TOILING IN THE VINEYARDS: AMERICAN SECURITY AND THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF NARCOTICS, 1930-1968

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Submitted to the

Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences

of American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In

History

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April 29, 2014

Date

2014

American University

Washington, D.C. 20016

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ABSTRACT

The story of America's "war on drugs" usually begins with Richard Nixon in 1971. However, the history of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics—the country's first drug control agency—suggests that the drug war's roots lay in the years following WWII, when the U.S. government began to consistently depict drug control as a paramilitary conflict and first stationed agents overseas to disrupt the flow of drugs to American shores. Analysis of the ideology and foreign policy of the early drug wars shows how the U.S. government interpreted addiction and organized crime as profound threats to the American people. Skeptical of public health efforts to reduce demand, the FBN believed that reducing the global supply of drugs was the only way to contain the slavery of addiction. In effect, America applied a foreign policy solution to a domestic social crisis. The FBN's effort to bring the rest of the world into line behind American expectations on drug control demonstrates how consistently U.S. policymakers have assumed that security at home could only be achieved by through some form of hegemony abroad.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scholarship can often feel like a solitary endeavor, but this project would have been impossible without the consistent support of friends, family, colleagues, mentors and loved ones. I owe a special debt to Peter Kuznick and Max Paul Friedman, both of whom nurtured this project from start to finish and provided invaluable advice and guidance with patience and élan. I like to think that each of their influence can be discerned in the pages that follow—though any errors are, of course, mine alone. Alan Kraut also made important contributions and remains a model of teaching and scholarship.

At various stages of this dissertation's development, I received valuable comments and suggestions from Alfred McCoy, Richard Brietman, William O. Walker III, Jeremy Kuzmarov, Jonathan Marshall, Nathaniel Smith, William McAllister and Daniel Weimer. Though she passed away before the manuscript was complete, Anna Nelson was a formative influence and treasured resource during my early graduate career. This project would also not have been possible without the groundbreaking work of John C. McWilliams and Douglas Valentine; both lent early encouragement when I first began researching the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Chuck Holden fostered my interest in history during my undergraduate studies and provided me with critical teaching experience when he invited me to fill in during his sabbatical year at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Thanks, also, to my students for reminding me what all of this is for.

In the course of my research, I received vital assistance from the staff at various archival and records collections. Polly Armstrong and James Quigel, at Stanford and Penn State, respectively, helped me navigate the George White and Harry Anslinger Papers. I also must thank the tireless staff of the Special Access and Freedom of Information Act Office at the National Archives in College Park, who dealt with countless declassification requests.

I received feedback—and a sympathetic ear—from fellow graduate students Aaron Bell, Adam Zarakov, Kit Crawford and Nick Ercole. My old friends, Drs. Kelly Mills and Mike Dambach, graciously fielded numerous questions about science, medicine and biology. I also want to thank Marge and Sue Maher for sharing stories about their husband and father, John Maher, who served for a time as the head of the Bureau's Returns Division. I'm happy that I was able to confirm a bit of family lore that he probably really was one of the few people who knew the secret recipe for Coca-Cola.

I also wish to thank the American University History Department and the Dean's Office at the College of Arts and Science for providing financial support during my various research trips and writing efforts. At Banner & Witcoff, Jon Dunn provided me with a job and much-needed flexibility while I worked to complete my degree and draft this manuscript, and for that he has my profound gratitude.

And, finally, there's my family. My mom and dad, Eileen Gellerman and Bob Pembleton, have been my two biggest supporters in all things. I also want to thank my stepmom, Cheryl, and all of my siblings: Julie, Rob, Mike, Dan, Ryan, Mary Kate and Tori. My stepdad, Dave Gellerman, did much to stimulate my intellectual curiosity and I wish he was here to share in the rewards. Last but certainly not least, thank you, Shannon, for your faith and patience in putting up with both me and this project. Your achievements in the classroom are a constant source of inspiration. I love you and could not have done this without you.

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INTRODUCTION. CONTAINING ADDICTION: DRUG CONTROL AND THE IDEOLOGY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

There comes a time in most undercover drug busts when the masquerading agent must end the charade. True-crime stories tell us this is a moment of great peril, arriving just before the bad guys are taken down and backup seems miles away. Usually some prearranged gesture—a certain phrase, the tip of a hat or a lit cigarette—signals the cavalry and springs the trap. On June 4, 1948, on the second floor of a house in a residential neighborhood of Istanbul, U.S. Narcotic Agent George Hunter White sat across a table from two men: Iradodos Terapyanos, a Western-educated Turk known as "Little Bob" to his friends, and Yasef Kariyo, a Spanish Jew who called himself "Joe." The atmosphere was tense as the undercover agent methodically examined several packages containing a total of three kilos of uncut heroin prior to handing over $6000 in Turkish lira and American dollars. White's moment had arrived.

Turkish law specified that money and drugs must be exchanged in order to prosecute a narcotics violation in court. With the deal complete, White stood up, pulled a small revolver with one hand, his badge with the other and announced the two men were under arrest. As planned, he smashed a window to signal his Turkish reinforcements. The noise, however, was lost in the din of the street outside as some forty detectives disguised as laborers, sailors and postmen continued their "work." Holding the two suspects under gunpoint and beginning to sweat, White finally tossed a chair backward through the window, showering the street with glass. That did the trick. The police outside dropped their cover, stormed the house and took the traffickers into custody. It was a close call for the American, but in his official report White was typically cavalier about the ordeal, commenting, "The entire matter was like a comic opera, or maybe a keystone comedy."[1]

For White, this was but one episode in a long and extraordinarily colorful career as a Federal narcotic agent and undercover operative. He quickly and cheerfully moved on to the next city and the next case. For contemporary audiences, however, the scene offers a bit more to contemplate. How did this American police officer wind up halfway across the world, well outside his legal jurisdiction, flashing a

[1] George White to Harry Anslinger, June 10, 1948, in Folder "George White's Reports (folder)," Box 164, Entry 9 (Miscellaneous Subject Files), RG 170 (Records of the Drug Enforcement Administration), National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter abbreviated NARA).

U.S. government-issue badge at Turkish subjects? Was this American imperialism? How did the episode look through Turkish eyes?

Subsequent Western accounts valorized the intrepid agent and a *Reader's Digest* article published soon afterwards described the bust as an early skirmish in "Our Global War on Narcotics." Turkish reporters, however, questioned White's role in the investigation. They wondered what necessitated American involvement in the first place, noting that the police had been on to this ring for some time and had already busted several clandestine heroin labs. The initial Associated Press story, they complained, was yet another example of Western chauvinism—playing up White's role in the case and ignoring the good work of Turkish police.[2]

Such episodes are gems for historians of American foreign relations, waiting to be unearthed, cut, polished and fixed into the appropriate framework. Turned one way, White's bust casts a light on differences in perception between the Turkish and American governments, where the case produced very different outcomes. With a slight shift, the incident uncovers both conflict and noteworthy developments in the realm of international law enforcement. Held just so, the events of that June day and its numerous dramatic reproductions show how drugs and drug control were presented to the American public and reveal a fitting prologue to the American foreign drug war.

Toiling in the Vineyards: American Security and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1968 tells the story of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN) and presents, for the first time, the history of the Bureau's foreign enforcement program and the birth of the foreign drug war. This story offers unique and relevant insights into the ideology of American national security and the manner that threats are perceived, shaped and presented to the American people. Drugs were frequently portrayed as a foreign menace while fears of unchecked narcotic addiction rampaging through the American underclass and threatening to strike at a virtuous middle America, through crime and escalating drug abuse, led the U.S. to develop an increasingly global police presence designed to cut off the foreign sources of the domestic drug trade. In the final analysis, this policy was a product of the persistent belief that American security requires some form of hegemony abroad.

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[2] Frederic Sondern, Jr., "Our Global War on Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, April 1950 (also published in *The American Mercury*, March 1950). See also "Summary Translation, Comments of the Turkish Press," Folder "George White's Reports (folder)," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

FBN Agent George Hunter White is an important figure in this tale. His adventures in Istanbul directly preceded the creation of District 17, a region headquartered in Rome and covering all of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. But his role goes further still; as an important figure in an expansive true-crime literature, White's active mythmaking actually helped shape American perceptions of drugs, organized crime, law enforcement and, in the end, American security. Indeed, White pops up in so many episodes, he appears as a slightly bent "Candide" of the security state, with a career that illustrates the porous borders separating the worlds of law enforcement and national security.

White cut his teeth as a new agent in the 1930's with a year-long undercover case against the Hip Sing Tong, a Chinese-American fraternal association with a sideline in the morphine traffic and other rackets. During World War II, White trained operatives for the Office of Strategic Services and led counterintelligence operations in Calcutta later in the war (where he reportedly assassinated two Japanese spies—throttling one with his bare hands). He also worked security for the Manhattan Project and helped spearhead a program to devise a "truth drug"—an OSS boondoggle that blossomed into the infamous MK-ULTRA program under the CIA. White's Istanbul case was the first time an American agent was sent abroad to disrupt international drug trafficking networks. Back home, he was rumored to have kept mobbed-up Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby as a criminal informant. By the late 1950s, he ran a sordid research initiative for the Company and used prostitutes to dope Johns with LSD while he watched the action from behind a two-way mirror and pounded gin martinis.[3] Whatever the relationship between myth and reality, White's remarkable career demonstrates the very real connection between the United

[3] For White's early career and work on a "truth drug", see Harry J. Anslinger and J. Dennis Gregory, *The Protectors: The Heroic Story of the Narcotics Agents, Citizens and Officials in Their Unending, Unsung Battles Against Organized Crime in America and Abroad* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Company, 1964), 79. For involvement in the OSS, see John C. McWilliams, "Covert connections: The FBN, the OSS, and the CIA.," *Historian* 53, no. 4 (1991): 657-679. For White's role in the Manhattan Project, and later the CIA's MKULTRA program, see John Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate": The CIA and Mind Control, The Secret History of the Behavioral Sciences* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979), 8, 95. For White's relationship to Jack Ruby, see Douglas Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf: The Secret History of America's War on Drugs* (London and New York: Verso, 2004), 309-312. For overseas drug enforcement, see "Folder "George White's Reports (folder)," Box 164, RG 170, NARA and "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School on October 28, 1970 by Geo H. White," Folder 18, Box 3, George White Papers, M1111, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA (hereafter abbreviated White Papers).

States' early attempts at drug control and the ideology of national security, which holds that the world must be made safe for America.

White also provides this dissertation with its title. Upon his retirement from the Bureau, White kept up a lively correspondence with old friends and colleagues. Among them was Sidney Gottlieb, who ran the chemical division of the CIA's Technical Services Section and was White's contact during the Agency's mind-control experiments. After reflecting on various life and career choices, White closed one letter with the following infamous and oft-quoted passage: "Of course I was a minor missionary, actually a heretic, but I toiled wholeheartedly in the vineyards because it was fun, fun, fun. Where else could a red blooded American boy lie, kill and cheat, steal, deceive, rape and pillage with the sanction and blessing of the All-Highest? Pretty Good Stuff, Brudder!"[4]

What were the "vineyards" and why was he a "heretic?" White's colorful exaggeration illustrates many of the contradictions that have become emblematic of American national security practices. He described himself as a normal "red blooded American boy" but celebrated deviant behavior. A critical exception is implicit; White was "toiling in the vineyards." The Gospel of Matthew (20:1-16) offers a parable comparing the "vineyards" to the "Kingdom of Heaven."[5] White's vineyards were national security and drug control, and they too were hallowed ground; this was a battlefield of life and death, a privileged space wherein his fight against America's enemies—whether junkies, Japs or Commies—permitted him to step outside the very same belief system he was sworn to uphold. This was a cognitive and behavioral trade-off of the highest order and it was a pattern replicated at the national level throughout the twentieth century, as the U.S. tested drugs on unwitting citizens, initiated a drug war at home and abroad, supported dictators, fought wars of choice and readily intruded upon the sovereignty of other nations, all while citing the imperatives of national security and trumpeting the right of self-determination.

George White was one of many narcotics agents, and his story comes somewhere in the middle of this tale. The history of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics has yet to be fully told but has important

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[4] White to Sidney Gottlieb, November 21, 1971, Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

[5] White seems to have missed the point of his Biblical allusion. In the "Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard," an employer hires a series of workers over the course of the day, offering to pay each one penny. When they are all paid at the day's end, the workers who had labored all day complain they are paid the same as those who worked for only an hour. The point of the story—which concludes, "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen"—is to take what you are given and be grateful.

implications for both the drug war and American foreign policy more broadly. Drug abuse (a more precise term than "addiction") is at its heart a domestic social problem, tangled up with a host of related issues like wealth disparity, economic opportunity, ethnicity and social integration. But to a large degree, it is also simply the product of a basic human desire to alter our consciousness, however temporarily.[6] Officials like FBN Commissioner Harry J. Anslinger tended to portray drug addiction as a kind of contagious lunacy that resulted inevitably from exposure to narcotics and other drugs. According to the Bureau, the temptation to indulge was irresistible to certain segments of the population. Demand was a constant. Therefore, in order to curb addiction and control drug use, the supply of drugs had to be reduced. A truncated supply would prevent exposure and therefore reduce drug abuse and addiction. To reduce supply, however, the United States needed to control or eliminate drugs at the site of agricultural production and where it consistently lacked the power or focus to impose its will. The basic pattern was set, however flawed: drug abuse would be curtailed by controlling the global supply of drugs. In effect, the United States externalized a domestic problem, going abroad to solve a social crisis.

This "supply-side" approach has many implications. First, drugs—and therefore drug addiction and drug users—were portrayed as a specifically foreign and deeply subversive kind of threat, a characterization that helped justify a foreign policy solution. Second, because drug users (due to dependence on a foreign substance) were not like normal Americans and threatened to spread their madness to the rest of society, the use of government coercion seemed valid. Third, to foster a drug-free domestic environment conducive to American values, the rest of the world had to be brought into line with American expectations vis-à-vis drugs.

If these three trends sound familiar, they should, for they echo many of the American anxieties and beliefs common to the twentieth century. The Bureau's tenure, from 1930 to 1968, coincides with a number of important transformations in the role of the American government and within American political culture. We seldom speak of "the republic" anymore, but at the dawn of the twentieth century belief in a limited government remained strong. Over the course of the twentieth century, however, traditional American fears of a strong state and centralized power were transferred to a fear of crime and foreign

[6] Andrew Weil, MD, *The Natural Mind: A Revolutionary Approach to the Drug Problem*, Revised (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004).

threats. Where Americans once emphasized the need for protection *from* the state, they began to seek the protection *of* the state.

The FBN's logic of addiction and source control conveniently mirrored a growing logic of American hegemony: to protect conditions at home, America must dictate or shape events abroad. In diplomatic negotiations, the United States posed as a "victim" rather than a consumer of drugs. Narcotics were a foreign problem, requiring an extraterritorial response—in effect, American drug control advocates claimed a global sovereignty, invoking their status as victims of the drug trade to affect a solution abroad and often trampling upon the sovereignty of "producing" nations in the process. In 1948, Commissioner Anslinger boldly proclaimed, "There are no national boundaries in our work. *You can't afford national sovereignty when you're trying to break up the narcotics racket.*"[7] In the end, the ability to control drugs effectively was premised on the ability of the United States to coerce foreign and international cooperation. The domestic response, a combination of punitive drug laws and incarceration, was little more than a holding pattern until the international drug trade was brought under control.

As should be increasingly clear, the United States was battling drugs well before Richard Nixon formally declared "war" on them in 1971. The new crop of drug warriors and reformers that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, White observed to a colleague, "have just stumbled into a show that has been going on for ages with the naive notion it has just begun."[8]

The drug war (against a commodity) also offers a useful historical analogue for non-state threats like terrorism and provides a critical analytical link between the Cold War (against Communist ideology) and the war on terror (against a tactic of political violence). All three employ a metaphor of war to pit the United States in conflict with an intangible, and all three linked domestic minorities and the socially marginalized to foreign threats. These are "wars" that can never truly be won, yet each rallies the public behind the flag. All three conflicts posses similar ideological assumptions, hold "security" as a central

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[7] Emphasis added. Quoted in Jay Richard Kennedy, "One World—Against Dope," *The Sunday Star: This Week Magazine*, March 7, 1948. Also printed in *The Baltimore Sun*, same date, page 108, both in Folder 13, Box 1, Harry J. Anslinger Papers, Special Collections Library, Historical Collections and Labor Archives, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA (hereafter abbreviated Anslinger Papers).

[8] White to Matthew O'Connor (California Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement), July 31, 1970, Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

preoccupation and share an elastic quality that encourages the cultivation and projection of power and suppression of critical voices.

In other words, the history of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics is about much more than the struggle to implement an effective domestic and international counternarcotics strategy. At stake are fundamental questions about the very character of the American federal state, the American social contract and the role the United States in the world.

Source Control and the Logic of Hegemony

The FBN consistently portrayed drugs and drug addiction—a complicated set of interlocking political, medical and legal trends it often abbreviated as "the dope menace" or the "narcotics evil"—as a foreign scourge on American society requiring a foreign policy solution. That solution was source control. Due to a combination of genuine belief and bureaucratic imperative, the Bureau tended to concentrate on the criminal aspect of drugs and essentially wrote the more public health oriented problem of demand off as more or less constant.

The Bureau, however, did not invent source control. That policy that emerged from reform efforts early in the twentieth century, partly at the urging of American missionaries concerned with opium use in China and the Philippines. Dr. Hamilton Wright, a tropical disease specialist and early drug control advocate, argued for some measure of agricultural restriction during the 1909 Shanghai Opium Commission and the 1912 Hague Opium Convention, and helped to establish the long-held American position that the world's supply of narcotics should be kept to the minimum required of scientific and medical use. Both of these early diplomatic efforts were hampered by colonial reluctance to forgo a lucrative cash crop, but American policymakers stuck to the position that all forms of production must be limited.[9] While diplomats clashed in the gilded boardrooms of Europe, the real seeds of conflict were planted squarely in the poppy fields and coca plantations of places like the Anatolian interior, the jungles of South America and the highlands of Southeast Asia—places, William Walker points out, often beyond

[9] Arnold H. Taylor, *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Traffic, 1900-1939* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1969); Anne L. Foster, "Prohibiting Opium in the Philippines and the United States: The Creation of an Interventionist State," in *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 95–105; William B. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

the reach of American influence where customs like poppy farming were supported by deeply-rooted cultural traditions and sharply resistant to outside interference.[10]

The Bureau entered the scene in 1930 as a new generation of professional bureaucrats like Anslinger eclipsed the missionaries and private interest groups who animated the first attempts at international control. On the domestic side, the FBN was created to enforce the 1914 Harrison Narcotic Act (which required legal vendors to register with the government and pay a nominal tax) and to divorce drug control from the increasingly unpopular policy of alcohol prohibition. As Rep. Stephen G. Porter (R-PA) explained in Congress, drug control had, for too long, "been a sort of stepson of prohibition." The Bureau was intended rescue drug control from Prohibition and facilitate American engagement at the international level, which was widely agreed upon as the key to solving the drug problem.[11] The following year, as the newly appointed Commissioner of Narcotics, Anslinger represented the U.S. at the 1931 Conference on the Limitation of the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs, an important treaty that established international control over pharmaceutical manufacturing. Although the American delegation was frustrated in its attempt to introduce agricultural controls, the Limitation treaty did establish a system of quotas, an international supervisory body and required signatories to create their own "special administrations" or domestic drug control agencies based on the American model. For the next thirty years, Anslinger and his allies at the State Department used this provision to shield the Bureau from a series of bureaucratic challenges.[12]

Although it had regulatory functions, the Bureau was first and foremost a police agency and that limited the way it approached the problem of drug abuse. As will soon be clear, the Bureau suffered from the institutional tendency to see every problem as a nail while in possession of a good hammer. In the

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[10] In both *Drug Control in the Americas*, Revised (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989) and *Opium and Foreign Policy: The Anglo-American Search for Order in Asia, 1912-1954* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), William O. Walker III argues the failure to consider cultural tolerance for many forms of traditional drug use has rendered source control a doomed and ethnocentric policy that consistently blurred "the narrow line between diplomacy and intervention in the internal affairs of other nations." (*Drug Control in the Americas*: 188)

[11] "It is conceded by every one familiar with the subject," Porter elaborated, "that one nation, standing alone, cannot control this traffic; that it must be controlled by international agreement." *H.R. 10561; A Bill to Create in the Treasury Department a Bureau of Narcotics and for Other Purposes*, March 7-8, 1930, 71st Congress (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1930), 13.

[12] Taylor, *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Traffic, 1900-1939*; McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History*.

big picture, one of the most damaging aspects of the Bureau's tenure was its ability to project a rather simplistic view of addiction, which constrained both popular and medical understandings of addiction. The Bureau adopted an interpretation of addiction that was developed in the first decades of the twentieth century, when, Caroline Acker observes in *Creating the American Junkie* (2002), reformers, physicians and government officials associated drug abuse with the urban underclass and the lasting image of the "junky" first coalesced. Moving further into the twentieth century, the state response to substance abuse continued to be highly conditioned by differences in race, class and gender, but drug addicts were often dismissed as deviant psychopaths and addiction as the immutable product of their madness. Demand for drugs was therefore assumed to be irreducible. FBN officials thought addiction depended almost entirely on access and exposure to drugs; controlling the global supply of drugs, the Bureau argued, was the only effective way to contain the spread of drug addiction.[13]

This limited view of addiction ignored the root causes of drug abuse and had critical implications, as over time basic questions of causality were set adrift and pegged to drugs themselves.[14] The Bureau considered drugs like heroin so dangerous it was as if they possessed historical agency all their own and frequently invoked what we might term a kind of *narcotic determinism*. As Anslinger put it, "opium, wherever produced, will always seek a consumer." Worse still, addiction appeared to be contagious and Anslinger often described it virally, calling it "axiomatic" that one addict begets four, four makes sixteen, and so on.[15] To convey the danger to the American public, drugs and addiction were described with monstrous imagery or as a new form of slavery that threatened to jump from the urban underclass to white, middle-class America—a collection of threats packaged together as "the dope menace." Anslinger explicitly identified drug traffickers as "an immediate and present danger to our society," a characterization echoed in the Tom Clancy novel and film *Clear and Present Danger* (1989 and 1994),

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[13] Caroline Jean Acker, *Creating the American Junkie: Addiction Research in the Classic Era of Narcotic Control* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

[14] Richard DeGrandpre addresses the tendency to attach social and cultural meaning to some drugs but not others in *The Cult of Pharmacology: How America Became the World's Most Troubled Drug Culture* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).

[15] Harry J. Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946, in Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. See also Harry J. Anslinger and William F. Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, Inc., 1953), 302, and Anslinger, "We're Winning the War Against Dope," *The Union Signal*, October 28, 1961, in Folder 10, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

which popularized CIA and military engagement in the drug war.[16] Casting drug control as a fundamental defense of liberty helped reconcile an otherwise intrusive policy with America's libertarian ideology, and, in the minds of early drug warriors, reversed black market forces: the United States was not a consumer of drugs; it was a victim of the global drug traffic.

The period of the 1930s and 40s saw the gradual elaboration of both domestic and international control regimes, as Anslinger carved out a unique niche for his agency that straddled the divide between foreign and domestic. The Limitation Convention was implemented throughout the years 1933-34, but the growing political and economic crises of the 1930s prevented the further elaboration of international source control. During World War II, U.S. policymakers scored an important symbolic victory by tying the liberation of former British and Dutch colonies in the Pacific to the end of state-sponsored opium industries. Germany and Japan, both manufacturing powerhouses prior to the war, were subject to military occupation and implemented domestic control systems under American supervision, while the supervisory bodies created in the '30s were given a new home at the United Nations, fixing source control as a legal—though still contested—international norm. There were even signs of Soviet cooperation and, from 1950 on, Anslinger always claimed that only Communist China dared to defy the international community on drugs. "That's where the Iron Curtain should be," Anslinger told a UN audience, "not on the European side, because we get complete cooperation from Russia, Hungary, Poland, all of those Iron Curtain countries. Their controls are excellent."[17]

Continued agricultural overproduction and excess manufacturing in the postwar era, however, revealed the limited ability of diplomacy to combat the drug trade. In another of history's ironies, drug diplomacy flipped the traditional Cold War script when it came to the Western allies; the stalwart British were influential critics of most U.S. positions, while the French were staunch supporters of source control

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[16] Harry J. Anslinger and Will Oursler, *The Murderers: The Story of the Narcotics Gangs* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961), 295. The phrase was coined by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. in the 1919 *Schenck v. United States* decision that considered when First Amendment rights might be curtailed during a time of war.

[17] Taylor, *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Traffic, 1900-1939*; McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 156–239; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 55–6; H. Richard Friman, *NarcoDiplomacy: Exporting the U.S. War on Drugs* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996); Carl A. Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy: A Study of the Asian Opium Trade, 1750-1950* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999). See also Anslinger, "Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics," May 29, 1957, Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

(even while resisting domestic intrusions by the Bureau). British opposition was rooted in two historical developments: protecting colonial opium revenues bred an attitude that privileged sovereignty over drug control, while at home the U.K. favored a clinic-based treatment system instead of the punitive criminal response used in America.[18] Ultimately, every country involved in drug control was fiercely protective of its own exports, whether crude opium or advanced pharmaceuticals, and diplomatic accord was consistently limited by a lack of consensus on the actual mechanics of international control, a conflict of interests best captured in the battle between the 1953 Opium Protocol, the first attempt to limit global opium production using tough oversight and sanctions, and the watered-down 1961 Single Convention, which was bland enough to achieve broad support.[19]

Drug control was frequently used to signal America's unique moral leadership in the pre-war period, but the growth of American power and influence following World War II seemed to offer Anslinger's drug warriors the chance to finally put real teeth into international enforcement. The Bureau was convinced this required the physical presence of American agents. As Agent Charles Siragusa, the first supervisor of District 17 argued, "It is necessary for one of us to direct operations, give orders, see that things get done."[20] The presence of American narcotic agents on foreign soil was, however, often contested. Law enforcement is a closely held sovereign right and jealously guarded by most states. Although the U.S. had sent police forces abroad before, this was something rather new as the FBN agents took an active role in investigations and arrests, instead of facilitating law enforcement that took place on American soil. In the absence of official bilateral agreements, informal cop-to-cop diplomacy became a central part of the agents' professional lives and dictated the success of any foreign program. As Siragusa characterized his time abroad, "we functioned somewhat as roving ambassadors of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics."[21]

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[18] Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy*.

[19] McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 156–239.

[20] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 45, dated October 16, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[21] Ethan A. Nadelmann, *Cops Across Borders: The Internationalization of U.S. Criminal Law Enforcement* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); Peter Andreas and Ethan A. Nadelmann, *Policing the Globe: Criminalization and Crime Control in International Relations* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Charles Siragusa and Robert Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), 144.

The Bureau's foreign operations expanded alongside America's global military and intelligence presence, but it was not as simple as piggy-backing on American military or economic aid. When officials administering Marshall Plan funds in Turkey, for example, refused to use U.S. loans to pressure the Turks into backing FBN efforts, Anslinger groused, "It is unfortunate that in handing out American dollars we cannot get something really tangible" in return.[22] Anslinger wasn't the only one to make this connection. After listening to FBN testimony on widespread diversion from Italy's pharmaceutical industry, Senator Alexander Wiley (R-WI) argued, "We must persuade Italy to pass laws providing severe penalties against Italian exporters of heroin. We have spent billions of dollars to revive that country economically. Now she ought to cooperate with us on this point."[23] American military and intelligence officers stationed overseas were usually ready to help their colleagues in the FBN, but it's clear from Bureau records that foreign drug control operations expanded independently and in parallel to the growth of the national security state. Both developments, however, drew from the same ideological well; as policymakers came to perceive a shrinking and increasingly dangerous world, many concluded that security and stability at home required hegemony abroad. As Anslinger argued in 1946, "the United States will always have to lead—if for no other reason than self-protection."[24]

The logic of containment and source control share striking similarities. Foundational documents like the Truman Doctrine and NSC-68 indicate how the two policies evolved out of a shared understanding of America's role in the world. President Truman's 1947 speech committed the U.S. to protecting the "freedom-loving peoples of the world." NSC-68 similarly argued that the country was obligated to assume global leadership and "assure the integrity and vitality of our free society" by opposing the "slavery" of Soviet Communism.[25] America's early drug warriors saw the world in the same terms and invoked a dichotomy between freedom and slavery that was equally compelling, well before

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[22] Anslinger to Garland H. Williams, December 30, 1948, in Folder "(0660) Turkey Folder 3 (1940-1948)," Box 25, RG 170, NARA.

[23] Quoted in Henry Jordan, "How Italy's Government Lets Heroin Flood the U.S.," *Bluebook*, June 1955, Vol. 101, No. 2, available in Folder "(1690-10 B) Bluebook Magazine," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[24] Harry J. Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946. Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[25] Copies of the Truman Doctrine and NSC-68 are both widely available and can be found on-line through the Truman Presidential Library at: http://www.trumanlibrary.org/ (accessed December 31, 2012).

the Cold War had become a reality. "We must realize that a terrifying responsibility confronts the human race in battling the awful tyranny of drug addiction," Anslinger claimed in a 1936 broadcast.[26]

Anslinger began to describe opium as "an effective and subtle tool of war" as early as the mid-1930s. This was not mere bureaucratic opportunism; the Commissioner viewed heroin as a profound threat to the American people and later warned, "narcotic drugs have killed probably more people throughout the world than the hydrogen bomb will ever kill." The Bureau was, however, quick to conflate the dangers of communism and drug trafficking, and with the onset of the Cold War, Anslinger warned that Communists might "make narcotics a new 'sixth' column to weaken and destroy selected targets in the drive for world domination," including the United States. Mao's China received particular opprobrium as the "dope-vending dragon of the East," and the Bureau spent a great deal of energy trying to prove that Red China was behind the Pacific heroin trade.[27] Despite its best efforts, however, the Bureau never uncovered a genuine ideological motivation for drug trafficking.

While much of this rhetoric was the clear product of Cold War politics and China's specific history of opium use, the ideology that informed both containment and drug control went further than comparatively transient geopolitics and rested on much deeper assumptions about the ability of the U.S. to dictate world events. As with communism, the Bureau identified "bad economic and social conditions" as "seed-beds for addiction."[28] Modernization and a high standard of living were seen as ways to inoculate against both radicalism and drug abuse. Drug control and security officials both focused on the subversive aspects of communism and addiction, describing them epidemiologically as contagions that would spread if left unchecked.[29] Anslinger frequently cited a (rather dated) 1921 report from the

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[26] See Harry J. Anslinger, "The Need for Narcotic Education" (NBC broadcast), February 24, 1936, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[27] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 8; see Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 226, 295; Anslinger, "Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics," May 29, 1957, in Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. See also Jonathan Marshall, "Cooking the Books: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and Cold War Propaganda, 1950-1962," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 11, Issue 37, No. 1, September 2013.

[28] "International Control of Narcotic Drugs by the Information Service of the European Office of the United Nations," *The Union Signal*, June 25, 1960, Folder 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[29] Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011); Daniel Weimer, *Seeing Drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and U.S. Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969-1976* (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2011).

American Medical Association that depicted the spread of addiction as akin to a "rotten apple in a barrel of sounds ones." When Dean Acheson tried to scare up support for the Truman Doctrine, he used the same analogy and warned the "corruption" of a Communist Greece would "carry infection" throughout the region, just like "apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one."[30]

This logic reemerged as the "domino theory" in Vietnam and it was the same logic the Bureau applied to crime and addiction. Complaining of the effect Corsican traffickers were having on the United States, one official urged Anslinger to warn the French, "The fester of these narcotic-financed criminal organizations has infected other nations." Anslinger was in total accord. "Prevention here is worth a million times the cure," he argued in his 1964 book *The Protectors*. "Our view is that prevention *is* the cure"—an argument that, when surveying the damage wrought by the American drug war, is not too far removed from the infamous Vietnam-era lament, "We had to destroy the village in order to save it."[31]

Just as NSC-68 globalized American national security by describing a "defeat of free institutions anywhere" as a "defeat everywhere," by the late 1940s and early 1950s the Bureau had translated the geographic reach of the drug traffic and moral obligation of drug control into demands for international cooperation and, ultimately, claims on a kind of universal jurisdiction. Witness Anslinger's progression over the years. In 1936, the Commissioner explained, "the narcotic evil is never wholly national in its incidence, and can never be solved by one nation alone…"[32] On the eve of World War II, he informed a gathering of police chiefs that international partnerships allowed the FBN to "reach around the world."[33] As the Bureau began to publicize its foreign efforts in 1948, Anslinger made his bold claim that the FBN

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[30] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 192. For Acheson quote, see Douglas T. Stuart, *Creating the National Security State: A History of the Law That Transformed America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 187; Frank Ninkovich, *Modernity and Power: A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), xvii.

[31] Letter from Wayland Speer to Anslinger, January 10, 1961, in Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170, NARA. On the damage of the drug war, see Arthur Benavie, *Drugs: America's Holy War* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), 223; Steven B. Duke and Albert C. Gross, eds., *America's Longest War: Rethinking Our Tragic Crusade Against Drugs* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1993); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

[32] Quoted from Ansligner's remarks to an April 13, 1936 luncheon hosted by the World Narcotic Defense Association, in Folder 7, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[33] Anslinger, address to the Convention of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, September 12, 1940," in Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

would not be bound by international borders or national sovereignty.[34] By mid-century, Anslinger was using explicitly moral arguments to bludgeon countries that balked in following America's lead. "If drug addiction is an evil habit—and who will say that it is not," he challenged, "it should be rooted out and destroyed."[35] In a telling passage from his 1961 book *The Murderers*, the Commissioner mused:

> Evil is of one cloth whether in Shanghai or Istanbul, the Middle Eastern deserts or the western plains. To me the change is only in coloration. The hole-in-the-wall barrooms of East Harlem become the adobe dives of Laredo, Jimenez or Tijuana; the night club circuits of Rome or Algiers become the chrome-plated gambling joints and fancy houses of Vegas, Reno, or Phoenix. Or Mexico City.

Note how easily he slid along the geography of the drug trade, deliberately conflating locations in the U.S. and abroad. Testimony to the scope of FBN operations, an exasperated "Lucky" Luciano, one of the Bureau's frequent antagonists, once complained, "That son of a bitch Asslinger, you cannot tell where any of his men are going to pop up. When Russia lands a man on the moon one of Asslinger's narcotic boys will be there to search him." Anslinger wore Luciano's animosity like a badge of honor, but because the dope menace was a global threat and deadly serious, he argued, "We need a cop at the crossroads of the world. We need the fellow with the nightstick to root out the rats, to blow the whistle on evil."[36] That cop, of course, was the United States.

Drugs, Security and Empire in American History

Debates over the existence and nature of an American empire have preoccupied many historians and took on even greater importance during the Cold War. Though it may be too crude a formulation, the basic schools of interpretation on the Cold War essentially boil down to three camps: orthodox, revisionist and realist. Orthodox historians tend to focus on the imminent danger presented by the Soviet Union and emphasize the democratic nature of the American-led alliance system. In their accounts, the array of state institutions dedicated to intelligence, espionage and military force—what we have come to know as the national security state—was built primarily as a *reaction* to external events. Soviet ideology and communist plots presented an existential threat to the American way of life (as Cold Warriors saw it,

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[34] See Anslinger remarks in Jay Richard Kennedy, "One World—Against Dope," *The Sunday Star: This Week Magazine*, March 7, 1948, Folder 13, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[35] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 295.

[36] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 201, 296. Luciano is quoted in a report by Sal Vizzini dated September 30, 1959, in Folder 8, Box 2, Anslinger Papers, and in Drew Pearson, "Luciano Left Trail of Confession," *Washington Post*, March 15, 1962.

freedom *everywhere* was at risk), necessitating the creation of institutions, policies and practices (like a standing peacetime army) that marked a sharp break with American tradition. As Anna Nelson once argued, "The national security state was created by the Cold War…"[37]

Revisionist historians, on the other hand, tend to emphasize U.S. economic interests. It was not democracy, they contend, but the global capitalist system that was endangered by the USSR. Many doubt the Soviet Union presented an existential threat, and point instead to the overwhelming preponderance of American power immediately following WWII. Moreover, despite its revolutionary heritage and anti-colonial sentiment, many revisionists argue, the United States has always had imperial aims and, with few remaining challengers, the postwar era presented the perfect environment in which to pursue them. Revisionist historians differ on the reach, character and chronology of that empire, but few dispute the basic notion of its existence.[38]

Realists, many of whom are political scientists by trade, also accept the idea of American empire but argue that focusing on ideological conflicts and political culture is misleading. Both the Soviet Union and the United States acted as great powers always have: taking specific actions to safeguard identifiable national interests, stabilizing the international system and trying to protect or extend their respective spheres of influence.[39]

In reality, few modern Cold War studies fit cleanly into any one category and each camp has come to accept and appreciate the insights offered by opposing schools of thought, giving rise to a fourth branch of "post-revisionist" scholarship that tries to strike a balanced account while utilizing new

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[37] John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking the Cold War* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998). See also Anna Kasten Nelson, "The Evolution of the National Security State: Ubiquitous and Endless," in Andrew J. Bacevich, ed., *The Long War: A New History of U.S. National Security Policy Since World War II* (Columbia University Press, 2009), 265-304.

[38] William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 1972nd ed. (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1959); William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life: An Essay on the Causes and Character of America's Present Predicament Along with a Few Thoughts About an Alternative*, Revised (Brooklyn, NY: Ig Publishing, 2007); Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War 1945-2006*, 10th ed. (McGraw-Hill, 2006); Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).

[39] John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Revised (W.W. Norton & Co., 2003); Norman A. Graebner, Richard Dean Burns, and Joseph M. Siracusa, *America and the Cold War: A Realist Interpretation* (Praeger, 2010).

documents and records. *Toiling in the Vineyards* wades directly into this fray and uses the story of the FBN to demonstrate that federal drug control contributed to both the operational and ideological construction of the national security state. At the operational level, narcotics agents possessed unique skills that became valuable when the United States (re)discovered the need for an espionage capability during WWII and thereafter. Of more lasting importance, however, is the FBN's contribution to national security ideology. These early drug warriors were among the first to recognize that globalization in the early twentieth century had ushered in a new era of interdependence and fundamentally changed the global threat environment. The actions of heroin users in New York City now linked American prosperity to the crops raised by peasant farmers in Turkey or the contraband smuggled by Corsican gangs.

This requires not a redefinition, but a more nuanced understanding of what we mean by "national security" and "national security policy." *Toiling in the Vineyards* embraces the definition offered by Melvyn Leffler, who argues that national security protects "domestic core values from external threats." In the twentieth century, "core values" were threatened not just hydrogen bombs, but by subversion. Few phenomena were seen as more subversive than rampant drug addiction, particularly at a time when popular portrayals of organized crime and drug use were cast in terms of ethnic conflict and social decay. Post-war anxiety over drug use blended seamlessly with the rhetoric of anticommunism as intrinsically domestic problems like drug use and crime were incorporated into the context of the Cold War; how could the U.S. lead the free world if it was saddled with addiction and drug-fueled crime waves? The novelty of Leffler's formulation is that he's talking about *values*. There is no mention of *interests* (like oil or geopolitics) or even *people*. Instead, Leffler shifts the emphasis from the comparatively simple study of actual security strategy to the far more tricky identification of discrete values and to whom they belong. "To determine core values," he suggests, "historians must identify key groups, agencies and individuals, examine their goals and ideas and analyze how trade-offs are made."[40] In this process of negotiation, culture is often the final arbiter and the background against which exchanges are made. In *The Myth of*

[40] Melvyn P. Leffler, "National Security," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 126. Leffler's stated goal is to bridge "some of the great divides" in U.S. diplomatic history and he elaborates, "Core values usually *fuse* material self-interest with more fundamental goals like the defense of the state's organizing ideology, such as liberal capitalism, the protection of its political institutions, and the safeguarding of its physical base or territorial integrity."

American Diplomacy, Walter Hixson argues, "If achieving security implies defense of core values, protecting 'our way of life,' then culture becomes foundational."[41] As the history of the Bureau of Narcotics should make clear, both drugs and drug agents helped shape the culture of security.

This approach is explicitly constructionist and holds that all perceptions are inextricably rooted within specific social and cultural contexts. Rather than objectively measurable phenomena, concepts like power, national interest and threats are all socially constructed. They do not exist independently of the society in which they are perceived and are given their distinctive forms only by the actors who envision them.[42] Understood as a socially constructed paradigm, national security is a conceptual framework that emerges not solely in response to outside threats (the Soviet Union), but out of American economic, cultural and domestic institutions. National security a prism through which policymakers view the world. Historian Ronald Steel contends it would be more accurate to think of it as "an attitude, not a policy."[43] For better or worse, drugs and the threat of drug addiction helped shape this worldview.

This argument builds on a rich historiography of "inside-out" interpretations that emphasize the influence of domestic politics and culture on American foreign relations. Focused on domestic currents, historians like Michael Hunt and William Walker find the emergence of a "security ethos" and abandonment of earlier republican models of government for a strong national state capable of projecting American influence occurs much earlier than the Cold War or even WWII.[44] Scholars as diverse as Richard Hofstadter, Robert Dallek, Kristin Hoganson, Walter Hixson, Campbell Craig and Frederik Logevall all find a marked American tendency to inject domestic concerns into international situations. Dallek believes this trend distinctive enough to brand it an "American style," and argues that in the United States foreign policy is often "a product of emotional displacement, of the impulse to make overseas

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[41] Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 4.

[42] This trend is explained well in the opening pages of Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). See also Stephen M. Walt, "The Renaissance of Security Studies," *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (June 1991): 211–239; Edward A. Kolodziej, "Renaissance in Security Studies? Caveat Lector!," *International Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (December 1992): 421–438.

[43] Ronald Steel, "A New Realism," *World Policy Journal* (Summer 1997): 3.

[44] Michael H. Hunt, *The American Ascendancy: How the United States Gained and Wielded Global Dominance* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007); William O. Walker III, *National Security and Core Values in American History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

affairs a vehicle for expressing unresolved internal tensions."[45] Such an approach is well-suited to examine the U.S. campaign for global drug control; to preserve a unified culture and free American society of drugs, the world itself had to be brought into line with American goals and assumptions—*a foreign solution to a domestic problem*.

These findings challenge nearly all camps of Cold War historiography. To those who portray the United States as a reluctant hegemon, the FBN demonstrates a pro-active and outwardly reaching state. To critics who depict policymakers' frequent invocation of national security as a cynical cover for imperial designs, the FBN demonstrates that while appeals to national security were elastic and perhaps abused, they were sincere.[46] And to those who portray the United States as coolly rational and interested mainly in power relationships and geopolitics, the FBN demonstrates the remarkable and sometimes unpredictable influence of culture on foreign policy.

The "New Drug History"

In using the FBN and genesis of the drug war to examine the murky intersection of law enforcement, national security and foreign policy, *Toiling in the Vineyards* also contributes to a growing field that historian Paul Gootenberg, the author of *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (2008), terms "a new drug history." He contends this field emerged in the 1990s, as "trained historians began to displace medical amateurs and muckraking journalists in the search for new historical data and more rigorous interpretations of drugs, drug usage and drug control regimes."[47] Strongly interdisciplinary, the new drug history draws insights and methodologies from biology, medicine, sociology, economics, political science, international relations and so on, for just as the drug trade and drug use seem to touch on all aspects of human society, so too can its history. In *Drugs and Security in the Caribbean* (1997), political scientist Ivelaw Griffith describes how drug control efforts "need to be multidimensional because

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[45] Robert Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), xii–xiii .

[46] Looking back from a Third World perspective, Noam Chomsky argues, "the appeal to security was largely fraudulent," little more than "a devise to justify the suppression of independent nationalism," and questions whether security was ever "a genuine factor in policy formation." Noam Chomsky, *World Orders, Old and New* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 31-2. See also Chalmers Johnson, *Dismantling the Empire: America's Last Best Hope* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010).

[47] Paul Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 3.

drug operations and their impact are multidimensional; they need to be multilevel—national, regional and international—because drug operations and many of the problems they precipitate are both national and transnational; and they have to be multiactor..."[48] What is true of drug control must also be true of the *history* of drug control, which should be nuanced in precisely the same manner, ranging across both vertical and horizontal levels of analysis.

There are several edited collections that serve to acquaint readers with the new drug history. *Drug Control Policy: Essays in Historical & Comparative Perspective* (1992), edited by William O. Walker III, illustrates the different ways the state has responded to the challenge of drugs. *Cocaine: Global Histories* (1999), edited by Paul Gootenberg, showcases the influence of drugs in transnational settings. More recently, *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol and Drug Use in the United States* (2004), edited by Sarah Tracey and Caroline Acker, shows how the field is expanding the concept of "drugs" to include the history of alcohol and tobacco.[49] When I began researching this topic in 2009, the new drug history seemed like an exciting but relatively small subfield. Over the last few years, however, the pace of scholarly output has picked up tremendously as scholars approach the historical problems associated with drugs with a variety of new interests and methodologies and place the field on increasingly firm empirical ground.

In *Cocaine: Global Histories*, Gootenberg points out that studies in the new drug history tend to fall into one of two categories: *drug histories* or *drugs in history*. Both offer important insights. Drug histories tend to focus on the drugs themselves as, Gootenberg suggests, "active historical agents, transforming of their own social sets and settings."[50] Many drug histories point out that the relationship between psychoactive plants and human society reaches into antiquity. Even former narcotics agents

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[48] Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, *Drugs and Security in the Caribbean: Sovereignty Under Siege* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 197–8.

