena and others on behalf of all Americans. That spring, two club members presented the "Camarena Club Proclamation" to then-First Lady Nancy Reagan, bringing the program national attention. That summer, parent groups in California, Illinois, and Virginia began to expand the Camarena Club program and promoted the wearing of red ribbons nationwide during one week in late October. In 1988 the National Federation of Parents organized the first National Red Ribbon Week, an eight-day event proclaimed by the U.S. Congress and chaired by President and Mrs. Reagan. The Red Ribbon Campaign also became a symbol of support for the DEA's efforts to reduce demand for drugs through prevention and education programs.

Speaking at a 1985 Memorial Day Service, Vice President Bush noted, "Today we honor the men and women of the Drug Enforcement Administration who sacrificed for an honorable cause."

Demand Reduction Section (1987)

In 1987, the DEA took another step forward in the demand reduction arena by establishing the Demand Reduction Section. "If we are truly the leaders in drug efforts," said DEA Administrator Jack Lawn, "we must also establish a leadership role in drug education efforts . . . I believe . . . that our personnel can do more to direct the attitudes of young people than can many other professions because our personnel know the reality of drugs."

Following its establishment, the DEA's Demand Reduction Program provided leadership, coordination, and resources for drug prevention and education. Each of the DEA's domestic field divisions was assigned a demand reduction coordinator whose role was to provide leadership and support to local agencies and organizations as they developed drug education and prevention programs. The program soon evolved from a few drug awareness presentations, to a nationwide effort that worked to change attitudes about drugs in sports, schools, and communities all across the nation.

At the 1987 National High School Athletic Coaches Association Convention, Nancy Reagan greeted Jacquelyn D. Rice, an assistant in the DEA's Demand Reduction Section, as Administrator Lawn looked on.

Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986

In 1986, Congress approved a significant bill authorizing $6 billion over three years for interdiction and enforcement measures, as well as demand reduction education and treatment programs. On the enforcement side, increases in criminal penalties were passed as part of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act. Mandatory prison sentences for large scale marijuana distribution were reinstated and Federal Drug Control scheduling was expanded to include analogues (designer drugs). A federal grant program for state drug enforcement was also created to assist local efforts at thwarting traffickers. On the demand side, federal funds were allocated for prevention and treatment programs, giving these programs a larger share of federal drug control funds than did previous laws. Prevention efforts were expanded under this law with the creation of the White House Conference for a Drug-Free America and the establishment of the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP), aimed at community prevention strategies. In the international arena, the 1986 law established a requirement that foreign assistance be withheld from countries if the President could not certify that they had cooperated fully with the United States or taken adequate steps on their own to prevent drug production, drug trafficking, and drug-related money laundering.

The Certification Process (1986)

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended by the Anti-Drug Abuse Acts of 1986 and 1988, required the President to make yearly determinations and file a report to Congress regarding the progress of drug producing and/or drug transit countries' efforts to eliminate the drug threat.

After the President's certification of a country for fully cooperating in counter-drug efforts, decertification for noncooperation, or decertification with a waiver for vital U.S. national interests, the Congress had 30 days in which to disapprove of the President's certification decisions by a simple majority vote before the decisions took effect. If the President vetoed a disapproval action, Congress could override the veto with a two-thirds vote. Decertification resulted in reduction of foreign aid by 50 percent and U.S. opposition to loans from any international agency, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

For those countries not certified, the Act required that most forms of U.S. foreign assistance, with the exception of counter-narcotics assistance and humanitarian aid, be withheld, and further required the United States to vote against bank lending to non-certified countries.

As part of the certification process, the U.S. Department of State, through its Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, presented findings on the drug strategies and policies, as well as current drug trafficking and abuse situations in every country listed as a major drug producing and/or drug-transit country, precursor chemical source country, or money laundering country. This Department of State report, known as the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, provided an objective basis for the certification determinations and was issued at the same time as the list of certification.

The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 also required that every certified country have a treaty in effect with the United States addressing drug eradication, interdiction, demand reduction, chemical control, and cooperation with U.S. drug law enforcement agencies. The DEA's role in the certification process is limited to providing the Attorney General and other U.S. policy makers with an assessment of the level of cooperation between the DEA and foreign law enforcement counterparts.

The success of Operation Blast Furnace set the stage for one of the DEA's most extensive and unprecedented enforcement efforts— Operation Snowcap. This initiative was developed by the DEA and the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters (INM) in 1987, and was designed to disrupt the growing, processing, and transportation systems supporting the cocaine industry.

The DEA and INM coordinated Operation Snowcap operations in 12 countries including Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Mexico. The Department of Defense and the U.S. Border Patrol also participated in the operation. The majority of Snowcap activity was concentrated in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador because of the prevalence of coca processing in these nations.

Planning for Operation Snowcap began in September 1986, two months before Operation Blast Furnace was concluded. When the 1987 operation was launched, there was a smooth transition of responsibility for air operations from the U.S. Army to the Government of Bolivia. Six Bell UH-1 Huey helicopters, loaned by the U.S. Army to the INM, and a U.S. Army training team arrived on the same C5-A transport that withdrew the Blast Furnace equipment from Bolivia.

Besides coca suppression operations, the Snowcap strategy included chemical control, vehicular interdiction, and marine law enforcement interdiction operations. The marine law enforcement and vehicular interdiction concepts mirrored

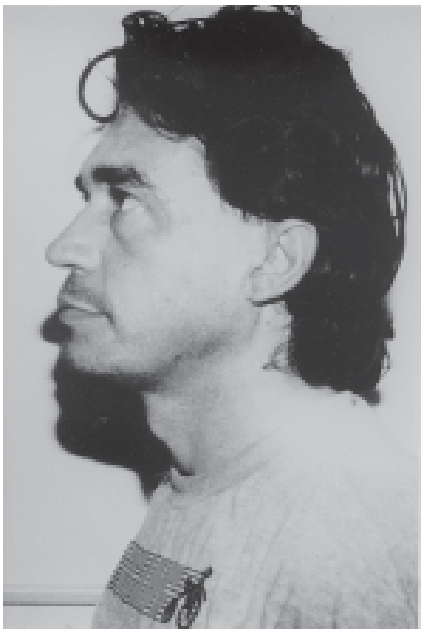
successful programs in the United States. The marine law enforcement operations grew from the DEA's close coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard, while vehicular interdiction originated from the DEA's Operation Pipeline, EPIC's national highway interdiction program.