[49] William O. Walker III, ed., *Drug Control Policy: Essays in Historical & Comparative Perspective* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992); Paul Gootenberg, ed., *Cocaine: Global Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Sarah Tracy and Caroline Jean Acker, eds., *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol and Drug Use in the United States* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004).

[50] Paul Gootenberg, ed., *Cocaine: Global Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 7, 13.

acknowledge the medical use of opiates dates back to Hippocrates.[51] Ancient religions made liberal ceremonial use of psychoactive plants and fungi, and literary figures as diverse as Homer, Shakespeare and Poe relate similar use of drugs to sooth melancholy and banish pain. Many of the founding fathers cultivated the fibrous hemp plant and may have occasionally indulged a toke.[52] Two wars were fought by the British for the right to sell opium to the Chinese, a trade that underwrote the development of the British Empire. Indeed, as Carl Trocki argues in *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy* (1999), "without the drug trade, there probably would have been no British Empire."[53] In *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World* (2001), David Courtwright confirms that the overseas trade in mind-altering substances played a formative role in the age of European imperialism, as grapevines, coffee beans, tobacco and coca leaves, marijuana and poppy plants all crossed the ocean—a transformation that was simultaneously political, social, cultural, ecological and commercial. Courtwright calls this "the psychoactive revolution" and "one of the signal events in world history.[54] Indeed, when we step back from the word "drugs," the diversity and scope of the global trade in mind-altering substances is astounding.

A perennial task in this vein is untangling America's (some would say hopelessly) conflicted relationship with drugs. In *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control* (1999), a ground-breaking book first published in 1973, David F. Musto observes that America has a cyclical relationship with drugs, in which the public responds to new mind-altering substances with enthusiasm, followed by caution and

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[51] James H. Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory* (New York, Washington and Hollywood: Vantage Press, 1972), 13; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 22–3.

[52] Type "Did George Washington..." into Google and one of your results is sure to be: "smoke weed?" The answer is decidedly inconclusive, but, as a number of sites point out, Washington left detailed agricultural journals that confirm he cultivated "the Indian hemp plant" and mention separating the "female" and "male" plants—a process that stimulates the growth of the female "bud" and increases THC content. This step is unnecessary if the plant is being harvested solely for fibers used in cordage and textile. For one example, see Harvey Wasserman, "Did George Washington Smoke Pot?," *Counterpunch*, February 16, 2009.

[53] Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy*, xiii.

[54] David T. Courtwright, in *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2001): 2. Courtwright, like many scholars of the new drug history, ultimately questions why some drugs came to be accepted while others became taboo and concludes that profit margins were generally the final arbiter of which drugs would find social acceptance. Coffee, for instance, was profitable, whereas "quat" or "khat," an African shrub with mild stimulant properties, was ill suited for trade or overseas commerce.

prohibition, and then back to tolerance.[55] From stark racial disparities in sentencing between crack and cocaine, an exploding prison population, debates over medical marijuana, the doping of children and emergence of a "Ritalin Nation," the upward trajectory of anti-depressant prescriptions, and an ever-increasing legal drug market catering to erectile dysfunction, restless leg syndrome and everything in between, it's clear that American society has complicated feelings on the subject.

Peering into the conflicted American response, observers like Richard DeGrandpre contend, "an ideology of angels and demons underlies America's troubled policies regarding prescription drug, street drugs, and store drugs." Where did this ideology come from? Scholars in the new drug history are driven by the belief that only careful historical analysis can tell. In *Andean Cocaine*, Gootenberg argues, "The unstable cultural boundaries between legal drugs (tobacco, alcohol) and illegal ones (cannabis, opiates), or between healing medicines and recreational ones (in the age of Prozac and Viagra), has compelled scholars to ask rigorously how such boundaries or categories were created and fixed in the first place." In *The Cult of Pharmacology: How America Became the World's Most Troubled Drug Culture* (2006), DeGrandpre (a Ph.D. in Pharmacology) reaches similar conclusions. The history of drug control, he argues, shows that "drug prohibitions were really more about the management and control of the body and the behavior of the masses than about total negation." A conflicted past has created a conflicted present when it comes to modern prohibitions, resulting in differential treatment based on race or ethnicity, social background and class distinctions.[56]

With so many loaded questions, the new drug history has proven particularly fertile ground for social historians, who typically focus on the experience of the addict, law enforcement and public health officials, and the role drug use plays in both popular and counter cultures. David Courtwright has been a major influence here, and his books *Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America before 1940* (1982) and *Addicts Who Survived: An Oral History of Narcotic Use in America, 1923-1965* (1989) remain among the best on the subject of drug use in America. *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1900-1980* (1981), by H.

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[55] David F. Musto, MD, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control*, 3rd ed. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[56] Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine*, 3. DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology*, 235, 241. He elaborates: "To facilitate this cultural distinction [between good and bad drugs], drug laws were written and enforced to maintain the double standards of differential prohibition: on the one hand there existed regrettable drug misuse of prescription drugs, which called only for treatment, while on the other hand there was criminal drug abuse, which called first and foremost for punishment." (172).

Wayne Morgan, provides an excellent survey of American drug use and, in the present context, makes an important contribution by showing that "Americans have opposed and feared drug experiences because they seemed to threaten a generally accepted set of values and aspirations that dated from the beginning of the national experience."[57]

A major challenge has been sorting out the causality of drug use and prohibition. As Gootenberg notes above, drug histories often treat drugs as agents of historical change, a seemingly fraught argument but one that offers important insights. In *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's Eye View of the World* (2009), journalist and food writer Michael Pollan acknowledges that humans are accustomed to thinking that we act on plants; causality flows from us to them. But, Pollan counters, if we "take seriously the plant's point of view," the inversion reveals that "we're prone to overestimate our own agency in nature . . . Our desires are simply grist for evolution's mill." The implications of this argument are manifold. On the plant side, Pollan points out how marijuana prohibition provided a dramatic evolutionary spur; moving plants indoors to evade detection has led to the cultivation of ever more potent and particularized strains and "Cannabis has thrived on its taboo the way another plant might thrive in a particularly acid soil," he writes. On the human side, Pollan argues that plants with psychoactive properties have "the power to alter mental constructs" like time and perception, and he points to breakthroughs in music, poetry, philosophy and art as evidence that drugs may serve as a "cultural mutagen," capable of intoxication, but also of transforming cultural memes.[58] Scholars focusing on the link between drugs and crime, however, have been less adulatory and often identify drugs as the primary cause of many crimes, a view that was endorsed by the Bureau with few exceptions.[59]

"Drugs as historical agents" is an interesting and, in the hands of writers like Pollan, compelling argument. This framework essentially turns Courtwright's psychoactive revolution on its head and Pollan

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[57] David T. Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America before 1940* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1982); David Courtwright, Herman Joseph, and Don Des Jarlais, eds., *Addicts Who Survived: An Oral History of Narcotic Use in America, 1923-1965* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989); H. Wayne Morgan, *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1800-1980* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981), xi.

[58] Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's Eye View of the World* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2002) xvii–xiv, 134, 149.

[59] See, for instance, Jill Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams: A History of America's Romance with Illegal Drugs* (New York: Scribner, 1996) which largely accepts the causal link between drugs and crime.

would argue that plants evolved specifically to appeal to humans, thus encouraging their migration via human transoceanic trade. In the case of the Bureau, I describe the attribution of causality to drugs as narcotic determinism. DeGrandpre describes this kind of logic as a product of what he describes as *pharmacological mysticism*, "an ideological system rooted in a set of assumptions that, although false or exaggerated, govern a whole range of perceptions, understandings, and actions" with regard to drugs. In the twentieth century, he argues, this ideology was "transplanted from the realms of religion and mysticism to the kingdom of science," and dragged a whole host of assumptions with it, many of them centered on the nature of the drug, rather than the user.[60]

Most social historians are careful to avoid deterministic arguments, looking instead for the historical processes that have shaped perceptions of drugs and drug users. Alan Block, a pioneer in the study of drugs and organized crime, argues that crime in general is a poorly understood but vital part of social history.[61] As Gootenberg likewise points out, the criminality of certain drugs is the product of historical processes. "The line between today's licit and socially ingrained drugs and taboo ones are historically drawn," he argues.[62] Studies by H. Wayne Morgan, David Courtwright, Caroline Acker, Jill Jonnes and Susan Speaker all similarly reveal the social construction of shared cultural images of drugs and drug users.[63]

In contrast to "drug histories" are works characterized as "*drugs in history*." Scholars of the new drug history have increasingly turned to the global trade in narcotics and efforts to control it to explicate the underside of globalization and twentieth century politics, culture and foreign policy. The geographic, social and political reach of drugs offer historians a unique window into the past. But this expanding field is not limited to the recent history, and, as Gootenberg argues, "is altering perceptions of drugs and of our possible present and future relationships to them, and . . . making notable contributions to European,

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[60] DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology*, 27.

[61] Alan A. Block, *Perspectives on Organizing Crime: Essays in Opposition* (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991).

[62] Gootenberg, *Cocaine: Global Histories*, 7.

[63] Morgan, *Drugs in America*; Acker, *Creating the American Junkie*; Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*; Courtwright, *Dark Paradise*; Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams*. See also Susan L. Speaker, "'The Struggle of Mankind Against Its Deadliest Foe': Themes of Counter-Subversion in Anti-Narcotic Campaigns, 1920-1940," *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 3 (Spring 2001): 591–610.

Asian and American history, in which drugs have played a notable and long-overlooked role."[64] Ethan Nadelmann, author of *Cops Across Borders* (1994), elaborates that while incorporating the story of drugs into related subjects—in Nadelmann's case, the expansion of international law enforcement—historians "tend to emphasize complexity and nuance: causal relationships become cloudier; political motivations become more complicated; and drug-use patterns more diverse and interesting."[65]

America's history with drugs and policing have been particularly useful in demonstrating the growth of state power. In *Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America* (2013), Peter Andreas argues that smuggled drugs, alcohol, people and technology have "made and remade America" and given birth to a "policing superpower." Smuggling, he concludes, "has been as much about building up the American state as about subverting it."[66] This is a somewhat counterintuitive argument to the uninitiated, but it also helps us understand how drug control and anxiety over American addiction enlarged the scope of the security state. As Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith argues, "the drug phenomenon has an impact not only on things military but also on things political, economic and social—on security in the nontraditional sense."[67] As the history of the FBN shows, the biggest impacts have been in the realm of policing and ideology.

Put another way, drugs help us understand some of the connections between law enforcement and national security. At times, however, the relationship has acquired a rather sinister air. In *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Heroin Trade* (rv. 2003), Alfred McCoy charts how the CIA allowed assets in several parts of the world to participate in the drug traffic in order to fund covert regional anticommunist operations. This is a hugely important book in the historiography of drugs, and when McCoy's findings were first published in 1979, they earned him a Congressional subpoena.[68] The book also helped bring legitimacy to a critique of U.S. foreign policy that is often derided as mere conspiracy theory—sometimes deservedly, sometimes not. One of the best examples is Gary Webb's *Dark Alliance:*

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[64] Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug*, 3–4.

[65] Ethan Nadelmann, "Forward" in *Cocaine: Global Histories*, Paul Gootenberg, ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1999): xi.

[66] Peter Andreas, *Smuggler Nation: How Illict Trade Made America* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), x–xi .

[67] Griffith, *Drugs and Security in the Caribbean*, 234–5.

[68] Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade*, Revised (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2003).

The CIA, the Contras, and the Crack Cocaine Explosion (1998). Initially published as a series of articles in the *San Jose Mercury News*, Webb's reporting traced the connections between CIA-backed contras in Nicaragua and Los Angeles drug dealers, prompting charges that the CIA was behind the crack epidemic plaguing American inner-cities during the 1980s.[69]

With the details of who knew what and when often difficult to pin down, other scholars of the "deep state" have focused on how drug control functions as a component of American security policy. Channeling Clausewitz, Jonathan Marshall argues, "the 'war on drugs' has become an extension of foreign policy by other means."[70] At times, drug control has served as a front for traditional foreign intelligence operations. At other times, drug control provided a compliment to modernization and counterinsurgency programs, a topic addressed in Daniel Weimer's *Seeing: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and U.S. Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969-1976* (2011).[71] This often took place in the form of police training and assistance, and in *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (2012), Jeremy Kuzmarov contends that "police training and financing have remained an unobserved constant" in the maintenance of American empire, and "were critical to securing the power base of local elites amendable to U.S. economic and political interests."[72] As *Toiling in the Vineyards* helps demonstrate, police cooperation in the realm of drug control has been an important component of American foreign policy for some time. Unpublished dissertations by Nathaniel Smith and Suzanna Reiss meanwhile document American advocacy for a punitive regime of

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[69] Gary Webb, *Dark Alliance: The CIA, the Contras, and the Crack Cocaine Explosion* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998); Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair, *Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs and the Press* (London and New York: Verso, 1998).

[70] Jonathan Marshall, *Drug Wars: Corruption, Counterinsurgency and Covert Operations in the Third World* (Forestville, CA: Cohan & Cohen Publishers, 1991), 11; Peter Dale Scott and Jonathan Marshall, *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies, and the CIA in Central America* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1991); Bruce Bullington and Alan Block, "A Trojan Horse: Anti-communism and the War on Drugs," *Contemporary Crises* 14, no. 1 (March 1990): 39–55; John C. McWilliams and Alan Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954," *Intelligence and National Security* 5, no. 1 (January 1990): 171–192.

[71] Weimer, *Seeing Drugs.*

[72] Jeremy Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), 1–2.

"special incarceration" for drug users in other countries and how American pharmaceutical profits helped drive the international control regime as it developed over the course of the twentieth century.[73]

The FBI receives quite a bit of attention and is typically accepted as part of the national security state, but the history of the Bureau should expand our understanding of how policing interacts with security. Few would challenge the assertion that police authority is absolutely central to the structure of the modern nation-state, but as Alfred McCoy points out in *Policing America's Empire: The United States, The Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (2009), a relative paucity of records has rendered law enforcement an overlooked aspect of American security policy and left historians to grapple with—and all too often speculate on—what he describes as the state's "profane margins: systemic violence, institutional corruption, extralegal security apparatus, and, most important, syndicated violence." The result, he continues, is that "society's shadowy interstices and those who inhabit them often remain obscure."[74] For nearly half of the twentieth century, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics occupied a central place in these "shadowy interstices" and its history has also remained obscure. Thomas Reppetto, a historian of American law enforcement and former Chicago detective, argues the "prime task" for police forces at both the local and national level "is to express the moral values of the society the police force serves," making contests over police authority a crucial forum for the historical expression of American values and identity.[75]

This discussion begs the question: what is the relationship or distance between a national security state and a police state? The line separating the two can sometimes appear rather thin. In *Chasing Dragons* (2008), a history of Canada's response to drugs, Kyle Grayson addresses the fine line between "criminalization" (an inwardly-oriented process) and "securitization" (an outwardly-oriented process). Both, he finds, rest upon "the same conceptual foundations." Each "requires the identification

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[73] Nathaniel Lee Smith, "'Cured of the Habit By Force': The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970" (Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007); Suzanna J. Reiss, "Policing for Profit: United States Imperialism and the International Drug Economy" (Dissertation, New York University, 2005).

[74] Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, The Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 12.

[75] "...creation of the police, like that of the civil bureaucracy," Reppetto continues, should be seen "as an inevitable product of the modern industrial state. Both provide for the orderly administration of affairs but do not in themselves guarantee the perpetuation of a particular elite." Thomas A. Reppetto, *The Blue Parade* (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 17.

of existential threats that must be confronted (e.g., drug dealers); requires emergency actions (e.g., increased surveillance, police raids); and affects interagent relations by breaking free of existing rules of behaviour (e.g., asset forfeiture, violence, or imprisonment) that establish the boundaries of legitimate state encroachment in society..."[76] The short answer is that a national security state is outward looking, designed to intercept external threats; a police state is inward looking, designed to meet internal threats to regimes that are typically authoritarian in nature. This does not suggest that the United States is or has been a police state, but with both an inward and outward gaze, an agency like the FBN and other law enforcement agencies with foreign policy responsibilities could well be the distance between the two. Anslinger was acutely aware that his agency could be seen in such a light and took pains to avoid the appearance of a Gestapo or secret police.[77]

While the FBN's specific role in American security and foreign policy remains understudied, a number of scholars have examined the role of drug control in American foreign policy more generally. William Walker argues that the failure to consider cultural differences and conflicts has historically hindered American plans for international control.[78] Arnold Taylor's *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Traffic, 1900-1939* (1969) is often cited as a pioneering work in the field and emphasizes the harmony between American humanitarian, moral and economic interests in the establishment of an international control regime, particularly with respect to U.S. commercial interests in China.[79] William McAllister updates this kind of systematic and exhaustive diplomatic history, but finds international attempts at drug control consistently stymied by conflicts of interest.[80]

In the end, one of the most promising aspects of the new drug history is the insight it offers into the process of globalization. McCoy observes, "The global drug traffic is, in fact, a vast commodities

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[76] Kyle Grayson, *Chasing Dragons: Security, Identity, and Illicit Drugs in Canada* (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 42–43. He continues: "...criminalization can be viewed as a *covert* form of securitization in that it *does* securitize an issue, but it does this by directly appealing to legal principles so as to try to mask the securitization and to occlude the powers vested in the securing agent, which is permitted to respond in ways that would otherwise be considered illegitimate."

[77] "Our staff, in order to avoid accusations of being like the Gestapo, has remained the same size as it was when the Bureau was established," Anslinger writes (Gregory) in *The Protectors*, 140.

[78] Walker, *Drug Control in the Americas*; *Opium and Foreign* Policy; and *Drug Control Policy: Essays in Historical & Comparative Perspective.*

[79] Taylor, *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Traffic*, 26.

[80] McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*.

trade linking First World and Third in a complex commerce that interpenetrates every aspect of contemporary society."[81] Both Gootenberg and Reiss similarly uses the licit and illicit traffic in coca and cocaine to situate the South American cocaine trade in a global system of commodity production. These frameworks infer an inherent foreign-relations component in both the traditional sense of state-to-state relations (control and legal trade) as well as non-state transnational exchanges (culture and the black market). Though in hindsight, we may find much to criticize in the record of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, these insights were lost on agents who immediately recognized that the illicit drug trade linked critical actors in disparate geographic locations. As the Bureau expanded the reach of its global operations, it became an influential voice calling attention to the way globalization had fundamentally altered the kinds of threats facing the American people and the American way of life.

Although the Bureau wielded an outsized influence on American life, it lacks a strong monograph to document that influence. The most authoritative treatment to date is *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962* (1990) by John C. McWilliams, a top-down history of the Bureau focused largely on Anslinger and based almost entirely on his personal papers. *The Strength of the Wolf: The Secret History of America's War on Drugs* (2004), by journalist Douglas Valentine, is a more recent and comprehensive treatment, which is based on an impressive number of interviews with former agents but offers lacks a firm grounding in the documentary record and makes a number of dubious claims.[82] Most recently Kathryn Frydl makes use of FBN sources in *The Drug Wars in America, 1940-1970* (2013), which looks at the structural and policy basis of drug control. One of the strengths and most important contributions of *Toiling in the Vineyards* to contemporary scholarship is its foundation in the actual records of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, held at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, Maryland—many of which were only recently made available or declassified in the course of this project.

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[81] McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin*, 455.

[82] John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990); Douglas Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf: The Secret History of America's War on Drugs* (London and New York: Verso, 2004). Valentine's materials for this and *The Strength of the Pack: The Personalities, Politics, and Espionage Intrigues that Shaped the DEA* (Waltersville, OR: Trine Day LLC, 2008) are now held at the National Security Archives at George Washington University. Some of these materials, particularly Valentine's correspondence with various former agents as well as documents are other related material are used throughout the dissertation and are referenced accordingly.

A few additional monographs reveal fragments of the FBN's history. William McAllister dips into FBN and Treasury Department records in *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (2000), but focuses mainly on Anslinger's role as the nation's top drug diplomat. In both *Drug Control in the Americas* (1989) and *Opium and Foreign Policy* (1991), William O. Walker III reveals a number of U.S. foreign policy projects orchestrated by Anslinger. In *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams* (1996), journalist and historian Jill Jonnes includes the FBN within a broader social history of drug use and the American counterculture. She portrays the Bureau as incompetent, corrupt and (not so) indirectly responsible for several twentieth century drug epidemics. Lee Bernstein is interested in depictions of the link between ethnicity and organized crime and makes some use of FBN files on the Mafia in *The Greatest Menace* (2002). In *Andean Cocaine* (2008), Paul Gootenberg documents how the public-private partnership between Coca-Cola and the FBN protected the soft drink company's global markets and monopoly on the mysterious coca extract at the heart of Coca-Cola's secret recipe. Anslinger also makes brief appearances in Courtwright's *Addicts Who Survived* (1989) and Morgan's *Drugs in America* (1981).

Despite the dearth of monographs, a number of article-length treatments of the Bureau exist and can be roughly divided into two groups: those focusing on the FBN as adjunct to the intelligence community and those focusing on the bureaucratic acumen of Anslinger. In addition to McWilliams, historians William Walker and Douglas Clark Kinder have examined Anslinger's remarkable career as a bureaucratic survivalist.[83] In a 1990 article published in the journal *Intelligence and National Security*, John C. McWilliams and Alan Block complain that writers interested in the history of the drug control "have consistently overlooked crucial evidence indicating a clandestine side to the FBN," including "operations designed to carry out counter-espionage and special intelligence missions first for military intelligence and later the CIA." Historians McWilliams, Block and Bruce Bullington have thus focused on the FBN's overlap with the developing national security state and note that several "doubled as spies and counter-intelligence officers" while participating in "some of the most repellent practices from drug

[83] Douglas Clark Kinder and William O. Walker III, "Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962," *The Journal of American History* 72, no. 4 (March 1986): 908–927; Douglas Clark Kinder, "Bureaucratic Cold Warrior: Harry J. Anslinger and Illicit Narcotics Traffic," *The Pacific Historical Review* 50, no. 2 (May 1981): 169–191.

experimentation to political assassinations."[84] It is true that in their work as federal narcotic agents, men like George White developed a highly specialized set of talents—what CIA operative Lucien Conein once termed "the clandestine arts." Block and Bullington argue the FBN actually "functioned as a counterintelligence unit, attached to the CIA and, at times, the Army."[85] Indeed as Block and McWilliams elsewhere contend, during the interwar period the FBN functioned as "a secret arm of the intelligence community" and a "prototype" or "missing antecedent" for the espionage, intelligence and counterintelligence programs built during and after WWII.[86] As deans of the OSS training schools, FBN agents undoubtedly left some stamp on future generations of intelligence operatives and officials. In short, these authors conclude, "The FBN had an unmistakable impact on the operational aspects of foreign affairs and perhaps the formation of foreign policy far greater than previously thought."[87]

These authors have contributed real and valuable insights into the function and history of the Bureau of Narcotics. *Toiling in the Vineyards* takes their analysis a few steps further, making a concerted effort to move beyond both conspiracy theory and the "cult of Anslinger" to demonstrate the very real impact of drug control on national security ideology. That FBN agents acted first as instructors and later as adjuncts to the security establishment demonstrates their operational influence—an important topic explored in the following pages. Ultimately, however, I argue that the real contribution and lasting legacy of the Bureau of Narcotics was in the realm of ideas and their portrayal of the "dope menace."

A few final words on terms and sources are in order. My usage and understanding of the term "national security" is detailed above, but some discussion is also needed to clarify my use of the term "drugs"—a word that carries lots of cultural baggage. DeGrandpre observes, "in its response to drugs, society has a tendency to load them with extraneous meaning—with myth." Grayson likewise notes that "illicit drugs have served as a focal point for discussions of health and sickness, normalcy and deviancy,

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[84] McWilliams and Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954," 171–173.

[85] Bullington and Block, "A Trojan Horse: Anti-communism and the War on Drugs," 43.

[86] Alan Block and John C. McWilliams, "On the Origins of American Counterintelligence: Building a Clandestine Network," *Journal of Policy History* 1, no. 4 (1989): 353.

[87] McWilliams and Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954," 173.

opportunity and threat, civilization and barbarity, tolerance and intolerance, progression and tradition."[88] As a result, any discussion of drugs tends to become highly charged and freighted with additional meanings, associations and implications. In this study, I use the term "drugs" synonymously with "narcotics," generally a psychoactive compound with sleep-inducing and analgesic (painkilling) properties. Most narcotics are derivatives of opium, which is harvested from the sap-bearing bulbs of the poppy plant; although both marijuana and cocaine (neither of which is a narcotic) both came under the purview of the FBN, heroin was the drug that most concerned federal narcotic agents. The historical process of building taboos, as well as the imprecision with which the term "drugs" is often used, has imparted a crushing pathological weight—one of the few successful legacies of prohibition. To expose the interplay between drugs and security to the light of history, it is necessary to move beyond these modern stigmas. But to simplify the text and reflect the way the term was used and understood by the relevant historical actors, I frequently use the general term "drugs" rather than specify "narcotics" or "narcotic drugs." As David Courtwright quips, "For all its baggage, the word has one great virtue. It is short."[89]

In terms of sources, this study relies primarily on the records of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics—a virtue in that these sources remain unexploited, but also a potential danger in only providing one "voice." Historian Michael Hunt warns, "While it might be simpler to study crises and other facets of foreign policy chiefly in terms of what Americans have thought and done, that approach is almost bound to miscarry by perpetuating distorted or over-simplified images of the other side."[90] Hunt is undoubtedly correct; multi-lingual and multi-archival international histories have become the gold standard for studies of American foreign relations and for good reason. Particularly when it comes to counternarcotics operations conducted on foreign soil, foreign-country sources would undoubtedly strengthen our understanding of international law enforcement. The scope and ambition of the U.S. global counternarcotics agenda, however, poses a significant challenge for subsequent historians and invites the incorporation of sources from European countries like France, Italy and Germany; Middle Eastern countries like Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt; East Asian countries like China, Japan, Burma,

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[88] DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology*, ix; Grayson, *Chasing Dragons*, xii

[89] Courtwright, *Forces of Habit*, 2.

[90] Michael Hunt, *Crises in U.S. Foreign Policy: An International History Reader* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 1.

Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and the Philippines; and Latin American countries like Mexico, Nicaragua, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia. Such a study, producing an accurate accounting of global drug control and law enforcement efforts, will require significant foreign archive research and will surely be a communal and on-going project for the "new drug historians."

The dilemma that animates this study, however, is fundamentally an American one. American society was where the consequences of drug abuse were felt and discourses about addiction, criminality and foreign threats emerged. If the goal is to study the American state and the beliefs surrounding drug addiction and national security, American sources should suffice. These, of course, must be treated with an appropriate degree of skepticism, for the gaze of the federal police officer produces a rather specific view. Another significant challenge in reproducing the history of any law enforcement program is the kind of sources that survive. While FBN records are rich with interactions between headquarters and the field and conflicts with other agencies, relatively few records of actual criminal investigations remain and many are classified due to privacy concerns. What proved plentiful, however, were memoirs, journalist accounts and true-crime stories—a category I describe as an early variant of the "infotainment" fare that remains popular today and also speaks directly to how successful the Bureau was in shaping popular understandings of drugs and drug control.

Even if readers remain skeptical about the influence that drug control had on American perceptions of national security or the value of pushing the drug war framework further into the past, the story of the FBN—and of District 17 in particular—still has broader relevance and reveals the mechanisms by which even faulty policies become self-reinforcing when their central premise goes unexamined. This history also tells us something of governmental processes and sheds light on the relationship between the state and its people, the interplay between culture and politics, and the manner in which the U.S. conducts itself on the world stage while negotiating the boundaries between law enforcement, security and diplomacy, as well as the conflicts between sovereignty, hegemony and extraterritoriality.

Chapter 1 provides an overview on the history of the Bureau and uses these infotainment accounts to demonstrate how the FBN shaped the threat of the dope menace, how that construct evolved over time and how drug control came to be cast as a drug war. The FBN's depiction of the dope menace

as a unique and transnational threat is critical to understanding the Bureau's contribution to the ideology of national security and how fears of American addiction justified a global police presence.

Chapter 2 focuses on Anslinger's role as the Commissioner of Narcotics and the influences that shaped his managerial style. Anslinger's ability to protect the Bureau from bureaucratic and ideological challenges was perhaps his greatest asset as Commissioner, but the way in which the Bureau defended its institutional prerogatives and silenced critics who advocated a public health response to drugs also played a determinative role in the evolution of American drug control policy.

Chapter 3 examines the career of Garland Williams, one of Anslinger's top lieutenants and an important figure in the history of both law enforcement and special operations, to examine the importance of undercover tactics in overcoming the unique challenges of drug enforcement. Tracing William's evolution from New York District Supervisor, to OSS instructor, to postwar State Department advisor illustrates some of the legacy and influence of the FBN's undercover ethos.

Chapter 4 charts the career of George Hunter White and highlights his role as a paragon of the Bureau's undercover ethos in a burgeoning true-crime literature. Tales of White's police adventures helped prepare the American public for the new roles and obligations required of the federal government in the increasingly complicated and dangerous world exemplified by the illicit drug trade. This chapter also uses White's involvement in the CIA's notorious MK-ULTRA program to reflect on the overlap between law enforcement, counterintelligence and national security.

Chapter 5 shifts the focus from the agents to their quarry and describes the FBN's pursuit of mob figure Charles "Lucky" Luciano while demonstrating the Bureau's decisive influence on popular perceptions of the Mafia and organized crime in America. At the same time, the Bureau's preoccupation with the Mafia and belief that organized crime formed the backbone of the global heroin trade also played a determinative influence on foreign operations and genesis of the foreign drug war.

Chapter 6 tells the story of the Bureau's first foreign office in Rome and subsequent expansion to Beirut, through the career of Agent Charles Siragusa, the first Supervisor of District 17. The challenges faced working on foreign soil profoundly influenced the way criminal investigations were carried out and provide telling insights into the conduct of American foreign policy and the conflicts between security, hegemony, diplomacy, sovereignty and law enforcement.

Chapter 7 continues the account of District 17 with the brief tenure of Jack Cusack, who supervised the Bureau's expansion into France and Turkey, but also faced new problems created by internal FBN rivalries. It also examines competition between the FBN and U.S. Customs, as both agencies sought entrance to Thailand, a country that had taken on crucial importance in the international drug traffic by the early 1960s. Building on the success of operations in District 17, the FBN prevailed in this bureaucratic competition and was rewarded with worldwide jurisdiction for American drug control efforts—a moment I identify as when America's foreign drug war went global.

Chapter 8 begins with the succession of Henry Giordano to the office of Commissioner following Anslinger's retirement and describes the period of transition between the Bureau's demise in 1968 and the start of Nixon's drug war, often credited at the official start of the "war on drugs." This chapter makes the case that there have actually been multiple drug wars and examines the ultimate legacy of the FBN in American history as well as its influence on the ideology of national security. The drug war has far greater longevity than even many of its critics appreciate, a stubbornness rooted in the way American policymakers think about role of the U.S. and the nature of threats in a globalized world.

As the foregoing preview indicates, I have approached the story of the FBN from a largely biographical framework. This was partly an organic development that reflected the strength of the many colorful I encountered and an effort to tell a compelling and readable story. But it's also an approach that raises useful questions about the nature of causality in history. The longevity of the drug war and the obstinacy of its essential paradigms speaks to the importance of institutions and structural factors, like American ideology, political economy and the prerogatives of the state. But, as the following chapters show, individuals have played decisive roles at a key moments. It's unlikely, for example, that the Bureau would have survived nearly forty years without a leader of Anslinger's political acumen and ideological zeal. Would the CIA's MK-ULTRA program have gone so sideways without the perverse joy Agent White took in the research? Or would foreign operations have been as successful in the absence of Agent Charles Siragusa's guiding hand?

The answers have important implications. As Tom Carnwatch and Ian Smith argue in *Heroin Century* (2002), "humans are not controlled by internal chemistry alone."[91] Historians ultimately believe in

[91] Tom Carnwatch and Ian Smith, *Heroin Century* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 75.

the primacy of individual agency. To paraphrase Karl Marx, people make their own history but they do it under circumstances inherited by the past. The drug wars demonstrate a remarkable resiliency for reasons that supersede the contributions of any one person, yet they were built one piece at a time, often by individual men (and women) and can be taken apart in the same way.

CHAPTER 1. THE SIXTH COLUMN AND THE DISCOURSE OF THE DOPE MENACE

Harry J. Anslinger, the U.S. Commissioner of Narcotics, was a busy man. But somehow, when not shuttling between New York and Washington or occupied with official duties, he found time to indulge his literary aspirations. Over the course of his thirty-two year tenure as Commissioner, Anslinger penned countless magazine and newspaper articles (sometimes filing in for syndicated columnists like Victor Riesel), and was frequently asked to discuss his work on both television and radio or with private audiences like (to name just a few) UN dignitaries, women's groups and other law enforcement organizations. He even co-authored three different books, all of which sang the praises of the Bureau and spread the gospel of the dope menace: *The Traffic in Narcotics* (1953), *The Murderers: The Story of the Narcotics Gangs* (1961), and *The Protectors: The Heroic Story of the Narcotics Agents, Citizens and Officials in Their Unending, Unsung Battles Against Organized Crime in America and Abroad* (1964), which was completed soon after his retirement. As the nation's top official on drugs, Anslinger's voice carried and helped prepare a cultural climate supportive of increasingly vigorous drug control measures.

Construction of the dope menace as a widely understood concept in American popular culture required frequent discussions of the four major components of the drug problem: drugs themselves, the nature of addiction, drug users, and drug traffickers—all of which are analyzed in this chapter. But Anslinger saved his most creative and pointed rhetoric for describing the threat the dope menace posed to American security. In the closing pages of *The Murderers*, the Commissioner warned that drug traffickers like the Mafia presented "an immediate and present danger to our society," and encouraged Americans to "be on guard against the use of drugs as a political weapon." Someday soon, he predicted, "Commies and fellow travelers may join hands with the world-wide syndicate—for profits and subversive politics combined. There is every possibility that they may try to make narcotics a new 'sixth' column to weaken and destroy selected targets in the drive for world domination."[1]

Talk of "fifth" or "sixth" columns was a colorful way to link drugs with the specter of internal betrayal or foreign subversion, but the unlikely alliance of Communists and mobsters was not the first time

[1] Harry J. Anslinger and Will Oursler, *The Murderers: The Story of the Narcotics Gangs* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961), 295.

the Bureau or its allies invoked the image nor was it the first time Anslinger described drugs as a potentially existential threat. In January 1942, while the country was still reeling from the attack on Pearl Harbor, Anslinger and Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr. issued a press release that described Japan's war on the West as beginning ten years earlier with "an offensive in which the weapons were narcotic drugs." For the remainder of the decade, Anslinger frequently asserted, "We have experienced Pearl Harbors many times in the past in the nature of dangerous drugs from Japan which were meant to poison the blood of the American people."[2] Subsequent popular accounts described Japanese drug trafficking during this period as an "attempt to build a fifth column in the United States, based upon addicts who . . . might be willing to pay with treason for their drugs."[3]

Narcotic drugs like heroin—and even milder drugs like marijuana—Anslinger and other Bureau officials constantly reiterated, were a very real danger to the American people, even if they didn't always agree on exactly where that danger originated. "The greatest threat to America lies within her boundaries," Anslinger claimed, while his long-time assistant Malachi Harney assured audiences that "most of our danger is from without."[4] The danger, both would be quick to correct themselves, was everywhere and required a police force capable of meeting this global threat.

During his three decades as the Commissioner of Narcotics and head of the FBN, Anslinger made sure Americans could never dismiss the danger posed by addiction and the deadly poison of narcotics. This chapter analyzes the various components of the "dope menace" as presented by the Bureau and its allies to show how they shaped drugs into a moral and national security imperative that supported an increasingly assertive role for the state in American life and the international community.

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[2] U.S. Treasury Department Press Release, dated January 26, 1942, in Folder "(1690-12) Folder #1, Publicity, Press Release, 1938 thru 1942," Box 74, RG 170, NARA. See also Albert Q. Maisel, "Getting the Drop on Dope," *Liberty Magazine*, November 24, 1945, in Folder 6, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[3] Jay Richard Kennedy, "One World—Against Dope," *The Sunday Star: This Week Magazine*, March 7, 1948, in Folder 13, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. Also printed in *The Baltimore Sun*, same date, page 108.

[4] Harry J. Anslinger and J. Dennis Gregory, *The Protectors: The Heroic Story of the Narcotics Agents, Citizens and Officials in Their Unending, Unsung Battles Against Organized Crime in America and Abroad* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Company, 1964), 223; Remarks of M.L. Harney, "The Drug Menace in the United States," October 8, 1952, Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

Framing the Threat

As Commissioner, Anslinger could boast many accomplishments, but his greatest legacy may have been framing the threat of the dope menace. The "narcotics evil," as it was also frequently called, was the Bureau's *raison d'être*, and Anslinger never failed to press his message: drugs are a subversive foreign menace, the addicts who use them threaten the moral foundation of American society and those who traffic in drugs are evil.

In order to promote its views, the Bureau worked closely with a number of journalists, often trading access to Bureau records and personnel for favorable reporting. Writers like Courtney Ryley Cooper, Herbert Brean, James Phelan, Ed Reid and Frederic Sondern all published feature-length stories or books based on Bureau sources that, in addition to the Bureau's own extensive public relations campaigns, perpetuated a specific interpretation of the drug problem. Early incarnations of the "infotainment" form so common to cable television today, these narratives were typically framed as adventure stories or true-crime literature and had a wide audience. In *Smack: Heroin and the American City* (2008), historian Eric C. Schneider observes how these accounts functioned as a "cultural script," which is to say that the Bureau, as the federal government's foremost authority on narcotics, developed a specific "way of framing questions about heroin use and interpreting the answers, that was shared broadly across American society and that shaped America's response to heroin..."[5] The sinews of these relationship receive further consideration elsewhere, but for now it's important to establish what this cultural script actually said and to recapture something of the Bureau's worldview. The framework elaborated by the Bureau has proven incredibly stubborn and contributed to the longevity of America's war on drugs. As Susan Speaker argues in the *Journal of Social History*, "The rhetorical framework developed by this first generation of anti-narcotics crusaders proved durable and long-lived; it is still the template for American public discourse about drugs."[6]

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[5] Eric C. Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the American City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 51. It should be noted that Schneider's argument is specific to the postwar period and focuses on the theme of teenage addiction. Although they became more effective in promoting their views over the years, I argue here the Bureau's production of a cultural script began much earlier, concurrent with the actual creation of the agency.

[6] Susan L. Speaker, "'The Struggle of Mankind Against Its Deadliest Foe': Themes of Counter-Subversion in Anti-Narcotic Campaigns, 1920-1940," *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 3 (Spring 2001): 592.

Opiates: The Finger of God

Anslinger liked to open his speeches in grand fashion and often proclaimed, "Opium is like the finger of God."[7] In calling on the divine, Anslinger was trying to capture something of the drug's remarkable duality: the same compounds that banished pain and comforted the sick could also cause catastrophic addiction when abused. At other times, Anslinger would argue, "Opium has greater potentialities for good and evil than any drug known to mankind. It is like the two-faced god Janus."[8] As the nation's top drug cop, Anslinger felt compelled to emphasize the bad over the good, but the double-sided nature of opiates clearly fascinated the Commissioner. When in one of his literary moods, Anslinger compared opiates to the "kindly Dr. Jekyll" and the "cruel monster, Mr. Hyde."[9] He rarely strayed from this Manichean framework and even delivered the following verse to an audience of medical students:

> Halting speech and trembling lips
> Tell the tale of life's eclipse.
> Men and women marked as prey
> By the wolves of modern day
> Waked at last from fancied bliss
> Doomed to hear the serpent's hiss
> Hell can match no hell with this.[10]

References within Anslinger's remarks indicate this was read sometime in the mid-1950s, but not when the poem was composed. Whether that was during the Depression, World War II or the early Cold War, however, it's worth noting that Anslinger thought the "hell" of drug addiction worse than crushing poverty, Nazis, nuclear annihilation or even literal hell. Clearly, the Commissioner was fascinated with the dark side of narcotics; he never waxed poetic on the benefits of opiates. This black and white framework was a useful rhetorical device and simplified the Bureau's public presentations. But the dominance of opiates like morphine and heroin in the illicit market and the Bureau's preoccupation with them meant that

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[7] Harry J. Anslinger, "Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics," May 29, 1957, Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[8] "Material for Radio Program, Maryland Pharmaceutical Association," February 28, 1942, in Folder "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1941-1948, #3," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

[9] Anslinger, "The Narcotic Problem, Address the National Conference on Crime," December 13, 1934, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. See also Anslinger, "Outline of Speech Before the International Association of Chiefs of Police At St. Petersburg, Florida, October 13, 1931," in Folder 7, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[10] Harry J. Anslinger, "Drug Addiction: A World Problem," undated, in Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

Anslinger and other Bureau officials tended to think and talk about other drugs, like cocaine and marijuana—neither of which is a narcotic—in the same manner. Drugs were either good or evil, there was no room for ambiguity.[11]

Opiates were, without question, the most important type of drug to the Bureau of Narcotics and heroin was public enemy number one. Opium is the product of the poppy plant, known by its scientific name as *Papaver somniferum*. There is strong evidence that poppies were among the first domesticated plants and poppy seeds have been found among the artifacts of many ancient civilizations. Opium poppy grows particularly well in semi-arid climates or on the sloping hillsides of mountainous jungle regions, with flowers blooming in a palette of vivid hues, from shades of pale white and lavender to bright crimson. When the brightly colored petals fall, they leave behind a swollen bulb, filled with seeds. To harvest the opium, the bulbs are lanced with a special knife and the wound oozes a milky white sap which is left to dry overnight. As the sap dries, it darkens to a deep brown or black and can be scraped off with wide, flat blade. This dried sap is raw opium.[12]

When enough opium is collected, it is boiled down with water into a sticky paste. In this basic form it can be smoked or eaten. Morphine was first discovered by German scientists in 1804 and is created when various acids are used to extract the desired alkaloids from an opium base, creating one of the most potent analgesic (pain-killing) compounds ever discovered. The ability to numb pain and alleviate a multitude of symptoms insured the drug's place as the most commonly prescribed medicine of the nineteenth century and led to its inclusion in a veritable cornucopia of nineteenth-century medicines, with a resulting increase in physical dependency. Heroin is, in turn, a still more refined morphine derivative with a faster metabolic rate that confers greater analgesic properties and greater physical dependency. Ironically, heroin was first synthesized in 1874 by British chemists looking for a non-

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[11] This "either or" framework is a subject taken up in Richard DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology: How America Became the World's Most Troubled Drug Culture* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).

[12] Carl A. Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy: A Study of the Asian Opium Trade, 1750-1950* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Pierre-Arnaud Chouvy, *Opium: Uncovering the Politics of the Poppy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010). Both books contain excellent discussions of the long history of opium cultivation.

addictive substitute for morphine.[13] Another central irony of opiate production is that the narcotic becomes increasingly dangerous the further it moves from its origin as an agricultural product. As the narcotic properties of opiates become increasingly concentrated, transformed by Western medicine from a sticky sap into a white powder, the danger of overdose and abuse rise exponentially.

For Anslinger and the agents of the Bureau, opium was simply an ancient and intolerable evil, medical benefits aside. "The poppy, symbol of sleep and death," Anslinger wrote in *The Traffic in Narcotics* (1953), "is age-old in the lore of antiquity." The implication was not that mankind has a long, complicated and evolving relationship with the poppy, but that opium was primordial—a vestige of our savage past. "The misuse of opium has occurred since its discovery. If it weren't for the boon it has afforded in medical therapy, decent people everywhere would certainly never have tolerated its continued existence," Anslinger speculated, leaving little doubt on how "decent people" should think.[14] When discussing marijuana, Anslinger used the same themes and consistently associated the drug with the primordial or the foreign, and described how the ancient Persian warrior sect known as the Assassins used the drug to prepare for battle (the word "hashish," he often noted, is derived from the word "assassin") or how Malay warriors under marijuana's thrall left us with the phrase "run amok."[15]

As the most concentrated opiate derivative with the greatest potential for physical dependency and addiction, heroin was often described in apocalyptic imagery. One writer friendly to the Bureau called it "America's H-Bomb of Addiction."[16] Anslinger, too, frequently invoked the specter of atomic destruction to convey the existential danger posed by opiates. In a 1946 article in *True Detective* magazine, Anslinger argued "the opium poppy holds as much potential disaster as an atom bomb," and deserved the same kind of international attention. For once, Anslinger's hyperbole was correct when in 1957 he pointed out that "narcotic drugs have killed probably more people throughout the world than the hydrogen

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[13] David T. Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America before 1940* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1982); H. Wayne Morgan, *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1800-1980* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981).

[14] Harry J. Anslinger and William F. Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, Inc., 1953), 1, 11.

[15] Anslinger, "Marihauna," March 30, 1937, address to the Women's National Exposition of Arts and Industry, New York, in Folder 7, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[16] J.A. Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1961), 22.

bomb will ever kill."[17] Putting drugs on par with atomic weapons was just one of the many ways Anslinger and the Bureau tried to convey the global threat posed by narcotics.