With DEA support, Bolivian troops burned a cocaine conversion lab.

Carlos Lehder Extradition (1987)

In 1981, Carlos Lehder was indicted on U.S. federal charges in Jacksonville, Florida, and a request for his extradition from Colombia was formally presented to that government in 1983. Up until that time, no extradition requests had been honored by the Colombian Government. Lehder, a major cocaine trafficker, had formed his own political party and adopted a platform which was vehemently opposed to extradition. He viewed cocaine as a very powerful weapon that could be used against the United States and referred to the substance as an atomic bomb. Lehder also claimed that he was allied with the Colombian guerilla movement, M-19, in an effort to protect Colombian sovereignty.

Fanatical in his efforts to prevent extradition, Lehder was instrumental in forcing a political debate on the merits of extradition and publicly faced off against Colombia's Justice Minister, Rodrigo Lara-Bonilla. When Lara-Bonilla was suddenly murdered in 1984, Lehder and the Medellin cartel, who had hidden behind the pseudonym "The Extraditables," were suspected. Embarrassed and outraged by the terrorist tactics employed by the Medellin organization, the Colombian Government turned Lehder over to the DEA and extradited him to the United States in February 1987. Lehder was convicted and sentenced to 135 years in federal prison. He subsequently cooperated in the U.S. investigation of Panama dictator Manuel



Carlos Lehder conceived the idea of transporting loads of cocaine from Colombia to the United States.

Noriega and received a reduced sentence in return for his testimony. However, the Medellin reign of terror did not end. The Medellin cartel was responsible for the murders of many government officials, including Attorney General Carlos Mauro Hoyos-Jiminez in 1988, and presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan in 1989.

The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988

The 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act (PL 100-690) increased criminal penalties for offenses related to drug trafficking and created new federal offenses and regulatory drug control requirements. Federal funding for state and local drug enforcement grant programs were also bolstered under this law.

The 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act also expanded a change to the certification process established by the 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act. The 1986 legislation required all certified countries to sign a treaty with the United States that addressed drug eradication, interdiction, demand reduction, chemical control, and cooperation with U.S. drug enforcement agencies. The 1988 act went a step further and made it unlawful to certify a country's compliance unless it had signed such a treaty.

Another requirement called for the Secretary of the Treasury to initiate negotiations with governments whose banks were known to engage in significant U.S. dollar transactions. This requirement helped to identify money laundering and illicit drug transaction funds.

Perhaps the most significant provision of this legislation was the creation of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and it's director, the "Drug Czar."

The Creation of a Drug Czar (1988)

The Anti-Drug Abuse and Control Act of 1988 established the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and its director became the nation's "Drug Czar." ONDCP was charged with setting national priorities and implementing a national drug control strategy. The ONDCP director was required to ensure that the national drug control strategy was research-based, contained long-range goals and measurable objectives, and sought to reduce drug abuse, drug trafficking, and their consequences. In 1993, Executive Orders No. 12880, 12992, and eventually 13023 (1996), extended ONDCP as the leading entity for drug control policy. The Executive Orders also created the President's Drug Policy Council. In 1994, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act extended ONDCP's mission to assessing budgets and resources related to the National Drug Control Strategy. It also established specific reporting requirements in the areas of drug use, availability, consequences, and treatment.

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Colombian Government Helps Seize Gacha Funds (1989)

In 1989, a successful international cooperative effort helped to bring down one of the highest ranking members of the Medellin drug cartel, Jose Rodriguez-Gacha, the right-hand man of cocaine kingpin Pablo Escobar. First, the Government of Colombia provided the investigation and enforcement actions that revealed the extent and location of Gacha's drug assets. These efforts also uncovered documents disclosing that some of Gacha's assets were hidden in accounts in Switzerland and elsewhere. Next, the DEA and other law enforcement agencies in Europe and Latin America, working closely with the Colombian National Police, froze over $80 million of Gacha's assets in bank accounts throughout the world. Large amounts of Gacha's financial empire were forfeited and disbursed to the governments of countries aiding in the cooperative effort to bring down Gacha. Over $1.5 million was allotted to the Government of Colombia. This investigation and seizure represented one of the largest financial efforts in the history of the DEA and underscored the importance of attacking a cartel's financial holdings as well as its physical assets.

Rescheduling of Marijuana Denied (1989)

During the late 1980s, as a proposed solution to the enormous drug problem in the United States, a small, but vocal minority began supporting the wholesale legalization of drugs, particularly marijuana. However, in December 1989, DEA Administrator Jack Lawn overruled the decision of one administrative law judge who had agreed with marijuana advocates that marijuana should be moved from Schedule I to Schedule II of the Controlled Substances Act. This proposed rescheduling of marijuana would have allowed physicians to prescribe the smoking of marijuana as a legal treatment for some forms of illness.

Administrator Lawn maintained that there was no medicinal benefit to smoking marijuana. While some believed that smoking marijuana alleviated vomiting and nausea experienced by cancer patients undergoing radiation, scientific studies indicated otherwise. These also showed that smoking marijuana did not benefit patients suffering from glaucoma or multiple sclerosis. In addition, it was found that smoking marijuana might further weaken the immune systems of patients undergoing radiation and might speed up, rather than slow down, the loss of eyesight in glaucoma patients.

It was found that pure Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), one of 400 chemicals commonly found in marijuana, had some effect on controlling nausea and vomiting. However, pure THC was already available for use by the medical community in a capsule form called Marinol. For these reasons, and the fact that no valid scientific studies offered proof of any medicinal value of marijuana, Administrator Lawn maintained that marijuana should remain a Schedule I controlled substance.

Joint Investigation

Agents of the DEA's Phoenix Field Division and the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) posed with 700 pounds of cocaine seized in 1987. The seizure, which took place 50 miles south of Phoenix, was the result of a joint DEA, U.S. Customs Service, and Arizona DPS investigation.

Operation Snowcap (1987)

The success of Operation Blast Furnace set the stage for one of the DEA's most extensive and unprecedented enforcement efforts— Operation Snowcap. This initiative was developed by the DEA and the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters (INM) in 1987, and was designed to disrupt the growing, processing, and transportation systems supporting the cocaine industry.

The DEA and INM coordinated Operation Snowcap operations in 12 countries including Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Mexico. The Department of Defense and the U.S. Border Patrol also participated in the operation. The majority of Snowcap activity was concentrated in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador because of the prevalence of coca processing in these nations.

Planning for Operation Snowcap began in September 1986, two months before Operation Blast Furnace was concluded. When the 1987 operation was launched, there was a smooth transition of responsibility for air operations from the U.S. Army to the Government of Bolivia. Six Bell UH-1 Huey helicopters, loaned by the U.S. Army to the INM, and a U.S. Army training team arrived on the same C5-A transport that withdrew the Blast Furnace equipment from Bolivia.

Besides coca suppression operations, the Snowcap strategy included chemical control, vehicular interdiction, and marine law enforcement interdiction operations. The marine law enforcement and vehicular interdiction concepts mirrored successful programs in the United States. The marine law enforcement operations grew from the DEA's close coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard, while vehicular interdiction originated from the DEA's Operation Pipeline, EPIC's national highway interdiction program.

Operation Snowcap depended on agents who volunteered for temporary assignments in foreign countries. These special agents left domestic field divisions for temporary tour of duty assignments to work closely with host country law enforcement counterparts. As envisioned, Operation Snowcap was designed to be a temporary program to assist law enforcement entities in Latin America with training and investigative work.

Organized Crime Targeted

January 8, 1986: Enforcement Group 31 in New York specialized in traditional Italian organized crime targets. This case targeted the Philipp Vasta trafficking organization and resulted in 18 arrests and seizures totaling $6 million including drugs, real estate, cars and currency.

Operation Polar Cap

Medellin cartel. Operation Polar Cap involved two international organizations that were laundering the proceeds of cocaine sales by using false gold sales and wholesale jewelry businesses as cover. Between 1988 and 1990, these two organizations laundered almost $1.2 billion in drug proceeds. Operation Polar Cap led to the first conviction of a foreign financial institution, Banco de Occidente/Panama, for violating U.S. money laundering laws. As a result of this operation, over 100 people were arrested, and more than $105 million in assets, including currency, bank accounts, real estate, jewelry, gold, and vehicles were seized. The money forfeited by the Banco de Occidente/Panama was shared with other governments, including Canada and Switzerland, which each received $1 million.

Sylmar Seizure (1989)

On September 29, 1989, the American public was presented with irrefutable evidence of the enormous volume of cocaine coming into the country when the DEA raided a warehouse in Sylmar, California, and seized 21.5 tons of cocaine. Such a huge amount of cocaine was amassed at the Sylmar warehouse because of a conflict between Colombia-based distributors and the Mexico-based group they had hired to transport the drug. The group from Mexico had continued to transport cocaine to the warehouse but refused to release it to the Colombian distributors until they were paid for their transportation services. This was the largest cocaine seizure in U.S. history. Colombian drug traffickers responded to the staggering Sylmar seizure by changing the way they compensated transportation groups from Mexico; they began to pay Mexico-based smuggling organizations up to 50 percent of each cocaine shipment in product rather than in cash. This shift to using cocaine as compensation for transportation services radically changed the role and sphere of influence of Mexico-based trafficking organizations in the U.S. cocaine trade. Criminal groups from Mexico became not only transporters, but also distributors of cocaine.

DEA Headquarters Relocated (1989)

By the late 1980s, the DEA headquarters building at 1405 "Eye" St. in Washington, D.C., was no longer large enough to house the increasing headquarters staff. In fact, many of the 1,500 headquarters employees had already been dispersed to 13 nearby buildings in an effort to accommodate the agency's continued growth.

The search for a new headquarters location included an evaluation of land in Arkansas and Mississippi, as well as abandoned military bases around the country. However, Attorney General Edwin Meese determined that the DEA headquarters had to be located in close proximity to the Attorney General's offices. Thus, the location selected for the new headquarters building was on Army-Navy Drive in Arlington, Virginia. The new facility consisted of two buildings that provided 292,000 square feet of available space.

The relocation of headquarters was the largest non-enforcement related project ever undertaken by the DEA or its predecessor agencies. The physical relocation began in May 1988.

Aviation

During this period, the DEA's Air Wing program was expanding rapidly. From 1975 to 1985, the number of Air Wing planes had doubled, rising from 30 to 61. After a budget increase from $1,310,00 in 1980 to $3,760,000 in 1985, the Aviation Division anticipated purchasing more aircraft and increasing the Air Wing's staff.

With the rapid growth of the Air Wing, the facility at Addison quickly became inadequate. Operations had been separated among several buildings and security had become a problem because the airport was located right on the street with public access to several ramps. In addition, airplanes were parked in the open and were subject to vandalism. From 1986 to 1988, the DEA's Air Wing looked for a secure location in Texas in order to be equally accessible for DEA officials located on the East and West Coasts. In addition, Texas was an ideal location based on its proximity to Central and South America, where many Air Wing support operations were performed. The location chosen for the new facility was a 12.3 acre site adjacent to Alliance Airport, north of Forth Worth, Texas. The site selected was spacious and accommodated future expansion. The new facility also offered greater security and included a guarded fence.