Almost regardless of the specific pharmacological properties, drugs were portrayed as something ancient yet otherworldly, familiar yet foreign, and Anslinger's alarmist rhetoric penetrated down into the ranks of enforcement agents. Although they reserved their harshest rhetoric for heroin—the drug widely perceived as the most dangerous—this way of thinking colored the way FBN officials talked about all drugs. Agent Charles Siragusa, for example, wrote in his memoir, "Hashish is like an atomic bomb; marijuana is just TNT."[18] Although there were profound differences on the enforcement side, in public discussions all drugs tended to be grouped together as narcotics and compressed into the same context.

"An Inexorable Master": Addiction and Drug Abuse

Medical views on addiction continued to evolve throughout the twentieth century and debates over its true nature actually continue today. Is addiction best described as a disease or as a vice? A condition? It is a mental or a physical ailment? Is addiction the product of environment or genes? What is the best way to account for the choices of drug users? These kinds of questions placed addiction at the forefront of conflicts in psychology, sociology, public health and law enforcement, but offered few resolutions. Even today, many dilemmas remain unresolved. "No single theory or idea fully explains why people use drugs or desire a drug experience," H. Wayne Morgan explains in *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1800-1980* (1981). Throughout America's history with drugs and alcohol, there has been a pronounced tendency to judge a drug or the various iterations of a drug by its users, a trend exemplified, for example, in the difference between drinking laudanum and smoking opium. In *Creating the American Junkie: Addiction Research in the Classic Era of Narcotic Control* (2002), historian Caroline Acker argues that a demographic shift in drug use from the upper and middle class "medical" users of the late nineteenth century to the urban "recreational" users of the early twentieth helped create the modern

[17] Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946, in Folder 12, Box 12, and "Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics," May 29, 1957, in Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[18] Charles Siragusa and Robert Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), xiv. See also Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 37.

image of the "junkie" and deeply prejudiced scientific agendas and conclusions, thus stymieing addiction research until well into the 1960s.[19]

This marked lack of medical consensus allowed the Bureau it to impose law enforcement prerogatives on public perceptions of addiction with little opposition. The image of the "dope fiend" it helped elaborate remains deeply ingrained in American culture. In the eyes of enforcement officials, narcotics had an almost mystical ability to find a user and addiction was often thought of with a kind of narcotic determinism. Anslinger had many axioms; one was that "opium, wherever produced, will always seek a consumer."[20] In a sense, Anslinger imbued opium with its own agency—inanimate yet acting within and upon the world. This was an extraordinary problem from a policy perspective.

Anslinger's 1953 book *The Traffic in Narcotics* represents the Bureau's most detailed and ambitious exposition on the nature of the drug traffic and the problem of addiction. Drawing on the work of numerous physicians, public health officials and various reports from the American Medical Association, Anslinger provides a survey of medical opinion at mid-century. He was particularly taken with the work of Dr. Lawrence Kolb, a noted psychiatrist at the National Institute of Mental Health, who argued that underlying psychopathic personality disorders were a significant cause of addictive behavior.[21] Caroline Acker observes, "Psychopathy emerged as a broad, vaguely defined diagnosis, which was attached to individuals who psychiatrists observed were unable to adjust to the demands for self-restraint and social conformity called for by a complex society, but who lacked symptoms of severe mental illness such as delusions or profound depression."[22] Anslinger was comfortable with this interpretation because it left little need for further explanation and it's essential ambiguity allowed for considerable subjectivity in its application. Addiction was, on the whole, seen simply the implacable

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[19] H. Wayne Morgan, *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1800-1980* (1981), ix; Caroline Jean Acker, *Creating the American Junkie: Addiction Research in the Classic Era of Narcotic Control* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Mara L. Keire, "Dope Fiends and Degenerates: The Gendering of Addiction in the Early Twentieth Century," *Journal of Social History* 31, no. 4 (Summer 1998): 809–822; Sana Loue, "The Criminalization of the Addictions: Toward a Unified Approach," *The Journal of Legal Medicine* 24 (2003): 281–330; DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology*, 115.

[20] Harry J. Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946, Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[21] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 179, 223.

[22] Acker, *Creating the American Junkie*, 135.

product of madness. Keeping dope out of the hands of outright psychopaths was a project everyone could get behind and Anslinger warned, "...there are many more addiction-prone individuals running around in the world who have not yet had contact with drugs. That is reason enough, if there were no other reason, for the existence of the Commissioner and the whole control program."[23] In terms of policy, if addiction (and therefore demand) was constant, the only solution to the problem lay in curtailing supply and vigorously enforcing drug control laws.

Even while leaning heavily on explanations that featured personality disorders, Anslinger also acknowledged the physiological side of addiction and referred to "habituation, tolerance and dependency" as the "tripod of addiction."[24] The psychiatry of addiction might be subject to debate, but the acute withdrawal symptoms caused by physical dependency were taken as irrefutable evidence of abuse. Beat writer William S. Burroughs described his own experience with heroin withdrawal in *Junky*, a quasi-anthropological memoir of drug use and addiction: "My nose and eyes began to run, sweat soaked through my clothes. Hot and cold flashes hit me as though a furnace door was swinging open and shut. I lay down on the bunk, too weak to move. My legs ached and twitched so that any position was intolerable and I moved from one side to the other, sloshing about in my sweaty clothes."[25] These symptoms were also well known to the agents, who often claimed a knack for spotting addicts simply from their general demeanor and carriage.[26] Experienced agents undoubtedly were able to pick out individuals who fit their expectations, but, as a number of authors have pointed out, there was no single addict experience and not all heroin users matched the profile of the "dope fiend."[27]

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[23] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 287, 223, 226.

[24] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 278.

[25] Regular users of drugs like morphine or heroin experience physiological changes as their internal biochemistry develops a tolerance to the drug's presence, requiring ever-escalating dosages to receive the same euphoric effect. However, when the drug is withdrawn from an individual who has developed a tolerance, the absence triggers intense withdrawal symptoms characterized by fever, nausea, diarrhea, body aches and hallucinations. See William S. Burroughs, *Junky: 50th Anniversary Definitive Edition*, 3rd ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 23.

[26] Agent James Mulgannon observes in his memoir, "The retching and vomiting, the agonies of withdrawal, are well known to the seasoned addict who has experienced this condition. Further, the symptoms are well known to the narcotics agent." James H. Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory* (New York, Washington and Hollywood: Vantage Press, 1972), 117.

[27] David Courtwright, Herman Joseph, and Don Des Jarlais, eds., *Addicts Who Survived: An Oral History of Narcotic Use in America, 1923-1965* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989); Sarah Tracy and Caroline Jean Acker, eds., *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol*

FBN agents acknowledged the social causes of addiction on occasion. In 1959, West Coast supervisor George White wrote an editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* that identified addiction as "a symptom of social delinquency" and advocated social and economic reforms. "Clear the slums, improve our schools, churches and playgrounds," he urged, "and drug addiction, along with many other 'crimes,' will be effectively controlled in the years to come."[28] Anslinger, too, recognized that for some people "narcotics block out the sights and sounds of poverty and inequality, the rapid pace at which we move in today's world, the constant trembling on the brink of disaster." But for most, Anslinger felt "the reason for taking drugs has been forgotten; narcotics has become their way of life."[29] These descriptions exemplify how the Bureau elaborated on older debates about whether addiction was the product of genes or environment and drew upon distinctions between the "worthy" and "unworthy" poor that date to the Gilded Age.[30] In keeping with the American tradition of self-reliance, Anslinger ultimately believed that "disregard for personal responsibility" was "the very touchstone of narcotic addiction."[31] On that point, the Bureau and the disaffected Beats were in rare agreement, and Burroughs claimed, "You become a narcotics addict because you do not have strong motivations in any other direction. Junk wins by default."[32]

In the end, most street agents would have probably shrugged if asked why people use drugs. Mental illness and poor social conditions may have had something to do with it, but few agents thought it was their job to worry about the actual causes of addiction. There was a saying popular in the Bureau on

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and Drug Use in the United States (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004). See in particular the essay by Acker, "Portrait of an Addicted Family: Dynamics of Opiate Addiction in the Early Twentieth Century," p. 165-181.

[28] Letter dated October 2, 1959 from White to Gordon Pates (Managing Ed., San Francisco Chronicle), in Folder "(1690-10) General Book #6, Publicity, Publications, Nov. 1958-Dec. 1960," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[29] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 22.

[30] Harry G. Levine, "The Discovery of Addiction: Changing Conceptions of Habitual Drunkenness in America," *Journal of Studies in Alcohol* 39, no. 1 (1978); Tracy and Acker, *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol and Drug Use in the United States*.

[31] In a memo to Nils A. Lennartson (Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury) dated August 10, 1959, Anslinger enclosed the draft of an article prepared for *American Youth Review*. In Folder "(1690-10) General Book #6, Publicity, Publications, Nov. 1958-Dec. 1960," Box 70, RG 170, NARA. See also Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 180.

[32] Burroughs, *Junky*, xxxviii.

the subject: you don't have to be a veterinarian to clean up the shit.[33] The agent's job was to enforce the law, the rest was academic.

When the Bureau did pay attention to the causes of addiction, it was usually to warn of its imminent spread. Officials often relied on medical terms to describe the dope menace as "a roadside fever," "a cancerous growth," an "epidemic," "a contagious manifestation," or "contamination."[34] In one 1942 radio address, Anslinger warned the mere presence of an addict in any community is "a causative factor in increasing addiction." In *The Traffic in Narcotics*, he elaborated, "drug addiction springs from association with drugs and addicts" who should be "regarded as a focus of infection for susceptible individuals." Anslinger would often call it "axiomatic" that one addicts begets four, four makes sixteen, and so on—an exponential increase he called "a frightening progression."[35]

These assertions were repeated down through the ranks of enforcement agents. "The hazards of contagion are obvious," Agent Sam Levine declared. "The most dangerous and serious element of the dope practice is that addiction, by the very nature of its disease, is contagious."[36] In the absence of a unified theory of addiction, such arguments were alarming, persuasive and repeatedly echoed outside the Bureau. Texas Senator Price Daniel, a valuable Congressional ally, publicly referred to the association between addiction and crime "a very communicable disease." Using language taken directly from the

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[33] There were a few iterations of this saying. Agent Jack Kelly dismissed most explanations for drug use as "always superficial" and wrote, "I contend you don't have to be a veterinarian, or understand the evolutionary development of the horse . . . to be a streetsweeper and clean up the shit. The same applies to the narcotics trade." George White, despite occasionally breaking ranks on the social aspects of addiction, similarly told reporter James Phelan, "I'm concerned only with the end product of drug trafficking. I don't think a street sweeper who pushes a broom in the wake of a parade is qualified to lecture on the digestive system of the horse." See Jack Kelly and Richard Mathison, *On the Street* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974), 159–160, and James Phelan, *Scandals, Scamps, and Scoundrels: The Casebook of an Investigative Reporter* (New York: Random House, 1982), 38.

[34] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 6; Memo from George Gaffney to Anslinger, dated January 6, 1960, in Folder 7, Box 2, Anslinger Papers; Malachi Harney, "The Police and Narcotic Enforcement," October 30, 1951, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers; Letter from White to Anslinger dated October 30, 1944, in Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

[35] Anslinger, "Material for Radio Program," February 28, 1942, in Folder 8, Box 1, and Anslinger, "We're Winning the War Against Dope," *The Union Signal*, October 28, 1961, in Folder 10, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. See also Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 55, 302.

[36] Quoted in Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery*, 51–2.

Bureau, journalist Joachim Joesten similarly wrote in *Dope, Inc.* (1953), "Dope addiction is not only a social evil of high magnitude, but it also has the manifestations of a contagious disease."[37]

Yet, as Richard DeGrandpre points out in *The Cult of Pharmacology* (2006), the disease model of addiction emerged alongside drug prohibition and "carried on its back a social agenda," which was primarily to empower both police and physicians with the authority to code behaviors and sort legitimate from illegitimate drug use.[38] The FBN's depiction of addiction as a communicable disease was perhaps its strongest argument for aggressive control measures and compulsory confinement. "It is the young addict who contaminates other youth with his dreadful vice. He should be plucked out of the community and quarantined," Anslinger argued.[39] As will be seen in the following chapter, Anslinger spent a considerable amount of time and energy opposing efforts to provide ambulatory treatment to addicts and was consistent on the point that addicts must be separated from the general population.

Reports from FBN agents serving overseas during WWII indicated similar concerns: that deployed U.S. military personnel would be exposed to narcotics and come home to spread addiction, a fear that resurfaced with even greater force during the Vietnam War.[40] In what few at the time took to be a comment on the character of the armed forces, Anslinger warned that military personnel stationed in drug-producing areas would come under the thrall of addiction: "Such an environment cannot fail to have an effect on those whose moral fiber cannot resist the temptation to experiment with drugs out of a sense of curiosity, or boredom. The potential danger is obvious."[41] The point Anslinger wanted to make was that simple exposure to drugs or drug users was enough to create addiction—even among the nation's military men. Doctors, the Commissioner similarly noted, were disproportionately represented among the numbers of drug users, simply due to their daily exposure to narcotics.[42]

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[37] Quoted in Frederic Sondern Jr., *Brotherhood of Evil: The Mafia* (New York, NY: Manor Books, Inc, 1959), 85; Joachim Joesten, *Dope, Inc.* (New York, NY: Avon Publications, Inc., 1953), 34.

[38] DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology*, 190.

[39] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 170.

[40] Letter dated October 30, 1944 from George White to Anslinger, in Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers. See also Jeremy Kuzmarov, *The Myth of the Addicted Army: Vietnam and the Modern War on Drugs* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

[41] Harry J. Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946, Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[42] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 234.

Indeed, the Bureau believed narcotics (as well as non-narcotic drugs) to be so addictive that physical contact wasn't even required, a belief prompting Anslinger to pursue a policy of censorship—albeit an ironic and deeply conflicted one, given the Bureau's own well-documented use of propaganda. Here, the FBN clearly pursued whatever course suited its political and bureaucratic agenda. When defending drug prohibition, Anslinger was dismissive of the idea that illegality increased the allure of drug use and argued, "Addiction does not arise from the 'forbidden fruit' concept." But he also worried that portrayals or discussions of drug use might arouse curiosity and cause a "strong potential increase in drug addiction."[43] In effect, the Bureau imbued addiction with Medusa-like qualities as it became *visually* contagious, ready to leap from screen to bloodstream.[44] This rather conflicted view was one of the reasons the Bureau felt it imperative to remain in command of all public discussions of drugs.

Overall, Bureau officials were far more comfortable describing the dope menace with morally charged language and imagery, and rarely troubled themselves with a sophisticated understanding of the physiological aspects of addiction. The Bureau of Narcotics was, after all, a law enforcement agency and not a public health office. Not until after the Bureau's demise in 1968 did the federal government join public health and law enforcement functions together in one agency—and even then, police priorities remained paramount. Rather, Bureau officials appropriated medical language when it suited their purpose, as scientific terminology possesses a vocabulary of power and authority.[45] If addiction could be "caught" like a virus, the causes of addiction must be exogenous—that is outside the users body and control. Addicts, they argued, could not control themselves, making it incumbent on the state to exert control on their behalf for the greater good. Again the legacy of debates over worthy and unworthy poor and nature versus nurture are felt as this line of reasoning introduced a strange conflict. All too often, Bureau officials—and society at large—tended to blame addicts for their own condition, even as they made arguments that implied addiction was beyond the control of any one individual.

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[43] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 180; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 215, 217.

[44] Sociologist John Markert observes that Anslinger might have been right to worry, as portrayals of drug use suggests ways to both interpret and model drug-using behaviors. John Markert, *Hooked in Film: Substance Abuse on the Big Screen* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2013), ix–x .

[45] See, for instance, Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (New York: Vintage, 1994); Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, Second Vintage Books (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

To cut through such conflicts, Anslinger and other Bureau officials came up with a variety of colorful ways to express the danger of addiction. Anslinger liked to call it "murder on the installment plan." At other times, he argued, "Drug addiction is a cold, calculated, ruthless, systematic plan to undermine by creating new addicts while sustaining the old."[46] Field agents echoed the boss and described addiction as "living" or "slow death" and "the greatest evil in the world today."[47] These formulations had two purposes: they established the danger and insinuated conspiracies against the American people. With drugs squarely in the framework of good and evil or salvation and damnation, addiction were frequently portrayed as a force of nature. Sometimes the Bureau was literally inflammatory, warning that drug abuse was sweeping the country "like wildfire." At other times, it was flowing like a "harmful and malignant stream" to "river of riches."[48] More ominously: a "tide . . . forever pressing against our levees." Dipping into more illustrative language, Bureau officials often evoked monsters or creatures by describing "tentacles of addiction" or "parasitic addicts" and mobsters who, like rats or cockroaches, would "run for the holes when the power is turned on." In *Dope, Inc.*, Joesten called addiction a "maelstrom," and characterized the drug problem as the "hydra of our times: every time one of its ugly heads is chopped off, two new ones seem to sprout."[49]

A kind of feedback loop existed between the Bureau and its allies. Specific modes of language were picked up and repeated back and forth, reinforcing this worldview. Longtime reformer Richmond P. Hobson was among those who helped promote this kind of monstrous imagery. As President of the World Narcotic Defense Association, a retired Navy Rear Admiral and two-term Congressman, Hobson was an influential veteran of the temperance movement and a reliable Bureau ally until his death in 1937. In a 1928 pamphlet, Hobson summoned images of the undead to describe addicts as "abject slaves,"

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[46] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, vii, 12.

[47] Sal Vizzini, Oscar Fraley, and Marshall Smith, *Vizzini: The Secret Lives of America's Most Successful Undercover Agent* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1972), 12, 26, 16.

[48] Anslinger, Address to World Narcotic Defense Association, April 13, 1936, in Folder 7, Box 1, and Anslinger, The Narcotic Problem," December 13, 1934, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. See also Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 226.

[49] See speeches by Harney, "The Police and Narcotic Enforcement," October 30, 1951, and "The Drug Menace in the United States," October 8, 1952, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. See also Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 173, 294; Joesten, *Dope, Inc.*, 38, 146.

"destructive parasites" and, finally, "the living dead."[50] This was a theme picked up by the Bureau and over the years it issued and revised a pamphlet called "Living Death: the truth about Drug Addiction."[51]

While this particular portrayal conjured images of addicts as zombies, both Hobson and the Bureau were driving at another related point: addiction is slavery. These addicts were the "living dead" because, while technically alive, they lived only for their next fix. Addiction represented an undeniable compulsion.[52] In twentieth century portrayals of drug use, associations with and ideas about slavery profoundly influenced how people thought about addiction. Addicts were frequently referred to as "slaves to heroin" and Anslinger often called addiction a form of "enslavement."[53] In an interview titled "Freeing the Drug Slaves," Anslinger called addiction a "terrible bondage" while arguing that for the public good, addicts must trade enslavement to drugs for confinement by the state, which was "the only way to abolish slavery to the drug habit."[54] Dipping back into literary allusions, one radio script prepared by the Bureau proclaimed, "Simon Legree was not as cruel a slave master as opium when it clutches a victim."[55]

Popular magazines echoed these sentiments and reached a wide cross-section of the American public. A 1939 *True Detective* article stated, "No slave ever cringed before a more inexorable master." *Actual Romances* warned that heroin "enslaves a human being - makes him a craven, beaten, degraded thing." *The Elks Magazine* similarly called addicts "people without souls" and "creatures of a dominating

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[50] Richmond P. Hobson, "Mankind's Greatest Affliction and Gravest Menace" in *Drugs in America: A Documentary History*, ed. David F. Musto (New York and London: New York University Press), 271-5.

[51] "Living Death: the truth about Drug Addiction," Folder 1, Box 7, Anslinger Papers. See also Folder "Living Death," Box 72, RG 170, NARA.

[52] Interestingly, there are actually many points of agreement between the Bureau's perception of the "dope menace" and the portrayal of drug addiction offered by William S. Burroughs. "As a habit takes hold," Burroughs writes, "other interests lose importance to the user. Life telescopes down to junk, one fix and looking forward to the next, 'stashes' and 'scripts,' 'spikes' and 'droppers.' The addict himself often feels that he is leading a normal life and that junk is incidental. He does not realize that he is just going through the motions in his non-junk activities. It is not until his supply is cut off that he realizes what junk means to him." Burroughs, *Junky*, 19.

[53] Anslinger, "The Treatment of Drug Addiction," *The Union Signal*, June 25, 1960, Folder 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[54] Richard Hirsch, "Freeing the Drug Slaves: An Interview with U.S. Commissioner of Narcotics Harry J. Anslinger," *True Detective*, October 1947, Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. See also Steward Robertson, "Dope on Dope," *The Family Circle*, October 26, 1945. Folder 4, Box 12, Anslinger Papers

[55] "The Necessity for the Uniform Narcotic Drug Act," undated script, in Folder "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1941-1948, #3," Box 69, RG 170.

force."[56] In *Merchants of Misery* (1961), a book Anslinger thought "should serve as a guide in narcotics education," author J.A. Buckwalter makes frequent references to addiction as "the ultimate slavery."[57]

Like Anslinger's references to the atomic bomb, invoking the specter of slavery imbued the dope menace with additional meaning. The liberty forfeit whether "choosing" or "catching" addiction was a negation of the very foundation of American values. Again, the Bureau introduced a way of thinking about drugs that ultimately outlasted the agency itself; in 1986 President Ronald Reagan claimed, "Drug abuse is a repudiation of everything America is."[58] For the Bureau, the most dangerous aspect of the dope menace was that it was both antithetical to American values and promised to spread. It was this fundamental threat to American liberty that led Rep. Stephen G. Porter (R-PA), sponsor of the legislation that created the Bureau, to call the drug trade "a greater evil than human slavery."[59] By grouping addiction with slavery, drugs were placed beyond the pale—roughly equivalent to the post-WWII tendency to compare political enemies to Hitler.

The phrases "narcotics evil" and "dope menace" quickly became shorthand for this entire complex of ideas and supported the notion that government action was needed to protect the American people. As Anslinger argued in the closing pages of *The Traffic in Narcotic Drugs*, "If drug addiction is an evil habit—and who will say that it is not—it should be rooted out and destroyed."[60]

Creating a Dope Fiend

The descent into addiction was a terrible thing to behold and received a lot of attention in FBN accounts. The Bureau highlighted a number of critical points when describing actual drug users: their personal disregard, the danger they posed to the community and the sub-human status of confirmed addicts. The abuse of narcotics threatened to draw the user into the tempest or slavery of addiction, but it

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[56] See Richard Hirsch, "How Treasury Agents Broke the 'Poison Sleep' Gang," *True Detective*, May 1939; "I Joined a Tee-age Sex and Dope Gang," *Actual Romances*, December 1951; and James Monahan, "Japanese Pipe Dream," *The Elks Magazine*, May 1942 (reprint), in Folder 10, Box 7, and Folder 1 and 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[57] Letter dated September 12, 1956 from Anslinger to J.A. Buckwalter, in Folder "(1690-10) Merchants of Misery," Box 72, RG 170, NARA; Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery*, 42, 46, 69.

[58] Ronald and Nancy Reagan, "Just Say No, Words to the Nation," September 14, 1986, available at: http://www.ibiblio.org/sullivan/CNN/RWR/album/speechmats/nancy.html (accessed May 12, 2012).

[59] Congressional Record, 68th Congress, 1st Session, 1925, Vol. 65, Part 6: 5769.

[60] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 295.

also ushered in a whole series of related transformations. What began with a general malaise and preoccupation slide into "moral aberration," "acute psychoses," and blatant criminality as addiction took over, Anslinger warned. "Such individuals," he continued, "now turned completely asocial, are responsible for the most horrifying human tragedies . . . The final state begins with the negligence of physical cleanliness, and it ends with complete physical decay..."[61] Drugs, the Commissioner asserted, were capable of transforming an otherwise normal citizen into a depraved and rotting lunatic. The promise of actual physical decay reinforced the zombie-like image of addicts as the "living dead," but whether slave or zombie, the addict was something less than human. *Reader's Digest* was explicit that an addict is "no longer a human being," while *The Family Circle* described "the dope fiend" as a "shivering, cowering, half-mad creature."[62] Worse still, because of addiction's contagious qualities, these half-mad sub-humans promised to spread their deadly affliction to the rest of society.

Focus on the physical degradation that accompanies drug abuse remains a fixture of public fascination with drugs. During the Bureau's time, this niche was usually occupied by heroin users, whose drug use over the course of the 30s, 40s and 50s evolved from sniffing to subcutaneous and finally intravenous injections as the quality of street heroin deteriorated. In the 1980s, junkies were joined by the image of "crackheads," and today the focus is often on meth users or fad drugs like bath salts and "krokodil," a crude homemade heroin substitute from Russia that leaves users with green scaly skin.[63] The tendency, then as now, is to hold up these admittedly disturbing examples as both warnings and characteristic of the dangers of drug use in general.

Another basic assumption was that addiction inevitably marked the beginning or escalation of a life of crime, which took on two basic dimensions: petty crimes necessary to support addiction and horrific

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[61] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 225.

[62] See Herbert Brean, "A Short - and Horrible - Life," *Reader's Digest*, September 1951, in Folder 1, Box 7, and Steward Robertson, "Dope on Dope," *The Family Circle*, October 26, 1945, in Folder 4, Box, 12, Anslinger Papers.

[63] "Krokodil" is Russian for "crocodile" and so named for the gruesome side effects. The drug is causing a minor health crisis in Russia, but experts doubt its use will become widespread in the U.S. where addicts have access to better alternatives. Media accounts of the drug's dramatic impact, however, draw on familiar narratives. See Max Ehrenfreund, "Homemade Heroin First Developed in Russia May Have Come to the United States," *Washington Post*, October 7, 2013. Another good example is "Faces of Meth," a website run by the Oregon Multnomah County Sheriff's Office that depicts the deterioration of regular methamphetamine users. Available at: www.faceofmeth.us (accessed October 18, 2013).

drug-induced violence. On the first count, Anslinger warned, the "parasitic drug addict is a tremendous burden on the community. He represents a continuing problem to the police through his depredations against society. He is a thief, a burglar, a robber; if a woman, a prostitute or a shoplifter."[64] In keeping with the Bureau's preference for spectacle over substance, many accounts stressed the danger of violence over petty crime. One radio program about the Bureau warned, narcotics "can turn a man of previously blameless life by quick degrees into a vicious, criminal killer." While campaigning for the Uniform State Narcotic Law and Marijuana Tax Act in the mid-1930s, Anslinger became notorious for keeping a "gore file" full of anecdotes about drug-fueled violence. The Commissioner often argued that marijuana induced temporary insanity and, as he informed a reporter from *The Family Circle*, "the drug [was] responsible for many dreadful cases of rape and murder, mutilation, and indiscriminate slaughter." In *The Traffic in Narcotics*, Anslinger described the violent deeds of psychotic marijuana users, including but not limited to: a bellhop who randomly attacked sailors passing on the street and bit one of them in the neck (more of that monster imagery); a ship that arrived in Baltimore carrying a crew mad with marijuana-induced fervor; a Texas man who shot two women and then gruesomely stabbed himself to death; and, last but not least, the depredations of a pot-smoking baby-rapist. One of Anslinger's favorite examples was the case of Victor Licata, a 21-year-old Florida axe-murderer who butchered five family members while in an apparent marijuana haze. Anslinger was quick to focus on Licata's alleged drug use, but usually failed to mention that he was subsequently found criminally insane, suffering from hallucinations, homicidal impulses and came from a strong family background of dementia.[65]

Assuming and affirming criminality of the part of addicts buttressed the argument that drugs were a "serious social menace to the community" (a phrase that pops up over and over again), and supported the contention that institutionalization and incarceration were the only appropriate responses to drug use and addiction. It also shifted the ostensible "victim" of addiction from the addict to the community. The consistency of this message flattened out the differences in addict experiences and introduced a strong

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[64] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 170.

[65] See the radio program, "The Silent Man," in Folder "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1949 thru June 1951, #4," Box 69, RG 170, NARA; Steward Robertson, "Dope on Dope," *The Family Circle*, October 26, 1945, in Folder 4, Box 12, Anslinger Papers; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 13–28; Larry Sloman, *Reefer Madness: The History of Marijuana in America* (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc, 1979), 60–64.

air of inevitability. *Reader's Digest* reporter Frederic Sondern, a reliable FBN mouthpiece, wrote, "Details vary, but the fundamental pattern of the addict's creation and subsequent behavior is almost always the same." Certainly the end result was the same, a life of crime and slavery in which the individual addict was reduced to "a pathetic creature," forfeit of humanity.[66]

While these portrayals tended to present American addicts as a monolithic social menace, closer scrutiny reveals that the Bureau's response was highly conditioned by differences in race, class and gender. An increasingly popular interpretation of American drug control is it that functions primarily as a form of social control—an argument presented most recently by Michelle Alexander in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (2012)—and race is often the crucial arbiter. Indeed, specific drugs were linked to various regional and racial tensions dating back to the turn of the century, when opium was associated with the Chinese in the west, cocaine with black males in the south and marijuana with Mexican migrants in the southwest.[67] The Bureau's emphasis on the race of drug users shifted with the times, but because this is an important argument, it's worth sorting out some of the chronology and causality.

Illicit drug use is often described as a specifically urban problem. Like alcoholism and nervous disorders like neurasthenia, drug addiction was historically seen as a disease or symptom of modern civilization, exemplified by America's largest cities.[68] The creation of a black market in many cities, which emerged in response to prohibition, reinforced that perception. In *Smack: Heroin and the American City* (2008), Eric Schneider observes that drug markets typically exist in the shadow of large trade and population centers. Making implicit agreement with Anslinger's contention that addiction is at least partly the result of exposure, Schneider argues that drug use tends to become more apparent with proximity to markets and the markets themselves often migrate to economically depressed areas where enforcement is poor.[69] As the demographics of the inner city changed, so did the composition of the addict population.

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[66] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 86, 97.

[67] David F. Musto, MD, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control*, 3rd ed. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Morgan, *Drugs in America*; Courtwright, *Dark Paradise.*

[68] See Sarah Tracy, "Building a Boozatorium: State Medical Reform for Iowa's Inebriates, 1902-1920," in Tracy and Acker, *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol and Drug Use in the United States*, Tracy and Acker, eds., p. 124-164.

[69] Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the American City*, 116.

Although the Bureau always claimed to be more interested in traffickers than users, this had important implications for the discourse of the dope menace. In the 1930s, the FBN usually concentrated on the Chinese, Jews and Italians. Anslinger claimed that "Chinese seduction of teen-aged girls into addiction and prostitution presented serious problems" during the Bureau's early years.[70] While all three groups remained important as potential traffickers, the Bureau's focus on actual use soon shifted to the African-American community, which continued to grow in the major northern cities throughout the 1930s and 40s. Soon after the end of WWII, "urban" had become code for "black," and the Bureau reinforced the notion that blacks were uniquely susceptible by continuing to insist that drugs were a primarily urban problem. "The big addiction centers are large cities: New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore . . . Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles," Anslinger wrote in *The Traffic in Narcotics*.[71]

The Bureau's focus on urban drug use, however, may have been somewhat misleading and there is plenty of evidence in the Bureau's own files that addiction existed in small towns and rural areas as well. One quick example comes from the memoir of Agent Jack Kelly, who took over the Albuquerque, New Mexico office in 1962. The region was considered "the sticks," but Kelly quickly realized it had "been entirely overlooked as a narcotics center," and during his brief tenure the city went from a ranking of 35 to 9 in the FBN's estimated addict population, simply because Kelly made sure the relevant reports were filed. As he later wrote, "one can conclude from drug statistics what one wishes!"[72]

An even more pertinent conclusion is that drug use could be found wherever the Bureau cared to look. Returning to the question of race, most historians agree that during the late 1940s and early 1950s anxiety over white teenage heroin addiction drove increasingly punitive control measures, even though most users were actually young, black urban dwellers. It's possible, however, that they were looking in the wrong place. Michelle Alexander explicitly argues, "The notion that most illegal drug use and sales happen in the ghetto is pure fiction," and that whites and blacks use drugs at roughly equal rates. (It's worth pointing out, however, that she uses only contemporary statistics and evidence.) Take Anslinger's discussion of drugs in DC: "We have a bad addiction problem in Washington, D.C.," the Commissioner

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[70] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 21, 25.

[71] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 281.

[72] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 183–6.

wrote. "If you go across the bridge into Alexandria or Arlington, you don't find addiction." Had agents crossed the Potomac with any regularity, they might have developed a more nuanced appreciation for what Schneider calls "the spatial dimension of heroin use," which has important implications for how different demographic groups interacted with drugs. Although he contends that white users were "a small minority" at the time, Schneider argues:

> The only important difference between white and African American heroin users was where they began using heroin: white users more frequently learned about heroin in central places outside of their immediate neighborhoods, in entertainment districts such as New York's Times Square, which helped limit the extent of white use, while African Americans found heroin locally. This helps explain not only why there were more African American heroin users, but also why more started drug use directly with heroin. Social setting determined who had access to heroin and drug knowledge and who did not.

In other words, addiction likely has more to do with *where* drugs are used than *who* is using them.[73]

Anslinger, however, concluded that the prevalence of black addicts indicated an inherent racial characteristic. By the end of the 1950s, Anslinger was publicly stating that blacks represented 59% of the total addict population and were biologically more susceptible to addiction. Occasionally he was pressed on this interpretation. In a discussion printed in *U.S. News and World Report*, Rep. Otto E. Passman (D-LA), a conservative southern Democrat, questioned Anslinger as to why African-Americans represented such a large segment of the addict population while only 13% of the total population. Anslinger acknowledged that low social and economic status played a role, but refused to back away from the position that blacks were fundamentally more prone to addiction. During an appearance on the television program "New York Forum," the Commissioner repeated the claim, but defended himself from charges of racism by citing the number of black agents employed by the FBN—more than all other federal agencies combined. The diversity among narcotic agents was indeed unique and receives further discussion in Chapter 3, but pointing to black agents while defending a dubious statistic was the equivalent of saying: I'm not racist, some of my best employees are black.[74]

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[73] Schneider, *Smack*, 46; Morgan, *Drugs in America*, 145; Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012), 99–100; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 283.

[74] See "Another Problem for the Big Cities," *U.S. News and World Report*, April 6, 1959, in Folder 9, Box 7 and transcript of program, "New York Forum," April 28, 1962, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. An article detailing Anslinger's participation in a raid on a Chinatown opium den actually used the "ethnic friend" alibi and read: "The Commissioner assured him that he had many Chinese friends, but that he was determined to stamp out opium smoking in the Capital." Edmond Van Tyne, "Personalities in Law Enforcement," *True Detective*, June 1939, Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

While these developments help explain the apparent racial cast of America's drug wars, the Bureau was sensitive to charges of racism. In 1934, Anslinger's tenure as Commissioner nearly came to an abrupt end when he made the mistake of circulating an agency-wide memo that described an unreliable informant as a "ginger-colored nigger," which prompted an outpouring of criticism from both the Senate and White House.[75] Following this incident, the Bureau took pains to avoid any signs of overt racial prejudice. One speech on marijuana, for example, was edited to read: "The clientele was principally ~~colored~~ men of the racketeer type and white prostitutes."[76] Once again, coded language became an important part of public presentations. From the 1930s to the 1950s, the Bureau was notorious for hounding jazz musicians; attacking jazz as a carrier of addiction became an indirect way of addressing black drug use. In a chapter of *The Protectors* titled "Jazz and Junk Don't Mix," Anslinger called jazz musicians "neither fish nor fowl" and describes the music itself as "decadent" with only "token respectability." In an effort to de-glamorize the art form, Anslinger detailed the arrests and overdoses of Billie Holiday and Charlie Parker, both of whom "paid the supreme price for their addiction." The Bureau even made attacking jazz musicians a component of its foreign policy and sought to restrict their international travel. In France, Bureau agents provoked the arrest of Milton Mezzrow, a Jewish saxophonist famous for introducing artists like Louis Armstrong to marijuana, on the grounds that he "exerts a harmful influence and is a discredit to the United States." Ironically, only a few years later, the State Department sent artists like Armstrong around the world as exemplars of American culture.[77]

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[75] Anslinger, Circular Letter No. 324, dated December 4, 1934, in Folder "(0370-3) Circular Letters, 301-400," Box 55, RG 170, NARA; in a letter to the Assistant Secretary of State dated December 30, 1934, Sen. Joseph Guffey of Pennsylvania called for Anslinger's resignation, in Folder 5, Box 3, Anslinger Papers. See also John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), 84–5.

[76] See draft titled, "Marijuana, the weed of folly and dreams." Although undated, the speech is held in a folder of material dating from the late 1930s to early 1960s in Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[77] See a memo report by Jack Cusack dated November 7, 1951, suggesting that jazz musicians passports be revoked in Folder "(0660) France #3, 1951-1953," Box 156; Agent Charles Siragusa is quoted in a report to Anslinger dated July 13, 1953 in Folder "(1825-7) Reports Progress Dist #17, 1951-1957 (2 of 2)," Box 83; another report dated September 4, 1956, reveals that Siragusa successfully prevented Mezzrow's entry to Italy, in Folder "(1825-7) Reports Progress Dist #17, 1951-1957 (1 of 2)," Box 83, RG 170, NARA. See also Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 150–164.

Social class was also an important arbiter of the way drug use was perceived and discussed. To convey the broad scope of the problem, the Bureau often stressed that the dope menace threatened all of American society, regardless of social and economic barriers. As Elizabeth Bass, a hard-nosed political operator and District Supervisor during the 1930s, informed reporters, "the problem is not entirely an urban one. It is not confined to any class of society or race." Anslinger, too, emphasized, "Actors, lawyers, engineers, surgeons and even diplomats have come to this office for help." Affiliated journalists likewise noted, "the drug habit knows no class distinctions or social barriers."[78] It is undoubtedly true that addiction troubled the upper and middle classes as well as the lower; the crucial difference was in how addicts from different social strata were treated.

The critical distinction was between "medical" or "recreational" addicts: those who became addicted in the course of medical treatment (or malpractice) versus those who took drugs simply for the thrill. In practice, this created a two-tiered system that remains visible today. White middle or upper class users were almost always coded as medical addicts and spared criminal charges; they either escaped punishment by turning informant or were quietly assisted in the management of their condition. Lower class or otherwise socially marginalized users, however, faced the full force of the law.[79]

A telling indication comes from the anecdotes Anslinger used or the cases in which he involved himself personally. The Bureau faced occasional criticism for its draconian approach, so Anslinger liked to highlight examples of the Bureau's magnanimity. In *The Protectors*, he describes how Bureau agents caught a famous former boxing champion he calls "Roger Crattle" (likely Barney Ross) forging prescriptions for Dilaudid. According to Anslinger, the FBN persuaded the U.S. Attorney to hold criminal charges in abeyance if Crattle sought treatment at a federal facility in Kentucky—an action taken solely because of Crattle's celebrity and claim that he became addicted while recovering from wounds suffered in WWII. Similarly, in *The Murderers*, Anslinger boasts of how, despite his official opposition to

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[78] Associated Press, "Drive to End Drug Traffic in Midwest Led by Woman," *Washington Post*, December 8, 1934, p. 4; Richard Hirsch, "Freeing the Drug Slaves: An Interview with U.S. Commissioner of Narcotics Harry J. Anslinger," *True Detective*, October 1947, in Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers; Joesten, *Dope, Inc.*, 38.

[79] An agency-wide memo from Anslinger dated March 20, 1949, urges field agents to encourage local District Attorneys to allow addicts "of previous good reputation" to defer prosecution if the addict sought immediate treatment. In Folder "(0370-3) Memorandum for All District Supervisors, 1936-1954," Box 56, RG 170, NARA.

ambulatory treatment, he personally helped cure a prominent Washington high-society lady from her addiction to Demerol by securing a direct supply from a pharmaceutical manufacturer, and then secretly replacing it with placebos. Once she was weaned from the drug, Anslinger took the woman aside and told her, abracadabra, "You are no longer addicted," a benediction met with tears of joy.[80]

Perhaps the most alarming and hypocritical example comes from Anslinger's account of the ambulatory treatment offered to a powerful but (anonymous and) unrepentant Congressman who was addiction to morphine. Rationalizing that this man was "one of the most influential members" of Congress, whose "decisions and statements helped to shape and direct the destiny of the United States and the free world," Anslinger claimed that he averted an international scandal and Soviet propaganda victory by keeping the legislator's addiction quiet and personally providing a direct, private supply. Historian John C. McWilliams speculates the unidentified Congressman was none other than Joseph McCarthy.[81] Though we may never know the true identity of the addicted Congressman, the point was that not all drug users were treated the same, and white upper and middle class users received consistently preferential treatment. While it was easy for someone in Commissioner Anslinger's position to treat the individual users that came to his attention with compassion, in the broad scheme of things, when the addict-as-victim view came into conflict with the addict-as-carrier view, the FBN came down firmly on the side of containment.

In the American context, addiction was particularly dangerous as a force of downward mobility. This was a prominent theme in the discourse of the dope menace, and one 1950 radio program (edited and approved by the Bureau), described the fall of a former Judge, who mourned, "At one time I had a nice office—a nice practice—I had a happy family..." But addiction ended all of that; as the narrator solemnly concluded, "That's the way it is with dope. It's no respecter of rank or position—or brains. It

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[80] Anslinger, *The Protectors*, 179-183; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 175–6. Crattle was likely Barney Ross, a famous Jewish boxer, whose struggles with addiction were chronicled in the 1957 film *Monkey on My Back*.

[81] In *The Murderers* (p. 181-2), Anslinger wrote, "The lawmakers went on for some time, guaranteed his morphine because it was underwritten by the Bureau. On the day he died I thanked God for relieving me of my burden." See also McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962*, 99. McWilliams cites an interview with former Agent John T. Cusack and David Oshinsky's biography of Joseph McCarthy, *A Conspiracy so Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (New York: The Free Press, 1983), and speculates that morphine was used to treat McCarthy's well-known alcoholism.

doesn't matter who you are or where you are . . . or what side of the tracks you live on."[82] In *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1800-1980*, historian H. Wayne Morgan contends, "Americans have opposed drug use and feared drug experiences because they seemed to threaten a generally accepted set of values and aspirations that dated from the beginnings of the national experience."[83] Among those were self-reliance and the American dream of upward mobility. Addiction seemed like the antithesis of those very qualities. In the Bureau's estimation, addicts were completely incapable of holding down a regular job or of living a normal life—thus cutting off their access to any kind of social mobility. Writ large, the Bureau argued there were serious economic consequences and, in 1957, Anslinger calculated that a population of 100,000 addicts drained $350 million from the U.S. economy each year.[84] By 1970, the former Commissioner was fighting a losing battle as attitudes toward drug use softened, but warned *Playboy*, "The economic consequences of having a nation of potheads would be dreadful."[85]

The question of personal responsibility runs unresolved throughout these discussions, once again echoing older debates about the worthy and unworthy poor and the determinative influence of genes versus environment. Anslinger promoted the 1961 book *Merchants of Misery*, by Seventh-Day Adventists official J.A. Buckwalter, as a guide for narcotics education because of its emphasis on "wholesome living rather than the often discouraging attempts to rehabilitate the human wrecks that are the product of drug addiction." Advocating a sternly moral and religious response to drugs, Buckwalter repeated the familiar refrain that drugs can send users from "the top of the social ladder" to "the cesspool of the underworld." Still more damning, in Buckwalter's eyes, was the willful rejection of commonly accepted moral values,

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[82] Script of radio program "Shooting Gallery," dated April 9, 1950, UN-NBC Series, United Nations Radio, in Folder "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1949 thru June 1951, folder #4," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

[83] This consensus on social values, Morgan continues, "involved an individualism that was responsive to larger social needs and that conformed to limits; the need for order, efficiency, and predictability that kept the entire society going; productivity that enriched society as well as the producer; an emphasis on the observable reality of the world rather than flights of imagination; and a rational mentality and emotional stability that were the hallmarks of a liberty based on conscious logic. Drug experiences and effects seemed to produce opposite results..." Morgan, *Drugs in America*, ix–x .

[84] Anslinger, "Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics," May 29, 1957, Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[85] "Playboy Panel: The Drug Revolution," *Playboy*, January 1970, in Folder 11, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

which made the addict's "personal deterioration" and physical "degradation appropriate."[86] In other words, addicts made a choice and deserved their terrible fate.

This is a difficult question to parse, both for the Bureau and later historians. The lack of consensus on the nature of addiction makes the matter of personal agency even murkier. In *Smack: Heroin and the American City*, Schneider points out, "historians believe in human agency, and a metaphor of epidemics obscures the actions of those who chose to use heroin, and those who chose to sell it, turning them into the hapless victims of larger forces."[87] In *Heroin Century* (2002), sociologist (and recovered addict) Ian Smith and psychiatrist Tom Carnwatch, similarly argue "humans are not controlled by internal chemistry alone."[88] Yet the Bureau's use of medical language and comparison with slavery seemed to obliterate the choices of drug users. If drug abuse was truly contagious, was it really the user's fault when he or she "caught" addiction because of environmental or hereditary factors? Despite Schneider's appreciation for human agency, he too has difficulty addressing the issue. In his "urban history of heroin," Schneider highlights the importance of "drug knowledge" in perpetuating use, but is unable to pin down precisely when knowledge of a drug becomes use or abuse of that drug.[89] Bureau officials likewise seemed unsure of exactly how much personal responsibility to ascribe to addicts. When describing the consequences of drug abuse, as Buckwalter does, the user's choice and fault is pretty strongly implied, a distinction that came down to social status far more often than drug use per se.