Training

Although DEA training had been conducted at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Georgia since 1981, Administrator Lawn wanted the DEA to establish a unique training facility that focused specifically on drug law enforcement. Because FBI and DEA agents cooperated on many cases and would benefit from a degree of shared training, Administrator Lawn decided that the new training center should be located near the FBI Training Academy in Quantico, Virginia. Ultimately, he acquired 155 acres of land adjacent to the FBI Academy from U.S. Marine Corps Commandante Alfred M. Gray for the construction of the new training center.

Originally the move was expected to take several months, with new classes not beginning until January 1986, but a special appropriation from Congress was earmarked for agent classes starting in 1985. Consequently, the pace of the move was accelerated and the DEA Office of Training officially moved to Quantico on October 1, 1985.

Members of the first basic agent class to train at Quantico are shown learning how narcotics test kits work.

On June 27, 1987, the DEA flag was flown at the FBI Academy in Quantico for the first time. The occasion was the graduation of Basic Agent Training Class 43. The guest speaker was Attorney General Edwin Meese III.

Arrest of Noriega (1989)

On February 4th, 1989, Manuel A. Noriega and 15 defendants were indicted by the grand jury in Miami, Florida. The structure of the RICO indictment alleged that Noriega was a drug facilitator for the Medellin cartel. Noriega had utilized his position as the Commander of the Panamanian Defense Forces and as the ruler of Panama to assist the Medellin cartel in shipping cocaine; procuring precursor chemicals for the manufacture of cocaine; providing a safe haven for cartel members following the assassination of Colombian Minister of Justice Rodrigo Lara-Bonilla on April 30, 1984; and sponsoring the laundering of narco-proceeds in Panamanian banks.

When the United States invaded the country of Panama on December 20, 1989, Noriega eluded capture by the U.S. military for the next several weeks. Finally, Noriega surrendered to the DEA in Panama and was immediately taken to Miami to answer the indictment. Over the next 21 months, enforcement Group 9 in Miami interviewed hundreds of individuals and reviewed reams of seized papers in the United States and Panama. In September 1991, the drug "Trial of the Century" began.

During the next eight months, over 100 prosecution witnesses, including Carlos Lehder, ex-DEA Administrators Bensinger, Mullen, and Lawn, an ex-Panamanian Attorney General, cartel leader Pepe Cabrera, and others testified at the trial. In supporting the prosecution, the DEA had special agents deployed in 15 countries around the world, including Panama, Colombia, Spain, Luxembourg, Germany, France, and Cuba.

Finally, on April 9,1992, the jury returned a verdict of guilty on eight of the ten counts in the indictment. Noriega, who had become Panama's political leader in 1988 after President Eric Arturo Delvalle was ousted, was convicted on racketeering and cocaine-trafficking charges for protecting Colombian smugglers who had routed drugs through Panama. On July 9,1992, Manuel Noriega was sentenced to 40 years in federal prison.

On April 6, 1998, he failed to overturn his drug trafficking conviction and the 40-year prison sentence it drew. Noriega's appeal contended that the drug cartel had paid $1.25 million to a witness to testify falsely against him, and that the government must be held responsible for the alleged bribe. The U.S. Supreme Court, acting without comment, let stand a ruling that said Noriega received a fair trial. The Noriega case was the most notorious drug trial in U.S. history and demonstrated to the American public the global scope of corruption that accompanied international drug smuggling.

General Manuel Antonio Noriega surrendered to U. S. authorities on January 3, 1990.

Manuel Noriega

Laboratories

In 1989, the Western Field Laboratory, under the leadership of Robert Sager, moved to a new location in San Francisco, California. The new laboratory featured 17,000 square feet of floor space and had benches for 16 chemists, special purpose instrument rooms, and natural light from several windows.

1989: Evolving computer technology improved the speed of complex searches for references. Pictured above are Dr. Judy Lawrence (left) and DEA librarian Lavonne Wienke.

Technology

The first office automation (OA) system for the DEA was procured in 1986 for a contract cost of $36 million. The operating system of this computer network provided DEA employees with E-mail, word processing, spreadsheets and other standard desktop tools. Based on its experience with the OA system, the DEA's introduction to and reliance on automation tools to assist in all facets of the agency's day-to-day operations were established. This computerization of the agency produced increased demands for more capabilities through the office automation infrastructure.

In January 1989, members of the DEA Phoenix Task Force seized 4.5 kilograms of black tar heroin, the largest seizure of its kind in Arizona at that time. The task force members from left are: Sgt. Doug Stine, Task Force Agent Charlie Adams, SA Steff Stewart, Group Supervisor Bill Ruzzamenti, SA Michelle Ashley, Task Force Agents Ben Quezada, Tom Reynolds, Phil Smyth, and Bob Hajek, SA Gerry Courtney, and Task Force Agents Garry Applegate, Adam Kurgan, and Dan Kelly.

El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) Dedication (1989)

To celebrate the opening of a new facility, the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) held a dedication ceremony on February 22, 1989, in Ft. Bliss, Texas. The new installation was dedicated in the name of slain DEA SA Enrique Camarena. Heartfelt remarks made by Dora Camarena, his mother, were the highlight of the ceremony.

Pictured at the EPIC groundbreaking ceremony in September 1987 are, from right to left, William I. Norsworthy, EPIC staff assistant; Larry L. Orton, EPIC SAC; Thomas G. Byrne, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Intelligence; and Fort Bliss staff.

Killed in the Line of Duty

Enrique S. Camarena
Died on February 9, 1985
DEA Special Agent Camarena of the Guadalajara, Mexico Resident Office was kidnapped, tortured, and killed by drug traffickers from Mexico.