While the dope menace was quite literally colored and coded by class, it was also gendered. Anslinger frequently pointed out, "Narcotics and prostitution . . . were handmaidens in the underworld," and the drug traffic was often associated with "white slavery" or sex trafficking as examples of a depraved kind of capitalism. At other times, gender was combined with racial and class considerations to sort the innocent from the guilty. Here the critical question was did the depiction of individual drug use confirm or threaten accepted gender norms? When the addict in question could be presented as a damsel-in-

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[86] Letter dated September 12, 1956 from Anslinger to J.A. Buckwalter, in Folder "(1690-10) Merchants of Misery," Box 72, RG 170, NARA. Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery*, 72, 78

[87] Schneider, *Smack*, xvi.

[88] Tom Carnwatch and Ian Smith, *Heroin Century* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 75.

[89] See, for instance, Schneider's discussion of how a marijuana subculture paved the way for future heroin epidemics by carving out specific locales where experienced drug users mingled with novices, thus transmitting their drug knowledge and culture to the next generation. Schneider, *Smack*, 23–4.

distress, as in the case of Anslinger's "beautiful, gracious lady" of Washington society, gender norms ensured she got the benefit of the doubt. If the addict in question threatened traditional gender norms, like promiscuous women or homosexual men, they were seamlessly rolled into the construct of the dope menace. In *The Murderers*, Anslinger wrote about "effeminate Teddy," a homosexual alleged to hook young boys and then trade drugs for sex. "Teddy," Anslinger warned, "was a degenerate who . . . lured young people to his apartment solely for his profit and his perverted sexual practices. Yet he is not unique. There are a thousand of these sub-strata vermiforms crawling in the shadows of any major city."[90] Overall, the dope menace was frequently depicted as a threat to American gender norms.

One common trope was to describe the plight of white middle class girls forced into prostitution or sexual degradation by their addiction. In addition to Teddy and his "vermiform" cohort, in *The Murderers*, Anslinger conjured up the graphic image of a hypothetical "flaxen-haired eighteen-year-old girl sprawled nude and unconscious on a Harlem tenement floor after selling herself to a collection of customers . . . in exchange for a shot in her arm." The Harlem backdrop was no afterthought; invoking the specter of miscegenation was a deliberate way of connecting the dope menace of the 1950s and 60s to older anxieties about cocaine-crazed blacks rampaging and raping their way through the south. This blonde, Anslinger wrote, was one of the "dream girls," drug-addled teenage "white girls from good families" who were lured into addiction by Chinese or Mafia traffickers and soon found themselves forced into "sex orgies" and other despicable acts.[91]

When the drug traffic resumed after WWII, public anxiety focused most acutely on fears of teenage drug use; after all, this was America's future and drug use nicely complimented broader concern with teenage rebellion and juvenile delinquency. By the time Anslinger published *The Murderers* in 1961, the descent of white teenagers into addiction was already a familiar storyline. Often with Bureau cooperation, popular outlets like *Actual Romances*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *True Story*, and the *Saturday Evening Post* ran boilerplate accounts of teenagers falling in with the wrong crowd, experimenting with drugs, and then plunging into a degrading life of addiction and crime. These tales

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[90] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 25, 191–2.

[91] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 4, 25–34; Morgan, *Drugs in America*, 92–3; Keire, "Dope Fiends and Degenerates: The Gendering of Addiction in the Early Twentieth Century." This trope resurfaced in the 2000 Steven Soderbergh film *Traffic*.

were larded with moral lessons. Troubled teens came from broken or dysfunctional households with confused gender roles—single mothers, fathers disappointed in daughters, sons failing to live up to masculine ideals, adolescent girls torn between school and dating. These were "embryo mobsters," Anslinger warned, and the tragedy could unfold with alarming speed. *Reader's Digest* cautioned that "a teenager can become a full-fledged drug addict in 14 to 30 days," and most would be forced into crime to support their addiction: "girl addicts usually become prostitutes or shoplifters; boys turn to picking pockets, car 'boosting' and other forms of thievery."[92] Throughout these accounts, addiction is a deadly and irresistible force. Reflecting the Bureau's conflicted view of treatment, redemption was rare and came only through compulsory institutionalization or turning to religion. Many were given up as lost. "You'd better forget you have a son," one doctor counciled a distraught mother.[93]

The critical point here is that race, class and gender were not just categories used to describe addicts and drug use—rather purported drug use was a way of branding entire communities and classes of people already on the outskirts of mainstream society. The conspiratorial view of the American drug war is that tarring these groups with the label of social menace or dope fiend was a way to reinforce their marginal status, justify state coercion and generally keep them in check. The reality, however, is that it was difficult for the "square" world of policymakers like Anslinger to differentiate and parse the socio-economic problems that created such a stratified society and made the disenfranchised seem threatening

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[92] For examples, many of which were collected by Anslinger and can be found among his personal papers, see: Herbert Brean, "A Short - and Horrible - Life," *Reader's Digest*, September 1951, Folder 1, Box 7; "I Joined a Tee-age Sex and Dope Gang", *Actual Romances*, December 1951, Folder 1, Box 12; David Hulburd, "It Happened to Amy: The Story of a Teen-Age Addict," *Woman's Home Companion*, May 1952, Folder 3, Box 12; "Don't Let it Happen to You!" (Parts 1 and 2), *True Story*, February and March 1951, Folder 19, Box 12; Harry J. Anslinger, "The Facts about Our Teen-Age Drug Addicts," *Reader's Digest*, October 1951, Folder 1, Box 7, Anslinger Papers. See also Eric C. Schneider, *Smack*, chapters 3 and 4.

[93] Cameron Cornell, "My Son is a Dope Addict," *Saturday Evening Post*, January 26, 1952. This comment in particular elicited a lot of complaints from readers. One reader from Evansville, IN wrote the Bureau to protest the article's pessimistic attitude about the chances of recovering from addiction. Anslinger wrote back to assure the woman that the statement "was purely the product of a writer's imagination." The Bureau was also given an essay written by "Bobby," the actual subject of the article, who published a direct response in *The Key*, an in-house publication at the U.S. Public Health Hospital in Lexington, KY. "Bobby" insisted he was being treated successfully and the "better forget your son" line in particular had left "a dark brown taste in my mouth." In contrast to the picture presented in the article, he wrote, "I am completely convinced an ex-addict can live truly happy and contented without drugs." See a letter from Anslinger to Mrs. Loretta Stutz (Evansville, Indiana), dated May 19, 1952 and Bobby's essay forwarded to District Supervisor Irwin Greenfeld by Agent Donald T. Howard on May 19, 1952. Both can be found in Folder "(1690-10), Reader's Digest," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

to mainstream America. An apparent predilection for drug abuse and addiction seemed to confirm their already marginal social and political status. As Anslinger himself suggestively wrote, "we are in the main not dealing with average citizens . . . but in fact with people who had unpleasant and troublesome tendencies before drug addiction was superimposed."[94] Anslinger was talking about personality disorders, but it's not hard to see how these "troublesome tendencies" might include being poor, gay, black, Chinese, Mexican, young or politically rebellious.

In keeping with its deterministic view of narcotics, the Bureau consistently portrayed addiction with a clear sense of inevitability. The truth is that human responses to addiction, be it to narcotics, cigarettes, alcohol, gambling or sex are incredibly diverse. Sometimes physical dependency is the most pronounced feature, while other addicts suffer from psychological dependence. Many drug users remain highly functional and go undetected, able to manage their addiction and lead outwardly normal lives. William Steward Halstead, for example, was a successful and famous American surgeon and one of the founders of Johns Hopkins Hospital—but was also addicted to cocaine and morphine for his entire adult life.[95] A number of the addicts interviewed by David Courtwright et al. in *Addicts Who Survived* (1989), similarly reported that many drug users, particularly in the years prior to WWII when the quality of street heroin remained high, were able to manage their addiction with little outward indication. "People that were dope fiends you'd never know that they were dope fiends, for the simple reason that they didn't nod on no corners . . . They were clean, their clothes looked good," claimed one. "Curtis," a Harlem resident, explained, "the pressure was not like it is now. We got real drugs, good drugs-not like the 1 percent they get now . . . You would hardly know an addict when you saw him."[96] But as the quality of street heroin declined over the course of the twentieth century, increasingly desperate addicts turned to petty crime or "capers" to fund their addiction. In a groundbreaking 1969 anthropological study of New York heroin users, Edward Preble and John J. Casey, Jr. argued that the "hustle" of meeting their daily needs belied the stereotype of addicts as lazy and essentially withdrawn from modern society. Instead, Preble and Casey's research indicated that "the street heroin user is an active, busy person, preoccupied primarily

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[94] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 226.

[95] Richard Davenport-Hines, *The Pursuit of Oblivion: A Global History of Narcotics* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 159–160.

[96] Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*, 49, 191.

with the economic necessities of maintaining his real income-heroin." Many, the authors concluded, would likely abandon the lifestyle if presented with a legitimate opportunity for a better one.[97]

For the Bureau, protecting the public superseded questions that, at least to some agents, were largely academic. "Innocence and guilt crop up in unexpected corners. There is room for compassion, for pity, for help and for common sense in carrying out our responsibilities," Anslinger concedes in *The Traffic in Narcotics*. "But before all else is the safeguarding of the government and its laws and its people."[98] It was the Bureau's job to protect American society from the dangers of the drug peril. If addicts were dehumanized in the process of fighting the dope menace, then, as many agents suggested, that was just part of cleaning up the shit. Anslinger firmly believed the ends justified the means. As he once explained, "I am quite of the opinion that as long as there is an organization attempting to take people off narcotics, it is all right, even though some of their attitudes are questionable."[99] Regardless of personal culpability, addicts were dangerous and the public needed the Bureau of Narcotics to protect it. As addiction took root among the marginalized and threatened the mainstream, the Bureau believed it had a duty to fight the infection. Everything else was of secondary importance.

Arch-villains and Drug Barons

The final component of the "narcotics evil" was the actual drug traffickers, a term most accurately applied to groups moving large volumes of illicit drugs at the international or interstate level. Below and usually several times removed from the international or regional networks were the dealers, operating at the retail level and selling directly to users. But just as the words "drugs" and "narcotics" were used inclusively, the term "traffickers" was also used with little precision and often encompassed the entire

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[97] Edward Preble and John J. Casey, Jr., "Taking Care of Business—The Heroin User's Life on the Street," *The International Journal of the Addictions* 4, no. 1 (March 1969): 1–24; David Simon and Edward Burns, *The Corner: A Year in the Life of An Inner-City Neighborhood* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997), 11. Simon and Burns' treatment of drugs in inner-city Baltimore is in many ways a compliment and update of Preble and Casey's study and defies many conventional stereotypes. As Simon and Burns explain, "In West Baltimore, you can be proud of a good caper; hell, a working viable caper is to be celebrated . . . everyone living off a corner understands and accepts the distinction between a caper and a crime. Stick a gun in a man's face and takes his wallet; that's a crime and, hey, you're a criminal. But steal the copper plumbing from a rowhouse under construction and sell it for scrap; that's a caper."

[98] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 293.

[99] "Playboy Panel: The Drug Revolution," January 1970, Folder 11, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. Anslinger was commenting on the self-help group Syanon.

distribution side of the illicit drug trade, from the growers to the peddlers. "The nature of the illegal narcotics traffic requires a combination of individuals," Anslinger explained in *The Traffic in Narcotics*, including "the higher-ups, the peddlers, and the pushers. Therein is found the hierarchy of the underworld, and taken together they represent a far more formidable threat to society than the individual offender."[100]

Although depictions of sinister foreign traffickers nearly always accompanied discussion of the drug trade, one of the chief reasons for creating a Bureau of Narcotics was to enforce the Harrison Narcotic Act of 1914, a law intended to regulate the domestic legal trade. Throughout the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, doctors were responsible for most addiction in America due to liberal use of morphine and the equally ubiquitous presence of opiates in patent medicines. By the time the FBN was operational, however, many physicians had become attuned to the dangers of addiction and more conservative in their prescription of narcotics.[101] As a result, the Bureau quickly turned its attention away from regulating the medical community and toward the black market.

Drug traffickers (both then and now) come in all shapes, sizes and nationalities.[102] The Bureau, however, tended to target three distinct groups over the years: the Chinese (first as immigrants, later as communists), the Japanese, and organized crime as commonly represented by the Mafia. The Bureau shifted emphasis between each of these groups in keeping with the times, but consistently portrayed each as a subversive foreign menace and warned "The big narcotics gangster is probably the most ingenious and ruthless type of criminal in the underworld."[103]

As the nation's top drug enforcement official, Anslinger found it convenient to have a personal nemesis to better highlight the importance of office and clarify the narrative in these early depictions of the war on drugs. Most famously, Anslinger case mob boss Charles "Lucky" Luciano in this role following WWII (a development analyzed in Chapter 5), but he was not the first arch-villain identified by the FBN.

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[100] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 299.

[101] Courtwright, *Dark Paradise*; Musto, MD, *The American Disease*.

[102] Alan Block, "European Drug Traffic and Traffickers Between the Wars: The Policy of Suppression and Its Consequences," *Journal of Social History* 23, no. 2 (Winter 1989): 315–337; Alan A. Block, *Perspectives on Organizing Crime: Essays in Opposition* (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991).

[103] Harry J. Anslinger, "The Facts about Our Teen-Age Drug Addicts," *Reader's Digest*, October 1951, in Folder 1, Box 7, Anslinger Papers.

That distinction belongs to Elias Eliopoulos, the purported "Drug Baron of Europe." According to Anslinger, Eliopoulos, a Greek merchant with excellent connections and shady business practices, "was a historic link between the individual network and personalized violence of the 1920's and the deadly and dedicated dominance, in the late 1930's and thereafter, of the dope-running murder-machine called Mafia."[104] The Bureau painted a vivid portrait of Eliopoulos and his brothers as the embodiment of old Europe. In *The Murderers*, Anslinger described him as "the handsome, swaggering, well-dressed baron of the business. In Paris he was the *bon vivant*, a frequenter of boulevard cafes, impeccable, always carrying his gold-topped cane which was a kind of trademark, splashing his money around for champagne parties, race tracks, opera and dinners, and an assortment of women."[105]

With a criminal network that spanned the Atlantic and was capable of reaching into China, Eliopoulos was portrayed as a forerunner to future drug kingpins. Eliopoulos reportedly had good (but unspecified) political ties was untouchable for much of the 1930s, until he and his brothers claimed sanctuary in the States to escape Nazi Europe. With Eliopoulos finally within his grasp, Anslinger assigned Agents Charlie "the Sphinx" Dyar, a seasoned Treasury operative, and George White to harass the brothers and round up former criminal associates aggrieved by the frequent double-crosses characteristic of drug trafficking.[106] Based on the testimony of their criminal underlings, Elias and his brother George were convicted in New York in 1943 on charges dating back to a large seizure of morphine made in 1930. Anslinger quickly issued a triumphant press release declaring that the Bureau had shut down "the No. 1 narcotics smuggling combination of all time," and imparted the brothers' flight from justice with an air of otherworldliness by describing it as a hegira—an Arabic word used to describe the Prophet Mohammad's flight from Mecca to Medina in the seventh century.[107]

Unfortunately for Anslinger and the FBN, mines owned by the Eliopoulos brothers in Greece supplied aluminum ore to the U.S. War Department, which meant the brothers were connected in the United States as well as in Europe. Their conviction was overturned on technical grounds due partly to

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[104] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 56; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 24 See also Folder "(1690-10) Drug Barons of Europe," in Box 71, RG 170, NARA.

[105] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 58.

[106] George White, "Diet of Danger," in Folder 11, Box 3, White Papers.

[107] Treasury Department Press Service No. 37-3, dated June 12, 1943, in Folder "(1690-12) Folder #2, Publicity, Press Release, 1943 thru 1947," Box 74, RG 170, NARA.

lobbying by officials from the U.S. Bureau of Mines. Indignant, Anslinger personally took the issue directly to "the Old Curmudgeon," Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, who resolved the conflict in favor of the FBN. Elias and his brother were soon deported back to Greece. "I would like to have heard the tongue-lashing Ickes gave to that Bureau of Mines official. I am told it was classic," crowed Anslinger. As a postscript that left no doubt on Eliopoulos's character, Anslinger claimed Elias took up arms trafficking in the Middle East immediately after WWII and sold weapons to both the Arabs and Israelis. A few years later, the FBN worked back channels to squash Eliopoulos's application for Marshall Plan funds to recondition the bauxite mines. When he heard Eliopoulos had died suddenly Athens, Anslinger quipped, "After this, hell won't be fit to live in."[108]

In public accounts of the Bureau's work, Anslinger consistently emphasized his own single-minded pursuit of big-time traffickers and described Eliopoulos as "the gold-tipped white whale I had to reach."[109] Evoking Moby Dick was not just another passing literary allusion; whether in pursuit of Eliopoulos or Luciano, Anslinger proudly portrayed himself as every bit the driven Captain Ahab—overlooking, of course, that Ahab's obsession and monomania doomed the crew of the *Pequod*.

As with drug users, race and class served to differentiate FBN targets. While Eliopoulos was singled out of the nascent world of organized crime and painted with an aristocratic air, the other primary target of pre-war Bureau operations, Chinese immigrants, were portrayed in a far more monolithic fashion. The focus on the Chinese first presaged and was then incorporated into the Bureau's on-going concern with organized crime. Although Chinese immigration was essentially nil after the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the remaining population made a convenient foil and the communities of mostly single men doing unskilled labor were known to harbor opium smokers. Chinese-run opium dens were particularly irritating to white America as places where the races might intermingle and novices receive initiation into

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[108] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 71-73; George White, "Diet of Danger". Folder 11, Box 3, White Papers. In April 1951, the Bureau's Rome office sent back word that "the Eliopoulos Brothers were involved in arms shipment to the Arab States at a time when such traffic was contrary to United States policy." An agent stationed in Athens also reported he had gathered enough information of Eliopoulous's criminal activities "to prevent a favorable report on them from emanating from the E.C.A. [Economic Cooperation Administration] office here . . . I am confident that action on their request loan from the E.C.A. will be stopped as a result of our efforts here." See Charles Siragusa, Progress Report No. 39, dated April 26, 1951 in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA and Martin Pera, reported dated April 23, 1951, in Folder "(0660-A), Agent Martin F. Pera's Foreign Assignment," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[109] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 71.

the world of opium smoking and other vices. The image of American women seduced into the world of opium addiction via these dens was a common trope and Anslinger cautioned that "a special Oriental ruthlessness" had spread "incense-flavored depravity" across the country.[110]

The Chinese represented a special kind of dual threat as (at least in the public's mind) confirmed opium users and potential traffickers, so many of the Bureau's early cases were directed against Chinese organizations. Anslinger deflected early criticism of the Bureau by personally leading a series of high-profile raids on opium dens in Washington's Chinatown, timed to coincide with a national convention of a Chinese fraternal organization known as the On Leong Tong. A few years later, one of the Bureau's first successful long term undercover investigations was against the Hip Sing Tong, another organization whose members were suspected as major players in the national opium market. The principals in all of these cases were predictably caricatured in subsequent accounts, with a "wizened yellow face," as "hatchetmen" or a "venerable Oriental who still affected the trailing mustaches and silken mandarin robes of a Fu Manchu."[111] Melvin Hanks, a Customs agent and narcotic specialist during in the 1930s and 40s, described the Chinese as particularly troublesome criminals, who, with their "inscrutable smile," had "few equals in wary, deceptive methods."[112] There were convictions in all of these cases and the agents were undoubtedly sincere in their belief that Chinese traffickers posed a threat, but the racialized descriptions offered in each account played on familiar archetypes of the Chinese as a reliable "other" and expanded the Bureau's purview beyond drug use *per se* to include the devious foreigners lurking in American cities.

The combination of Chinese foreignness and the Bureau's interest in organized crime created a circular kind of logic: the Chinese-American fraternal organizations known as tongs looked like ready-made criminal networks to the Bureau, while the discovery of tong involvement in the drug traffic reinforced the FBN's belief that drugs fueled the rise of organized crime in America. According to Peter

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[110] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 20-31.

[111] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 20-24. See also Richard Hirsch, "How Treasury Agents Broke the 'Poison Sleep' Gang," *True Detective*, May 1939; Edmond Van Tyne, "Personalities in Law Enforcement," *True Detective*, June 1939; James Phelan, "When the Rookie Took the Tong," *True: The Men's Magazine*, December 1959, in Box 12, Anslinger Papers; "Seize Opium Smokers Near Nation's Capital," *New York Times*, April 6, 1930, p. 34.

[112] Melvin L. Hanks, *Narc: The Adventures of a Federal Agent* (New York: Hastings House, Publishers, 1973), 63, 38. Hanks also writes: "The Oriental smugglers, particularly the Chinese, were and probably still are, the cleverest and most difficult to apprehend," (p. 10) and, "For ways that are devious and tricks that deceive, the Chinese are world masters." (p. 82)

Niblo, a narcotic agent who served in Hong Kong (and later with the CIA and State Department), the FBN "developed [an] unusual expertise in Chinese organized criminal investigations" that colored, at least in part, how all Chinese were perceived and policed. A 1951 memo prepared by the San Francisco office and distributed Bureau-wide with a cover letter by Anslinger, warned agents that a "social-psychology, or 'way of thinking', brought from the Orient, tends to make them contemptuous of Western manners, including law-enforcement." Tongs were described as a "vicious and powerfully coercive secret order," filled with "daring and law-defying Chinese" involved in criminal enterprises like gambling, prostitution, drugs and human trafficking. Publicly, the Bureau was somewhat less equivocal and acknowledged that not all tongs engaged in criminal activity. Privately, however, Niblo reported that the Bureau remained convinced that "each and every one of them provided a cover for narcotic trafficking, prostitution, gambling, and money washing."[113]

World War II had a major impact on the international drug traffic. Although it temporarily disrupted international trade routes, the war also introduced new wrinkles and shifted some of the roles in the discourse of the dope menace. Ironically, even while the tongs were coming under fire in the U.S., on the international stage China was grouped together with the U.S. as a "victim" nation. China's opium problem and Chinese drug use could be viewed with sympathy as long as it was *over there*. The Japanese occupation of Manchuria reinforced China's victim status and presented Anslinger with a new international antagonist. (Compounding the irony, Niblo speculates that the tongs turned to opium trafficking to fund the Kuomintang resistance.) As reports began to creep out of China that Imperial Japan was using opium as a tool of occupation, Anslinger privately chafed at American neutrality policy and quietly built his files. After Pearl Harbor, diplomatic niceties went out the window and Anslinger was free to unleash his fusillade against Imperial Japan, including his claim about multiple Pearl Harbors and

[113] Peter Niblo to Douglas Valentine, July 22, 1994, in Folder "Niblo, Peter," Box 5, The Douglas Valentine U.S. Government Drug Enforcement Collection, National Security Archives, George Washington University, Washington, DC (hereafter abbreviated Valentine Collection.) See also memo titled "Chinese Tongs," with a letter from Anslinger dated August 16, 1951, in Folder 9, Box 10; and Richard Hirsch, "How Treasury Agents Broke the 'Poison Sleep' Gang," *True Detective*, May 1939, Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

the Japanese use of opium as a tool of subversion and war. "We should not be far short of the mark if we said that 90% of all the illicit 'white drugs' of the world are of Japanese origin," he declared.[114]

During the 1930s, drug trafficking was usually described as a product of greed or moral failure; the participation of Imperial Japan introduced a new set of ideas to the discourse of drug control. Narcotics became, according to the Bureau, "another form of chemical warfare . . . as deadly as that of the prohibited gases." In a framework that would become increasingly pronounced in the second half of the century, Custom Agent Hanks described how the Japanese "had combined narcotics smuggling and espionage in one ingenious operation." Anslinger and Bureau allies pressed this interpretation at every opportunity and faced little opposition during a time of war. As the Commissioner liked to say, "We Americans say that our Constitution follows our flag. Japan ought to say that opium both precedes and follows the flag of Japan."[115]

Once again race played an important role in elevating the level of rhetoric. Hanks described the shift from Chinese immigrants to Japanese officers in starkly racial terms: "Round countenances gave way to bony ones. Slanted eyes were more likely to be shielded by spectacles. The Japanese, who up until then had given us only minor trouble, began moving into the narcotics racket in a big way."[116] A few months after the war in Japan ended, Anslinger revealed the depth of his animosity to a reporter from *Liberty* magazine: "I never trusted them, I don't trust them now . . . Now that the war's over, somebody

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[114] Niblo to Valentine, July 22, 1994. Folder "Niblo, Peter," Box 5, Valentine Collection; an undated speech titled "American Policy, Constitution follows our flag; Japanese Policy, Opium precedes their flag," presents a number of Anslinger's collected notes and reports. Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers; see also Folder "(0605) Mukden Factory, 1935-1955," in Box 150, RG 170, NARA for a collection of reports relating to the operation of Japanese heroin factories and social conditions in the surrounding area. For charges against Japan, see Press release dated January 26, 1942 in Folder "(1690-12) Folder #1, Publicity, Press Release, 1938 thru 1942," Box 74, RG 170, NARA.

[115] Another of Anslinger favorite lines was: "Pestilence and war are historically associated with each other but it has been left to the Japanese to find a way of making a pestilence, the opium traffic, pay for war," a slogan he credited to a speech delivered by Lieutenant-Commander Reginald Fletcher to the British House of Commons on December 22, 1938. See press release dated January 26, 1942 in Folder "(1690-12) Folder #1, Publicity, Press Release, 1938 thru 1942," Box 74; "Material for Radio Program, Maryland Pharmaceutical Association," February 28, 1942, in Folder "(1690-8) Folder #3, Publicity, Radio, 1941-1948," Box 69, RG 170, NARA. Many of the specific charges and phrases were repeated verbatim by third parties: for examples see Hanks, *Narc*, 125, 134–7; James Monahan, "Japanese Pipe Dream," *The Elks Magazine*, May 1942 (reprint), Folder 10, Box 7, Anslinger Papers; Andrew Tully, *Treasury Agent: The Inside Story* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958), 127; and Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 8-10.

[116] Hanks, *Narc*, 125.

may find some good Japanese somewhere. Well, all I can say is that we'll still search them - the bottoms of their soybean barrels and the insides of their shoes. There won't be any peace treaties with dope smugglers."[117] In *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (1986), John Dower describes how the Pacific theater of WWII was cast as a racial struggle and characterized by hatred on both sides, but also how quickly race relations between the U.S. and Japan evolved at war's end.[118] Anslinger, too quickly recovered from his own enmity and was soon citing excellent Japanese cooperation in international control, particularly as he sought to shift attention to Communist China.[119]

The FBN's WWII-era engagement with Japanese drug trafficking left a crucial legacy—for now the drug traffic was frequently and persuasively cast as a tool of espionage and aggression. Bureau officials jumped on this new angle and began elaborating on the subversive image of "fifth columns" and the dope menace as a secretive set of enemies both within and without. Internally, the Bureau returned its focus to the problem of organized crime, which they now associated primarily with the Mafia. Externally, Anslinger assumed the rise of American geopolitical power would finally allow the Bureau to attack the foreign sources of the domestic drug trade.

Identifying, let alone cutting off, the origins of the domestic drug traffic proved easier said than done, however. Year after year, the FBN issued contradictory statements about the ultimate source of the drug trade. In 1942, for example, the Bureau estimated that three-quarters of the opiates seized in the U.S. came from Iran, but also described Japan as the source of "90% of all the illicit 'white drugs' of the world." The following year, the Bureau claimed "Mexico has replaced the Orient as the major source of narcotics" entering the country, which was true until the end of the war. By 1948, the Bureau shifted its attention to Europe and identified Italy as "the main source of postwar heroin smuggled into American cities." But in 1951 the Bureau was also telling reporters that Mexico was again responsible for 85% of the opiates entering the country. Eventually, the Bureau focused its foreign operations on the

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[117] Albert Q. Maisel, "Getting the Drop on Dope," *Liberty*, November 24, 1945, Folder 6, Box 12, Anslinger Papers

[118] John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986).

[119] Wayland Speer, one of Anslinger's top lieutenants, toured a number of Far Eastern countries following the American occupation of Japan and reported "I believe I could well spend some time in Japan working closely with the authorities here to break up this traffic." Reports held in Folder "(0660-A-3) Wayland Speer's Foreign Assignment, Correspondence and General File," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

Mediterranean, where the Turkey-to-France-to-U.S. route that became known as the "French Connection" was responsible for much of the Atlantic heroin trade. When France was designated as the latest primary source country, one agent finally asked if that was consistent with repeated statements that "the principal sources of supply for heroin are Communist China, Syria, Turkey and Lebanon?"[120]

Communist victory in the Chinese civil war ultimately proved a godsend to the Bureau's PR machine, and China thereafter dominated the list of countries identified, at one time or another, as "the greatest source of opium and heroin in the world for the illicit traffic."[121] The Bureau's portrait of Communist China brought together all of the amorphous threats associated with the dope menace: slavery, contagion, foreign subversion, espionage, even the monsters. As Anslinger wrote in *The Murderers*, "Now Red China has become the dope-vending dragon of the East."[122] Like the Japanese before them, the Chinese Communists were alleged to use narcotics as a weapon of war. Initially, Anslinger emphasized the threat to American troops fighting in Korea, but quickly broadened the scope to include the American homeland, and, indeed, the entire free world. "The United States is a target of Communist China," he testified at the UN. In *The Traffic in Narcotics*, he wrote, "Again the policy of trying to weaken an enemy by subsidizing addiction was at work. This time the free people of the world, fighting against communism and its spread, was the objective..."[123] A briefing paper prepared in 1954 described how "the big bludgeoning, blood-dripping fist of Red China" was poised over Southeast Asia and warned

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[120] For 1942 estimates see: Treasury Department Press release dated January 26, 1942 in Folder "(1690-12) Folder #1, Publicity, Press Release, 1938 thru 1942," Box 74, RG 170, NARA and Ryan Gingeras, "Poppy Politics: American Agents, Iranian Addicts and Afghan Opium, 1945-80," *Iranian Studies* 45, no. 3 (May 2012): 318. For Mexico, see: Treasury Department Press Service No. 37-95, dated August 6, 1943, Folder "(1690-12) Folder #2, Publicity, Press Release, 1943 thru 1947," Box 74, RG 170, NARA and Peter White, "Dope Inc.," *Argosy*, February 1951. In Box 12, Folder 1, Anslinger Papers. For Italy, see Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 83. For European operations, see generally the monthly progress reports compiled in Box 83, RG 170, NARA. On the inconsistency in assigning blame, see a note by Siragusa affixed to a memo by Wayland Speer, dated April 1, 1961, which described France as "the principal source of supply for heroin reaching the United States," in Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

[121] Anslinger, undated draft (circa June 1952) of guest column for Victor Riesel's "Inside Labor," in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1952-1954," Box 153, RG 170, NARA.

[122] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 226.

[123] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 10, 92. See also "Remarks of the Honorable Harry J. Anslinger, United Sates Representative to the United Nations, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Eighth Session, April 1953. The Illicit Narcotic Traffic in the Far East." Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

that narcotics would be the vanguard of invasion.[124] Over time, the Bureau used the drug issue to further isolate China on the world stage and Anslinger frequently claimed it was the only country that defied the international community when it came to drugs. "That's where the Iron Curtain should be," he emphasized, "not on the European side, because we get complete cooperation from Russia, Hungary, Poland, all of those Iron Curtain countries. Their controls are excellent."[125] These kinds of accusations broadened the Bureau's base of support and Anslinger readily supplied material to interested politicians and groups like the Committee of One Million, a "China Lobby" group that advocated against UN recognition of China.[126]

The anxieties surrounding addiction and the drug trade inevitably coalesced into a new front of the Cold War, and affiliated journalists and media outlets readily picked up the hue and cry. In *Washington Confidential* (1951), Heart reporters Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer claimed, "A definite tie-up exists between Communists and the narcotics traffic." Joachim Joesten called Red China "the darkest spot in the world drug picture today." Andrew Tully's *Treasury Agent: The Inside Story* (1958), a compilation of heroic derring-do by the Treasury's law enforcement wing, described the machinations of the "Poole Gang," a group of San Francisco merchant seamen the Bureau identified as heroin couriers supplied in China. In a chapter titled "Red China's Secret Weapon," Tully claimed it was "beyond doubt that heroin is being shipped regularly from Communist China." An article appearing in *Master Detective* magazine titled "Smashing Red China's Fifth Column," warned that the FBN was the only entity standing against "the very real *invasion* of the United States by a peculiarly hellish fifth-column operation that seeks to undermine the morale of our youth and destroy our fighting strength."[127]

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[124] "Red China and the Narcotic Traffic—Mid-1954 Report", Folder 9, Box 10, Anslinger Papers.

[125] Anslinger, "Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics," May 29, 1957, Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[126] In a letter to Rep. Gordon Canfield (R-NJ) dated February 11, 1954, Anslinger sent material and rehearsed a number of well-worn talking points for the Congressmen, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1952-1954." For the Committee of One Million, see a letter from Anslinger to Marvin Liebman dated May 18, 1955, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1955-1958," Box 153, RG 170, NARA. See also Jonathan Marshall, "Cooking the Books: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the China Lobby and Cold War Propaganda, 1950-1962," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 11, no. 37 (September 2013).

[127] Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, *Washington Confidential* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1951), 28. See also Joesten, *Dope, Inc.*, 161; Tully, *Treasury Agent*, 127–132; Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery*, 92; Edward S. Sullivan, "Smashing Red China's Fifth Column," *Master Detective*, 1954, in Folder 13, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

The reality, of course, was somewhat more complicated and the Bureau's actual evidence of Red China trafficking was never better than circumstantial. The Bureau tended to cite any narcotic seizures made in the region as proof of Chinese involvement in the drug traffic and Anslinger sometimes relied on rather dubious logic. As he explained to other Treasury officials, much of "the opium, morphine, and heroin produced in Communist China is smuggled through Bangkok" to Hong Kong. "It is therefore the inevitable conclusion," he concluded, "that illicit narcotics reaching Hong Kong and the West Coast of the United States originate in Communist China."[128] Within the U.S., meanwhile, the Bureau spent years unsuccessfully trying to develop cases that implicated sources in China.[129] As recounted in Chapter 7, in 1962 the Bureau finally gained a foothold in Southeast Asia and looked forward to incriminating the Chinese regime. What the agents actually discovered, Peter Niblo, the first agent stationed in Hong Kong, recalled, was that "opium was coming out of the same area as it is today, the Golden Triangle," a relatively lawless area that included Burma, Thailand, Laos and China's Yunnan province, and where CIA-connected groups like the remnants of Chiang Kai-Shek's Kuomintang Army remained active.[130] Few agents, however, were prepared to undermine Anslinger's well-known (and very public) position that Red China was the source of all heroin in the Far East.

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[128] After citing reports about Chinese opium being smuggled to Bangkok, Anslinger wrote: "According to British authorities, most of the narcotics reaching Hong Kong come from Bangkok. Most of the narcotic reaching the West coast come from Hong Kong." Therefore, everything coming from Hong Kong, he concluded, came from China. Memo from Anslinger to Ralph Kelly (Commissioner of Customs) and George White (FBN), dated October 29, 1958, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1955-1958," Box 153. See also, Folder "(0660-A-3) Wayland Speer's Foreign Assignment, Correspondence and General File," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[129] In a memo dated May 20, 1953, for example, one FBN official ordered agents in California to "be sure to include one defendant in Communist China" as this would "be worth a great deal to the Commissioner in the United Nations." The Bureau made enough noise that eventually J. Edgar Hoover ordered the FBI to look into the allegations, but their informants reported had "no information that Chinese Communist Government is directing the sale of narcotics to the United States or using the profits therefrom in this country to promote subversive activity." Douglas Allen, FBI report dated January 26, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1952-1954." By the early 1960s, the standing orders to be alert for Chinese communist involvement had become so rote that FBN officials simply noted, "All of our Field Offices are aware of the Bureau's interest in developing Chinese investigations in the United States indicating Communist China as the source." Siragusa, Memo for Files dated February 12, 1962, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1962-1963," Box 153, RG 170, NARA.

[130] Niblo to Valentine, July 22, 1994, in Folder "Niblo, Peter," Box 5, Valentine Collection. See also Folder "(0620-13) Hong Kong, 1964-1967," Box 150, RG 170, NARA. KMT involvement in the SE Asian opium trade is a major argument in Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade*, Revised (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2003), 193–386.

Historically, China and the U.S. were close allies in the fight for international drug control, dating back to the beginning of the century. Had he not been blinded by the ideological conflict of the Cold War, Anslinger might have recognized that the two countries retained many common interests. In *Webs of Smoke: Smugglers, Warlords, Spies, and the History of the International Drug Trade* (1998), historians Kathryn Meyer and Terry Parssinen argue the Communist Chinese government actually "carried out an effective and thorough antinarcotics program . . . by combining legal restrictions with mass movements to educate people against drugs. The communist cadres could arouse the fervor of the people because they identified drug manufacture, sales, and use with national enemies. The eradication of drugs became a revolutionary activity."[131] In still another of the ironies common to America's encounter with drugs, it seems Anslinger's "dope-vending dragon of the East" actually embarked on a domestic counternarcotics program remarkably akin to the American one—in which drugs were consistently associated with foreign enemies and stamped out in the name of national security.

Imperial Japan and Communist China were useful from a rhetorical perspective because they were easily distinguished as enemies of the United States. But what made the drug traffic so alarming was the way it seemed to bring together so many different kinds of threats: foreign military powers might be involved, but American were also told to worry about the contagious psychoses of addiction, the deviousness of foreign espionage, the subversion of organized crime and the lingering suspicion that America's enemies were already here.

Drug Wars and Themes of Counter-Subversion

The image of the dope menace, with its layered implications of conspiracy, has proven so durable because its resonates clearly with deep-seated and historic anxieties about internal subversion and the fear that America's open society will be turned against itself. After September 11, America had terrorists. The Bureau of Narcotics had dope fiends, communists and mobsters. In the nineteenth century, Americans feared Freemasons, or religious groups like Mormons, Catholics and Jews. In other words, the dope menace was but one elaboration of recurrent American cultural anxieties about the erosion of moral values and the ability of Americans to carve their own destiny.

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[131] Kathryn Meyer and Terry Parssinen, *Webs of Smoke: Smugglers, Warlords, Spies, and the History of the International Drug Trade* (Lanham and Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 269.

These fears have deep roots. In his seminal 1960 essay "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," historian David Brion Davis argued the nativist movements of the nineteenth century produced a literature that "attracted wide public support" and "evoked images of a great American enemy that closely resembled traditional European stereotypes of conspiracy and subversion." Davis's argument has important implications for the study of drug control, and as Susan Speaker points out, has direct parallels in the rhetoric that accompanied the establishment of drug prohibition in the twentieth century, when Anslinger and other reformers "routinely described drugs, users, and sellers as 'evil' and often asserted or implied that there was a large sinister conspiracy at work to undermine American society and values through drug addiction." In an essay titled "Shutting Out the Evil: Nativism and Narcotics Control in the United States," Douglas Clark Kinder similarly argues, "by asserting that the narcotics problem was 'foreign,' both in terms of source as well as use," the FBN and other early drug warriors "exploited nativist feelings in America and justified a series of laws collectively establishing a nonmedical drug prohibition in the country and entrusting narcotics control to the federal government."[132]

Panic over the drug traffic historically comes in waves. In the twentieth century, the early 1910s, 1930s, early 1950s, late 1960s and 1980s all witnessed spikes in public anxiety over drugs. David Musto has described this as a "cycle of learned experience," but American historian Richard Hofstadter would undoubtedly also have indentified these dates as periods of "social crisis," when intense social or international conflicts created a fertile ground for what he called "the paranoid style" in American politics, "a way of seeing the world and expressing oneself" that reflects "the way in which ideas are believed and advocated rather than . . . the truth or falsity of their content." The paranoid style, he noted, also comes in waves and is preoccupied with the image of "a vast and sinister conspiracy, a gigantic and yet subtle machinery of influence set in motion to undermine and destroy a way of life." This kind of thinking is on clear display in the writings of Anslinger and other public figures concerned with the dope menace. The

[132] David Brion Davis, "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47, no. 2 (September 1960): 205–224; Speaker, "'The Struggle of Mankind Against Its Deadliest Foe': Themes of Counter-Subversion in Anti-Narcotic Campaigns, 1920-1940"; Douglas Clark Kinder, "Shutting Out the Evil: Nativism and Narcotics Control in the United States," in *Drug Control Policy: Essays in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 117–142.

drug traffic evoked such a visceral response because the stakes seemed to be so high. As Hofstader argued, the paranoid style is a response to "social conflicts that involve ultimate schemes of values and that bring fundamental fears and hatreds, rather than negotiable interests, into political action." While race, class, gender and the anxieties that accompany broad social changes helped give the dope menace its particular shape, Speaker argues, "reformers' rhetoric consistently suggested that much more was at stake: our virtue, our civilization, our very souls."[133]

In short, drugs have a great deal of cultural baggage in the American context. As historian Paul Gootenburg notes, "Drugs are protean and relational things, and cultural magnets for charged meanings." Both drug use and drug control have assumed and shed meanings to suit the times. In the mid-twentieth century, the plague of drugs was a way of understanding the profound social and economic changes unfolding with particular urgency in American cities. Drug control, particularly the effort to fight drugs at the source, was a way of reasserting America's exceptional nature in the face of domestic turmoil. Robert Dallek argues that American foreign policy is often "a product of emotional displacement, of the impulse to make overseas affairs a vehicle for expressing unresolved internal tensions."[134] Clearly, this is a pronounced trend in the history of American drug wars. In later periods of American history, as with the drug wars waged under Nixon and Reagan, the issue took on additional context as a corollary to broader political clashes between liberal and conservative political ideologies. Although the Bureau's drug war was equally rooted in a domestic context, the FBN itself was an agency born in the devastation of the Great Depression, spent an adolescence in a time of global war and matured while facing the existential threat of nuclear annihilation. For the FBN, the drug war was about securing the homeland and fighting America's enemies; that made the subversion of organized crime and global drug trafficking networks almost more disturbing than the effects of individual drug use, no matter how horrible.

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[133] Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008). Hofstadter's essay on "Cuba, the Philippines, and Manifest Destiny" is often cited as the first to introduce the idea of "psychic crises," but most of the analysis above is drawn from his essay "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," first published in 1964. See also Speaker, "'The Struggle of Mankind Against Its Deadliest Foe': Themes of Counter-Subversion in Anti-Narcotic Campaigns, 1920-1940"

[134] Paul Gootenberg, ed., *Cocaine: Global Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 7; Robert Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), xii–xiii.

One of the most prominent themes emerging from the discourse of the dope menace is that trafficking organizations represented a hidden enemy within, or, equally troubling, a "government-within-a-government," that undermined the stability and sovereignty of the state. It was this context that made organizations like the Mafia or the tongs appear to be a threat to national security. These groups, Anslinger cautioned his agents, shared "a tradition of secrecy" and were shielded by language barriers or the famous code of *omerta*. Both organizations also seemed to exert a troubling degree of influence over their respective ethnic communities. In *The Murderers*, Anslinger reports the gratitude of an Italian businessman freed from the grasp of a cadre of *mafiosi*: "The gang that controlled this place was not a gang but like a government unto themselves," the businessman complained. "To my mind there was little difference between living in East Germany and living here." By the late 1950s, the Bureau feared the Mafia had achieved such a level of organization that it was establishing, one agent wrote, "an 'invisible government' superior to our own." This kind of language was not confined to internal memos. In the *Saturday Evening Post*, Sen. Estes Kefauver wrote, "the Mafia really is a secret international government-within-a-government," while his colleague Sen. Alexander Wiley worried the Mafia's example "will lay a pattern for other organizations to think they are bigger than the state."[135]

What seems to have been most troubling about both the Chinese (communist or otherwise) and the Mafia, was not their drug dealing per se, but that they commanded the allegiance of their communities and their ultimate loyalty was not to the United States. Davis describes how prejudice against Catholics was at least partly rooted in the belief that their fealty was to the Pope in Rome, rather than the President in Washington. Bureau allies like reporter Ed Reid (whether consciously or not) adroitly played on these lingering cultural anxieties by claiming the Mafia was "the religion of the criminal classes" and figures like "Lucky" Luciano served as a "high priest" or "god."[136] Even as many authors pegged *mafiosi* with distinctive traits like blue jowls or tacky suits, authors like Frederick Sondern warned they walk among us undetected, but known to each other. "They have no sign of recognition; there is no need of it," he

[135] Anslinger memo dated August 16, 1951, and accompanying paper "Chinese Tongs," in Folder 9, Box 10, Anslinger Papers; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 91–2; "invisible government" is quoted from a memo, dated January 6, 1960, from George Gaffney (DS, NYC) to Anslinger regarding the Mafia's famous Apalachin meeting, in Folder 7, Box 2, Anslinger Papers; Sen. Estes Kefauver, "What I Found In the Underworld," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 7, 1951; Sen. Wiley is quoted from Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 187.

[136] Ed Reid, *Mafia* (New York, NY: Signet, 1954), 38, 50.

claimed, and they "know each other automatically." As befitting a secret society like the Freemasons or Illuminati, applicants to the tongs and Mafia families were said to undergo intense initiation rituals. Tong members were forced to kneel "before a shrine and crossed lethal weapons" while their brethren burned incense and intoned sacred vows, promising death to those who betrayed them. Mafia hoods were similarly alleged, on pain of death, to swear blood oaths upon acceptance of formal membership.[137] With American society honeycombed by subversive elements bent on the destruction of American values through drug addiction, the stakes went far beyond mere drug abuse. Racial animosity clearly played a role, most prominently in the fluid shell game that officials played as they tried to finger the real enemy behind the dope menace, but the fact that the discourse of the dope menace tapped into such deep seated and familiar anxieties is one of the most important reasons for the drug war's amazing longevity.

Doubting the patriotism and loyalty of competing social and economic groups is a time-honored American tradition, but the combination of closed ethnic societies and drug dealing was very troubling for government officials in the Bureau of Narcotics. The narcotics evil had become a weapon of war and another front in the Cold War. Meanwhile, American law enforcement officials were forced to confront the threat of the Mafia in the midst of their own society. It should be no surprise that the Bureau quickly assumed a siege mentality and slipped, from its very first days, into a metaphor of war.

The drug war, however, was no ordinary war. In the depictions and warnings offered by the Bureau and its allies, the drug war was a dirty war—more akin to the asymmetry of guerilla warfare or terrorism, hence the frequent appearance of fifth (or sixth) columns. In retrospect these anxieties seem overblown if not downright silly (an army of junkies rising up to overthrow the government?), but at the time they were taken quite seriously. Courtney Ryley Cooper, Anslinger's co-author on the infamous "Marijuana: Assassin of Youth" essay, took the threat so seriously that he hanged himself in a New York hotel room when his claims of Nazi fifth columnists were dismissed by federal authorities.[138] "Organized

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[137] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 56; Reid, *Mafia*, 29. In the Anslinger Papers, see also Chinese Tongs," Folder 9, Box 10; Richard Hirsch, "How Treasury Agents Broke the 'Poison Sleep' Gang," *True Detective*, May 1939, Folder 18, Box 12; and James Phelan, "When the Rookie Took the Tong," *True: The Men's Magazine*, December 1959, Folder 17, Box 12.

[138] Suicide described in "Author Kills Self Over FBI Spy Snub," *Washington Times-Herald*, September 30, 1940, in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers and "Fifth Column Expose Failure Blamed for Cooper Suicide," *The Evening Star*, September 30, 1940, in Folder 1690-10, "American Magazine, Courtney Ryley Cooper" Box 70, RG 170, NARA. See also Harry J. Anslinger and Courtney Ryley

crime wears no uniform, and its contempt for the uniform of the law is supreme," Anslinger warned. There were no traditional battlefields here—skirmishes were fought in landscapes as diverse as UN boardrooms, Turkish poppy fields, Italian heroin plants and American inner-cities. For those steeped in this war, the danger was existential and the stakes equal to or greater than America's confrontation with the Soviet Union. Authors like Ed Reid claimed the Mafia "represents a greater threat to the United States than the Communist Party. We know is which direction to face where the Communist threat is concerned," he wrote. "The Mafia is all around us and we are just beginning to get some idea of the extent of its machinations. A liaison of Mafiosi and Communists . . . is not beyond the powers of imagination." Reid was not alone in this fear. Spruille Braden, a longtime State Department official, was even more explicit. "Gangsters and Communism are in cahoots," he declared. "It would pay Stalin to develop crime in this country . . . In my opinion this country is facing the gravest menace in its history, not so much from aggression and Communism as the breakdown of morality everywhere." Lee and Mortimer, fed by FBN sources, similarly claimed that "organized gangsters [are] working on one side and the Communists and pinks on the other to turn Americans into addicts..."[139]

Anslinger left no doubt that he considered America at war. "Ours is a war," he wrote in *The Murderers*, "fought on unsuspecting battlefields, unseen and unrecognized in the midst of average, everyday communities." Elsewhere he described the drug war as one "which involves the whole nation," and was fought "against an army of subtle and defiant men" who "poison our children and create thousands of victims with their heroin."[140] More than any other individual, Anslinger helped transform drug control into a drug war, with all its implicit claims on national resources and commitment, and introduced a way of thinking about drugs that has remained into the present.

Cooper, "Marijuana, Assassin of Youth," *The American Magazine*, Vol. 124, No. 1 (July 1937) and Courtney Ryley Cooper, "Double Dealers in Dope," *The American Magazine*, May 1938, in Folder 13, Box 2, Anslinger Papers; See also a letter dated July 27, (1940), from Courtney Ryley Cooper to Anslinger, in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers

[139] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, vii; Reid, *Mafia*, 49; Lait and Mortimer, *Washington Confidential*, 28.

[140] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, ix; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 3.

CHAPTER 2. HARRY J. ANSLINGER: "THE WORLD'S GREATEST LIVING AUTHORITY ON DOPE"

Harry J. Anslinger was an imposing man. A large fellow—not fat but thick like a wrestler—the Commissioner (or the Old Man, as the agents sometimes called him) had a gleaming bald head and a penetrating gaze that was said to catalogue everything, all at once. His friends teased him that he looked like Mussolini. His manner was reserved and straight to the point, a quality that unnerved more than one agent brought before him. Anslinger displayed a strange combination of character traits: he was both diplomat and cop, the studied decorum of a high government official tempered by the Pennsylvania coal fields where he was born and raised. One reporter tried to convey the odd tenor of his audience with Anslinger: "Listening to the commissioner, one gets the strange impression of being in two worlds at once. He is an educated, cultured gentleman . . . But as he gets into the swing of a story, something happens to his polished phrases. 'Trade terms' being to creep in. Soon he is speaking an underworld patois in a Harvard accent."[1]

This split personality extended to Anslinger's surroundings and the Old Man's office was a reflection of both his background and position. "His paper littered desk is that of the typical Washington executive," the reporter continued, "but the rest of his office is a luxuriously furnished narcotics den, hung with scores of engraved and inlaid opium pipes . . . One shelf has a half a hundred hypodermic syringes. Another is laden with homemade gadgets - needles, syringes, pipes, and applicators of all sorts, including some that even Anslinger can't explain."[2] For a while, the Commissioner's office was in the Tower Building at the end of K Street. Eventually FBN headquarters moved to 1300 E Street, just a few blocks

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[1] For Mussolini see H. Keith Weeks (an MGM executive and longtime friend) to Anslinger, letters dated January 8, 1936 and April 19, 1940, in Folder 4, Box 3 and Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. Less charitably, Marie Nyswander, a pioneer of methadone treatment, recalled that Anslinger looked "like a movie character of a despot." Quoted in David Courtwright, Herman Joseph, and Don Des Jarlais, eds., *Addicts Who Survived: An Oral History of Narcotic Use in America, 1923-1965* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 311. See also Albert Q. Maisel, "Getting the Drop on Dope," *Liberty*, November 24, 1945. Folder 6, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[2] Maisel, "Getting the Drop on Dope," *Liberty*, November 24, 1945, in Folder 6, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. See also Will Oursler and Laurence Dwight Smith, *Narcotics: America's Peril* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1952), 134

from the Treasury Department. "How come your bureau doesn't rate an office in the Main Building?" another reporter ventured to ask. "Because our work is nobody's business," came the growled reply.[3]

Anslinger was like that in his public life. He was in but not of official Washington and took pains to stay that way. Despite his thirty-two years as a Washington bureaucrat, he never made the city home and stayed at the Shoreham Hotel in Northwest DC whenever he was in town.[4] Behind closed doors he was a loyal friend and a touchingly devoted husband.[5] Every now and then he even demonstrated a sense of humor. Right after comparing addiction to the devastation of nuclear war and describing Red China's narcotic assault on the West to one audience, Anslinger switched gears to relate how a Chinese woman was recently discovered smuggling heroin in a set of fake breasts. The Old Man wasn't sure how his agent had uncovered the "set of falsies," but confided that applications for screening positions had subsequently jumped by fifty percent. "I think that's the first time that we ever saw that kind of a communist front," he quipped.[6]

Jokes from the Commissioner were rare, however, and in his role as the government's top drug cop Anslinger was usually rather brusque, almost severe in his dealings. As one agent remembered, "if you got a 'well done' out of him it was like getting a citation from some one else..." The Commissioner was a distant figure for most agents and few were eager to face his measured stare. "A call from the director was comparable to a call from the President," recalled another agent, "he was an omnipotent

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[3] Jay Richard Kennedy, "One World—Against Dope," *The Sunday Star: This Week Magazine*, March 7, 1948. Also printed in *The Baltimore Sun*, same date, p. 108, in Folder 13, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[4] Many letters held in Anslinger's papers are addressed to him at the Shoreham Hotel. For one reference to Anslinger's preference for the hotel, see a letter to James C. Ryan (District Supervisor, NYC), dated April 9, 1954, in Folder 14, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[5] Martha Anslinger suffered from multiple sclerosis for much of her life and Anslinger took frequent leave to care for her. John C. McWilliams writes, "there was a sharp contrast between the public Anslinger who mixed with important Washington figures, and the private citizen who derived much pleasure from the two-block walk to pick up his mail at the Hollidaysburg post office and a stag night with old friends at the Blair Country Club." John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), 10, see also footnote 39, page 219.

[6] Anslinger, "Comments before Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics," May 29, 1957, in Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

name like the Wizard of Oz."[7] And lo unto the unfortunate soul facing the Commissioner's wrath. One reporter described the spectacle: "he plants both of his size-twelve feet on the ground. His ham-like hands turn to fists and he pounds his desk until the ash trays jump. His barrel chest swells till you fear for his shirt buttons. His bow tie shifts up and down over his Adam's apple and his beetle-bald scalp reddens in righteous wrath."[8]

As the U.S. Commissioner of Narcotics from 1930 to 1962, Anslinger set the country's drug control policy for three critical decades. The term "drug czar," which carries a certain autocratic air, didn't come into fashion until Richard Nixon appointed a White House aide to personally oversee the nation's drug policy. But Anslinger, more than any other figure before or after, is the one who best fits the image. For thirty-two years, his influence in the field of drug control was unrivaled and official U.S. policy bore his unmistakable imprint. He was often referred to as "the world's greatest living authority on dope," an expertise that afforded him great status and put him on Adlai Stevenson's short list of VP candidates in 1952. (As a registered Republican, he declined.) In 1958, one of Anslinger's subordinates even took the liberty of nominating him for the Nobel Prize, based on his work in the field of international drug control.[9]

Anslinger, however, has left a conflicted historiographical legacy. Many scholars and historians of American drug control give him surprisingly short shrift. David F. Musto's *The American Disease* (1999) is one of the best studies of America's complicated relationship with drugs but is cursory in its treatment of Anslinger, simply noting his vigorous support for a punitive response to drugs. *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1800-1980* (1981), by H. Wayne Morgan, notes how consistently drugs have been interpreted as a threat to American values but pays little attention to the Washington official who exemplified this trend for thirty critical years. The Commissioner of Narcotics makes a few similarly brief

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[7] Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine, July 21, 1994, in Folder, "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection. Jack Kelly and Richard Mathison, *On the Street* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974), 93.

[8] Albert Q. Maisel, "Getting the Drop on Dope," *Liberty*, November 24, 1945, Folder 6, Box 12, Anslinger Papers

[9] The "greatest living authority on dope" plaudit is attributed to Leonard Lyall, a British narcotics expert, and listed on the book jacket of Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*. Anslinger was nominated for a Nobel Prize by Joseph Bransky, one of his long-serving lieutenants, who described the Commissioner as "the undisputed leader in the world in suppressing the abuse of narcotic drugs," whose work helped established an international control framework that could be applied to atomic weapons or disarmament. Letter from Joseph Bransky to the Nobel Prize Committee, dated January 15, 1958, in Folder 9, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. For the VP nomination, see McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 105.

cameos in David T. Courtwright's two excellent books *Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America before 1940* (1982) and *Addicts Who Survived: An Oral History of Narcotic Use in America, 1923-1965* (1989). Richard DeGrandpere's *The Cult of Pharmacology: How America Became the World's Most Troubled Drug Culture* (2006) examines the tendency for American society to treat drugs with a simple good or evil binary but similarly overlooks the role of Anslinger—who, as the previous chapter shows, did perhaps more than anyone to consolidate that view of drugs.[10]

To the extent that Anslinger is remembered today, it is generally not with warm feelings. In *The Drug Hang-up: America's Fifty Year Folly* (1972), Rufus King identifies him "one of the most tyrannical oppressors of his fellow citizens ever to be sustained in public office by this republic." In contrast to scholars who all but ignore Anslinger is what might be termed a "cult of Anslinger" that is often harshly critical but positions him at the absolute center of American drug prohibition. One of the best (or worst) examples of this is *Reefer Madness: The History of Marijuana in America* (1979) by journalist (and celebrity ghostwriter) Larry Sloman. The Commissioner's penchant for grandstanding and overblown warnings about the dangers of drug use, particularly marijuana, has left a rather one-dimensional image of Anslinger as a true-believing zealot whose narrow views on drugs constrained U.S. drug policy for decades and established a lasting foundation of failure in the drug war.[11] To some extent this interpretation is valid, but Anslinger was also much more.

Fortunately, the cult of Anslinger has also drawn more careful practitioners. The most noteworthy is John C. McWilliams, whose biography *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics*, *1930-1962* (1990) remains the most authoritative monograph on the Bureau to date. As McWilliams points out, Anslinger's remarkable thirty-two year career is rivaled only by J. Edgar Hoover, a singular achievement that alone "merits a full-scale investigation of his career." Both Rebecca Carroll and

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[10] David F. Musto, MD, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control*, 3rd ed. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), in particular, see 204–214; H. Wayne Morgan, *Drugs in America: A Social History, 1800-1980* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981); David T. Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America before 1940* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1982); Courtwright, Joseph, and Jarlais, *Addicts Who Survived*; Richard DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology: How America Became the World's Most Troubled Drug Culture* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).

[11] Rufus King, *The Drug Hang-up: America's Fifty-Year Folly* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1972), 69; Larry Sloman, *Reefer Madness: The History of Marijuana in America* (Indianapolis and New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc, 1979); *American Drug War: The Last White Hope*, dir. Kevin Booth, 2007.

Douglas Clark Kinder have looked at Anslinger's rhetorical legacy and published articles or contributed to edited volumes on the subject. Journalist Douglas Valentine also has much to say about Anslinger in his oral history of the FBN, *The Strength of the Wolf* (2004). A number of article-length studies focus on Anslinger's bureaucratic acumen and the FBN role in some of the murkier episodes in the history of the national security state.[12]

Overlooked, however, is the extent to which Anslinger turned drug control into a drug war, a framework that reflected the Commissioner's genuine belief in the threat posed by drugs, but was also an undeniable part of a broader bureaucratic survival strategy to secure greater resources and autonomy. But there are casualties in wars; in this case it was a rehabilitative model of drug control, which Anslinger worked tirelessly to prevent from emerging as a viable policy option. This chapter demonstrates how Anslinger applied lessons learned early in his career, as both an intelligence operative in post-WWI Europe and an official with the Bureau of Prohibition, to the task of shaping and fighting a drug war while navigating the Washington bureaucracy for over thirty years. By establishing the threat of drugs, Anslinger was able to position the Bureau as a bulwark of American values and security, thus ensuring its survival throughout his tenure. Maintaining the discourse of the dope menace, however, also meant silencing critical voices who threatened the basic punitive framework of the drug war.

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[12] John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), 13; Douglas Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf: The Secret History of America's War on Drugs* (London and New York: Verso, 2004); John C. McWilliams and Alan Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954," *Intelligence and National Security* 5, no. 1 (January 1990): 171–192; John C. McWilliams, "Covert Connections: The FBN, the OSS, and the CIA.," *Historian* 53, no. 4 (1991): 657–679; John C. McWilliams, "Unsung Partner Against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113, no. 2 (April 1989): 207–236; Alan Block and John C. McWilliams, "On the Origins of American Counterintelligence: Building a Clandestine Network," *Journal of Policy History* 1, no. 4 (1989): 353–372; Douglas Clark Kinder and William O. Walker III, "Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962," *The Journal of American History* 72, no. 4 (March 1986): 908–927; Douglas Clark Kinder, "Shutting Out the Evil: Nativism and Narcotics Control in the United States," in *Drug Control Policy: Essays in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 117–142; Douglas Clark Kinder, "Bureaucratic Cold Warrior: Harry J. Anslinger and Illicit Narcotics Traffic," *The Pacific Historical Review* 50, no. 2 (May 1981): 169–191; Rebecca Carroll, "Under the Influence: Harry Anslinger's Role in Shaping America's Drug Policy," in *Federal Drug Control: The Evolution of Policy and Practice* (New York, London and Oxford: Pharmaceutical Products Press, 2004), 61–99; Rebecca Carroll, "The Narcotics Control Act Triggers the Great Nondebate: Treatment Loses to Punishment," in *Federal Drug Control: The Evolution of Policy and Practice* (New York, London and Oxford: Pharmaceutical Products Press, 2004), 101–144; Rebecca Carroll, "A Rhetorical Biography of Harry J. Anslinger, Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930 to 1962," Dissertation (University of Pittsburgh, 1991).

The Young Mr. Anslinger

Anslinger's personal and professional background had a profound influence on the way he approached his job as the Commissioner of Narcotics. From boyhood encounters with addiction to hunting communists in post-WWI Europe and taking on rumrunners as the Assistant Commissioner of Prohibition, Anslinger was primed to see the drug problem in a perspective that melded diplomacy, law enforcement and cloak-and-dagger tactics.

Anslinger's first encounter with what he would term "the narcotics evil" came at the tender age of twelve. Born in 1892 to John Anslinger and Christina (née) Fladtt, little Harry grew up in the outskirts of Altoona, PA at a time when the largest demographic of opiate users was middle and upper-class women. In *The Murderers* (1961), Anslinger recalled that about one in ten of the locals were addicts and how one night he heard the screams of a neighbor experiencing the agony of withdrawal. "I had never heard such cries of pain before," he remembered. The tormented woman's husband soon appeared and urgently sent young Harry to purchase morphine from the town pharmacist. "I recall driving those horses, lashing at them," he wrote, "convinced that the woman would die if I did not get back in time." Anslinger returned with the morphine that soothed his distressed neighbor, but he later wrote, "I never forgot those screams. Nor did I forget that the morphine she had required was sold to a twelve-year-old boy, no questions asked."[13] Anslinger is surprisingly unique in that regard; among the many remembrances of former agents, only he cites a childhood experience with drugs as influencing his adult opinions.

As a young man, Anslinger earned an associate degree from Penn State (where his personal papers now reside) and then went to work as a construction supervisor for the Pennsylvania Railroad, where he had "first brush with Mafia violence in America." One day Anslinger found a member of his crew of mostly Sicilian immigrants laying in a ditch, riddled with bullet holes and barely clinging to life. Anslinger learned the man had refused to pay off a local "Black Hand" thug running a protection racket, so he tracked the gangster down and threatened to kill him. His crew was thereafter left in peace, which seems to have imparted the lesson that crime could be checked with threat of force.[14]

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[13] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 8; Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America before 1940*.

[14] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers,* 9–10.

When the United States entered World War I, Anslinger, like many young men, rushed to enlist. Due to a childhood eye injury, he was denied combat duty but rose to the rank of second lieutenant in the Ordnance Division. In 1918, Anslinger joined the State Department and was assigned to the consular staff of the U.S. Embassy at the Hague. Already fluent in German, Anslinger quickly picked up Dutch and was tasked with, in his words, "behind-the-scene intelligence reports and investigations." Anslinger's mentors in the world of the early intelligence community were Julius A. Van Hee and Charles "the Sphinx" Dyar, both of whom seemed rather dashing figures to the young man.[15] Anslinger was given the sensitive assignment of infiltrating the entourage of Kaiser Wilhelm II, then taking asylum in the Netherlands, and convincing him to reclaim the German throne. Posing as a representative of Dutch intelligence, Anslinger warned that Germany's Social Democrats would "bring on revolution, strikes and chaos." The Kaiser, of course, abdicated, and Anslinger later speculated that had he stayed, "A decent peace might have been written, forestalling any change [sic] for a future Hitler gaining power, or a Second World War erupting."[16]

The devastation of postwar Europe made a deep impression on Anslinger. Traveling through Paris and Brussels, Anslinger recorded in his diary, "The sight of a large city in ruins, without a house seen standing, creates a feeling that is difficult to describe." He was struck by the large piles of captured guns laying about, which he took as "a visible sign that civilization has won against barbarism, that spirit has triumphed over the brute in man." This contrast, between civilization and barbarism, became a central theme in the Commissioner's repeated calls for international control of narcotics. Anslinger was also confronted with the antagonists who would define his future. Amongst the ruins, he noticed despondent veterans turning to drugs in their depression or perhaps addicted in the course of medical treatment, and described "young fellows whose faces bore the stamp of the opium smoker, the user of morphine or the new 'kick' called heroin." A more immediate concern, however, was Bolshevism, and

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[15] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 3–9. Anslinger clearly looked up to these two men and paints a heroic portrait of both. He describes Van Hee as "Dapper and always immaculately dressed," and noted, "He smoked cigarettes out of the left corner of his mouth" and "his words came like bursts of machine-gun fire." Dyar, Anslinger meanwhile notes, was nicknamed "The Sphinx and looked like Gary Cooper." See also Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 10; and John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 28–9.

[16] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 13–15, 16. At some point, he managed to collect Kaiser Wilhelm's field utility kit and other personal items, which he later donated to the Smithsonian, but coyly writes how he obtained them "must remain a state secret." A certificate from the Smithsonian, dated March 24, 1959, acknowledge the gift. In Folder 15, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

Anslinger was assigned the task of investigating and monitoring communist agitation. Anslinger took the job seriously and uncovered a few Russian Communist agents en route to the U.S., as well as the American agent in Rotterdam who provided fraudulent visas. He was distressed, however, by what he perceived as the passive attitude of his superiors.[17]

Anslinger's ambition to make a career in the Foreign Service was temporarily frustrated when he was transferred to the Venezuelan port city of LaGuaria in 1923. Compared to the intrigues of interwar Europe, there was little for Anslinger to do in Venezuela and he feared the backwater posting was a professional dead end. "I cannot even find a little Communist about," he complained to one State Department official, and told Dyar, "Turtles are slow but life and work here slower."[18] It wasn't long, however, before a change of scenery ushered in a new phase of Anslinger's career. In 1926 he was transferred to the Bahamas, a critical transshipment point for illicit liquor. Anslinger's efforts to secure British cooperation on anti-smuggling measures quickly drew him into the foreign policy of Prohibition. That summer, Anslinger impressed his superiors at a London meeting with British officials and he was asked to organize a Division of Foreign Control for the Prohibition Unit of the Treasury Department. Shortly thereafter, the Treasury Department formally requested Anslinger's transfer from State and he was promoted to Assistant Commissioner of Prohibition.[19]

Anslinger came somewhat late to the Noble Experiment. By the time of his appointment, the Eighteenth Amendment and Volstead Act had been in effect for nine years and public opinion had turned firmly against Prohibition. It is ironic how quickly Anslinger, too, soured on the project. "The Law must fit the facts," he wrote. Prohibition would never work "if the American people regard it as obnoxious. Temperance by choice is far better than the present condition of temperance by force," he decided. The

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[17] Concluding the episode, Anslinger bemoans the casual attitude of the State Department, writing, "Decades later, in the world of narcotics, I met this same Red enemy—with the same ultimate goals. And in some measure, I also met the same puzzling unconcern." Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers,* 15–19. See also Lt. Anslinger's Diary," March 6 and 7, 1920. Folder 1, Box 1; and a letter dated October 20, 1920, describing Anslinger's duties from William Phillips to "Carr," in Folder 19, Box 3, Anslinger Papers.

[18] Quoted in McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 31.

[19] See letter dated January 19, 1928, from Assistant Secretary Seymour Lowman to the Secretary of State in Folder 19, Box 3; a letter from the Treasury Department to Anslinger dated October 15, 1929 and a series of memos dated August 14, 1929 written by Anslinger and J.M. Doran (Commissioner of Prohibition), in Folder 11, Box 3, Anslinger Papers.

future Commissioner of Narcotics learned a key lesson here: not to be wary of efforts to legislate morality "by force," but to ensure that policy retained the support of the people. Calling alcoholism "a curse of the modern industrial state," Anslinger issued a series of papers and began to develop arguments he later applied to drugs. It's clear he believed the problems of Prohibition were due to a poorly informed public, rather than flawed policy, and he thought public education campaigns had the best chance of improving the efficacy of the Volstead Act. He also began thinking about the proper division of resources between federal and local government. "The Federal function should be primarily investigative rather than that of policing," he argued. "It should aim to break up the large inter-state and inter-district conspiracies and center its efforts on the commercial operations" and "investigate collusive conditions where local officials are in conspiracy with these rings." Ultimately, however, Anslinger recognized Prohibition was a failed policy, and later complained, "it was becoming obvious that this was a thankless and impossible assignment. The people of the nation had rejected Prohibition. Criminal gangs were feeding this appetite. Liquor poured across the borders not in a trickle but in a flood."[20]

Meanwhile, reformers were beginning to pivot to a new intoxicant: narcotics. Due chiefly to the lobbying efforts of private citizens like Elizabeth Washburn Wright (the widow of Dr. Hamilton Wright, a major player in the 1909 and 1912 international conventions) and politicians like Rep. Stephen G. Porter (R-PA), Congress was also ready to pick a new target. Enforcement and administration of the 1914 Harrison Narcotic Act, the federal legislation upon which domestic drug control was based, was originally entrusted to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, but was transferred to the Bureau of Prohibition with passage of the Volstead Act. Control of both alcohol and narcotics suffered in the notoriously corrupt agency. In 1929, a federal grand jury uncovered rampant corruption in the New York office of the Narcotics Division of the Bureau of Prohibition. Padded expense accounts, falsified arrest records, agents associating with known dealers—the list of offenses was damning. Still worse, it was discovered that both the son and son-in-law of division chief Colonel Levi Nutt had worked as attorneys for the notorious (and recently murdered) gangster Arnold Rothstein. It was clear a shake-up was in order.[21]

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[20] Undated papers titled "Common Sense Temperance," and "The American Prohibition Policy," in Folder 5, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. See also Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers,* 20.

[21] McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 37–45; Musto, MD, *The American Disease*, 206–209.

In the winter and spring of 1930, Rep. Porter introduced a series of bills to create an independent Bureau of Narcotics. As Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, Porter played an enthusiastic role in negotiations with the League of Nations to create an international framework for drug control. Now he complained that drugs had "been a sort of stepson of prohibition," and argued that as control of each commodity was really a separate policy, each should have its own enforcement mechanism. Moreover, the increasing unpopularity of Prohibition was hurting efforts to control narcotics. "We were all convinced of the wisdom of separating narcotics from prohibition, for the very simple reason that there is absolutely no relationship between the two," he argued on the floor of Congress. "The latter is highly controversial and the former is not."[22]

Porter's colleagues agreed. Porter introduced legislation to create an independent Bureau of Narcotics in late March, and it was passed and signed into law by early June. Although both Porter and Elizabeth Wright lobbied for Admiral Mark Bristol, Anslinger was named Acting Commissioner in a July recess appointment and confirmed in December after proving his efficacy by taking down a network of Chinatown traffickers and leading a national roundup of Italian gangsters, which the media immediately dubbed a "War on Drug Rings." Due to his experience breaking up the East Coast's "Rum Row" as the Assistant Commissioner of Prohibition, Anslinger was a natural choice. But it didn't hurt that his wife, Martha Dennison, whom he married around 1923, was a relative of Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon. Anslinger initially seems to have been somewhat ambivalent about the appointment and still harbored ambitions to become a diplomat, but it was actually his internationalist bent that secured him the job. As Garland Williams later recalled, the job "required close cooperation with drug authorities in many foreign countries. The Treasury Department needed an internationalist to run the Narcotics Bureau."[23]

Taking the helm of an unproven federal agency must have been daunting to the 38-year-old Anslinger, particularly after witnessing the failures of Prohibition. The position of Commissioner of

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[22] *H.R. 10561; A Bill to Create in the Treasury Department a Bureau of Narcotics and for Other Purposes* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1930), 13–15.

[23] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers,* 20–22; Carroll, "A Rhetorical Biography of Harry J. Anslinger, Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930 to 1962," 65. See also "Anslinger Slated for Narcotic Post," *Washington Post*, July 1, 1930, p. 1; "War on Drug Rings," *Washington Post*, August 30, 1930, p. 4; "Up From the Ranks," *Washington Post*, September 25, 1930, p. 6; "Hoover Faces Fight on Appointments," *New York Times*, November 16, 1930, p. 5; "Predicts Defeat for Brossard," *Baltimore Sun*, December 10, 1930, p. 2.

Narcotics was then something of a novelty within the American federal government, with responsibilities divided between foreign and domestic policy, regulating the medical and pharmaceutical industries and leading federal law enforcement efforts. Anslinger scholars are divided on his qualifications and the quality of his performance, but there is uniform agreement that his skill as a communicator and bureaucrat were central to his management style. Ultimately, few people, Anslinger least of all, could have foreseen that he would become one of the longest tenured government officials in American history, a vantage from which he dominated the discourse around drug control for the next thirty years.[24]

Defending the Bureau

From its very first days, the Bureau made a tempting target for politicians looking to score political points and the early years were marked by trial and tribulation. Although the FBN's uncompromising attitude attracted occasional criticism, most of Anslinger's challengers actually came on the Bureau's flanks, in the form of would-be rivals or reformers looking to consolidate the federal bureaucracy. With his agency under frequent attack, Anslinger took some early lumps and apparently suffered a nervous breakdown and lost his hair from the stress. But over the course of his career, the Old Man proved adept at defending the Bureau of Narcotics and its prerogatives.[25]

In a pattern that became all too familiar, Anslinger hadn't even settled into office before federal drug control efforts came under attack on the floor of the Senate, where Sen. Cole Blease of South Carolina presented his colleagues with a tin of opium he claimed was "sold within the shadow of the United States Capital." Mustering his own knack for publicity, Anslinger realized "if the newly formed Federal Narcotics Bureau was to win and hold the respect and support of Congress and the public, it would have to act fast." As Congress debated the merits of an independent Bureau, Anslinger "ordered

[24] Valentine acknowledges the importance of Anslinger's diplomatic background, but contends his marriage to Andrew Mellon's niece "secured" his appointment. Valentine may, in a sense, be right, but on the assumption that Anslinger's financial security would inoculate from the corruption endemic during Prohibition, rather than as an overt sinecure. Carroll, on the other hand, contends that "neither his academic training not his previous work experience sufficiently prepared him" for the variety of challenges facing the position, and that he compensated for his lack of expertise by using his skills as "a powerful and persuasive speaker" to fabricate "horror stories connecting drug use with violent crime." Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 15–16; Carroll, "A Rhetorical Biography of Harry J. Anslinger, Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930 to 1962," 65–66.

[25] Anslinger's nervous breakdown and hair loss are mentioned in Jill Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams: A History of America's Romance with Illegal Drugs* (New York: Scribner, 1996), 104.

all available agents" into an assault on the District's Chinese-run opium trade. The investigation culminated in a series of raids on thirty alleged opium dens and brought national headlines against the backdrop of a suspected nation-wide tong war. Promising to smash the dens "into a teakwood pulp" if they reopened, Ansligner claimed his "first victory at close quarters with the narcotic underworld," the glory of a big bust evidently overcoming the sting of the criticism that prompted the raids.[26]

The episode displayed Anslinger's penchant for using a good publicity stunt to galvanize support for aggressive control measures and counter criticism of the Bureau. Social problems in the District have a way of being magnified as symptomatic of national trends. To meet the political (if not criminal) challenge, the Bureau had to act and take responsibility for a situation that was, at least to some extent, beyond its control. This is the double-edged sword of drug control in American politics: government authorities and politicians point to problems like drug abuse but then must demonstrate real change. As Anslinger and other agents frequently pointed out, the drug traffic was incredibly difficult to stop—particularly once the low-bulk high-profit heroin came to the fore. Right from the start, controlling the narrative became a way to compensate for the impossible task of eliminating drug use in America. Anslinger's well-publicized raids on Chinatown countered Sen. Blease's criticism with a show of arresting a handful of foreigners who could absorb the blame, while the actual traffic just went further underground. By the 1950s, the Bureau was once again forced to deal with the local traffic when Washington's Chinatown opium market reemerged. By then, however, the Bureau was better established and could blame the problem on external enemies like Red China, which helped blend drug control into the increasingly familiar narrative of the Cold War. As *Official Detective Stories* reported, "Washington, the heart of the free world, had been chosen as the first point of saturation."[27] This was a consistent trend

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[26] Anslinger's recollection is slightly muddled here. Blease's complaints about the District's opium trade began in 1929, and most of the raids took place in April when the Porter Bill was still under debate. See Carroll, "A Rhetorical Biography of Harry J. Anslinger, Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930 to 1962," 94; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers,* 20–24. The opium raids were covered in Edmond Van Tyne, "Personalities in Law Enforcement," *True Detective*, June 1939, Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. See also Congressional Record, January 16, 1930 (p. H1701); "Opium Dens Honeycomb Capital, Blease Charges, as Hoover Opens Drive to Dry Up Washington," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 24, 1929, p. 1; "Seize Opium Smokers Near Nation's Capital," *New York Times*, April 6, 1930, p. 34; "Opium Dens Raided Near Capitol and 21 Chinese Caught," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 6, 1930, p. 10; Alan MacDonald, "Why is a Tong War?" *Washington Post*, August 31, 1930, p. M4.

[27] Richard Cornwall, "Undermining Washington—$120,000,000 Worth," *Official Detective Stories*, November 1954, in Folder 13, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

under Anslinger's leadership; depicting the Bureau as a protector of American values was an effective way of defending the Bureau's existence and worldview.

Over the years, Anslinger developed an extensive network of supporters to spread the Bureau's message and extend his influence. Interested journalists were a key part of this network and Anslinger seems to have been particularly close to reporters like Victor Riesel, Frederick Sondern and Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer of the *Confidential* series. But even a cursory look at Anslinger's personal papers reveals a web of contacts scattered across a range of professions, from Hollywood and the media, to Congress and the federal bureaucracy, foreign governments, the pharmaceutical and medical communities, and a host of influential special interest groups like the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Through phone calls, letters, favors and salutations, Anslinger kept this network primed. In *The Protectors*, John C. McWilliams dubs the group "Anslinger's Army," and collectively it had a powerful voice.[28] When trouble appeared on the horizon, the Commissioner could generally count on a outpouring of support to help carry the Bureau through its many crises.

One good example is Elizabeth Washburne Wright, who, despite initially lobbying against Anslinger's appointment, became a critical ally. Independently wealthy and something of a firebrand, Wright enthusiastically took up her late husband's crusade to create an international framework for drug control and was actually the first woman granted plenipotentiary powers by the U.S. government. "It was good to have her on the team," Anslinger wrote. She had enough influence "to lift a telephone and secure an immediate audience with any Cabinet officer. She had the ear of the President himself." This made Wright a useful ally when the time came to rally support for various Bureau initiatives, like uniform state drug laws or diplomatic initiatives. Anslinger, for example, credited Helen Moorhead, an activist with the Foreign Policy Association in the mold of Elizabeth Wright, with helping secure the appropriations necessary to send agents on their first overseas tours after WWII.[29]

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[28] McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 57, 86, 90, 106.

[29] William B. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 65; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 17–20. Constance Drexel, "Prominent Capital Woman is Leading Fight to Eradicate World Drug Evil; Wins Strong Praise from Associates." *Washington Post*, December 30, 1923, p. 21. See also a letter from Wright to Anslinger, dated June 25, 1931, reporting her lobbying efforts for a uniform state narcotic law, in Folder 9, Box 3; and a letter from Anslinger to Herbert May, dated March 17, 1950, mourning Moorhead's passing, in Folder 15, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

Anslinger's Army was essential to maintaining the Commissioner's own job. As a political appointee, Anslinger served under five different presidents but seemed unsure of his position with each incoming administration. When Roosevelt took office in 1933, Anslinger feared that he, like most Hoover appointees, would be dismissed. But allies from across the political spectrum lobbied to keep Anslinger at his post. The State Department's Stuart J. Fuller, chief of the Far Eastern division, urged his retention. Richmond P. Hobson, President of the World Narcotic Defense Association, was a particularly active FBN booster and cited Anslinger's diplomatic work in a letter that implored Roosevelt to "preserve the integrity and efficiency of our Federal Drug Control activities." Similar missives came from the pharmaceutical company Mallinckrodt Chemical Works. Roosevelt even heard from the British colonial official Sir Thomas Russell Wentworth Pasha, head of the Egyptian Central Narcotics Intelligence Bureau, who called Anslinger "a live wire" and predicted that if he was replaced, "our work would suffer very much indeed; and the enemy would rejoice."[30] Anslinger was unique in that regard and it was unusual for a political appointee to have such a diverse constituency.

In 1952, as Eisenhower began to install his own people after twenty years of Democratic governance, Anslinger received backing from allies in the federal judiciary and an outpouring of support from the pharmaceutical industry, which organized an independent campaign to keep him in office. In a comment not often heard from a government regulatee, the President of Sterling Drug informed the incoming Treasury Secretary that Anslinger "has been extremely fair (I might say strict) to those of us in the Industry who deal in legitimate narcotics. In fact, were his control over any product other than narcotics, this letter might well be one of complaint because of too strict regulation for normal business." The Sterling executive urged other industry leaders to do the same and argued that Anslinger represented the best hope for effective drug control "not only in the United States but in other countries as well." R.R. Reed of Wyeth Laboratories similarly reported that Anslinger "commands the respect of the entire drug industry . . . The world is better today as a result of his many accomplishments."[31]

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[30] McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 90, 107–109. See also Hobson to President Roosevelt, April 8, 1933; Mallinckrodt Chemical Works to President Roosevelt, April 4, 1933; and T.W. Russell to Cordell Hull, April 15, 1933, in Folder 7, Box 3; Anslinger Papers.

[31] In a letter dated December 5, 1952, John W. Stansfield (Narcotic Agent, Denver) wrote to regular Bureau-collaborator Judge Twain Michelsen (Superior Court, San Francisco), and asked him to verbalize support for the Commissioner, in Folder 12, Box 2; Letters from James Hill, Jr. to Treas. Sec.

Even the executives of America's favorite beverage company pledged support for the Commissioner. In *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (2008), Paul Gootenberg explains that "a political pact reigned between Coca-Cola and the FBN on coca and related cocaine issues," a relationship he likens to the one between the U.S. government and United Fruit. Essentially alone outside of the pharmaceutical industry, Coca-Cola was allowed to import raw coca leaf (the basis of Coke's mysterious Merchandise No. 5) from South America through intermediary Maywood Chemical Works of New Jersey. Gootenberg describes how this "virtually symbiotic political relation" rewarded both parties: Maywood received an exclusive right to import bulk coca leaves while the Bureau got a compliant industry partner to help manage the legal cocaine trade. Maywood was able to place employees in locations otherwise inaccessible to Bureau agents, particularly in South American countries like Peru, where executives functioned as the Bureau's eyes and ears.[32] Over the years, Anslinger developed personal friendships with executives at all of these companies, and Ralph Hayes, a VP and director of Coca-Cola International from 1948 to 1967, became one of his most ardent supporters. In 1952, Hayes joined the chorus singing Anslinger's praises and, while urging his retention, described his performance as "a superlative demonstration of what complete dedication and honest, skillful administrative direction can accomplish."[33] The enthusiastic support of industry executives does, of course, raise the question of whether Anslinger's Army was actually *cultivating him* and maintaining a figure within the bureaucracy who was sympathetic to their interests. The reality is that this was a two-way street, and Anslinger was careful to return favors to his supporters and friends.

Threats to the Bureau, however, were not always so overt as broadsides delivered from the Senate floor or changes in presidential administrations. The FBN itself was under constant threat from

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George Humphrey and Howard B. Fonda (Burroughs Wellcome & Co., Inc.), dated December 4, 1952, in Folder 13, Box 2; See also Howard B. Fonda to R.W. Albright (Distillation Products) dated December 22, 1952, in Folder 13, Box 2; Letters from R.R. Reed (Wyeth Laboratories) to Anslinger dated January 5, 1953, and from H.S. Howard to President Dwight D. Eisenhower dated January 2, 1953, in Folder 12, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[32] Paul Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 198–204, 240.

[33] "Ralph Hayes, 1894-1977," Memorial pamphlet prepared by The New York Community Trust (http://www.nycommunitytrust.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/BioBrochures/Ralph%20Hayes.pdf, accessed September 30, 2012). See also letter from Ralph Hayes to RW Woodruff (President, The Coca-Cola Company) dated December 4, 1952, in Folder 13, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

within the federal bureaucracy, as budget-minded reformers sought to trim expenses and consolidate federal law enforcement operations. One of Anslinger's greatest priorities was autonomy in the field of drug control and he fought hard to protect it. A key strategy was to keep Bureau appropriations modest; big budgets made big targets.[34] But he was also able to supplement the Bureau's resources with asset forfeitures—a major issue in contemporary critiques of the drug war. Civil forfeiture laws basically allow law enforcement agencies to seize any property or vehicles associated with drug trafficking, even outside of a trial setting and almost irrespective of actual guilt.[35]

The history of the FBN reveals that confiscation of private property is written into the very DNA of American drug control. The federal government authorized the seizure of ships used to evade customs revenues in the very first Congress of 1789. The Bureau began lobbying for the power to claim vessels associated with the drug traffic in 1933 and was granted the authority in 1939.[36] The ability to seize vehicles was a huge boon to the perennially cash-strapped agency. As affiliated journalists wrote, "Testimony to the Bureau's shoestring achievements is the fact that it has never purchased a single car." Even then, the ability to somewhat arbitrarily seize cars was a pernicious influence, and Agent Jack Kelly described confiscating "expensive autos as both a game and legal booty." In the 1950s, the Bureau even

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[34] Budget figures are actually somewhat hard to come by in FBN records. Although Anslinger often pleaded for additional resources, he was careful not to take more than he needed and in a September 20, 1954 letter to Rep. Gordon Canfield (R-NJ), he reported that current appropriations were adequate and the Bureau was "getting along satisfactorily." An August 14, 1953 letter from FBN official George Cunningham to George D. Riley (of the American Federation of Labor), gives a sense of the FBN's annual appropriations and cited the following annual budget and personnel numbers: 1949: $1,542,270, 185 agents; 1950: $1,647,000, 177 agents; 1951: $1,850,000, 188 agents; 1952: 2,500,000, 218 agents; 1953: $2,790,000, 275 agents. In Folder "(280-1) Bureau Operations, 1931-1954," Box 48. There are, however, ample references to keeping expenses down. Two memo issued in 1949 (January 26 and June 29), encouraged the field offices to "practice every possible economy" and admonished them, "Not one cent more than is absolutely necessary for the development of a good case should be expended." In Folder "(0370-3) Memorandum for All District Supervisors, 1936-1954," Box 56, RG 170, NARA.

[35] Richard Lawrence Miller, *Drug Warriors and Their Prey: From Police Power to Police State* (Westport and London: Praeger, 1996); Radely Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police Forces* (New York: Public Affairs, 2013).

[36] See the Judiciary Act of 1789, specifically sections 9 and 30, (available at the National Archives website "Our Documents," http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=12&page=transcript, accessed November 3, 2013). For FBN lobbying efforts, see a letter to the Vice President from Acting Secretary of the Treasury T.J. Coolidge dated June 1, 1934 and a copy of H.R. 5611, introduced May 11, 1933, in Folder "Narcotic Bureau, 1933-1940," Box 191, Entry 193 (Central Files of the Office of the Secretary of the Treasury), RG 56 (General Records of the Department of the Treasury), NARA. The Bill was finally passed on August 9, 1939 as HR 6556, 76th Congress, Stat. 53, Chapter 618.

contemplated giving the Rome Embassy a seized Cadillac as a gesture of gratitude. FBN records confirm that seizing cars was an important strategy—one that net the FBN roughly $500,000 each year. One memo meanwhile cautioned that loose talk about forfeit cars provided openings for defense attorneys to portray the Bureau as predatory, while another FBN directive ordered agents to seize cars whenever possible as a matter of policy. It's clear from Bureau records that seizing property had a dual purpose: it punished suspected traffickers and transferred additional potential resources to the Bureau outside of the normal appropriations process.[37]

Keeping FBN overhead low, however, wasn't always sufficient to keep the agency out of the crosshairs and over the years several proposals to consolidate federal law enforcement threatened the Bureau's autonomy. The first came in 1933 (exacerbating Anslinger's fears of replacement), when President Roosevelt's budget director proposed recombining the FBN and Bureau of Prohibition and transferring them both to the Justice Department in an effort to cut costs and improve enforcement. Both the Commissioner of Prohibition and Attorney General supported the plan, but Anslinger, of course, did not. Behind the scenes, Stuart J. Fuller of the State Department and Anslinger were able to thwart the plan by pointing out how the proposal violated provisions of the recently enacted Convention on the Limitation of the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs—which Anslinger had helped negotiate—that required the U.S. to maintain an independent drug control agency. In *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, William McAllister observes, "For three decades Anslinger blunted attempts to reorganize the FBN by invoking international obligations supposedly incurred under Article 15 of the 1931 Convention." In another recurring pattern, Anslinger parlayed international treaty obligations into valuable internal leverage and used his position astride both domestic and foreign policy to protect his bureaucratic turf.[38]

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[37] Oursler and Smith, *Narcotics*, 136; Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 102. On the Rome Embassy, see Siragusa to Anslinger, October 11, 1956, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2," Box 165. A chart listing FBN auto seizures made between 1954 and 1963 indicates that the Bureau confiscated between 300 and 500 cars each year and provides an estimate of their value, in Folder "(0280-1) Bureau Operations, 1955-1969, Folder #2," Box 48. For memos relating to seized cars, see an agency-wide memo by Anslinger dated January 9, 1950 in Folder "(0370-3) Memorandum for All District Supervisors, 1936-1954," and Anslinger, Bureau Order No. 161 dated October 10, 1956, in Folder "(0370-3) Bureau Orders, 1956-1967," Box 56, RG 170, NARA.