James A. Avant
Died on July 24, 1986
Deputy Sheriff Avant of the Pulaski County, Arkansas, Sheriff's Office, was killed in a helicopter crash in Mount Ida, Arkansas. He was assigned to the DEA's Task Force in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Charles M. Bassing
Died on July 24, 1986
Criminal Investigator Bassing of the Arkansas State Police was killed in a helicopter crash in Mount Ida, Arkansas. He was assigned to the DEA's Task Force in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Kevin L. Brosch
Died on July 24, 1986
Criminal Investigator Brosch of the Jefferson County, Arkansas, Sheriff's Office, was killed in a helicopter crash in Mt. Ida, Arkansas. He was participating in a DEA Marijuana Eradication Spotter School.

Susan M. Hoefler
Died on August 16, 1986
Ms. Hoefler, an office assistant at the DEA Office in Guadalajara, Mexico, died from injuries suffered in an automobile accident in Guadalajara.

William Ramos
Died on December 31, 1986
DEA Special Agent Ramos of the McAllen District Office was shot and killed by a drug-trafficking suspect during an undercover investigation at Las Milpas, Texas, near the Mexican border.

Raymond J. Stastny
Died on January 26, 1987
DEA Special Agent Stastny of the Atlanta Field Division died from gunshot wounds he received six days earlier while working in an undercover operation in Atlanta.

Arthur L. Cash
Died on August 25, 1987
DEA Special Agent Cash, who was in charge of the Sierra Vista Post of Duty in Arizona, was killed in a traffic accident while transporting three prisoners to Tucson.

Terry W. McNett
Died on February 2, 1988
Detective McNett of the Sedwick County, Kansas Sheriff's Office was shot and killed in the execution of a search warrant in Wichita, Kansas, while assigned to a DEA task force.

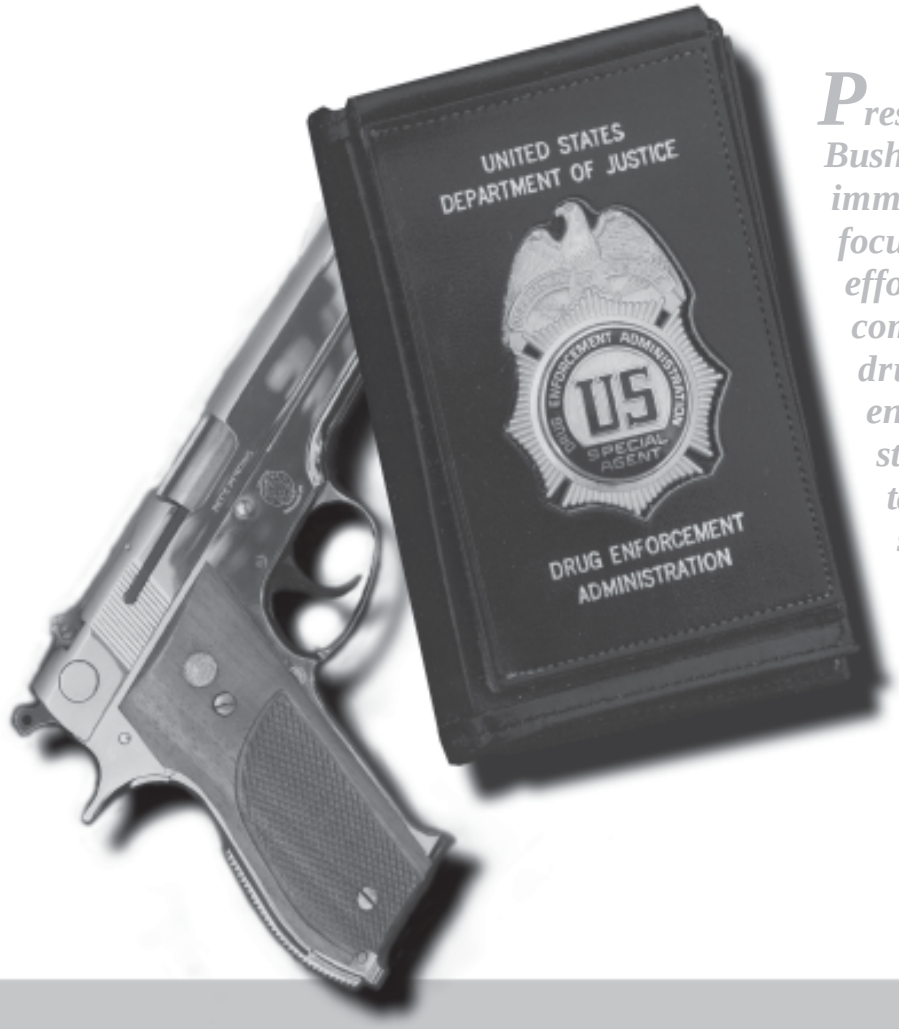
George M. Montoya
Died on February 5, 1988
DEA Special Agent Montoya of the Los Angeles Field Division was shot and killed during an undercover operation in Los Angeles, California.

Paul S. Seema
Died on February 6, 1988
DEA Special Agent Seema of the Los Angeles Field Division died of gunshot wounds received during an undercover operation in Los Angeles, California.

Everett E. Hatcher
Died on February 28, 1989
DEA Special Agent Hatcher of the New York Field Division was shot and killed during an undercover investigation in New York City.

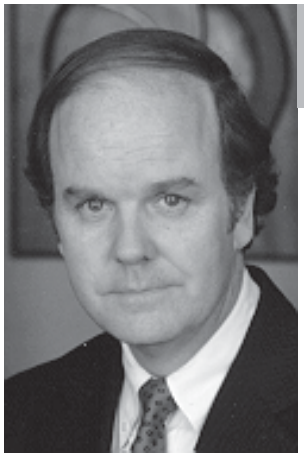
Rickie C. Finley
Died on May 20, 1989
DEA Special Agent Finley was killed in a plane crash as he was returning from a jungle operation to a base camp in Lima, Peru.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION



President George Bush began to immediately focus national efforts on a comprehensive drug enforcement strategy that targeted both supply and demand reduction.

1990-1994



DEA

Robert C. Bonner
August 16, 1990 - October 31, 1993

When John Lawn retired on March 23, 1990, Terrance M. Burke, a career DEA agent, was named Acting Administrator. On May 11, 1990, President George Bush nominated Robert C. Bonner, a Federal Judge and United States Attorney from Los Angeles, as Administrator. He was confirmed by the Senate on July 27, 1990 and sworn in as the DEA's fifth Administrator on August 13, 1990.

In prior years, Mr. Bonner was the United States Attorney for the Central District of California (1984-1989) and Federal Judge, United States District Court for the Central District of California (1989-1990). He had worked closely with the DEA on two record-breaking money laundering cases, Operations Pisces and Polar Cap, and had led the prosecution team against the killers of DEA Special Agent Camarena. Judge Bonner understood that the drug trade was a global enterprise, and because of this, federal drug law enforcement had to target drug trafficking organizations overseas, as well as their networks within our borders.

After leaving DEA, Mr. Bonner was a partner in the Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., law firm Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. In September 2001, he was sworn in as Commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service, and in 2003, he became the first head of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, a new agency under the Department of Homeland Security.

DEA was called upon to work with its foreign counterparts to reduce the supply of drugs in the country and reduce the demand through prevention, education and treatment.

Robert C. Bonner was sworn in as the DEA's Fifth Administrator in August 1990. Attending the inaugural ceremony at headquarters were (from left): Administrator Bonner, Mrs. Bonner, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, and Attorney General Dick Thornburgh.

DEA Special Agents
1990.....3,191
1994.....3,418

DEA Budget
1990.....$769.2 million
1994.....$1,050 million

Year	Foreign Office Opened
1990	Freeport, Bahamas
1990	Rangoon, Burma
1990	Udorn, Thailand
1992	Belize, Belize
1992	San Salvador, El Salvador

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Americans considered the drug issue a major concern, and public awareness about drug trafficking and drug abuse increased significantly. The media had provided the American people with critical information about the damage caused by drugs.

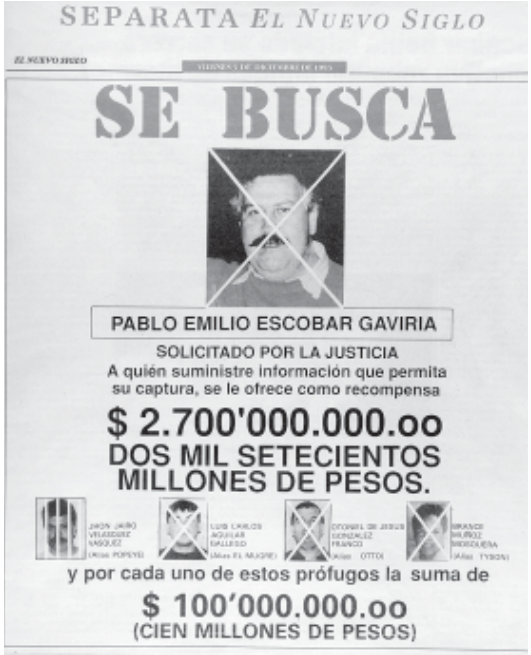
President George Bush began immediately to focus national efforts on a comprehensive drug enforcement strategy that targeted both supply and demand reduction. On one hand, his strategy called for the DEA and other federal agencies to work with our counterparts overseas and at home to reduce the supply of drugs in the country. At the same time, complementary efforts were directed at reducing the demand for drugs through prevention, education, and treatment, including a comprehensive advertising program launched by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America.

Cocaine and crack remained the number one drug challenge facing law enforcement, and the Colombian cartels and their cells were firmly entrenched in virtually every U.S. city and in many countries around the globe. Both the Medellin Cartel and the Cali mafia had a devastating impact on U.S. communities. In the Northeast, especially the New York area, the Cali mafia had quietly established a network of cells to carry out all of the mafia's various tasks involving the shipment of cocaine, its storage, communications between Colombia and the United States, and the return of profits to Colombia. The Cali mafia sent armies of surrogates into the United States to ensure that the cocaine business was run smoothly and profitably.

In 1992, the DEA instituted the Kingpin Strategy to attack the drug organizations at their most vulnerable areas—the chemicals needed to process the drugs, their finances, transportation, communications, and leadership infrastructure here in the United States. The Kingpin program essentially controlled investigations from DEA headquarters and selected a finite number of targets for intensive investigative activity.

Because extradition of Colombian nationals to the United States was prohibited by Colombia's 1991 constitution, it was essential that Colombian drug lords were arrested, prosecuted, and incarcerated in their own country. With the help of law enforcement counterparts overseas and at home, most notably the Colombian National Police (CNP), one by one the Medellin leaders were toppled. By the time Pablo Escobar, the most notorious and murderous drug lord of the Medellin Cartel, was killed by the CNP on a Colombian rooftop in 1993, the cartel had already been severely damaged. But there would be no rest, because waiting to emerge on the world scene was the Cali mafia, which over the years had been less visible, but no less formidable than its Medellin counterpart.

Decline of the Medellin Cartel and the Rise of the Cali Mafia



Pablo Escobar "Wanted" poster with faces crossed out signifying that he and his entourage had been killed or catured.

In the early 1990s the Medellin Cartel was waging a campaign of terror and bribery to pressure the Colombian government to prohibit the extradition of native Colombians. Pablo Escobar and several other Medellin leaders, labeled "The Extraditables," took increasingly violent measures to try to force the government to accept legislation that would protect them from extradition. The cartel was responsible for the assassinations of dozens of government officials, and the bribery of many more. When, in July 1991, the Colombian congress adopted a new constitution that prohibited the extradition of the Colombian natives, it was considered a major victory for the Medellin Cartel.