[38] McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 98; McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 88–89.

A second reorganization attempt was launched in 1936, this time by Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., who proposed that all Treasury Department law enforcement agencies (including Customs, the Alcohol Tax Unit, the Intelligence Unit of the IRS and the FBN) be consolidated within a single department led by a shaken-up Secret Service. The Secret Service Reorganization Act, as it became known, was an effort to streamline costs during the Depression and keep Treasury's police arm on even footing with the growing Federal Bureau of Investigation.[39] Once again, Anslinger did not anticipate keeping his job through the process, but having now faced two such attempts in the span of three years, the Commissioner had stock memos on hand citing the many reasons to maintain an independent Bureau. One prepared specifically to rebut the proposal cited the now-familiar treaty obligations and the FBN role in regulating the legal industry, which "must be carried on by a person of official standing and of tact, who is not known primarily as a secret service officer, but . . . an administrator with an independent position in the federal service." Subordinating drug control and legal regulation to a separate agency "would not promote efficient administration of the law," the memo concluded.[40]

Sometimes, however, responding to bureaucratic challenges required greater strategic shifts. The 1937 Marijuana Tax Act is a particularly contentious point in that regard, and several authors have portrayed FBN support for marijuana prohibition as a power grab by Anslinger. To the extent that he is known at all today, it is generally for his hyperbolic claims about the dangers of cannabis and more ink has been spilled over the marijuana issue than any other aspect of the Bureau's history, which has narrowed popular understanding of both the FBN and drug prohibition in America. Anslinger tends to be treated rather contemptuously in such accounts, portrayed as the creature of a reactionary and socially conservative corporate America. One popular canard is that business titans like William Randolph Hearst and the du Ponts pressured an acquiescent Anslinger to ban marijuana in order to protect extensive timber holdings and the synthetic fiber industry. Both the internet and library are awash with

[39] Thomas A. Reppetto, *The Blue Parade* (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 287; McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 89–9.

[40] Memorandum in Respect to H.R. 10586, dated February 1, 1936, in Folder 4, Box 3, Anslinger Papers. Many of these memos are collected in Folder "(280-1) Bureau Operations, 1931-1954," and Folder "(0280-1) Bureau Operations, 1955-1969, Folder #2," Box 48, RG 170, NARA.

conspiratorial accounts that attribute the prohibition of marijuana solely to the machinations of Anslinger and his corporate overlords.[41]

In reality, as late as the 1920s marijuana was considered little more than a nuisance and even reformers advocating for federal drug control paid it little attention. The drug gained gradual notoriety due to its association with Mexican immigrants in the Southwest and jazz musicians traveling up the Mississippi from New Orleans. For the first several years of the Bureau's existence, Anslinger maintained the drug was best left to local police. On this much Anslinger scholars agree, but opinion quickly diverges when it comes to the causal factors leading to the adoption of the Marijuana Tax Act. In *The Strength of the Wolf* (2004), Douglas Valentine depicts Anslinger with a pathological hatred for marijuana and the Marijuana Tax Act as a Depression-era tactic to protect the Bureau.[42] Rebecca Carroll, on the other hand, argues that Anslinger's change of heart was a direct response to the Secret Service Reorganization Act, and that "immediately" after the Act was introduced in the House, "Anslinger's public statements changed" and he "declared war on marijuana." Instead of downplaying the danger as a local enforcement issue confined to a small minority, Anslinger began to issue his notorious "assassin of youth" claims and linked the drug to violent crime in the hope that greater awareness of the dope menace would prevent the FBN's absorption into a super Treasury Department police agency. Anslinger's fulminations on "killer weed" then increased the pressure for a federal statute, even though he remained privately ambivalent about the Bureau's ability to actually enforce marijuana prohibition.[43]

Lingering controversy over the Marijuana Tax Act is a microcosm of the many issues surrounding the Bureau. Far from a conspiratorial power-grab, expanding the Bureau's obligations to include marijuana without additional manpower was actually something of a setback and, had it been taken seriously, would have stretched the chronically understaffed agency even further. Anslinger was candid

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[41] Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair, *Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs and the Press* (London and New York: Verso, 1998); Rudolph J. Gerber, *Legalizing Marijuana: Drug Policy Reform and Prohibition Politics* (Westport and London: Praeger, 2004); Miller, *Drug Warriors and Their Prey*; Sloman, *Reefer Madness.* For additional examples, see websites such as: Peter Guither, "Why is Marijuana Illegal?", DrugWarRant.com, http://www.drugwarrant.com/articles/why-is-marijuana-illegal/; "Anslinger, Hearst, and the 1937 Marihuana Tax Act", http://www.ephidrina.org/cannabis/taxact.html; "How did 'Reefer Madness' Get Started?", Washington Drug Defense, http://washington-drug-defense.com/REEFER_MADNESS (each website accessed December 30, 2011).

[42] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 21.

[43] Carroll, "Under the Influence: Harry Anslinger's Role in Shaping America's Drug Policy," 70–76.

with his superiors that "it would be almost hopeless to expect any kind of adequate control" over a wild-growing weed through essentially the same tax and revenue system used to police manufactured drugs like heroin and morphine.[44] Though marijuana remained useful for social political purposes like maligning jazz musicians, even after passage of the Tax Act it was mostly a distraction from the heroin cases that the agents and public found far more important.

How and why the Marijuana Tax Act was passed raises important questions about causality in the history of American drug control. To put it another way, was drug prohibition an organic bottom-up development, or was it foisted upon the American people by the likes of Anslinger and Hearst, each with their own agendas and ulterior motives? The answer helps shed light on the triangular relationship between the efforts of the FBN, public sentiment and actual policy. In *The Protectors*, John C. McWilliams agrees with Carroll that marijuana prohibition was, at least to some degree, the result of Anslinger becoming trapped by his own inflated rhetoric, only McWilliams contends it was largely in support of the Uniform State Narcotic Law, a 1934 federal law that standardized control measures across state lines. Because few states were eager to take on new responsibilities in the depths of the Depression, Anslinger pointed to marijuana as a reason to increase local enforcement even as he opposed a federal anti-marijuana law. Although the cause was different, the result was the same, with Anslinger's exaggerations boomeranging back on the feds. McWilliams acknowledges that Anslinger did not create the marijuana scare, but argues that he and his supporters "effectively influenced legislative opinion and created the needs for laws."[45] Douglas Clark Kinder and William Walker similarly contend "that Anslinger was far more in command of an existing antidrug consensus than has previously been recognized."[46] What is consistent in all of these accounts is that marijuana prohibition is depicted as a top-down affair, largely dictated to the public by bureaucrats and policymakers.

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[44] Anslinger, memo to Asst. Sec. Gibbons dated February 3, 1936, in Folder 4, Box 3, Anslinger Paper.

[45] McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 54–57, 63–80. Examining the publicity featuring marijuana and designed to support the Uniform Narcotic Law, McWilliams writes, "The anti-marijuana campaign, however, may have been too successful. Anslinger had long wanted legislation for the states, but the heightened public awareness of marijuana as a result of the FBN's propaganda blitz stimulated demand for federal legislation." (57).

[46] Kinder and Walker III, "Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962," 909. In *The Strength of the Wolf* (p. 21), Valentine argues that Anslinger, almost single-handedly, "created a pseudo-crisis" out of marijuana. Carroll is unequivocal but mostly

Anslinger's fear-mongering, however, was successful only because it resonated with a public whose negative views on drugs and ethnic minorities made it amendable to such claims. Due largely to its association with Mexicans and fed by nativist sentiment, Musto explains, fear of marijuana increased during the 1920s and "clearly was present before the Bureau of Narcotics was established in 1930." As knowledge of marijuana grew and its negative associations increased, the situation "led naturally to pressure on the federal government to take some action." An important contributing factor was that public sentiment against Mexican immigrants grew as the Depression increased competition for cheap labor, which also increased the negative association with marijuana. By the time the Tax Act was passed in 1937, H. Wayne Morgan points out, twenty-four states already had laws on the books, which made the federal statue seem "an addition to existing regulation rather than an innovation."[47]

In practical terms, this demonstrates the error of looking to the history of American drug wars for "bad guys" like Anslinger to scapegoat for failed policy, in much the same way the FBN tried to pin blame for the international heroin trade on kingpins like Eli Eliopoulos or Lucky Luciano. The reality, and the relationship between policymakers and the public, is complicated and the drug wars were built upon much deeper cultural anxieties that predisposed a militant and punitive response. Anslinger was not a passive player in this process and does bear real responsibility for imparting American drug control with much of its particular shape and form, but it's important to heed the institutional and historical contexts in which these changes took place. It is telling, for example, that Anslinger's first instinct, after coming around in support of federal marijuana prohibition, was to introduce a clause into an international treaty that would have obligated a federal law. Even though marijuana was a low priority and lacked the international aspect of the heroin trade, Anslinger's consistent view of drugs as a foreign scourge justified an unusual approach; as he wrote in *The Murderers*, "Sometimes you have to know your way through the channels in Washington, especially in the State Department, to get results."[48] Like the FBN's construction of the dope

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accurate in arguing, "Probably more than any other person, Anslinger influenced Americans' attitudes toward narcotic drugs" including marijuana. Carroll, "Under the Influence: Harry Anslinger's Role in Shaping America's Drug Policy," 61).

[47] Musto, MD, *The American Disease*, 219, 221; David F. Musto, MD, "The History of the Marihuana Tax Act of 1937," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 26 (February 1972); Morgan, *Drugs in America*, 141.

[48] Musto, MD, "The History of the Marihuana Tax Act of 1937"; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers,* 276.

menace, this episode illustrates how the Commissioner saw, approached, and cast drugs as a transnational threat, rather than a domestic social problem. Adding marijuana to the FBN's enforcement obligations likely did not, as several authors contend, secure its bureaucratic survival or thwart the Bureau's absorption into a consolidated law enforcement agency. Instead, the FBN's survival was tied to the American people's readiness to see drugs as a foreign problem that required federal action.

Yet Anslinger was acutely aware of the limits on the public's acceptance of sprawling police agencies. Although the FBN developed some potentially effective countermeasures to protect itself, the reasons for its survival as an autonomous agency went beyond any individual action. The Secret Service Reorganization Act and subsequent attempts at police consolidation all failed because they aggravated American anxiety about centralizing too much government power. Even as he sought to expand the Bureau's operational reach, Anslinger remained cautious about tipping that balance and explained, "Our staff, in order to avoid accusations of being like the Gestapo, has remained the same size as it was when the Bureau was established." Morgenthau's plan was eventually dropped because it smacked of a European-style "secret police."[49] In the book *In the Shadow of the Garrison State* (2000), Aaron L. Friedberg describes how the pressures of war and modernity fostered the development of a strong national state but were met by "strong anti-statist influences that were deeply rooted in the circumstances of the nation's founding."[50] Sentiment for a powerful federal government arguably reached ascendency with the establishment of the national security state in 1947, but in the 1930s it was not yet sufficient to overcome the reluctance to create a large federal police force.

Over time, Anslinger and the Bureau got better at dealing with these kinds of challenges and kept carefully maintained files full of stock language extolling the virtues and accomplishments of the Bureau. Arrest figures and a history of modest appropriations were always close at hand and prepared material rarely failed to mention the Bureau's compliance with treaty obligations or its effective working relationship with the medical and pharmaceutical professions.[51] Anslinger was particularly fond of citing

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[49] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 140. "Plan to Merge Federal Police Units Dropped: Government Fears Move Might Create Group Similar to OGPU," *Washington Post*, April 28, 1939, p. 3.

[50] Aaron L. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3–4.

[51] In general, see Folders "(280-1) Bureau Operations, 1931-1954," and "(0280-1) Bureau Operations, 1955-1969, Folder #2," Box 48, RG 170, NARA. A particularly good example is an undated

the Bureau's arrest record against other federal enforcement agencies. In *The Protectors*, he pointed out that during the 1930s the FBN was responsible for twelve percent of the federal prison population while comprising only two percent of the federal police force. By the 1950s, he continued, the Bureau remained at two percent of federal law enforcement, yet was responsible for nearly eighteen percent of federal incarcerations. Although these figures were intended to demonstrate the Bureau's outsize effectiveness ("The average narcotic agent . . . was making 300 per cent more criminal cases than any other law enforcement agent in the country," Anslinger claimed), they also clearly show the beginning of an attempt by the federal government to arrest its way out of the drug problem—a trend initially rooted in bureaucratic competition that continued to escalate for the rest of the century.[52]

Defeating the Clinics

The old adage "the best defense is a good offense" captures much of the Bureau's essence, in terms of both its aggressive pursuit of international traffickers and the manner in which it patrolled the borders of its institutional domain. Unfortunately for American addicts, that meant eliminating any alternatives to drug prohibition that might undermine the Bureau's existence. Criminalization of drugs underwrote the entire law enforcement paradigm and the Bureau felt compelled to respond forcefully to any public health proposals on the drug problem. As Musto observes, in the aftermath of marijuana prohibition, "One of the regrettable aspects of the Marihuana Tax Act was that its role as a symbolic legislative gesture toward fearful groups made any qualification or moderation of the drug's intrinsic dangers a threat to the FBN."[53] One of those dangers was viewing drugs as a problem for doctors rather than cops, and Anslinger's consistent opposition to a clinic-based treatment system helps to show how

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memo prepared in the 1950s titled "Bureau of Narcotics," which repeated many of the arguments used to avoid consolidation, listed treaty obligations and pointed out, "If the Bureau of Narcotics were transferred to and merged with an agency of another Department, we would cease to have the required special administration for this purpose, and would violate this international obligation." The memo also addressed the drug industry: "The professions and industries (physicians, druggists, drug manufacturers, hospitals—about 205,000 registrants) accept the checking and inspection of narcotics transactions and records by agents of the Bureau of Narcotics as Treasury representatives, but would resent and oppose inspection by officers of an agency primarily engaged in enforcing general Federal criminal laws—viewing such as 'police investigation.'" In Folder "Bureau Operations, 1931-1954," Box 48, RG 170, NARA.

[52] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 71, 199.

[53] Musto, MD, "The History of the Marihuana Tax Act of 1937."

the stubborn categorization of drugs as both a security and moral threat is also at least partly rooted in a bureaucratic context.

In many ways, the Bureau had an impossible task. Charged with breaking up the illicit traffic and regulating the legal industry, the FBN risked being seen as responsible for eliminating drug abuse entirely; any uptick in addiction rates could be construed as a failure to effectively enforce the drug law, which exacerbated the Bureau's already uncompromising attitude and made officials like Anslinger sensitive to criticism. The FBN's overall strategy revolved around aggressive undercover investigations to disrupt the traffic coupled with long prison sentences to isolate and deter users. The Boggs Act of 1951 and the Narcotic Control Act of 1956, which introduced and increased mandatory minimum sentences, represented the ascendency of this punitive framework and were major victories for the Bureau. But this police-first solution was not the only proposed method of combating the dope menace.

For a brief moment in the late 1910s and early 1920s, narcotic clinics sprang up in cities all across the country. Most were connected to state health departments and reflected the Progressive-era belief that public health problems like mental illness or venereal disease could be alleviated with the help of government. The clinics practiced what was called "maintenance" or "ambulatory treatment" of addiction. Confirmed addicts could register with a local clinic and present themselves to receive an allotted dosage of morphine sufficient to keep withdrawal symptoms at bay but small enough not to send them into ecstasy or off on a bender. This remains the strategy behind modern methadone treatment, which began in earnest in the late 1960s. The primary intent was to stabilize the individual user and break the link between addicts and the illicit trade. The theoretical goal was to gradually taper off the dosage until the patient was free of addiction. In *The American Disease*, Musto notes that clinics typically had rather small clienteles of mostly poor middle-aged addicts, many of whom likely became addicted in the course of medical treatment. Though imperfect and unpopular, the clinics had some degree of success with those users willing to seek treatment. Their existence was also immediately challenged by the Treasury Department, resulting in a series of Supreme Court cases on the constitutionality of the Harrison Narcotic Act and legality of the clinic system. In the 1916 *U.S. v. Jin Fuey Moy* decision, the Court interpreted the Harrison Act narrowly as a revenue measure that permitted ambulatory treatment. In 1919, the Treasury Department brought two new challenges before the Court. Much had changed in

the intervening three years, as the Red Scare, Prohibition and fallout from World War I contributed to a more conservative political climate. The *U.S. v. Doremus* and *Web et al. v. U.S.* cases (both decided on the same day), effectively reversed the *Jin Fuey Moy* decision and affirmed that the government not only had the right to regulate prescription drugs under the Harrison Act but that it was illegal to prescribe narcotics for the sole purpose of maintaining an individual's addiction. Under threat of indictment, all of the clinics closed their doors by the mid-1920s, leaving American addicts with few alternatives to the black market.[54]

Upon taking up his post in 1930, Anslinger vigilantly opposed any return to the clinic system. Although busting Chinese tong traffickers made good headlines, much of the Bureau's attention initially remained on the medical and pharmaceutical industries which until recently had been the primary cause of American addiction. To monitor the licit trade, the FBN created a headquarters division called the Returns Department and maintained a system of import certificates and licenses necessary to handle narcotics and ensure that doctors, pharmacists and drug manufacturers were treating illness and not simply feeding addiction. Over time, the medical and pharmaceutical communities became more aware of opiates' addictive properties and voluntarily curbed its use, leading to an increasingly cordial relationship with the Bureau. By 1964, Anslinger estimated the FBN spent about twenty percent of its time investigating and regulating the legal narcotics industry.[55]

The Bureau used a variety of arguments to discredit the idea of addiction maintenance or ambulatory treatment, based on the belief that addiction was contagious and "every addict is a potential peddler." Providing a secret but controlled supply to a few Washington insiders was one thing, but underwriting the addiction of the masses was quite another. Because addicts were contagious, the Bureau argued they must be isolated from the general population, reinforcing the tendency to treat them like criminals rather than patients or victims.[56] Anslinger also sharply refuted the notion that clinics separated addicts from the criminal underworld; in essence, he argued, addicts *were* the criminal

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[54] Musto, MD, *The American Disease*, 121–182; Morgan, *Drugs in America*, 108–117. See also "The *Doremus* and *Webb* Decisions" in *Drugs in America: A Documentary History*, ed. Musto (New York and London: New York University, 2002), 256-261.

[55] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 141.

[56] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 214. J.A. Buckwalter *Merchants of Misery*, 51-2; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 170.

underclass and "a large proportion" of small-time crooks like pickpockets, shoplifters, gamblers and con-men were confirmed drug users. Associating spikes in local crime rates during the early 1920s with the site of clinics, Anslinger argued these were "nothing more than supply stations" for roving bands of criminals and cited a 1952 National Institute of Mental Health report that claimed addicts "are likely to appear when circuses and carnivals are present in a community."[57]

Bureau officials argued that, aside from inviting crime and carnies, the clinic system failed to consider the compulsive nature of addiction. Once again toggling in and out of the disease concept of addiction, Anslinger argued in a 1939 radio broadcast, "You cannot cure a disease by injecting more germs, any more than you can cure morphinism by giving a patient more poison." It would be the equivalent, he later claimed, of "establishing infection centers during a smallpox epidemic." (In point of fact, that's almost exactly how inoculation prevented the further spread of smallpox.) Anslinger's long-time assistant Malachi Harney likewise tried to highlight the impracticality of the clinic system and argued, "If we were told that the way to stop drunkenness was to send the drunk to a doctor who would supply him with enough whisky to keep him drunk, we would consider it a joke."[58] While these rather facile comparisons conveyed the Bureau's dismissive attitude, the belief that addiction was merely a symptom of underlying mental problems made officials like Anslinger doubt that even those addicts stabilized in a clinic setting possessed the fortitude necessary to repair their broken lives. After all, he pointed out, addicts demonstrably lacked "the physical willpower and mental stamina necessary to solve the problems which led them to drug addiction in the first place."[59]

Blaming the victims was a viable strategy so long as images of the "dope fiend" continued to dominate public understanding of addiction, which made Anslinger's frequent invocation of the moral dimension all the more critical. Any return to a clinic plan, he argued, represented "abject surrender" to "the evil of drug addiction." Allowing physicians to ease a patient's suffering by maintaining his or her

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[57] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 185–212, 171, 231. The "supply stations" quote comes from Anslinger, "The Treatment of Drug Addiction," *The Union Signal*, June 25, 1960, Folder 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[58] Harry J. Anslinger, Broadcast Over Radio Station KIRO, Seattle, Washington, July 31, 1939, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 189; Harney is quoted in Harry J. Anslinger, "The Treatment of Drug Addiction," *The Union Signal*, June 25, 1960, Folder 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[59] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 190.

addiction, he claimed, "would elevate a most despicable trade to the avowed status of an honorable business . . . and drug addicts would multiply unrestrained, to the irrevocable impairment of the moral fiber and physical welfare of the American people." When the Nixon administration began providing federal support for methadone treatment after Anslinger's retirement, the Old Man was horrified and called it a "monstrous" development.[60]

At other times, Bureau officials claimed their hands were tied. It was their duty to enforce the laws passed by Congress, they argued (ignoring their own extensive lobbying efforts). The Bureau believed it had a legal obligation to oppose any departure from prohibition; that criminalization failed to stem the drug traffic was no reason to abandon the entire enforcement apparatus. "Enforcement of the laws against murder, burglary, robbery and larceny has not eliminated the commission of those crimes," Anslinger protested, yet those laws obviously remained in place. The Bureau also frequently invoked its reliable fallback position of international leadership and treaty obligations, and claimed that any kind of clinic plan, at any level of governance, would place the United States in violation of the very drug control treaties it had worked so hard to negotiate. "This Government has received many tributes of admiration for its leadership in narcotic control work," Anslinger reminded the public, "and if it hopes for the continued approval of the world, it cannot afford to compromise or slip from the high pinnacle it has attained and now occupies in the family of nations." Accepting the continued existence of drug addiction in America and re-establishing maintenance clinics would mean abandoning a hard-fought position of moral leadership on the world stage.[61] Once again demonstrating America's strained history of legislating morality, the Bureau ultimately argued that abstinence was the only real solution, a tactic echoed in the Reagan-era "Just Say No" campaign. Although Anslinger supported the two federal drug treatment

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[60] Harry J. Anslinger, "The Treatment of Drug Addiction," *The Union Signal*, June 25, 1960, Folder 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 186; Arnold Sagalyn, transcript of interview with Anslinger dated July 9, 1971, in Folder "Drugs and Drug Abuse - Control of Narcotic Traffic [Research for Objective Paper], 1 of 2," Box 1, Arnold Sagalyn Papers, American University, Washington, DC (hereafter abbreviated Sagalyn Papers).

[61] In a magazine associated with the WCTU, Anslinger elaborated, "regardless of the label we used, we should be taking a long step backward in civilization by tolerating, and thus encouraging the growth, of a debilitating evil..." Anslinger, "The Treatment of Drug Addiction," *The Union Signal*, June 25, 1960, Folder 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 191.

facilities in Lexington, KY and Fort Worth, TX, in the final analysis, he concluded: "The best cure for addiction? Never let it happen!"[62]

Sometimes Anslinger took more direct action when he felt threatened by the potential of the clinic system. In a confidential 1940 letter to his Canadian counterpart, a close personal friend, Anslinger reported that the Mexican government had begun experimenting with ambulatory treatment in Mexico City. In retaliation, the Commissioner withheld all drug exports to the country until they stopped. After exhausting their current stocks, Mexican health authorities pleaded for time and offered to appoint a special committee to study the issue if the U.S. resumed drug exports—a proposition that Anslinger gleefully declined. "Evidently the shoe is pinching the health authorities," he gloated. "They appear to be somewhat shaken over the whole thing."[63] It would not be the last time Anslinger leveraged American drug exports to pressure foreign countries into supporting FBN objectives.

The aggressive manner in which the Bureau attacked all public health proposals or efforts to provide ambulatory treatment led critics like Rufus King, author of *The Drug Hang-up: America's Fifty-Year Folly* (1972), to accuse the FBN of a decades-long campaign of intimidation intended to bully the medical profession into supporting drug prohibition. Beginning with Treasury Department opposition to clinics in the 1920s and continuing under the FBN, King charges, "Doctors were hounded and bullied . . . [in] a relentless attack upon the medical community, carried on by police authorities whose leadership and direction care directly from Treasury officials in Washington."[64]

This is an important complaint and one that speaks directly to contests over the basic premise upon which American drug policy was founded. At the helm of a police agency, Anslinger refused to tolerate any dissent from the belief that drugs were primarily a police problem. King points to the example of Dr. Thomas Ratigan, Jr., a Seattle doctor who provided maintenance treatment to roughly 7,000

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[62] Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery*, 53. In *The Traffic in Narcotics*, Anslinger also approvingly quotes six pages of analysis by R.S.S. Wilson, a former superintendant of the Royal Mounted Canadian Police, who concluded, "The only hope for [the addict's] salvation lies in complete abstinence." (p. 207).

[63] Letter from Anslinger to Charles Sharman (Chief, Narcotics Division, Canadian Department of Pensions and National Health), dated March 28, 1940, in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. See also McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 94, for more on Anslinger's relationship with Sharman. The two men often colluded in diplomatic negotiations and McAllister calls Sharman "Anslinger's soulmate."

[64] Rufus King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 39.

addicts a year during the early 1930s. In 1934, the Bureau brought charges against Ratigan, but a jury initially found the doctor not guilty. Seven months later, however, Ratigan was arrested again in what King described as trumped-up assault charges orchestrated by the FBN. The charges were dropped but Ratigan was arrested for a third time in October 1935 after one of his regular patients turned informant. During the second trial, federal prosecutors revealed that Ratigan had dispensed more narcotics than all other physicians in Seattle and Portland combined. This time the jury found him guilty of violating the Harrison Act. Despite the conviction, Ratigan was unrepentant. "The present enforcement of laws by narcotics agents is wrong," he said and claimed to have found "the solution to the narcotics problem" in maintenance treatment. Compounding the stakes, Ratigan announced that he intended to run for the House of Representatives but was sentenced to seven years in prison after the Circuit Court and U.S. Supreme Court both declined his appeal. King cited Ratigan's experience as an example of the Bureau's harassment of doctors inclined toward maintenance and argued, "a menacing call from the federal agents, coupled if necessary with open threats of prosecution, would usually prevail when a doctor dared minister to an addict."[65]

Ratigan may have suffered from FBN persecution, but as a vocal proponent of addiction maintenance his example was not typical. The actual tactics used to investigate doctors were as routine as they were simple. When ordering wholesale narcotics from a manufacturer, physicians filled out a specific order form in triplicate. One copy went to the retailer, one to the Bureau, and one to the physician's files.[66] The Bureau's job was to monitor the legal trade for signs of diversion into the black market, which was a legitimate concern. An adept technocrat, Anslinger recognized that retaining the support of druggists and medical professionals was key to the Bureau's success. Soon after taking office, Anslinger circulated orders that no investigations were to be initiated against physicians or pharmacists without written instructions. Reports coming in from the field supported his cautious approach. Although it was relatively easy to send an informant in to purchase a small amount of narcotics from a physician or pharmacist, the Seattle District Supervisor warned, that did not necessarily indicate "the bad faith of the

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[65] King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 47-58. See also "Aspirant for Zioncheck's Seat is Sent to Prison," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 29, 1936, p. 25; "Court Sentences Seattle Physician," *Los Angeles Times*, August 29, 1936, p. 4.

[66] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 97.

physician." The Bureau had to avoid putting itself in a position where it was telling physicians how to do their job. The supervisor of the Jacksonville office explicitly ordered his agents to treat all medical professionals with the utmost courtesy, and "not go out at random" trying to make cases on doctors. "This is for the purpose of obviating entrapment," he explained, "or to guard against someone connected with the Government being the cause of a registered dealer committing his first violation of the law."[67]

World War II nearly accomplished what the Bureau could not; with international shipping and smuggling routes in disarray, the foreign sources of the black market were temporarily cut off and Anslinger was optimistic that American addiction was approaching its "irreducible minimum." Although some heroin began to arrive by way of Mexico, investigations of legal diversions took on greater urgency during the war as Bureau officials urged agents to press their momentary advantage.[68] The manner in which these investigations were carried out, however, appears to have been rather inconsistent and one veteran supervisor in Minneapolis complained, "there has been a policy of sending informers in on doctors and making cases regardless of the circumstances." Yet his own office had closed a number of cases simply by talking to the doctors in question and explaining the regulations. Anslinger, ever mindful of the political challenges facing the Bureau, wrote back in agreement that "it would be good policy to continue handling minor infractions" in this manner.[69] Not all of these conversations went smoothly and much depended on the personality and discretion of the individual agents. Obtuse agents and scared doctors, aware their careers might be in jeopardy, made for a volatile mix that did little to allay criticisms of

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[67] See a letter from Seattle DS Harry D. Smith to Anslinger, dated November 13, 1930, forwarding a 1928 report prepared in his office on the subject, and orders dated November 3, 1930, from C.R. Frazier of the Jacksonville, FL office to Mr. Chas. H. Nensihel and all Narcotic Officers, in Folder "(0970) Investigations, General File (1930-1967), No. 2," Box 168, RG 170, NARA.

[68] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 165. For example of WWII-era registrant investigations, see letters dated November 4, 1944, from Joseph Bell to H.B. Westover, and July 30, 1945, from Harold E. Whitely to W.P. Blackwell, in Folder "Investigations, General File (1930-1967), Folder 1," Box 168, RG 170, NARA.

[69] In each instance, DS Harry D. Smith (formerly of the Seattle office) wrote, "a good talk was had with the doctor, and in a friendly but firm manner he was fully advised as to the provisions of the Harrison Narcotic Law and Regulations . . . doctors so admonished not only promised to follow the strict letter of the law in the future but expressed surprise and grateful appreciation for the kind and courteous manner in which the requirements were explained." See Smith to Anslinger, August 9, 1940, and Anslinger to Smith, September 2, 1940, in Folder "(0970) Investigations, General File (1930-1967), No. 1," Box 168, RG 170, NARA.

Bureau bullying. Occasionally, the Bureau did encounter clear cut examples of physicians engaged in the illicit traffic, but as Anslinger acknowledged, these cases were "few and far between."[70]

Most agents assigned little priority to these types of investigations, and even during WWII, many were allowed to languish for years. In 1946, Anslinger reminded George White, then supervising the Chicago office, "you must be keenly aware of the importance of closely following up on any information on excessive purchases by registrants." White, however, was well-known as an "agent's agent" and probably cared little for the style of paper-trail investigation required to check on medical professionals. In his reply, he indicated that the Chicago office had allowed its backlog to grow during the war simply because the secretary who normally handled this function had been ill.[71]

In short, there is little evidence in FBN records to indicate a sustained campaign of intimidation or that registrant investigations were used to coerce cooperation from the medical community. Monitoring licit narcotic purchases was an important function the Bureau continued throughout its tenure, but standing orders required agents to approach these investigations with the utmost caution and act only when there was clear evidence of criminal wrong doing. Moreover, in the absence of an undercover angle or any real action—the kinds of cases that advanced careers—street-level agents cared little for registrant investigations. By 1965, as the backlogs continued to grow out in the districts, the Deputy

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[70] In December 1941, Agent Ernie Gentry, whose uncompromising attitude was well known to his fellow agents, reported on an investigation that went south. After sending an informant in to make a few purchases from a Dr. Parry Clark of Powell, WY, Gentry presented himself to the doctor and demanded access to his records. Clark, realizing that his medical license could be revoked, reacted poorly—first pulling a gun, then attempting to club Gentry with a chair. In his report Gentry fails to identify either the specific drug or quantity purchased by his informant, making it impossible to determine if Clark had criminal intent or was spooked into reckless aggression by the belligerent federal agent. See Gentry, report to Elizabeth Bass (DS, Denver), dated December 9, 1941, in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. In *On the Street*, Kelly wrote, "Gentry had a wide reputation as a tyrant and disagreeable martinet . . . He beat down any suggestions, was unimaginative to the point of bleak despair, and fought off anything which seemed an innovation or might involve added work." (122-123) In *The Protectors*, Anslinger describes the Bureau's efforts to shut down the mail-order Direct Sales Company and investigate Dr. Leopold Brandenburg, "a real-life version of the underworld doctor of the George Raft and James Cagney films," who did things like provide fingertip skin grafts to wily criminals. "Today, the cases we are forced to make against doctors are few and far between," Anslinger wrote, "this was not so a quarter of a century ago." Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 149, 83–5, 141–5.

[71] August 16, 1946, Anslinger to White, and August 8, 1946, White to Anslinger, in Folder "Investigations, General File (1930-1967), Folder 1," Box 168, RG 170, NARA.

Commissioner felt compelled to issue an agency-wide memo complaining of the neglect, which seems to refute King's depiction of an FBN-led "reign of terror."[72]

Although the Bureau does not seem to have afforded registrant cases a high priority, there were two factors outside of the normal paperwork system that were guaranteed to trigger an FBN investigation: complaints from important people or vocal criticism of the Bureau. Ratigan is a good example of the latter; his vocal support for ambulatory treatment and intention to run for Congress made him an easy target. In *On the Street* (1974), Agent Jack Kelly recalls an example of the former. Sometime in the mid-1950s, Anslinger received a complaint from Sen. Harley Kilgore (D-WV) that addicts had poured into the bucolic Appalachian town of Bluefield, West Virginia and caused a rash of petty crime. The Old Man sent Kelly to check it out. After first visiting the local sheriff and springing a local addict named Tom Patterson to use as an informant, Kelly called on the physician suspected as the ultimate source of supply. By Kelly's own account, Dr. Horton was a typical country doctor. At age 75, he was a fixture in the town and often bartered treatment for goods or services. When Patterson went in to see the doctor and requested a shot of Dolophine (a synthetic opioid), Dr. Horton amiably obliged and politely offered one to Kelly as well. Kelly declined, but requested a prescription which Dr. Horton wrote while admonishing Patterson to quit doping. Incredulous, Kelly brought in another agent to pose as a down-on-his-luck horse jockey and buy from local peddlers allegedly supplied by the accommodating Dr. Horton. After rounding up a handful of such small-time dealers, Kelly also arrested Dr. Horton. At trial, Horton's lawyers plead insanity; the judge found him guilty and stripped his medical license, but suspended the elderly doctor's prison sentence. In Kelly's recollection, this was a pretty open and shut case; a handful of local peddlers supplied by the doctor's negligence went to jail, Horton was no longer practicing medicine and Anslinger banked a favor with another Congressman.[73]

In the context of the Bureau's confrontation with a medical maintenance-based approach to addiction, however, Kelly's investigation takes on additional overtones. Dolophine, the drug Horton readily provided to the confirmed addict Patterson, is today better known as Methadone, a synthetic

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[72] See an April 16, 1965 memo titled "Registrant Investigations," sent by George H. Gaffney to All District Supervisors, In Folder "(0970) Investigations, General File (1930-1967), No. 1," Box 168, RG 170, NARA. See also King, *The Drug Hang-up,* 43.

[73] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 93-97.

opioid with effects that are more gradual and lack the euphoric "high" of more quickly metabolized narcotics like morphine or heroin.[74] In the late-1960s, medical researchers Marie Nyswander and Vincent Dole began to use methadone in an experimental addiction maintenance program at Rockefeller University and earned the support of the Nixon administration in its search for new solutions to the drug problem. As in the clinic era, Nyswander and Dole found that patients addicted to heroin could be stabilized on a carefully calibrated methadone regimen. Freed from both the dramatic highs and lows of heroin use and from the acute withdrawal symptoms that followed the removal of all opiates, many patients were able to resume the rhythms of their old lives, hold down jobs, meet family obligations and function as otherwise normal American citizens.[75] By prescribing the slow-acting Dolophine to patients suffering from opiate withdrawal, Dr. Horton, whether intentionally or not, had stumbled into an addiction maintenance program roughly ten years too soon. Agent Kelly recalled being convinced that Horton "really believed he was helping suffering mankind." Patterson also defended the doctor and told Kelly, "Doc Horton doesn't ordinarily give fixes unless he thinks folks need one. He just wants to help people . . . doesn't like to see them hurting, you know."[76] For the Bureau, the question of criminal intent was paramount and a country doctor who was willing to take old appliances or home repair as payment was clearly not trying to get rich by peddling dope to all comers. But the interest of a U.S. Senator and suspicion that Horton's narcotics leaked onto the street ensured that the Bureau took action.

Preventing the return of any sort of clinical maintenance system was just one of the ways the Bureau policed the drug traffic in America. It was the FBN's opinion that ambulatory treatment only encouraged the spread of addiction and, because it would vest power in the medical community instead of the police, represented a threat to the Bureau's very existence. Anslinger was fending off attacks from the Bureau's very first days, which hard-wired a kind of institutional protectionism into the agency and was on full display in its reaction to maintenance treatment. Much of the Bureau's strategy relied on the taboos of criminalization and it refused to tolerate any softening of American attitudes toward the dangers

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[74] U.S. National Library of Medicine, PubMed Health, "Methadone." (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0001150, accessed November 9, 2013).

[75] Eric C. Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the American City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 159–181; Musto, MD, *The American Disease*, 237–239; Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*, see in particular Ch. 14, which features a lengthy interview with Dole.

[76] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 96–7.

of drugs or any departure from its police approach. That entailed discrediting the clinics and silencing any critics that threatened the discourse and beliefs supporting prohibition.

Silencing the Critics

While the Bureau's control of public discourse was not absolute, the manner in which it confronted its critics reveals that Anslinger and others were preoccupied not only with controlling drugs but with how Americans thought about the entire drug problem. There's scant evidence to support the claim that narcotic agents engaged in systematic intimidation of the medical profession, but there are significant indications that the Bureau paid close attention to public discussions of drugs and moved forcefully against its most vocal detractors.

Although examples of the FBN suppressing critical voices are scattered throughout its history, several illustrative incidents date to the late 1930s as Anslinger became more confident and assertive about consolidating Bureau prerogatives. Anslinger's Army was again a critical partner. In April 1938, freshman Representative John M. Coffee (D-WA) complained that the federal government had strayed from the original intent of the Harrison Narcotic Act and introduced a resolution that authorized the U.S. Public Health Service to review domestic drug control policy, in the hope that drug control would be put back in the hands of doctors. The Commissioner apparently didn't even feel compelled to respond personally and Coffee's resolution died a lonely death by committee after failing to attract a Senate co-sponsor. Although it's possible that Anslinger did some unrecorded private lobbying, this helps demonstrate that the Bureau was operating in a favorable climate and Congress had little interest in challenging the basic law enforcement posture of drug control.[77]

At other times, the Bureau felt compelled to take more direct action. In the early 1930s, a prominent Los Angeles physician named Dr. E.H. Williams agreed to help Los Angeles public health authorities treat a small group of addicts. As with Ratigan, the inclusion of a government informant among his patients ensured a swift indictment. Although Williams avoided prison, knowing that his practice was effectively over, he turned his attention to creating a nonprofit organization called the World Narcotics Research Foundation, which the Bureau promptly labeled a "criminal organization" since Williams still had a conviction on the books. When agents discovered a few years later that Dr. Williams's

[77] McWilliams, *The Protectors, 1930-1962*, 92–95; King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 63–68.

brother Henry, a retired physician, published a book provocatively titled *Drug Addicts Are Human Beings* (1938), they immediately dug into this Dr. Williams's background as well, and found he had no criminal record, an upstanding reputation in his community and a serious bird-nest collecting habit. Undeterred, the investigating agent suggested Anslinger alert the Intelligence Unit of the IRS (the same unit that took down Al Capone) and set them to investigating the recent sale of his 130-acre Connecticut farm. Meanwhile, Commissioner Anslinger prepared for any future confrontations by collecting and filing away statements from the editors of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that smeared Henry Williams as a "quack."[78] The Bureau may not have set out to intimidate the profession at large, but as the example of the Williams brothers clearly demonstrates, any doctors who publicly challenged the basic premise of American drug control were regarded as suspect and deliberately marginalized.

The Bureau was even willing to take on prominent politicians if they deviated from drug war orthodoxy. Although the Marijuana Tax Act passed Congress with very little debate, New York City Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia was less sanguine. As a Congressman, the "Little Flower" was supportive of Anslinger and commended his appointment as one of the delegates to the 1931 Limitation Convention, calling him "an exceptionally able, alert and competent official." In line with his outspoken opposition to Prohibition, however, LaGuardia was skeptical that criminalization would curb marijuana use. In 1939, he commissioned a panel of decorated physicians and public officials to study the drug's use and effects in collaboration with the New York Academy of Medicine. The committee moved at a deliberate pace and did not publish its final report until 1944, but challenged many of the Bureau's assertions. Accounting for the sociological, physiological and psychological aspects of marijuana use in New York City, the LaGuardia Report found marijuana use was largely contained and its effects fairly banal. Anslinger launched a counterattack before the final report was even published. When some of the initial findings were aired in a 1942 issue of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Anslinger took to the pages of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and attacked the two physicians who wrote the article, and continued to use the journal as a platform to discredit the actual report thereafter, which the editors of

[78] See the slim Folder "(1690-10) Williams, Dr. Henry Smith, MD," in Box 74, RG 170, NARA, and King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 61.

agreed was "narrow and thoroughly unscientific." As a result, the LaGuardia Report was almost totally marginalized, allowing the Bureau to maintain its dominance over public understanding of drug use.[79]

One of the Bureau's most well-known confrontations was with the sociologist Alfred Lindesmith, who studied addiction from a psychological, rather than physiological, perspective. Lindesmith first came to the Bureau's attention during the late 1930s as he conducted field research on drug use during his graduate studies at the University of Chicago. Lindesmith's essential argument was that the self-perception of the drug-user was just as important as the drug's pharmacological properties, and over the years he authored a number of books elaborating on this theme, including *Opiate Addiction* (1947, republished in 1968 as *Addiction and Opiates*), *Drug Addiction: Crime or Disease?* (1962), and *The Addict and the Law* (1965). In nearly all of his writings, Lindesmith was sharply critical of U.S. drug control policy and attacked the reductionist view of addiction as an untreatable mental illness. In *Creating the American Junky*, Caroline Acker cites Lindesmith's work as "the beginning of a critique of federal drug policy grounded in disciplinary research."[80]

Jealous of its prerogatives, the Bureau embarked on repeated attempts to discredit Lindesmith. When he was offered a tenure-track position at Indiana University in 1939, agents from the Chicago office dropped by to warn university officials that Lindesmith was consorting with a "criminal organization" run by a "collection of racketeers," which turned out to be the Williams brothers' World Narcotics Research Foundation. The university was undeterred and Lindesmith remained on the faculty for most of his career. The following year, Lindesmith published a brief article titled "'Dope Fiend' Mythology" that refuted many of the positions taken by Anslinger and his allies. Such a challenge could not go unanswered, but Anslinger was loathe to demean his own office by confronting Lindesmith directly, so

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[79] Anslinger's criticism may have actually brought the report more attention that it otherwise would have received. A rather even-handed *Washington Post* editorial remarked, "We have not yet been able to obtain a copy of the report, although Mr. Anslinger insists that it is available in almost every public library." See "More About Marijuana," *Washington Post*, June 24, 1951, B4. See also: letter from F. H. LaGuardia to Henry L. Stimson, dated March 18, 1931, in Folder 9, Box 3, Anslinger Papers. The full text of the La Guardia Report is available at the website "DRUGTEXT." (http://www.drugtext.org/Table/LaGuardia-Committee-Report/, accessed, November 10, 2013). See also King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 78–85; McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 102–106.

[80] There are excellent discussions of Lindesmith's work in both Acker, *Creating the American Junky*, 201-4, and DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology*, 118-137. Lindesmith's chief insight was to characterize addiction as a "learned process" with the recognition withdrawal symptoms a critical step in the evolution of an addict.

one Treasury Department official suggested, "We might look for a college professor, a district attorney or other lawyer, or a law professor to answer him." The Bureau settled on Twain Michelsen, a San Francisco Circuit Court Judge and personal friend of Anslinger, who penned a polemic rebuttal titled "Lindesmith's Mythology." Running in the same journal three months later (and at nearly three times the length), Michelsen's article rehashed many of the orthodox positions on addiction as the product of a criminal mind, disparaged the idea of the clinic plan and tarred Lindesmith as a "pseudo-scientist." When Lindesmith published another article in a 1948 issue of *Federal Probation* that addressed the disparity between the treatment of privileged and underprivileged addicts and claimed that some maintenance programs had been "cleared with the Federal Bureau of Narcotics," FBN officials demanded a retraction. In the face of clear persecution, Lindesmith came to fear that agents would plant narcotics and have him arrested on drug charges. One internal memo suggests the FBN may have utilized an illegal wiretap on his phone. Anslinger even wrote to J. Edgar Hoover at the FBI to ask if he had information linking Lindesmith to "any Communist-Front organizations."[81]

Ironically, the Bureau may have taken Lindesmith more seriously than his professional colleagues. As Caroline Acker points out, Lindesmith's own perception of addiction (centered around the idea of learning to associate withdrawal symptoms with addiction) was itself somewhat reductionist and the authors of an article documenting the FBN attack likewise acknowledge, "Lindesmith did not have wide support in the academic community for his antagonistic approach to the federal government's drug policy . . . most prominent academicians either ignored Lindesmith's work or criticized it methodologically or substantively." Although the authors exaggerate the "nearly absolute control of information exercised by the FBN," the larger point is that the Bureau actively sought to discredit its most vocal critics, demonstrating how aggressively officials acted to manage public perceptions of the dope menace.[82]

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[81] See primarily, John F. Galliher, David P. Keys, and Michael Elsner, "Lindesmith v. Anslinger: An Early Government Victory in the Failed War on Drugs," *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (Winter, 1998), 661-682. Also see Acker, *Creating the American Junky*, 204; Kinder, "Bureaucratic Cold Warrior," 175-177; and King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 62-3; as well as Alfred R. Lindesmith, "'Dope Fiend' Mythology," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* Vol. 31, No. 2 (July-August 1940), 199-208; Twain Michelsen, "Lindesmith's Mythology," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* Vol. 31, No. 4 (November-December 1940), 375-400; and Alfred R. Lindesmith, "Handling the Opiate Problem," *Federal Probation*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (December 1948), 23-25.