However, the many law enforcement efforts to topple the Medellin cartel were resulting in numerous surrenders and arrests that eventually led to the cartel's demise. For example, in December 1990, cartel leader Fabio Ochoa surrendered to authorities near Medellin. Shortly, after, in January 1991, Fabio Ochoa's brother,

Fabio Ochoa-Vasquez

Juan Ochoa-Vasquez

Jorge Ochoa-Vasquez

Miguel Rodriguez-Orejuela

Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela

Jose Santacruz-Londono

Jorge Luis, also turned himself into the CNP. The brothers, along with Pablo Escobar, had been the top leaders of the cartel. Also, in January 1991, the CNP killed David Ricardo Prisco Lopera, Pablo Escobar's top assassin, along with his younger brother, Armando Alberto Prisco. The Priscos were wanted for ordering the murders of 50 Medellin police officers, for several terrorist bombings, and for nine assassinations, including that of a Colombian Justice Minister in 1984. In February 1991, a third Ochoa brother, Juan David surrendered.

Law enforcement efforts were increasingly directed at Pablo Escobar, the kingpin of the Medellin cartel. In June 1991, Escobar surrendered to authorities, and was put in Envigado prison. However, the Colombian government had agreed in Escobar's surrender negotiations that security at Envigado prison would be the responsibility of Army guards and Escobar's own, handpicked bodyguards. In reality, Envigado prison protected, rather than incarcerated him. Escobar's period at the prison was considered his "Golden Age," during which time he ran his drug empire without fear of being hunted by the Colombian Government or assassinated by his rivals.

In July 1992, Escobar "escaped" from Envigado prison in order to avoid being transferred to a Bogota jail after it was confirmed that Escobar had ordered the murder of some 22 of his own drug mafia associates. One or two of Escobar's victims were even tortured, killed, and buried on the grounds of Envigado prison. Escobar clearly had prior warning of the plan to transfer him to a more secure prison, and 28 guards were later charged with aiding and abetting Escobar's "break out." For 17 months, Escobar was the target of the largest manhunt in Colombian history. In December 1993, the CNP killed Escobar in a fire fight at a private residence in downtown Medellin. Escobar's death, along with the surrender and arrest of the Ochoa brothers marked the decline of the Medellin cartel.

The Cali mafia had been formed in the early 1970s by Gilberto Rodriguez-Orejuela and Jose Santacruz-Londono, and rose quietly alongside its violent rival, the Medellin Cartel. But while the Medellin Cartel gained an international reputation for brutality and murder, the Cali traffickers posed as legitimate businessmen. This unique criminal enterprise initially involved itself in counterfeiting and kidnapping, but gradually expanded into smuggling cocaine base from Peru and Bolivia to Colombia for conversion into powder cocaine.

Up through the early 1990s, the Medellin Cartel had dominated the drug trade, but its reign of relentless public terror against the Colombian government had driven Colombian authorities to serious action that led to their ultimate defeat. By the early 1990s, the Medellin drug lords were either killed or incarcerated. Having observed the fate of the brutal and violent Medellin Cartel, the Cali leaders passed themselves off as law-abiding businessmen, investing in their country's future, earning public respect, and taking economic control of the Cali region. Because they operated in a less violent manner, the government did not aggressively pursue them, thereby allowing the Cali mafia leaders to operate and grow in wealth and power with virtual impunity.

In the global arena, the cartels began expanding their markets to Europe. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990, they quickly moved into Eastern Europe, taking advantage of the political and economic chaos by using these newly-created democracies as the "backdoor" to transit their cocaine to Western Europe. For example in 1992, large loads of cocaine were seized in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary. In 1993, Russian authorities seized 1.1 tons of cocaine hidden in cans of corned beef hash. This shipment originated in Cali, Colombia, and was destined for the Netherlands, via St. Petersburg, Russia.

In the new, post-Cold War Europe, without border controls and an eastern border sealed against communism, international businesses and world governments were threatened by the drug cartels from Colombia.

In the early 1990s, the DEA estimated that they collectively produced and exported from Colombia between 500 and 800 tons of cocaine a year. The organizations were structured and operated much like major international corporations. They had enormous financial resources, with which they could afford to buy the best legal minds, the most sophisticated technology, and the most skilled financial experts.

On December 2, 1993, Escobar's exact location was determined using electronic, directional-finding equipment. With authorities closing in, a fire fight with Escobar and his bodyguard ensued. The two fugitives attempted to escape by running across the roofs of adjoining houses to reach a back street, but both were shot and killed by Colombian National Police.

Among the major Cali drug lords, the Rodriguez-Orejuela brothers—Gilberto and his younger brother, Miguel—were known as the transportation specialists who moved cocaine out of Colombia into the United States and other countries. Gilberto was responsible for the strategic, long-term planning of the organization. Miguel was the hands-on manager who ran the day-to-day operations. Jose Santacruz-Londono was responsible for establishing distribution cells in the United States.

These Cali leaders ran an incredibly sophisticated, highly-structured drug trafficking organization that was tightly controlled by its leaders in Cali. Each day, details of loads and money shipments were electronically dictated to heads of cocaine cells operating within the United States. The Cali drug lords knew the how, when, and where of every cocaine shipment, down to the markings on the packages. The Cali bosses set production targets for the cocaine they sold and were intimately involved in every phase of the business—production, transportation, financing, and communications.

Each organization had its own hierarchy of leaders, its own distribution networks, and customers in nations around the world. The operations were divided into separate cells. Each cell was run by a cell director—always a Colombian national—who reported directly to the drug lords in Colombia. These organizations were truly international operations run with efficiency and geared for huge profits. The massive scale of their trafficking operations dwarfed law enforcement efforts in Colombia, in the United States, and in the transit nations between them.

Heroin

During the 1980s, worldwide illicit opium production had doubled, with Southeast Asia then emerging as the major source of the world's heroin supply. In Burma, self-styled rebels, like drug lord Khun Sa, financed private armies and generated an estimated $200 million gross profits per year from his heroin and opium enterprises. This wealth made him so powerful that the Burmese government allowed him to operate with impunity, and he controlled most of the Shan State of Burma.

In the early 1990s, the United States was faced with a resurgence of heroin. As the decade progressed, the heroin became purer and cheaper than ever before in U.S. history. New traffickers and new sources for the drug also contributed to the tide of heroin abuse.

In South America, the Colombian cocaine cartels were beginning to diversify into the production and distribution of heroin. Colombian heroin seizures in the United States began to rise. It was estimated that the Colombian cartels had financed the cultivation of up to 25,000 hectares. That made Colombia one of the largest cultivators of illicit opium, behind Burma and Laos, but ahead of the traditional opium-producing nations, such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Lebanon. In February 1992, the first heroin lab was seized and destroyed in Colombia, and in that year, the Colombian National Police eradicated more than 10,000 hectares of opium poppies.

More heroin was available in the United States than ever before, and this drove prices down and purity up. The national average purity level of an ounce of heroin being sold on U.S. streets was 66 percent in 1993, compared to less than 5 percent in the early 1980s. In some cases, the DEA seized heroin that was 95 percent pure. Aggressive international heroin traffickers, such as those based in Nigeria, emerged to join the traditional heroin trafficking organizations based in China, Turkey, and the Middle East.

In 1991, DEA made the largest seizure of heroin in U.S. history when over 1,000 pounds of Southeast Asian white heroin, with an estimated wholesale value of more than $1 billion, was seized in San Francisco. Agents from San Francisco, Sacramento, and New York monitored a controlled delivery of the heroin 24-hours-a-day for nearly a month prior to the arrest

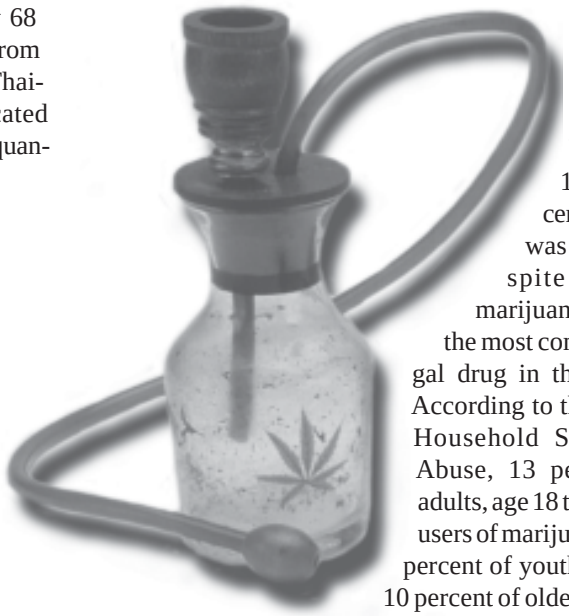
of five suspects. The heroin was found in 59 of 1,360 cartons of plastic produce bags imported from Taiwan. Each of the 59 cartons contained two cylinders of heroin coated in white wax or wrapped in "happy birthday" paper. By 1993, Southeast Asian heroin, which was smuggled by both China and Nigeria/West Africa-based traffickers, was one of the greatest threats to the United States. At that time, roughly 68 percent of the heroin seized in the United States came from Southeast Asia's Golden Triangle—Burma, Laos, and Thailand. China-based traffickers controlled sophisticated international networks that smuggled multi-hundred kilo quantities of heroin in commercial cargo on a regular basis.

Police examined a test sample of the 977 pounds of heroin seized in the Gulf of Thailand in 1991. Looking on are (from left): General Sawat Amornivivat, Director General of Police; DEA Country Attache Glennon L. Cooper (third from left); General Pow Sarasin (fifth from left), Deputy Prime Minister; and Thai Police General Pratin Santiprapop (upper right corner).

DEA Mini-Series

Network series lasted 6 episodes before being cancelled.

Marijuana



With the explosion in the use of crack, cocaine, and heroin in the 1980s, public concern about marijuana was diminished, despite the fact that marijuana continued to be the most commonly used illegal drug in the United States. According to the 1991 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 13 percent of young adults, age 18 to 25, were regular users of marijuana. In addition, 4 percent of youth, age 12-17, and 10 percent of older adults, age 26 to 34, reported using marijuana regularly.

The marijuana of the early 1990s was an entirely different drug from the version that was available in the 1960s or 1970s. Due to modern sophisticated cultivation techniques, U.S.-grown marijuana became one of the most potent and highly-prized cannabis products in the world. While the THC (the psychoactive ingredient) content of marijuana averaged 1.5 percent in 1970, by the 1990s it was 7.6 percent. The sinsemilla (seedless) variety ranged from 8 to 19 percent, and marijuana seizures in Alaska registered a THC potency of almost 30 percent.

In addition, marijuana growers continued to encroach on national forests and parks and to threaten the environment by using harmful pesticides. With the wholesale price of high-quality sinsemilla averaging between $3,000 and $8,000 a pound, marijuana cultivation became big business. It was estimated that domestically grown marijuana constituted 25 percent of the supply for the United States.

In recognition of the growing threat from marijuana, by the 1990s, all 50 states were actively participating in the Domestic Cannabis Eradication and Suppression Program. With the marijuana market increasing, the program looked for more efficient ways to eradicate the plant. Along with the traditional "whack and stack" method, the DEA added herbicidal eradication. One of the first herbicidal eradication efforts, Operation Wipe Out in Hawaii, was an overwhelming success. In the summer of 1990, almost 90 percent of Hawaii's cannabis crop was eradicated. Half of the crop was destroyed by spot herbicidal spraying, a new and more efficient eradication technique, which had little, if any, environmental impact.