[82] Acker, *Creating the American Junky*, 202; Galliher *et al.*, "Lindesmith v. Anslinger: An Early Government Victory in the Failed War on Drugs," 669.

By the early-to-mid 1950s, the Bureau's campaign for tougher drug laws began to pay off in the form of new legislation and increased public attention. But that brought new scrutiny. In 1954, the American Bar Association (ABA) formed a special Committee on Narcotics to develop its own expertise. In February 1955, the ABA invited the American Medical Association (AMA), which had been a rather passive Anslinger accomplice, to form a Joint Committee and reassess the 1914 Harrison Narcotics Act and related drug control laws. The Committee was led by counsel Rufus King (author of the 1972 critique *The Drug Hang-Up*), and included future Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas and Dr. Robert Fenix, head of the National Institute for Mental Health. The same day the Committee was formed—February 21, 1955—Sen. Price Daniel (D-TX), a staunch Bureau ally close to Senate Minority Leader Lyndon Johnson, used his position as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency to launch a separate Congressional investigation into the drug problem. With dedicated funding, the Daniel Committee moved much faster than the ABA-AMA Joint Committee and kept the Bureau one step ahead of its opposition. The Joint Committee, meanwhile, struggled. Although both the legal and medical profession had a large stake in the on-going (non)debate over drug control, the ABA-AMA Committee was unable to find much support from either parent organization. Some modest funding was secured from the Russell Sage Foundation in October 1956, but the Joint Committee remained constrained by a tight budget. In November 1957, nearly three full years after its creation, the Committee finally issued an "Interim Report" that contained an analysis of the evolution of American drug laws and identified five projects worthy of continued study, including evaluations of the clinic system, education and prevention campaigns, study of the relationship between state and federal laws, study of the overall drug control system and additional research on the treatment of addiction.[83]

By the time the Interim Report was published, however, the battle was already over. Passage of the Boggs Act in 1951 and the Narcotics Control Act of 1956 (in the wake of the Daniel Committee's findings) created mandatory minimum sentencing laws and unified state-level enforcement under federal leadership. Yet Anslinger still responded aggressively to the Joint Committee, hastily convening his own "Advisory Committee" of Bureau stalwarts that issued a "Comments on Narcotic Drugs" report refuting

[83] King, *The Drug Hang-Up*, 120, 161-175; Galliher et al., "Lindesmith v. Anslinger: An Early Government Victory in the Failed War on Drugs."

and intentionally mimicking the appearance of the ABA-AMA study. The Bureau simultaneously pressured the Russell Sage Foundation to withdraw its support and copies of the "Comments on Narcotic Drugs" soon outnumbered, and were often mistaken for, the actual ABA-AMA report. The Joint Committee limped along but had difficulty publishing it findings until Lindesmith intervened to have it published by the University of Indiana press.[84]

One final example of the Bureau's efforts to silence or sideline critics shows how the refusal to tolerate dissent, even behind closed doors, carried over into aspects of the Bureau's work like its foreign enforcement program. Throughout the years 1960 to 1962, the Bureau carried out a discrete investigation of State Department Foreign Service Officer Elwyn F. Chase, who, seemingly out of resentment at FBN prominence at international conferences, reportedly "expressed hostility" toward the Bureau in general and Agent Charles Siragusa in particular. In response to his private criticism, the Bureau assigned a surveillance team to monitor Chase, check out his pharmaceutical prescriptions and collect evidence of Chase's purported alcoholism to prevent his future assignments.[85]

The forceful manner in which the Bureau responded to critics shows how central it deemed public perceptions to the efficacy of drug control. Any breakdown in the taboos supporting prohibition and criminalization undermined the Bureau objective of deterring all drug use, while examples like the investigation of Chase show how managing this criticism could sometimes even distract from the Bureau's core mission of actual counternarcotic investigations.

Cops vs. Doctors

The Bureau's control of public perceptions was not absolute. Despite the aggressive countermeasures deployed against external critics like Lindesmith or internal critics like Chase, there was little the Bureau could do in the face of the broader cultural shifts that shaped the 1960s and changed the relationship between the American public and drugs. But its efforts to maintain the discourse of the dope menace impart some crucial insights into how Anslinger's personal style helped shape Bureau strategy and the legacy he left on American drug control policy. As Anslinger learned during the waning days of

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[84] King, *The Drug Hang-Up*, 120, 161-175; Galliher *et al.*, "Lindesmith v. Anslinger: An Early Government Victory in the Failed War on Drugs."

[85] See the Folder "Chase, Elywn F., Jr., State Dept. Special Folder," Box 11, Entry 10 "Classified Subject Files," RG 170, NARA.

Prohibition, maintaining public support was paramount.[86] As this chapter shows, retaining public support entailed silencing critical voices and ensuring that drugs were seen as primarily a police problem.

But there was more at stake here than the survival of a federal agency—namely the treatment afforded to American citizens struggling with drug addiction. Although the Bureau held the high ground for most of its existence, the fundamental question of whether drugs should be addressed through law enforcement or medicine was under constant negotiation. The essential conflict between these two approaches to drug control was on full display during a March 1958 symposium held at the National Institute of Health. In contrast to the often acrimonious clashes described above, the NIH symposium featured a clear and forthright exchange between the two camps and provides a convenient place to conclude how and why the Bureau shaped this essential struggle between cops and doctors.

For two days in late March 1958, almost every major participant in this on-going debate gathered in the Washington suburbs to once again hash out their respective positions. The group included members of the ABA-AMA Committee, staff from the federal narcotics hospitals in Kentucky and Texas and an array of other U.S. health organizations. Seeking to keep himself above the fray, Anslinger declined to participate but was well represented by his long-time assistant Malachi Harney and other Bureau allies.[87] Although the debate was often heated, there was a noted absence of the rancor that often characterized philosophical clashes in the drug war and for a brief moment it seemed like real progress could be made.

One of the most telling exchanges was between Harney and Dr. Lawrence Kolb. A longtime employee of the Public Health Service and director of the U.S. Narcotic Hospital in Lexington, KY, Kolb had only recently retired as an Assistant Surgeon General and was a widely recognized expert in addiction treatment. In fact, his work on the link between addiction and personality disorders provided the basis for much of the Bureau's own understanding of addiction. After a lifetime of public service, however, Kolb was finally free to express his reservations about the direction drug control had taken in

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[86] In one of the position papers he wrote while at the Bureau of Prohibition, Anslinger even quoted Lincoln: "No law is stronger than the public sentiment where it is to be enforced." Undated paper titled "Common Sense Temperance," in Folder 5, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[87] Anslinger explained his decision to skip the conference in a letter to Charles Vaille (Chief of the French Central Pharmacy Service) dated April 8, 1959. The symposium, he complained "was composed of experts who wished to turn over all drug addiction to the doctors." In Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

America and the "enormous mass of misinformation" that in the public sphere. He was especially troubled by the demonization of addiction. The conflation between drugs and foreign threats and charge that opium was a weapon of war, he claimed, could only happen "in an atmosphere already clouded by propaganda and permeated with fear." Kolb also took issue with the idea that addiction was a sign or cause of moral decline and argued "*the assumption that these drugs cause deterioration and crime is utterly unfounded*." (original italics) Importantly, however, Kolb recognized that these persistent beliefs were not the product of government conspiracy or a federal power grab, but were created by "sincere laymen and law enforcement officers" and "otherwise competent physicians." The problem, he argued, was not their intentions, which were good, but that the campaign for drug control had generated "enthusiasm and zeal for the suppression of vice rather than the desire to obtain and spread proper knowledge of drug addiction." The promulgation of increasingly punitive drug laws was "a tragic thing," he charged, "that must eventually end just as witch burning eventually ended."[88]

It fell to Harney to defend the status quo. "The question of whether or not narcotic addiction is a sin is something perhaps for the Pope to pass on," he mused, and its legality was a question for the legislatures. But "when a program is laid down," he insisted, "we ought to carry it out in the best conscience, and see that it is carried out." Harney readily agreed that the police and medical communities had very different perspectives and both deserved consideration, "but I will still say as a simple policeman," he continued, "who has walked the streets with these addicts that this stuff is a poison." As Harney repeated the government line, Kolb pressed him and questioned whether drug use or trafficking was really "as serious a crime as murder, kidnapping or rape?" Harney was evasive and replied, "you and I see a little different type, of course, doctor." He was not wrong. Although at times they dealt with some of the same unfortunates, federal narcotics agents and public health physicians faced vastly different scenarios in their professional lives and had very different formative experiences. Addicts might deserve sympathy, Harney allowed, but traffickers were a different story and anyone who sold a fellow human into the bondage of drug addiction, he insisted, was "worse than a great many murderers."[89]

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[88] Robert B. Livingston, ed., *Narcotic Drug Addiction Problems* (Public Health Service Pub. No. 105; Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1963). Quoted in King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 176-185.

[89] Livingston, ed., *Narcotic Drug Addiction Problems*; King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 176-185.

Although the conference featured some of the toughest and most fundamental criticism yet leveled against the Bureau and the police approach, it is also striking how much common ground existed between the two camps. Kolb, for all of his criticism, maintained his belief that drug control was important. He, too, equated addiction with slavery and agreed it was "such a fearful thing that it does demand control measures." The country needed drug control, Kolb argued, it just needed a *different kind*, conducted by different personnel. "What has happened in this country is the almost total failure to provide for the necessary and proper measures," he complained. "We need sane narcotic laws, administered by people who know that their function is to enforce the laws and not to dictate what the laws should be."[90] Clearly, Kolb agreed on the need for drug control and perhaps even for the Bureau's existence, but he also recognized that American policy had drifted in the course of its confrontation with such a complex, multifaceted and compelling problem.

The NIH symposium now seems like a missed opportunity. Each camp had identified common ground as well as bottom-line institutional priorities, thus establishing a potential foundation upon which to build a more effective and sophisticated policy. But, when the participants broke up and dispersed to their respective agencies, *nothing happened.* Rufus King, the chairman of the ABA-AMA Joint Committee, argues a "bulldozing campaign" ensued to suppress the findings of the symposium, which weren't published until 1963. Some, like Kolb, had stature sufficient to place them beyond reproach. But other federal officials who dared criticize the status quo, he contends, were quietly pressured and reprimanded by their home agencies, each according to his station.[91]

It's not clear how genuine a threat the NIH symposium, or any of the critics mentioned above, really posed to the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Anslinger, however, was eager to simplify public narratives, maintain support for his agency and clearly felt compelled to meet any and all challenges to the punitive law enforcement approach to drug control. Through a combination of political skill, astute networking and rhetorical mastery, Anslinger proved remarkably adept at defending his bureaucratic domain and put his own personal stamp on American drug control for thirty-two critical years.

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[90] Livingston, ed., *Narcotic Drug Addiction Problems*; King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 176-185.

[91] King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 184-5.

CHAPTER 3. GARLAND WILLIAMS: ON THE STREET AND BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Garland Williams was a man of mystery. Some of the stories about him dated back to the days of Prohibition, when Williams used to haunt the bays and inlets of the Gulf of Mexico. Bobbing gently with the waves, he would sit alone for hours in a small boat scanning the horizon and waiting for the rum-runners to come ashore laden with booze from Mexico, Honduras and Cuba. The smugglers, Williams knew, had to put in somewhere and when they did, he radioed the Coast Guard, signaled the cavalry and sprang the trap. If the hooch made it off the beach, it was as good as gone. Catching the traffickers as their precious cargo changed hands was the best chance to make a big seizure, roll up the smuggling networks and prevent the black-market alcohol from reaching American consumers.[1] It was a good plan but it required patience. As Williams saw it, this was the narrowest point in the contraband booze trade and the most vulnerable place to strike.

Years later, Williams applied a similar strategy to the illicit narcotics trade. Drug trafficking, much like the underground booze market, was a tricky thing to nail down. Populated by a disparate, ever-shifting alliance of experienced smugglers, hijackers, black market financiers, temporary entrepreneurs, small-time hoods and some genuine bad guys, the underground market was built to evade detection. But the moment when the wholesalers brought their product in from overseas and handed it off to smaller domestic traffickers provided a perfect opening for law enforcement—a chance, Williams thought, to finally impose some authority. "Our narcotic control system should be in the shape of an hour glass," he once wrote to Harry Anslinger, his on-again, off-again boss. At one end, out in the world, the U.S. government should work to cut foreign production and prevent the unrefined narcotics from escaping their place of origin. Once in the hands of traffickers, it was much harder to find and seize the narcotics. The other side of the hour glass was the retail side, where the refined but highly diluted drugs were sold to their ultimate consumers. There, Williams argued, the dope menace should be met by "a hard-driving investigative and police group" that would "give the roughest sort of treatment to the domestic violators who were successful in securing the contraband." But this side, too, presented serious difficulties to the enforcement community and even the increasingly stiff penalties leveled against the array of street peddlers, petty criminals and actual drug users populating the domestic market had only a limited effect.

[1] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 13–15.

The "narrow waist" where drugs changed hands, however, offered some real possibilities. As Williams explained, "at this relatively narrow point we would have the tightest possible control agency using the latest results of special research and development to locate and secure the drugs while they are in a constricted place."[2] There was some debate over where, precisely, that narrow waist was located. Having cut his teeth as a Customs Agent, Williams identified the borders as one possibility. As the FBN expanded its foreign operations after WWII, other agents pointed to the manufacturing stage, where opium was converted into heroin (often in clandestine laboratories located in southern France).[3] As ever when it came to drug control, law enforcement was aiming at a moving target.

Throughout the thirty-eight years of the Bureau's existence, narcotic agents and supervisors worked to refine their investigative craft and pioneered innovative strategies and techniques that had an impact well beyond the world of drug control. This chapter focuses on the career of Garland Williams, a central figure in the history of the Bureau, to analyze some of the challenges presented by drug enforcement and trace the development of the Bureau's investigative techniques, particularly its heavy use of informants and undercover work. As the District Supervisor of the FBN's critical New York office, Williams oversaw the development of these investigative tactics and then applied that experience to the job of training American spies, saboteurs and commandos during World War II and beyond. Following Williams from his tenure as a FBN District Supervisor into the embryonic world of the American intelligence community shows the clear influence of the Bureau's investigative techniques on espionage and intelligence field craft.

From Hooch to Heroin

When Harry Anslinger took the job of Commissioner of Narcotics, he found himself in charge of an agency in near total disarray. The situation in Manhattan was particularly bad; the federal narcotic squad there was known as "the Forty Thieves" for its expertise in graft.[4] As the largest city in the world's

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[2] Letter from Williams to Anslinger, dated June 23, 1952, in Folder 12, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[3] "From its growing and harvesting as a raw material," veteran FBN and CIA agent Tom Tripodi writes in his memoir, "the product moved over an ever-decreasing number of routes to the relatively few processing laboratories—the slender midpoint of the hourglass. From the laboratories, the finished product then moved over a steadily increasing number of distribution channels to its final destination in the veins of an addict." Tom Tripodi and Joseph P. DeSario, *Crusade: Undercover Against the Mafia and KGB* (Washington, New York and London: Brassey's, 1993), 174. For heroin conversion in France, see monthly progress reports from 1951 to 1968 in Box 83, RG 170, NARA.

largest consumer market, New York played an outsized role in the global heroin trade and was a critical battlefield in the early drug war. In *Smack: Heroin and the American City* (2008), Eric Schneider writes, "Not only has New York organized the heroin trade both nationally and internationally since the 1920s, it has also hosted the nation's largest population of heroin users."[5] By aggregating demand for heroin, Schneider contends, New York became something of a clearinghouse for the drug traffic.

The FBN's New York office, however, was not yet up to the challenge of policing the city's drug traffic. Beset with corruption, the office was in turmoil and few cases were made in the early 1930s. Back in Washington, Anslinger had little time to spare for the Bureau's most important field office and was preoccupied with his diplomatic work and bureaucratic challenges. Exasperated with the trickle of cases reaching his desk, the local U.S. Attorney complained to Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, "No serious effort appeared to be made to prosecute the wholesale importers and principal distributors who ultimately are the real menace." Already exasperated with some of Anslinger's early missteps, Morgenthau quietly sent in a team of Treasury Department officials to clean house. In a fortuitous turn of events for the embattled Commissioner, the delegation was led by Garland Williams.[6]

Williams was a man on the rise in the Treasury Department during the waning days of Prohibition. Born in 1903, in Prentiss, Mississippi, Williams joined the Army Reserve in 1924 while studying Civil Engineering at the University of Mississippi. He soon distinguished himself when, at the age of 26, he was given command of a National Guard company stationed in New Orleans. Upon his arrival, he found the company "highly disorganized and broken in morale," but earned the rank of Captain after quickly reorganizing and invigorating the unit.[7] In 1929, he was recruited by the U.S. Customs Agency. While the "Prohis" (as the Prohibition agents were called) were responsible for hunting down domestic bootleggers and speakeasies, Customs was tasked with preventing smuggled liquor from reaching the

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[4] Douglas Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf: The Secret History of America's War on Drugs* (London and New York: Verso, 2004), 28–29.

[5] Eric C. Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the American City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 1.

[6] "Narcotic Shake-up Hits 11 Agents Here," *New York Times*, November 18, 1936, p. 28. See also: Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 28; Jill Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams: A History of America's Romance with Illegal Drugs* (New York: Scribner, 1996), 105.

[7] United States Civil Service Commission, Personnel Form, "Garland Williams." In Folder "Williams, Garland," Box 8, Valentine Collection.

U.S. in the first place. Williams quickly took to the work and accelerated through the ranks as part of a "Flying Squad" of investigators loaned to Anslinger as the foreign policy of Prohibition.

Williams was responsible for breaking up a number of international smuggling rings, including an operation run by "Big Jim" Clark, which Anslinger described as the "most extensive small boat and big ship whiskey ring in bootlegging history." In *The Protectors* (1964), Anslinger approvingly narrates Williams's pre-FBN adventures, describing a near-fatal brush with malaria in Belize and the time an elevator cable snapped as Williams escorted a suspect to an interrogation with the U.S. Attorney, sending the intrepid investigator and bootlegger plummeting down the elevator shaft. Williams (and the suspect) survived, and by 1933, he was promoted to Customs Agent in Charge of Galveston, Texas, an important Gulf port. During his assignment, Williams even led an official delegation to Mexico to persuade the government to raise export taxes on Mexican booze and lend assistance on cross-border investigations. Three years later, Williams was promoted again, this time to District Supervisor of the Southwest Patrol District, responsible for the supervision of approximately 160 men and all Customs enforcement in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and parts of Louisiana. Compounding the challenge of the new job was the fact that Williams had to create and organize the District himself—an impressive administrative feat accomplished in only six weeks.[8]

The appointment, however, was short-lived and, in November 1936, Williams was formally transferred to the Bureau of Narcotics and immediately put in charge of the New York office. This was part of a wider trend as a number of Treasury Department officials began to redeploy from Prohibition to drug control.[9] Just as he had done throughout his Customs career, Williams imposed a new sense of order and discipline on the unruly New York office and initiated a number of important investigations. Together with representatives of the U.S. Attorney's office and Internal Revenue Service, Williams bore down on signs of corruption. Eleven of the eighteen federal agents stationed in New York were demoted

[8] United States Civil Service Commission, Personnel Form, "Garland Williams." In Folder "Williams, Garland," Box 8, Valentine Collection. See also Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 13-15.

[9] "Customs Men Join Narcotics Fight," *New York Times*, September 1, 1936, p. 43. While reporting on Williams's brief appointment as the supervisor of Customs' Southwest District, the article also noted: "Secretary Morgenthau recently stated that rum running had been virtually eliminated. The Treasury planned to give the same attention to narcotic smuggling effectively paid to the rum traffic."

and shipped out, including Williams's direct predecessor.[10] Anslinger, unsurprisingly, tells the story of Williams's arrival a bit differently and claimed he was busy organizing "a secret panel of narcotics law enforcement officers" from Canada and Western Europe. "To handle the home front," he wrote, "I called in Garland Williams," and sent him to New York with a list of targets.[11]

Younger generations of narcotic agents recall Williams with a touch of reverence. Howard Chappell was later recruited by Williams into the OSS and from there into the Bureau, and remembered Williams and Malachi Harney as "two of the most wildly acclaimed Agents of the old Prohibition unit" to switch over to the new drug control agency. Like Williams, Harney had one foot in law enforcement and the other in military service. An ex-Marine, Harney was described by one of his colleagues as "gung-ho as all hell" and often professed "to think of the Bureau as a little Marine Corps." Rare among the personnel associated with Prohibition, both Williams and Harney were noted for their integrity and became part of an older cohort that comprised the nucleus of Anslinger's field marshals. These agents provided a direct link between Prohibition and drug enforcement and brought with them a wealth of experience. Both Harney and Williams later advanced to several higher offices, increasing the Bureau's political clout, reach and influence as they rose. Chappell speculates, "I think that HJA moved both Harney and Garland around to increase his influence in other law enforcement agencies."[12]

Anslinger may have glossed over the reasons for Williams's arrival, but he was right about one thing: the new District Supervisor arrived ready to target high-level traffickers. He faced, however, a very challenging enforcement environment. In the 1930s, New York was a patchwork of ethnic enclaves. Since well before the turn of the century, wave after wave of immigrants looking for a new life had crashed and broken on the city. With few resources beyond distant kin, the new arrivals tended to cluster

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[10] "Narcotic Shake-up Hits 11 Agents Here," *New York Times*, November 18, 1936, p. 28; Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams*, 106.

[11] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 46.

[12] The description of Harney is in Jack Kelly and Richard Mathison, *On the Street* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974), 25, and attributed to Agent Irwin Greenfield, one of Harney's contemporaries. Former agents Howard Chappell (see a letter to Valentine dated November 30, 1994) and George Belk discuss the leadership of older agents who transition from Prohibition in correspondence held in Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, and Folder "Belk, George," Box 1, Valentine Collection. See also Folder "(0280), Bureau of Narcotics; Transfer of personnel from Bureau of Prohibition, effective July 1, 1930," in Box 48, RG 170, NARA. A letter dated June 26, 1930 from J.M. Doran (Commissioner of the Bureau of Prohibition) to the Secretary of the Treasury (Andrew Mellon) enclosed a roster of 434 employees transferred to the FBN.

in specific neighborhoods and slums, giving each a distinctive national or ethnic character. That made New York one of the most international cities in all the world. But it also made some areas nearly impenetrable to law enforcement.

Foremost among Williams's targets were the Jewish and Italian gangs suspected to run the nascent international heroin trade. Like Anslinger, Harney and Williams, many of these organizations got their start in Prohibition. As Anslinger later explained, "Dope had always been part of their operation," but after Repeal in 1933, "it took on a bigger role." With a criminal infrastructure already in place, Anslinger argued, it was an easy transition: "they had the organization, the contacts, the personnel." The gangs also proved stubbornly resistant to law enforcement as the rank-and-file were easily replenished from New York's working poor. Some of Williams's "toughest battles," Anslinger later wrote, "were against the mobs of the Brooklyn waterfront and the 107th Street gang on the upper East Side of Manhattan. Both areas, even when crippled by frequent raids and arrests, seemed able to continue to spawn long lists of major and minor dope racketeers."[13] The trick was to go after the leadership, but, to do that, Williams had to fundamentally change the way the Bureau did business and introduce new counternarcotic strategies and tactics.

Making Cases

The challenges inherent in narcotics investigations, most agents are quick to point out, are legion. Underlying all of them is the fact that drug use, like all vices, is usually a consensual crime. "Narcotic police work differs from nearly all other police work in that there is no complainant involved in the transaction," the Commissioner explained in one 1942 radio address. "The seller is satisfied and so is the purchaser."[14] Although many agents claimed a near preternatural ability to spot drug users, the consensual nature of the crime made drug use and trafficking difficult to detect. Prohibition may have been where most of the FBN's senior staff learned their craft, but, as David Courtwright observes in *Addicts Who Survived: An Oral History of Narcotic Use in America, 1923-1965* (1989), drug and alcohol use often produced two very different sets of behavior. "Alcoholics," he notes, "were notoriously obstreperous and often injured others as well as themselves. Their behavior was a public nuisance and a

[13] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 88; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 20–21, 47.

[14] "Material for Radio Program, Maryland Pharmaceutical Association," February 28, 1942, in Folder "(1690-8) Folder #3, Publicity, Radio, 1941-1948," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

scandal." Contrary to Anslinger's overblown tales of rampaging dope fiends, however, most addicts "tended to be quiet and withdrawn . . . theirs was a private vice."[15] That meant narcotic agents had to go looking for their quarry.

There were also, as Williams learned, unresolved questions about strategy and targeting. Drug control, like Prohibition before it, was a clear-cut attempt at social control and disproportionately affected the poor and the marginalized. The ultimate policy objective was to eliminate an intoxicating habit deemed inimical to American values and society. In contrast to crimes like theft or murder, both of which are investigated after the fact, the Bureau's task was in that sense preventative rather than purely investigative. All of this suggested targeting drug users, and over the years the Bureau championed increasingly punitive drug laws to deter drug use. But FBN agents and officials were well aware that the compulsive nature of addiction limited the efficacy of any strategy designed to police the traffic from the ground up. The Bureau knew it could not vanquish addiction head-on, so from the very first days, the strategy was to focus on supply. One of Anslinger's first orders as Acting Commissioner directed all agents to pursue only "worth-while cases involving actual peddlers and dealers in narcotic drugs in an attempt to strike at the source of supply…" Cases involving nothing more than "petty addicts" were to be turned over to local authorities.[16]

Most suppliers, however, were canny enough not to expose themselves to law enforcement. As one veteran supervisor observed, "The smuggler on the financing end does not endanger himself . . . and rules with a ruthless hand the subordinate henchmen who MUST take the penalty of law if apprehended." Many trafficking organizations were layered to protect the principals, a "scheme of operation," the supervisor noted, that "is well established from the most successful illegal importer to the derelict addict, bindle peddler of the street."[17] The degree of separation between the top and the bottom varied with each organization, but every agent knew, as James Mulgannon explained in his memoir *Uncertain Glory* (1972), that "a multiple-ounce dealer of heroin can very well be one step removed from the actual

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[15] Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*, 2.

[16] Anslinger, Circular Letter No. 13, dated August 2, 1930, in Folder "(0370-3) Circular Letters, 1-100," Box 55, RG 170, NARA.

[17] Harry D. Smith (District Supervisor, Minneapolis), undated report (circa late 30s, early 40s), "Narcotics," in Folder 9, Box 10, Anslinger Papers.

smuggler, the person who makes contact with the supplier..."[18] The cell-like structure of most organizations, however, meant the money-men and wholesale traffickers rarely interacted with the street-level dealers or addicts frequently encountered by federal agents, necessitating a delicate and time-consuming style of investigation as the agents worked their way up the supply chain.

Yet there were also countervailing pressures. Impatient to be seen making an impact on the drug traffic, many FBN offices resorted to general round-ups aimed at known addicts or drug markets, a strategy Anslinger thought would have a "salutary effect on the criminal element," but was the modern equivalent of "clearing the corners." Over in Chicago, District Supervisor Elizabeth Bass—an anomaly in the otherwise all-male world of the Bureau—favored a blunt strategy of leveling maximum charges against the largest number of offenders possible. After leading a series of raids in December 1934 that took in approximately 250 known addicts and peddlers and disrupted a gang estimated to move $3.6 million worth of narcotics each year, Bass told reporters, "Our purpose is a general round-up of all known addicts and peddlers in this area. We aim to exterminate all the handlers and minimize the effects of this absolutely devastating business." The use of the term "exterminate" is particularly striking—an indication that she thought of the suspects as vermin rather than people.[19]

In New York, however, even this round-up style of enforcement had fallen by the wayside during the era of the "Forty Thieves" and it was up to Garland Williams, now a Major in the U.S. Army Reserve, to get the Bureau's most important office back on track. Following his arrival in November 1936, Williams returned the Bureau's focus to international and regional suppliers, rather than users and small-time dealers. Throughout the spring and summer of the following year, the Bureau's renewed focus on supply produced a series of big seizures, police raids and national headlines. In March 1937, agents tailed one suspect to his home and seized an estimated $25,000 worth of narcotics, which the *New York Times*

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[18] James H. Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory* (New York, Washington and Hollywood: Vantage Press, 1972), 52.

[19] Anslinger is quoted in "U.S. Launched Nation-Wide War on Dope Traffic," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 9, 1934, p. 9. Bass is quoted in "Drive to End Drug Traffic in Midwest is Led by Woman," *Washington Post*, December 8, 1934, p. 4. See also, "Full Penalty Her Formula," *Los Angeles Times*, January 7, 1934, p. 3. For "clearing the corners" in the modern drug war, see David Simon and Edward Burns, *The Corner: A Year in the Life of An Inner-City Neighborhood* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997).

described as "the latest move in the campaign by the Treasury Department's Narcotic Bureau, which last November began to concentrate on distributors instead of addicts."[20]

In October and November of 1937, the Bureau brought two long-term investigations to dramatic conclusion. Both investigations began prior to Williams's appointment, but were carefully calibrated under his direction for maximum impact. In early October, the Bureau launched simultaneous raids in New York, Houston, Galveston and New Orleans against a network suspected of distributing between $5 and $25 million worth of narcotics. After the Bureau rounded up 74 suspects, including ringleader Nicola Gentile, Judge Samuel Mandelbaum praised Williams and Manhattan District Attorney Lamar Hardy for their efforts "to crush the activities of those potential murderers, who spare no one, not even children, when they make victims." The *Washington Post*, meanwhile, described the raids as part of the Bureau's "war" on dope smugglers. FBN officials later realized this was one of its first real cases against what it came to identify as the Mafia, when Gentile jumped bail and resurfaced after WWII as a lieutenant in "Lucky" Luciano's suspected drug empire in Italy.[21]

At the time, there was much more excitement about the conclusion of the Hip Sing Tong case, one of the true-crime adventures that routinely surfaces in Bureau literature. Any news about the tongs made for big headlines in the 1930s and, in late November, Williams announced that "one of the biggest dope rings in the country has been broken" with the arrest of some 38 suspects nationwide, including the tong's national president. As the *New York Times* summarized, in language likely provided by Williams himself, "The round-up . . . was in keeping with the smashing blows dealt to narcotic traffickers since the shake-up a year ago when Major Garland Williams took charge of the Treasury Department's Narcotic Bureau here."[22]

The exotic nature of the tongs and heavily Orientalist portrayals helped make the Hip Sing Tong case a popular police adventure story, but it was also a conveniently textbook example of working up the

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[20] "$25,000 in Narcotics Seized. Woman Held," *New York Times*, March 25, 1937, p. 52.

[21] Quoted from "74 Indictments Hit at Dope Ring; New Raids Staged," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 6, 1937, p. 12; "74 Are Indicted in U.S. War on Huge Dope Ring," *Washington Post*, October 6, 1937, p. 22. For more on Gentile, see *Mafia: The Government's Secret File on Organized Crime* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 794, and numerous reports filed in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[22] "Raids in Big Cities Net Narcotic Ring," *New York Times*, November 20, 1937, p. 34; "Great Tong Linked to Opium Racket," *New York Times*, November 21, 1937, p. 39.

supply chain and highlighted the FBN's unique brand of undercover work. Although Williams refused to identify the agents involved, the case was initiated by George White in Seattle, Washington, sometime in the winter of 1936 or early 1937, with the arrest of an elderly Chinese man known to the local office as an addict and minor peddler. Faced with the prospect of deportation, the addict set up a meeting between Agent White and his supplier, a former tong "hatchetman" identified as Charlie Lum (a.k.a. Lum Git, Charlie Lee). Given the same choice between cooperation or prosecution, Lum turned informant. Posing as the representative for a West Coast organization, White and Lum traveled the country together, making purchases and setting up cases against suspects all along the tong's national distribution network, including some of Luciano's known associates in New York. Given the ostensible business he generated for the organization, White was even formally initiated into the tong, an unprecedented honor for a white man and the first time the Bureau managed to infiltrate an ethnic Chinese gang. The number of suspects tended to grow with each retelling, but the investigation led to the immediate indictment of at least 24 people and resulted in several lengthy prison sentences and deportations.[23]

The case was a particularly good example of what older agents liked to call "exchanging a biscuit for a loaf of bread." The Bureau was willing to trade limited penalties against the Seattle addict and White's "hatchetman" informant for access to tong leadership and the development of an investigation against a major supplier or distributor. Less metaphorically, Agent Tom Tripodi explained, "given the time, effort, motivation, and energy, you can start with a junkie and go all the way back to the source of supply."[24] At the same time, media reports immediately seized on the romanticism and danger of the Bureau's undercover work and described how agents like George White "furnished courage and brains and the spearhead of an army of agents," while the members of the Hip Sing Tong were rendered in

[23] "Press Service No. 14-3," dated July 18, 1938, in Folder "(1690-12) Folder #1, Publicity, Press Release, 1938 thru 1942," in Box 74, Entry 9, RG 170, NARA. See also Richard Hirsch, "How Treasury Agents Broke the 'Poison Sleep' Gang," *True Detective*, May 1939 and James Phelan, "When the Rookie Took the Tong," *True: The Men's Magazine*, December 1959 in Folder 17 and 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers, as well as Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, and Will Oursler and Laurence Dwight Smith, *Narcotics: America's Peril* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1952), 81–89.

[24] James Mulgannon explained, "The established procedure in attacking major sources of supply is that a narcotics agent makes an arrest, then the arrested one turns giver of information. The agent, acting on the information, effects another arrest. The second person offers to make an exchange . . . And so on ad infinitum." Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory*, 98, 110. See also Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 31, 35.

reliably exotic caricatures—all of which helped define the growing narrative of the drug war at a time when most Americans remained leery of spies and secret police.[25]

One month later, the feds unveiled indictments against noted Jewish mobsters Louis "Lepke" Buchalter and Jacob "Yasha" Katzenberg. Buchalter was well known for his involvement in New York's labor and garment rackets, and, somewhat after the fact, for his command of the Mafia hit squad known as "Murder, Inc." FBN literature variously indicates the investigation of Buchalter's drug operation was developed by a jilted lover turned informant, an aggrieved rival and an undercover agent. Through one or all of these sources, the Bureau learned that the organization was supplied by sources in Japanese-occupied Tientsin, China, and facilitated by corrupt Customs inspectors in Manhattan. Both Buchalter and Katzenberg fled the country after the indictment was issued, but the drug ring was finished. Anslinger later announced that the Bureau had "crushed" a "drug smuggling conspiracy of world-wide ramifications" and cited the case as one of the most important in recent years, and proof of the need for tougher controls in the Far East. Less than a year later, Katzenberg was arrested in Greece and returned to the U.S., where he was sentenced to ten years and testified against Buchalter, who famously remained on the lam until he turned himself in to columnist Walter Winchell and J. Edgar Hoover in August 1939 (to considerable FBN consternation).[26]

Like Hoover, Anslinger was fond of headlines and in April 1939 took to the field to personally lead a series of raids in Kansas City, capping off an eighteen-month long investigation into what the

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[25] "Great Tong Linked to Opium Racket," *New York Times*, November 21, 1937, p. 39.

[26] In a December 3, 1937 memo to Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Stephen B. Gibbons (Folder 3, Box 4, Anslinger Papers), Anslinger estimated the ring smuggled roughly ten million dollars worth of narcotics annually. This number was likely inflated, but the Buchalter-Katzenberg ring was a large operation. In a year-end summary delivered in Treasury Department Press Service No. 14-3, dated July 18, 1938, the Bureau claimed the ring was responsible for smuggling enough narcotics within a single year "to supply the needs of 10,000 addicts . . . or about one-fifth of all drug addicts in the country." See Folder "(1690-12) Folder #1, Publicity, Press Release, 1938 thru 1942," Box 74, RG 170, NARA.

See also: "Three Customs Men Held In Lepke Narcotics Plot," *New York Times*, December 1, 1937, p. 1; "Leader of Narcotics Ring is Sentenced to Ten Years in Prison and Fined $10,000," *New York Times*, December 1, 1938, p. 2; "Tells How Lepke 'Cut In' On Ring," *New York Times*, December 8, 1939, p. 25; Harry J. Anslinger and Will Oursler, "Secret Story of Lepke is Told by Dope Fighter," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 18, 1962, p. 4; Oursler and Dwight Smith, *Narcotics*, 141–143; Andrew Tully, *Treasury Agent: The Inside Story* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958), 51–59; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 43–55; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 65–67; Malachi L. Harney and John C. Cross, *The Informer in Law Enforcement*, 2nd ed. (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1968), 52, 66–67; Robert A. Rockaway, *But He Was Good to His Mother: The Lives and Crimes of Jewish Gangsters* (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 2000), 24–29.

Commissioner pegged as "the capital of narcotics distribution in the mid-West." Over the course of the investigation and raids, agents seized or confiscated some 500,000 grains (equivalent to approximately 100 pounds) of narcotics valued at over $1 million. The investigation also implicated one local police officer and fueled an on-going battle between political boss Tom Pendergast (recently indicted for income tax evasion) and his rival, Governor Lloyd C. Stark. Meanwhile, back in New York, Garland Williams announced that one Charles Cassesa had also been arrested and identified as the "chief supplier" for the Kansas City network.[27]

The Bureau continued its drive against suspected national distribution networks in January 1940 by issuing charges against the "Newman Brothers," a trio of international traffickers who had eluded authorities for close to twenty years, and were periodic colleagues and competitors to some of Manhattan's most notorious gangsters. As Williams explained to the *New York Times*, under the Americanized moniker "Newman," brothers Henry, George and Charles Neiditch were suspected as "the underworld's principal source of supply for narcotics," and ran a network worth an estimated $15 million. As one of Anslinger's frequent collaborators put it, "They were big time . . . Their operations extended over a period of twenty years. They maintained a handsome suite of offices in downtown Manhattan, owned large parcels of real estate in New York and other cities, and conducted a variety of seemingly legitimate importing operations as a cover for their main business of drugs." In 1937, Williams assigned a team of agents to drop everything in favor of a narrow focus on the Newmans. In January 1940, the agents delivered a detailed dossier that became the basis of indictments on tax fraud and conspiracy to violate the Harrison Narcotic Act.[28]

Though the Newmans' actual case files were likely destroyed, additional FBN records indicate an expansive approach. In October 1938, Anslinger invited the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to join the hunt and reported that at least two birth certificates had been uncovered for Charles Neiditch—one issued in New York City and another in Montreal. The FBN's investigation, however, indicated that he was most likely born in Russia. "It has occurred to me that your Bureau might wish to make some

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[27] Associated Press, "Kansas City Drive Breaks Dope Ring," *Baltimore Sun*, April 13, 1939.

[28] "3 Brothers Named in Narcotics Case," *New York Times*, January 27, 1940, p. 11; "3 'Newman Brothers' Sentenced to Prison," *New York Times*, April 27, 1940, p. 11; Oursler and Smith, *Narcotics*, 120–1; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 62–3.

investigation of Charles Neiditch (and possibly other members of his family) with a view to determining whether or not he is an alien illegally in the United States, or has violated the immigration laws," Anslinger suggested.[29] Given the number of suspects who were first or second generation immigrants and the considerable overlap between human and drug trafficking, the FBN and INS became increasingly effective partners over the years and were, for quite some time, the only federal agencies granted the authority to conduct search and seizures without a warrant.[30] In April, the brothers apparently reached a plea deal and turned themselves in to face a relatively lenient sentence of two years imprisonment and nominal fines.[31]

Between Garland Williams's arrival in 1936 and the close of 1940, the Bureau leveled an impressive series of blows against the national distribution networks operating in and out of New York and even managed to take out a few suppliers of genuinely international stature. Many of the FBN's initial targets in the 1930s were Chinese and Jewish; ironically, the elimination of these networks (along with Hitler's impending Final Solution) may have inadvertently helped pave the way for the Mafia's suspected postwar domination of the narcotics trade. Despite big cases against the Hip Sing Tong, the Buchatler-Katzenberg ring and the Newman brothers—each of which was variously identified as *the* biggest source of supply—still the drug traffic persisted. Bureau officials were getting one of their first real looks at the incredible malleability and resilience of the illicit drug trade. Years later, Williams complained, "no matter how hard we hit it, it seems to keep springing up again. Considering the very large criminal population in this country there will always be more than enough violators who will enter the traffic if other

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[29] Letter from Anslinger to James L. Houghton (Commissioner, INS), dated October 31, 1938, in Folder "(0915) Immigration, 1934-1967," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[30] Following WWII, cooperation between the two agencies became increasingly common and in an agency-wide memo dated May 22, 1946, Anslinger encouraged the rest of the FBN to follow the example of the New York office and routinely invite INS personnel to to participate in interrogations of suspected illegal aliens, particularly Chinese. See Folder "(0915), Immigration, 1934-1967," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. Another agency-wide memo dated August 16, 1951 noted that Chinese were particularly vulnerable as many had entered the country illegally and their "fear of deportation is often greater than fear of imprisonment for narcotic violations." In Folder 9, Box 10, Anslinger Papers. Agent Kelly similarly recalls, "It has been my experience that the most frightened people you can find are those who fear being deported. Most will turn informer." Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 143. On warrantless searches, Tripodi wrote, "At that time, the FBN and the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) were the only law enforcement agencies in the country that could conduct discretionary searches and seizures without a warrant." Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 21.

[31] "3 'Newman Brothers' Sentenced to Prison," *New York Times*, April 27, 1940, p. 11.

lines of endeavor are non-remunerative." The agents knew they could not arrest the problem away; "The prisons will not hold them all," Williams conceded, but "we must keep on trying."[32] As 1939 edged into 1940 and the shadow of war loomed over both shores, the underworld's ability to absorb the Bureau's attack and expose American vulnerability raised pressing concerns.

With several of the wholesale operations out of business, Williams turned his attention to the neighborhoods that seemed to keep breathing new life into the dope menace. Acting against specific communities was in some ways a return to the "round-up" style of investigation, but Williams was hopeful that with a little finesse the Bureau could root out the criminal infrastructures that turned places like the Lower East Side, Harlem and San Juan Hill into veritable open-air drug markets and talent pools for future traffickers. "We have learned that to arrest the petty passers of narcotics is futile," he told reporters at the conclusion of an undercover case in Harlem. "It merely creates a job for another criminal. So we extended our investigation over a period of many months to get the higher-ups—and I believe we finally caught up with them."[33]

When the agents began looking into Harlem, they professed astonishment with what they saw. Williams described conditions in the largely black and Spanish neighborhood as "atrocious" and an "eye-opener" for the agents. "Dealers fairly swarmed over a few poolrooms and restaurants with their wares, and they sold to men, women and children of all descriptions," he said. "Some of the narcotics were paid for in pennies begged on the streets." One unidentified Treasury Department official claimed that children were selling narcotics "as openly as though they were selling apples, and with a good deal more success."[34] For what it's worth, that's *not* how many former residents remembered their neighborhood. A number of the subjects interviewed in Courtwright's *Addicts Who Survived* recalled a vibrant community that resisted urban blight until the 1960s and 70s. Drugs could certainly be found; one addict admitted, "In Harlem you can buy anything—you just have to know where to buy it." But most sharply refuted the image portrayed by Williams. "You didn't see no kids selling or using drugs," countered Arthur, an addict

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[32] Letter from Williams to Anslinger, dated June 23, 1952, in Folder 13, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[33] "Dope Peddled by Youngsters," *Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1939, p. 9.

[34] "Dope Peddled by Youngsters," *Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1939, p. 9; "Harlem Children Peddle Narcotics," *The Baltimore Sun*, January 13, 1939, p. 6.

and resident of Depression-era Harlem.[35] The difference was almost surely one of perspective: the gaze of a lawman differs from that of a neighbor.

The cases targeting specific neighborhoods were another way of trying to undermine the structure of the drug traffic, but the ethnic and racial character of these areas required greater sophistication from the Bureau. Cases like the Hip Sing Tong investigation, where a white agent was able to infiltrate an ethnic gang, were fairly isolated. Sometimes the Bureau was able to compensate with simple ruses. In one 1937 investigation in Manhattan's Chinatown, FBN agents donned shabby clothing and wandered about the target area collecting intelligence while pretending to sell discount eggs.[36] More often, however, the Bureau needed informants—or, better yet, actual agents—who fit the necessary racial profile. "In selecting agents for an assignment we usually look for specialized qualifications," Anslinger wrote in *The Murderers*. "Most of our agents in the Chinese districts are of Oriental extraction; they speak Chinese fluently, know the idiom and the slang and can merge in the Chinese community. Similarly in the investigation of Sicilian mobs here or abroad, we frequently use our agents of Italian—preferably Sicilian—backgrounds, steeped in the ancient culture of Sicily, aware of the obscure customs, meanings, intonations, idioms and oaths."[37]

In Harlem, one of the Bureau's targets was a ring of Latin-American smugglers who worked on cruise ships and ocean liners between New York, Cuba and South America. To infiltrate the gang, the FBN needed a Latino agent, who later explained, "I had to pretend I was Spanish—which I am by birth—and 'on the lam' from the law. I had to dress in infested second-hand clothes to play my part, eat filthy food and mingle with people who'd turn an ordinary stomach." He was also repeatedly force to prove his criminal bona fides, at one point "stealing" a government vehicle and initiating a "street brawl" when gang members accused him of being a "stool pigeon." Ultimately, the Bureau arrested ten people in

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[35] Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*. See, for example, interviews with "John" (p. 132-135), "Arthur" (p. 105-108), "West Indian Tom" (p. 237-239), "Stick" (p. 52-58), and "Teddy" (p. 48-52, 249-254)—all of whom were addicts and several minor peddlers.

[36] "Agents' Ruse Bared in Chinatown Raids," *New York Times*, March 20, 1937, p. 3.

[37] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 128.

connection with this investigation and the U.S. Attorney's office estimated the ring was responsible for smuggling at least $60,000 worth of (unspecified) illicit drugs into New York.[38]

Although consistently excluded from the FBN hierarchy, African-American agents were in particular demand.[39] In 1958, one supervisor complained of the difficulty in conducting investigations or surveillance in Denver's predominantly black Five Points neighborhood, where "the presence of a white person . . . causes some alarm among the Negroes."[40] This kind of complaint was common throughout the Bureau's history. In 1933, for example, another supervisor requested a black agent for a series of prospective cases in Louisville, Kentucky. "Most of the dealers are negroes," local supervisor G.W. Cunningham observed, and given light sentences and his office's lack of black agents, "there is not much opportunity for putting the fear of God into them." Anslinger arranged to have a black agent sent over from the Chicago office, which prompted immediate protests about the loss of an important investigational asset.[41] In time, Anslinger would cite the number of black agents employed by the Bureau to fend off charges of institutional racism.[42] That the Bureau hired black and other minority agents in an era when few were employed by the federal government is indeed commendable, but it's clear their hiring was driven by investigative need, while Cunningham's privately expressed desire to "put the fear of God into the Negros" exposes a clear limit to any genuinely progressive ethos the Bureau sought to portray.

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[38] "Harlem Children Peddle Narcotics," *The Baltimore Sun*, January 13, 1939, p. 6.

[39] One April 16, 1965 agency-wide memo by Deputy Commissioner George Gaffney noted that the FBN had "lost more colored employees in the past year than we have been able to hire," and requested supervisors to initiate recruit drives at schools with "a high percentage of colored students." In Folder "(0370-3) Memorandum for All District Supervisors, 1955-1965," Box 56, RG 170, NARA. On institutional racism, see Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 243. Kelly speculated that agent named Bill Jackson "made more undercover buys than any agent in the Bureau." (p. 61).

[40] Memo from B.T. Mitchell to Anslinger dated June 24, 1958, in Folder "(1515-9), 1932-1967," Box 66, RG 170, NARA.

[41] Memo from G.W. Cunningham to Anslinger, dated September 30, 1933. See also a series of lettes between Chicago DS Elizabeth Bass, G.W. Cunningham and Anslinger as they worked out the terms of Agent Jaushawau Taylor's temporary assignment to Louisville. In Folder "(1515-9), 1932-1967," Box 66, RG 170, NARA

[42] "We employ more Negro agents than all the other Federal agencies combined . . . who have ranked with the finest investigators in the United States government, in character, in reliability, courage, and resourcefulness," the Commissioner wrote in Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 132. See also: "Another Problem for the Big Cities", *U.S. News and World Report*, April 6, 1959, in Folder 9, Box 7 and transcript of program, "New York Forum," April 28, 1962, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

The FBN's undercover cases in Harlem concluded in January and February 1939 demonstrated that the Bureau's focus on suppliers did not mean the abandonment of a more bare-fisted approach to dealing with crime-ridden neighborhoods. The area once known as San Juan Hill was, by almost all accounts, a rough place. Situated on Manhattan's West Side along Amsterdam Ave from 59th to 65th street, the tightly-packed tenement houses were home to one of the city's largest and oldest black communities but, by the 1940s, had become one of the city's worst slums. Williams called it one of "the wildest streets in America" and claimed that at least seven policemen had been killed by bricks and debris thrown from the rooftops and windows—a perfect hideout for what he identified as the "most notorious, vicious gang of narcotic peddlers in America." Curtis, a former drug dealer, recalled, "There were more drugs sold in the San Juan Hill than anywhere in the world. It was called 'the jungle.'" For once, dealer and cop were in complete agreement. As Williams told reporters, "For more than 25 years this section has resisted every effort of enforcement agencies to clean it up. My men have made more than 100 arrests in one block in the last two years, but the narcotics trade, along with almost every other conceivable vice and racket, has gone on unimpaired."[43]

On February 2, 1939, Williams led some forty federal agents on a dramatic raid, blocking off the streets and surrounding area before plunging into the densely populated tenements of San Juan Hill. The ostensible purpose of the operation was to capture a ring reportedly supplying a "white surgeon and ten of his Negro followers" who sold heroin to "poor white addicts" in Asheville, North Carolina. (As a surgeon, however, the alleged distributor Dr. G.D. Gardner would have had easy access to pharmaceutical-grade narcotics and little need for the highly adulterated product coming out of San Juan Hill, which had an estimated purity of only 3 percent.) Inside, the Bureau discovered a network of secret tunnels and passages connecting the dilapidated buildings, which delighted reporters who gleefully described how "prisoners scurried through tunnels they had laboriously dug through stone walls" and "condemned tenements." Exploiting intelligence gleaned from subsequent interrogations, the Bureau

[43] Associated Press, "'Wildest Street' Raided for Dope," *Atlanta Constitution*, February 2, 1939; Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*, 192.

staged a series of follow-up raids four days later and brought in an additional thirty suspects, twenty-six ounces of heroin and "large quantities" of marijuana.[44]

The Bureau tended to stress the importance of every group or suspect it targeted, but, given the diluted product coming out of San Juan Hill, an astute analyst like Williams would have known this was a relatively unimportant and low-ranking branch of the traffic. The real purpose was simply to hit a disreputable neighborhood known for spawning minor drug offenders while publicly demonstrating the Bureau's commitment to law and order—the law enforcement equivalent of "showing the flag." Race surely contributed to the aggressive and intimidating style of the operation, but Williams was also trying to undermine the criminal infrastructure that continued to replenish the drug trade. Years later, Anslinger even claimed that Williams "succeeded, so great were his powers of persuasion, in getting the indomitable and much loved Fiorello La Guardia to raze the block of houses..."[45] Following WWII, San Juan Hill was indeed torn down, not because of any Bureau involvement, but to make way for the Lincoln Center and Opera House and a public housing project known as the Amsterdam House.[46]

The Right Stuff

Led by Garland Williams and the New York office, the late 1930s were something of a formative period for the Bureau, during which the agents refined their investigative techniques, field craft and institutional culture. Building on that seminal time, the Bureau developed an array of different approaches to combating the dope menace over the years. In *The Corner: A Year in the Life of An Inner-City Neighborhood* (1997), David Simon and Ed Burns observe, "Stupid criminals make for stupid police."[47] The reverse was also mostly true; savvy criminals required sharp police and drug trafficking was a tricky enterprise. In *The Traffic in Narcotics* (1953), Anslinger wrote, "Drug trafficking is a very ingenious and

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[44] "'Wildest Street' Raided for Dope," *The Atlanta Constitution*, February 2, 1939, p. 20; "Narcotic Raiders Bare 'Catacombs,'" *New York Times*, February 2, 1939, p. 2; "30 Persons Seized in Narcotic Raids," *New York Times*, February 6, 1939, p. 3. For more on the racially stratified nature of the illicit traffic, see Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the American City*, in particular, see Chapter 5, "Ethnicity and the Market."

[45] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 76.

[46] See Gary Shapiro, "Amsterdam Houses Celebrate 60 Years," *The New York Sun*, July 30, 2007 (available at: http://www.nysun.com/new-york/amsterdam-houses-celebrate-60-years/59399/, accessed July 20, 2012) and Lincoln Center website, "Before Lincoln Center" (http://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/lincolncenter/, accessed December 17, 2013).

[47] Simon and Burns, *The Corner*, 168.

resourceful business. All the tricks and ruses of the professional magician, all the devices and inventions of Houdini himself seem tame and unimaginative beside the innumerable dodges and disguises thought up by the tribe of international drug traffickers."[48] This left federal agents and traffickers locked in an almost Hegelian dialectic, where advances or innovations made by one side lead the other to develop countermeasures, spurring continual evolution on both sides.

The Bureau was always on the lookout for new investigative aids and tactics to counter the increasing sophistication of the traffickers, but much depended on the personal style of the agents and supervisors. Sometimes it was as simple as kicking in a suspicious door and finding an addict or illegal alien to intimidate. Rough-and-tumble agents like Jack Kelly professed to "come from the old school of narcotics law enforcement where the basic tool was a size twelve pair of shoes," and argued that "an expert door-kicker is as vital to a narcotics team as a valued placekicker in pro football." Kelly dismissed FBN intelligence operations as "primitive" and mostly limited to roughing up suspects in secluded alleyways in search of leads. Other agents preferred a more deliberate style of intelligence collection and the use technical aids like bugs and wiretaps to unreliable informants.[49] Agents like James Mulgannon, for example, thought "listening devices and telephone taps" were of "inestimable value to law enforcement officers when used in proper channels." In addition to classic physical surveillance, the Bureau made frequent use of what it termed mail and toll covers to monitor the communication of suspects and build a portrait of targeted organizations.[50]

At times, FBN proposals on the use of technical aides took on the air of something out of Batman or Mission Impossible. In 1951, for example, Agent Charles Siragusa suggesting a novel method of tailing suspects by dusting people, vehicles, money or contraband with radioactive powders and using a Geiger counter to track them. Coming out of WWII, the Bureau was intensely interested in developing a method of inserting chemical markers into the ingredients used in heroin manufacture, which would

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[48] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 141.

[49] "We never concerned ourselves with warrants," Kelly wrote. "When we heard that someone had narcotics we simply went to the address and kicked in the door." Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 13–14, 58.

[50] Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory*, 137; Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 51.

permit seized heroin to be traced back to its point of origin.[51] By the mid-1960s, the Bureau was advanced enough in its use of technical equipment that it began to act as a covert purchasing agent for what an internal briefing paper elliptically referred to as "other Top Secret Government agencies," most likely the CIA or a State Department agency that funneled aid to foreign police forces.[52]

One of the more notable innovations introduced by Williams during the 1930s was the use of drug dogs, a practice that is now virtually synonymous with drug control.[53] In fact, there's a bit of jockeying in the historical record between different agents and agencies claiming to be the first to use dogs in the field. Though drug-sniffing dogs became an increasingly common tool in years to come, most accounts agree the practice was initially greeted with skepticism and a great deal of laughter. Siragusa, for example, recalled setting out for the first time in a creaky station wagon with a fellow agent and two dogs (a German Shepherd named Daro and an Irish terrier named Wolf) peering out the back window while the rest of his squad "stood on the sidewalk convulsed with laughter." Anslinger similarly recorded the reaction of two Customs officials who politely declined to take part in the experiment and departed his office "shaking with laughter interspersed with simulated barks."[54]

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[51] For the Geiger counter tracker, see a memo from Siragusa to Anslinger and all District Supervisors, dated November 2, 1951, in Folder "General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165. In a memo dated April 16, 1951, Siragusa reports on his conversation with several Italian chemical manufacturers who professed interest in Siragusa's proposal to insert a chemical marker into shipment of acetic anhydride, a common reagent used to refine morphine into heroin, but "claimed that several difficulties precluded this accomplishment." In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA

[52] A FOIA request is pending for files on the use of technical aids (Box 149, RG 170, NARA). An undated (circa 1965) FBN briefing paper prepared for Treasury Secretary Henry Fowler warned that an upcoming Senate hearing on the use of technical equipment in federal law enforcement "poses a significant problem for this Bureau" and would not only reveal the use of such investigative aids to traffickers, but might "expose our purchase of technical equipment for other Top Secret Government agencies." This is almost surely a reference to the CIA, though it might also refer to an intermediary like the State Department's Agency for International Development or Office of Public Safety. In Folder "(280-17) Orientation Materials for Top Executives," Box 49, RG 170, NARA. See also Jeremy Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012).

[53] A FOIA request is pending for files pertaining to the use of dogs (Box 147, RG 170, NARA).

[54] Most FBN accounts credit the introduction of drug dogs to Agent Earl Teets. In a letter to Anslinger dated January 9, 1970, George White described coming across an interview with a former Customs agent in a newsletter of the International Narcotic Enforcement Officers Association who claimed that *he* had been the one to introduce drug-sniffing dogs after hearing stories from his grandfather about the use of dogs to detect black market coffee in Europe. In Folder 4, Box 1, White Papers. See also Charles Siragusa and Robert Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the*

The Bureau's greatest innovation, however, was its highly-developed use of covert operations. The FBN was hardly the first organization to employ undercover agents. In the nineteenth century, the Pinkerton Detective Agency frequently went undercover on behalf of corporate America to undermine various labor movements or pursue private investigations. Under J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI eschewed undercover tactics in support of law enforcement, but readily applied them to collect political intelligence and sow discord among American radicals and leftists, as well as the civil rights and antiwar movements.[55] No other police agency, however, employed undercover operatives to fulfill basic law enforcement objectives as consistently as the FBN, a fact that came to define the Bureau's institutional culture—to such a degree that successful undercover work became an unspoken requirement for advancement. Each agent's reputation revolved almost entirely around his purported "street smarts" and ability to make cases.

"Over a period of many years," Anslinger wrote in his 1961 book *The Murderers*, "my staff and I pioneered in the development of new undercover techniques of investigation, to meet the special problems our agents must face." Three years later, in *The Protectors*, the Commissioner added a little more color: "In order to smash criminal combines and bring gangsters to justice, we've had to step out of familiar uniforms into theirs—plain clothes. The criminal must always move in the shadows, in the underworld. It is our job to follow him there..."[56] Somewhat more prosaically, Harvard political scientist and criminologist James Q. Wilson describes narcotic agents not as intrepid adventurers but as "instigators" who insert themselves into a criminal act. In drug enforcement, "the dominant strategy," he notes, "is not that of detecting or randomly observing a crime but of instigating one under controlled circumstances."[57] George White's role in the Hip Sing Tong case is a good example of this and illustrates how important it was to maintain a clear public narrative of good vs. evil to justify the moral ambiguity of criminal acts instigated or carried out by police.

Mafia (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), 49–52; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 146–152.

[55] Frank Morn, *"The Eye That Never Sleeps": A History of the Pinkerton National Detective Agency* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); Tim Weiner, *Enemies: A History of the FBI* (New York: Random House, 2012).

[56] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 123; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, vii–viii.

[57] James Q. Wilson, *The Investigators: Managing FBI and Narcotics Agents* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1978), 22, 42.

The swashbuckling nature of the job, however, was a point of pride for FBN agents and one they felt separated them from all other branches of federal law enforcement. In his criminology text *The Investigators: Managing FBI and Narcotics Agents* (1978), James Q. Wilson comments, "A narcotics agent, like a big-city patrolmen, is always on his guard, suspicious and wary. His authority does not depend, as with an FBI agent, on his office or, as with the patrolmen, on his uniform, but rather on *his demeanor*: he must personally take control of situations by his manner and bearing."[58] As the Old Man put it, "An agent must be a better actor than an Academy Award winner, quick on his feet, even faster with his hands, and ten times as fast with his mind."[59] Most agents seemed to feel you either had "it" or you didn't—that ineffable quality or edge required of undercover work. An author like Tom Wolfe might describe the blend of bravado, ingenuity and cavalier machismo shared by the Bureau's undercover agents as *the right stuff*.[60]

Most agents thought the ability to work "on the street" sharply differentiated them from their more famous cousins at the FBI, where Director Hoover insisted his agents dress in conservative attire and project an image of professionalism.[61] In contrast, James Mulgannon pointed out, he and his colleagues "must actually police the streets in the manner of officers of local police departments."[62] In other words, they felt they were real cops doing real—and often dangerous—police work, unlike FBI agents who only investigated crimes after their commission. One particularly sore point of contention in this institutional rivalry was the credit regularly afforded to Hoover for the arrest of Lepke Buchalter. The FBN always insisted that Buchalter, whose reputation for rubbing out rival mobsters earned him the underworld title "the Judge," would never have been brought to justice if not for Andy Koehn, an FBN agent who infiltrated

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[58] Wilson, *The Investigators*, 38, Emphasis added.

[59] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, viii. Elsewhere, the Commissioner wrote that FBN agents came in "many kinds, shapes, sizes, races and backgrounds. There is no special type of Bureau investigator . . . Their interests, information, and backgrounds range as wide as the worlds they must investigate. They are picked not only for these special backgrounds but also—even more importantly—for their integrity, their physical courage, their resourcefulness in emergency, their stamina under stress and their mental agility." Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 123.

[60] Wolfe applied the term to the test pilots who formed the core of the Mercury space program. Tom Wolfe, *The Right Stuff* (New York; Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1979)

[61] Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The FBI: A History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), 85.

[62] Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory*, 162.

Buchalter's gang and then broke cover to harass all his criminal associates until the mob demanded he turn himself in. Koehn was said to be so adept at surveillance and undercover operations that Anslinger likened him to "a one-man counterintelligence corps."[63]

The perilous nature of covert narcotics investigations contributed to the FBN's swagger. Sal Vizzini, a decorated undercover agent, wrote that danger was "part of the job, routine as a morning cup of coffee. But you don't think about it. You never worry as much about getting killed as not getting the job done."[64] In the thirty-eight year history of the Bureau of Narcotics, seventeen agents were killed in the line of duty—a significantly higher ratio than at the much larger FBI.[65] Although a relatively small police force, the FBN also accounted for an outsized percentage of federal arrests—statistics that Anslinger and his agents cited frequently. Many agents attributed their success to the institutional culture at the Bureau and "wide latitude afforded street-level agents."[66] Looking back from the present of a failed drug war and overcrowded prisons, it looks as if the Bureau was bragging about its obstinate dedication to a flawed strategy of mass incarceration.[67] At the time, however, the agents simply took it as proof they were part of an elite club.

The reasons for choosing this particular line of work varied as greatly as the agents' individual backgrounds, though it is surprising that few cited personal experience with drug abuse or addiction as a motivating factor.[68] Most seem to have been lured by the sense of power and adventure. Jack Kelly

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[63] In a letter to Carey McWilliams (editor of *The Nation*) dated October 16, 1958, George White commented, "Lepke was convicted on a narcotic smuggling case developed entirely by the Bureau of Narcotics. The only part the FBI played was in the contrived Hoover-Winchell surrender, and he was convicted on evidence we had previously obtained." In Folder 16, Box 3, White Papers. See also Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 63-67; Tully, *Treasury Agent*, 58-59.

[64] "It's like one of the big race drivers once said," he continued, "You're afraid of losing, not dying." Sal Vizzini, Oscar Fraley, and Marshall Smith, *Vizzini: The Secret Lives of America's Most Successful Undercover Agent* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1972), 15.

[65] Wilson, *The Investigators*, 48. Wilson points out that the seventeen slain FBN agents were "almost as many as in the FBI even though the latter has a longer history and at least four times as many agent personnel."

[66] Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 25. "By 1960," Tripodi claimed, "the Federal Bureau of Narcotics only had about 250 agents throughout the world, but it accounted for more arrests and criminals sentenced to the federal prison system than the FBI, which had more than 7,000 agents at the time."

[67] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

[68] Anslinger cites a boyhood experience with an addicted neighbor in Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 8. Among the agents, one exception also seems to be Harry D. Smith, an older agent who

professed to be drawn by "tales of adventure, of million-dollar busts in exotic lands, of shootouts and intrigue in high places" and reveled in the "curious prestige" of the job, which imparted a "feeling of absolute power. You know you are The Man," he wrote.[69] James Mulgannon wrote with similar reverence about his "brilliantly-shined gold badge of authority." Tom Tripodi, an agent who toggled between the FBN and CIA, found the secretive nature of undercover work particularly intoxicating. "I was a U.S. narcotics agent," he wrote. "I knew it, they didn't. There was a sense of power in that. Invigoration. Control."[70]

The Bureau's techniques and attitudes, however, were not without controversy. At times, the agents' cavalier attitudes led to carelessness and the secretive nature of FBN operations permitted an ultimately detrimental level of corruption.[71] One of the most contentious issues was the Bureau's reliance on criminal informants. The FBN's Field Manual, a copy of which was kept at every office, made it clear that an agent's ability to recruit and manage criminal informants was considered a "reflection on his professional ability," and Tom Tripodi recalled being taught that a "law enforcement officer's primary link to the underworld is his informant." Beyond simply providing information, informants were often pressed into direct service and asked to conduct surveillance or take part in undercover operations.[72] One of the

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transitioned from the Narcotics Division of the Bureau of Prohibition into the FBN and, in a private letter to Anslinger, attributed his "natural hatred for narcotic drugs in any form and for any person who trafficked in them" to a series of boyhood experiences with an addicted relative. See letter dated September 5, 1940, from Smith to Anslinger, in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[69] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 21, 81.

[70] Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory*, 177; Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 32.

[71] Jill Jonnes writes in detail about FBN corruption in *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams*. Later in life, Tom Tripodi reflected on how the perilous nature of the job influenced the behavior of agents and related an anecdote about the time he saw a black teenager fleeing down a Harlem street. Tripodi and his partners instinctively jumped out, guns drawn, and beat the teen to the ground. When a uniformed officer caught up, he told the agents the kid had run out on a check. Years later, Tripodi looked back in disbelief: "We had almost killed this poor kid over a lousy piece of pie. That's how on-the-edge we were, how reckless, how hair-trigger ready to jump into action." He also recounts that agents made it a standard practice to "jump out" on any groups congregating at certain corners—a modern practice familiar to any readers of David Simon or viewers of *The Wire*. Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 37–8. See also five folders labeled "(0550-19) Invasion of Privacy," 1961-1967 (FOIA request pending) in Box 149 and Folder "(0515-13), Officers, Complaints Against," in Entry 10 (Classified Subject Files), Box 11, RG 170, NARA.

[72] The Manual read: "The efficiency and effectiveness of an investigator depends largely upon the caliber of his cooperating underworld sources of information. The failure of a field officer to use every proper effort to develop and maintain such sources of information is an adverse reflection on his professional ability." United States Bureau of Narcotics, Field Manual, "Informants, Section 22," page 1, dated July 1, 1967, in Folder "(1325) Field Manual (1967)," Box 66, RG 170, NARA. A curriculum outline

most common functions for an informant was to make preliminary drug buys from FBN targets. It was also common for agents and informants to hit the road together in what were called "special endeavor assignments," during which the pair traveled throughout a designated region, making buys and setting up cases. There were strict rules governing the use of addicts as informants, but few agents balked at using addiction to compel cooperation. Agent Sal Vizzini, for example, recalled using "a strung-out junkie who had turned stoolie" named Arthur Bee during a tour early in his career. "He was my bird-dog," Vizzini wrote, "the necessary evil that would lead me to the pushers and suppliers who peddled the stuff."[73] Agents received a great deal of specialized training on the management of informants. Agent Kelly was taught that, above all, an informant must "respect and fear you." The ability to dispense and withhold narcotics from an addict-informant, however, was the ultimate spur and made it difficult for individuals so ensnared to escape the government's grasp. As a former addict and dealer named Curtis recalled, "if you work for the government as a stool pigeon, they don't let you go. They either catch you or have you killed, if you play with the government."[74]

In Bureau accounts, these individuals were stripped of their humanity in much the same manner as the actual traffickers. Despite rules to the contrary, several agents admit to providing their informants with drugs and observing their use. Vizzini characterized his informant, Arthur Bee, as a "poor devil" and

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from the Bureau's training school, held among Anslinger's personal papers, suggests one role for the informant was to "make observations or perform shadowing assignments in localities where strangers would be immediately suspected." Federal Bureau of Narcotics Training School, "Informers," in Folder 2, Box 7, Anslinger Papers. See also Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 158–9. James Mulgannon similarly wrote, "No peace officer is bigger than his source of information . . . he must depend on a 'good' informer, usually a thief, and do his utmost to keep the informer on the streets where he is more valuable to police interests." Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory*, 144.

[73] The Bureau's Field Manual warns: "Field officers will not utilize the services of cured drug addicts nor permit them to aid in the development of an investigation during the course of which they might handle or come in contact with drugs. Neither will they be used to purchase drugs as evidence nor to associate with addicts or retail peddlers or drugs." The Field Manual also stated that addicts are not to be used in legal registrant cases, as presenting a suffering addict to a doctor "is manifestly unfair and an imposition upon the medical profession. Therefore, the use of this type addict in the investigation of any registrant is absolutely prohibited." United States Bureau of Narcotics, Field Manual, "Informants, Section 22," page 1, dated July 1, 1967, in Folder "(1325) Field Manual (1967)," Box 66, RG 170, NARA. See also Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 17–26. Agent George Belk described "special endeavor assignments" as "travelling with an informer who had been purchasing drugs in Kansas City, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Il and New York. The idea was that . . . guy would make introductions with traffickers. We tried to purchase evidence." John McWilliams interview with George Belk dated January 7, 1987, in Folder "Belk, George," Box 1, Valentine Collection.

[74] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 40; Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*, 193. In *Uncertain Glory*, 117, Mulgannon describes how agents used addiction to coerce cooperation.

a “bird-dog” on a “leash.” Mulgannon similarly described one of his Chinese informants as “a walking pincushion,” distinguished only by his “ghastly festering sores.” Even Anslinger wrote about a regular addict-informant nicknamed “Oozy” because “he oozed dope from every pore of his body.” Anslinger described him as “repulsive” and “beguiling” but extremely valuable. “I do not know how he stayed alive,” the Old Man wrote with grudging respect. “He could take heroin, morphine and cocaine all mixed together in one colossal dose, shoot it into any part of his body and show no ill effects whatsoever.”[75]

In the milieu of the international drug trade, the Bureau was forced to make constant trade-offs and its reliance on criminal informants exemplified the inevitability of compromise. In his memoir *The Trail of the Poppy* (1966), Charles Siragusa described the central role played by a known conman and criminal during the investigation of a Middle-Eastern heroin ring and readily admittred that he would “work with the devil” to break a big case. In fact, running throughout FBN literature is an often explicit acknowledgement that the systematic use of criminal informants was a kind of Faustian bargain. In the foreword to Vizzini’s memoir, for example, Anslinger echoes Siragusa’s sentiment that if “it meant making a case, he would grow a tail and dance with the devil.”[76]

Ultimately, the real problem with widespread reliance on informants was that it created an institutional and procedural dependency on the very traffic the Bureau was sworn to stamp out and upon class of people the Bureau deemed fundamentally unreliable. FBN officials, however, saw underworld informants as a necessary evil, even at the expense of allowing them to continue their criminal activities—be it using or dealing. During internal debates within the Treasury Department about the best approach to drug control, Anslinger dismissed the Customs Agency’s search-based strategy and argued, “The seizure of narcotics in New York City as well as in other places depends upon information obtained either from inside this country or from sources abroad,” often provided by paid informants.[77] In his study of federal investigators, James Q. Wilson identifies the same tendency in the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBN’s ultimate successor, writing, “DEA agents see no practical way of finding

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[75] Vizzini recalled the parting words of one senior agent who told him, “Just bear in mind that sometimes we go by the book and sometimes we write the book as we go along.” Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 17-25; Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory*, 15-16; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 135.

[76] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 7; Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 10.

[77] Letter dated March 16, 1959 from Anslinger to Assistant Treasury Secretary A. Gilmore Flues, in Folder “(0395) Customs Book #2, 1955 through December 1962,” Box 59, RG 170, NARA.

informants other than by arresting street-level dealers after making undercover drug buys. This belief leads DEA agents to define their central task as one of making buys."[78]

To put it another way, using undercover agents and criminal informants to work up the supply chain was the gold standard of counternarcotics investigations and seen as the only effective way to disrupt the traffic. But the Bureau could only crack those kinds of investigations by first making as many retail-level arrests as possible, which introduced a problematic tension between short and long-term investigations. The pressure to make cases also pushed the Bureau out toward the edge where investigating criminal intentions ran up against entrapment. By the 1960s, FBN officials had compiled a file thick with formal complaints. Anslinger's successor Henry Giordano summarized, "The common denominator in all of the allegations is that the defendant was framed by the informant," many of whom were actual dealers who, detractors charged, had essentially been given "a license to sell narcotics."[79]

The secretive and consensual nature of the drug trade made the use of criminal informants a necessity—but that didn't make the practice popular with the public. Officials felt compelled to defend the practice in FBN literature, particularly during the backlash that followed McCarthyism and the Red Scare. In *The Murderers*, Anslinger claimed, "the informer provides the solution for ninety-five percent not only of narcotic offenses but of all types of crime." In the 1952 book *Narcotics: America's Peril*, James Ryan (Williams's successor in New York) defended informants as "brave citizens," often "former addicts" who work for the Bureau at "great personal risk."[80] In 1960, longtime FBN official Malachi Harney published *The Informer In Law Enforcement* (revised in 1968), which was half public apologia for the method and half narrative adaptation of FBN training curricula—for which Williams was singled out for his contributions. Acknowledging that "informer" was often a "dirty word," Harney protested that they were not only an irreplaceable asset to investigators but were "essential to the preservation of a democratic

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[78] Wilson, *The Investigators*, 58.

[79] Giordano defended the Bureau's use of informants and argued that "several prisoners at the Federal House of Detention have agreed to put pressure on the Bureau by submitting false allegations." Letter dated October 15, 1965, from Henry L. Giordano (Commissioner of Narcotics) to David C. Acheson, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury for Enforcement, in Folder "(1515-3) Officers, Complaints, October 1934 thru December 1967," in Box 66, RG 170, NARA.

[80] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 141. Ryan is quoted in *Narcotics: America's Peril*. Authors Oursler and Smith wrote, "Informers are not considered in any sense to be stool pigeons. They are men who agree to work for the government. Although not permitted to carry shields or given authority to arrest, they are accorded the status of special employees." Oursler and Smith, *Narcotics*, 140.

society."[81] Even official FBN policy and terminology reflected the slightly schizophrenic view of informants. In an effort to shake the negative stigma associated with the term, in June 1950, the Bureau ordered all agents to drop the word informant in favor of the phrase "special employee" or abbreviation "SE" but then reversed course twelve years later.[82]

The Bureau arguably reached the apex of its influence during the 1950s, a period that coincided with a broader political conservatism that found Americans intolerant of anything that smacked of subversion or threatened to undermine social norms. The passage of tough drug laws demonstrated the FBN's influence on policy and legislation. One of those bills, the 1956 Narcotic Control Act, included funding for the Treasury Law Enforcement Officers Training School (TLEOTS). Run by FBN Agent Patrick O'Carroll, the training school formalized the FBN techniques developed during the prewar period and further cemented the Bureau's influence with the local and foreign police services that trained there.[83]

The training school helped the Bureau achieve many of its postwar objectives. By that time Williams had left the Bureau, but many sources indicate his lasting influence on FBN procedure and technique. Indeed, by 1940, Garland Williams possessed unique expertise and as the storm clouds of World War II gathered, he was one of the first men called upon to help prepare America for a new style of combat.

Good Wars

On September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland. Among Hitler's many casualties was the dope menace, at least for a while. With Nazi subs prowling the Atlantic and both Europe and the Far East

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[81] Harney and Cross, *The Informer in Law Enforcement*, Williams is acknowledged on p. ix; public attitudes are discussed on 4-5, 11, "preservation of democratic society" is quoted from p. 105.

[82] See Anslinger, Bureau Order No. 98, dated June 9, 1950, in Folder "(0370-3) Bureau Orders, 1938-1955," and Giordano, Bureau Order No. 196, dated November 16, 1962, in Folder "(0370-3) Bureau Orders, 1956-1967," Box 56, RG 170, NARA. Despite the name change, Agent Sal Vizzini deadpanned, "S.E. means special employee. Also other things, such as button man and stool pigeon, which you don't call him in an official report." Vizzini *et al.*, *Vizzini*, 30.

[83] Anslinger announced the development in a memo dated August 22, 1956 to all FBN supervisors and forwarded a copy of the proposed curriculum, in Folder "(0370-3) Memorandum for All District Supervisors, 1955-1965," Box 56, RG 170, NARA. The training school, which was dominated by the FBN, is also described in H.J. Anslinger, "Narcotics Bureau Conducts Training School for Police," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* Vol. 31, No. 10 (October 1962). This article and material from the fully developed training curriculum are available in Folders 2 and 4, Box 7, Anslinger Papers. The school's expansion and outreach efforts during the early 1960s are discussed in an undated (circa 1965-1968) briefing paper for Treasury Secretary Henry Fowler in Folder "(280-17) Orientation Materials for Top Executives," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

engulfed by war, global trade routes were thrown into chaos and the international heroin traffic slowed to a trickle. By the end of the month, Treasury Department officials reported that drug smuggling had dropped by over seventy-five percent. George Collins, chief of the narcotics unit at Customs, commented, "I can't recall ever having seen things quieter on the smuggling front. Our information indicates that European governments are seizing many kind of narcotics consigned for the United States. They need it or will need it in hospitals, once the war really gets under way." Back in New York, the sudden shortage combined with the Bureau's assault on distributors to touch off a prolonged heroin panic. Street prices soared as illicit supplies dwindled. Williams happily reported that addicts all over the city were beginning to suffer the effects of withdrawal and "having themselves committed to hospitals for the cure as fast as they can be taken in."[84]

The dope menace was momentarily vanquished, but a new menace awaited. With American involvement looking increasingly inevitable, the U.S. government called on individuals like Williams to help prepare for war. The public remained uncomfortable with the idea of a large national police force, but officials like Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr. knew changes were needed to meet the challenges ahead. In late September, Morgenthau named Hugh McQuillan, the Special Agent in Charge of the Treasury's New York intelligence unit (part of the IRS), as the "coordinator" of all Treasury enforcement personnel in the New York area, with Williams to serve as his assistant. "While Secretary Morgenthau has frowned upon consolidation of the Treasury enforcement agencies," the *New York Times* explained, "with a total personnel close to 15,000, he has promoted coordination of the various units in the interest of efficiency. A consolidated Federal police force, he has said, would bear too close a resemblance to a 'Gestapo.'"[85] In October 1940, Williams assumed McQuillan's duties and supervision of all Treasury Department personnel operating in New York, New Jersey and Delaware. The *Times* described the move as "an intensification of efforts to guard against sabotage, to locate Fifth Columnists and to push the preparedness program." Still a year prior before Pearl Harbor, the war was referred to only elliptically and Williams told reporters, "The most serious matter to us, as well as to the entire

[84] "War Is Calamity for Dope Addicts," *Baltimore Sun*, September 27, 1939, p. 11.

[85] "M'Quillan Receives Enforcement Post," *New York Times*, September 22, 1939.

country, is the preparedness program. We must protect the preparedness program and protect the revenues which will finance it as well as enforce procurement of the revenues."[86]

Anslinger, meanwhile, was also keeping busy and doing his part to put the country on war footing by building a massive opiate stockpile. In a 1935 meeting with Morgenthau, Anslinger pointed out that the country's entire supply of medicinal opiates was in the hands of private retailers and sufficient for only one year. The federal government, he noted, had no supply of its own—a precarious situation should the anticipated war in Europe finally arrive. Morgenthau recognized the vulnerability and immediately authorized American pharmaceutical companies to increase their supply by 130,000 pounds of refined opium, with another 50,000 pounds to be held by the Treasury Department itself.[87]

Working through the Defense Supplies Corporation (a subsidiary of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation), Anslinger and the pharmaceutical companies bought up nearly all of the available opium stocks in Turkey and Iran, as well as Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, India and Afghanistan.[88] The actual details of this arrangement remain a little fuzzy. In *The Protectors*, Anslinger wrote, "Having foreseen the possibility of war, we had, in 1939, *arranged with drug manufacturers* to stockpile a sufficient quantity of opium to carry the U.S. and her Allies through a conflict. This was accomplished *without Congressional appropriation* by *having the funds made directly available* to opium manufacturers."[89] The Bureau had a modest budget, so Anslinger probably arranged inexpensive loans or direct subsidies from federal agencies like the Defense Supplies Corporation or Board of Economic Warfare to cooperative pharmaceutical companies. Though he lacked the funds to make the purchases himself, Anslinger wasn't afraid to throw his weight around and threatened pharmaceutical companies like Hoffman-LaRoche with,

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[86] "Assumes New Duties as U.S. Treasury Aide," *New York Times*, October 2, 1940.

[87] John C. McWilliams, "Unsung Partner Against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113, no. 2 (April 1989): 221–222; McWilliams, *The Protectors, 1930-1962*, 95–96. In both instances, McWilliams cites Morgenthau's diary entry, dated November 22, 1935, held among the Henry Morgenthau Papers at the Franklin Roosevelt Presidential Library.

[88] Douglas Clark Kinder and William O. Walker III, "Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962," *The Journal OF American History* 72, no. 4 (March 1986): 919–921.

[89] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 75. Emphasis added.

in Douglas Clark Kinder and William Walker's words, "unspecified reprisals" if their subsidiaries dared sell opiates to the Axis powers.[90]

By 1940, the FBN had 300 tons of cured opium packed into chests and stored in the very same vaults that once held the nation's gold reserves (only recently moved to Ft. Knox). According to Anslinger biographer John C. McWilliams, the Commissioner "had hoarded enough to last nearly four years." One of Anslinger's literary collaborators later argued the "contents of those chests would be more precious than any gold," due to the "thousands of lives" and "hours of agony" saved by the FBN's "stockpile of mercy." At war's end, the stockpile was rumored to still be mostly intact, with tons of opium tucked away in anonymous crates like the Arc of the Covenant at the end of *Raiders of the Lost Arc*.[91]

Regardless of how the massive reserve of opium was technically paid for, Anslinger's actions produced the desired effect of formally drawing the Bureau into the national defense effort. In June 1941, he issued a circular letter to the rest of the Bureau reporting that as of May 27, 1941, the FBN had been officially designated a "defense agency."[92] In *The Journal of American History*, Kinder and Walker summarize:

> After ten years of service at the FBN, Anslinger was ready to do his part when the United States finally entered World War II. Because medicinal narcotics were essential to the war effort and because no other wartime administrator had the requisite knowledge or authority, Anslinger made sure that he had a voice in all decisions having to do with Allied drug requirements. By making himself indispensable, the commissioner further expanded the historically nebulous power vested in his office.[93]

Anslinger made it clear to Washington policymakers that he considered the FBN's opium cache part of America's "arsenal of democracy" and testified to the House Appropriations Committee that the Bureau met the "medical needs of a lot of our friends."[94]

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[90] Kinder and Walker III, "Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962," 919–921.

[91] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 133; McWilliams, "Unsung Partner Against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962," 221–222; McWilliams, *The Protectors*, 95–96; Oursler and Smith, *Narcotics: America's Peril*, 133. On the surviving opium stocks, McWilliams cites a January 7, 1987 interview with George Belk, available in Box 1 of the Valentine Collection.

[92] Harry J. Anslinger, June 6, 1941, "Confidential Circular Letter," in Folder "(280-11) Bureau Operations, 1931-1954," Box 48, RG 170, NARA

[93] Kinder and Walker III, "Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962," 919–920.

[94] McWilliams, "Unsung Partner Against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962," 220–221.

In the context of world war, opium—and the morphine derived from it—became a strategic war asset rather than a pernicious foreign scourge. Milo Perkins, executive director of the Board of Economic Warfare, concurred with Anslinger that buying up all available opium was not only critical to supplying the wartime medical needs of the Allies but was "important as a defensive objective in preventing Germany from obtaining this important material."[95] Occasionally Anslinger was challenged on his assertion that the Bureau was part of the national defense. One Congressman sought to differentiate the FBN's work from the war effort, asserting that the Bureau's activities related to the national welfare but not the war. Anslinger saw no such distinction and retorted, "They are related to both. Our work with respect to critical and strategic materials all ties into the war effort."[96]

While Anslinger was busy stashing crates of opium in Treasury Department vaults, the agents who remained with the Bureau found themselves left with few traffickers to hunt. In keeping with the Commissioner's effort to make the Bureau indispensable to the growing national defense establishment, the FBN began to aggressively investigate military drug use—another borderline counterintelligence function. He downplayed the FBN role to one friend, writing, "Our men are doing the prosaic work of investigating the character and habits of applicants for the Navy..."[97] Bureau records, however, indicate that hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals were rejected by the military for suspected drug use and their names quietly turned over to the Bureau for investigation and inclusion in the ever-growing registry of known addicts. Much of this correspondence was emblazoned with the following warning:

> Discreet investigations should be made as may be indicated. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANY REFERENCE BE MADE TO REJECTIONS BY THE MILITARY SERVICES AND YOUR INQURIES SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN SUCH A MANNER THAT THERE WILL BE NO

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[95] Quoted in Kinder and Walker III, "Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962," 920. Perkins's statement is taken from the minutes of a meeting held January 10, 1942 kept in the Records of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RG 234) at the National Archives.

[96] Rebecca Carroll, "Under the Influence: Harry Anslinger's Role in Shaping America's Drug Policy," in *Federal Drug Control: The Evolution of Policy and Practice* (New York, London and Oxford: Pharmaceutical Products Press, 2004), 77.

[97] Letter from Anslinger to Keith Weeks, an executive at MGM, dated November 24, 1941. It's possible Anslinger was downplaying the FBN's wartime responsibilities. In the early years of WWII, Weeks was desperate for a job in the intelligence community and repeatedly pressed Anslinger for an introduction to the powers that be. Anslinger gently but consistently demurred. Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

INFERENCE THAT THE INFORMATION CAME FROM MILITARY AUTHORITIES AS IT WAS OBTAINED QUITE CONFIDENTIALLY.[98]

In effect, the draft became a giant drug screening program. On the one hand, Anslinger was encouraged that only one in every ten thousand conscripts or enlistees screened by military doctors was a drug user, an improvement from the one-in-three thousand ratio reported during World War I. Yet that didn't stop him from using potential military drug use to further insinuate the Bureau into the national defense, and he later wrote that one quarter of the FBN's wartime personnel were "engaged in keeping army and other military camps free of narcotic peddlers and drug addicts."[99] With heroin now in short supply, the Bureau directed much of its attention to investigating marijuana use by American servicemen and Anslinger reported "complete cooperation from the Army in this regard."[100]

The Bureau's best agents, including Garland Williams, had more important assignments. In the closing months of 1940, Williams was summoned to Washington to meet with General Sherman Miles, the Chief of Army Intelligence. "I've been told that you know something about secret operations and that you'd be a good man to organize some sort of plainclothes unit for the Army," Miles reportedly told Williams. "We've already spoken to Commissioner Anslinger. You report for six months' duty to set up a secret police for us. You might as well know, we'll be at war before long and General Marshall says that we'll *need a lot of trained people to fight spies and that type of thing*."[101]

With the start of World War II, the United States found itself in a position where it had to build an espionage, intelligence and counter-intelligence apparatus essentially from scratch. In the hunt for radicals and other subversives during and after the first World War, those roles were filled by primarily by

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[98] This language is repeated throughout the Bureau's "Military Reports" files, but for a specific example, see the memo from Will S. Wood, Acting Commissioner, to R.W. Artis, District Supervisor, NY dated May 6, 1943. In Folder "(0550-3) Reports to the Military, District No. 2, April 7, 1943 to October 27, 1943," Box 13, RG 170, NARA. There are twelve separate folders dealing with investigations of servicemen held in this box, running from September 22, 1942 to March 28, 1945. See also a September 6, 1943 letter from the Treasury Department's Director of Public Relations, Charles Schwarz to Lorene Threepersons indicating it is Department policy to "never to refer to Army service records of offenders prosecuted by Treasury agencies." In Box 189, Entry 193 (Central Files of the Office of Secretary, 1933-1956), RG 56 (General Records of the Department of the Treasury), NARA.

[99] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 77; see also Press Service No. 14-3, dated July 18, 1938, in Folder "(1690-12) Folder #1, Publicity, Press Release, 1938 thru 1942," Box 74, RG 170, NARA

[100] Harry J. Anslinger, memo for the files dated April 9, 1941, Re: "Fort Eustis, Norfolk, VA," in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[101] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 76. Emphasis added.

the Army's Corps of Intelligence Police (CIP) and the FBI. Most Americans continued to look askance at the idea of secret or political police. Many policymakers similarly dismissed the idea of a domestic spy agency and felt, as Henry Stimson famously said, "Gentlemen do not read each other's mail."[102] The result, however, was that the U.S. found itself ill-prepared to conduct its own intelligence operations or disrupt those of the Axis powers once World War II began. It fell to people like Garland Williams, with his military background and unique expertise, to build a crash course in intelligence and special operations. Who better to hunt enemy spy networks than someone who had made a career of directing the investigation and infiltration of criminal networks of all shapes, sizes and ethnicities?

Gen. Miles initially put Williams in charge of the Corps of Intelligence Police (CIP), a military intelligence unit that had languished since its WWI glory days. Williams reported for duty in January 1941 and immediately organized a four-week course designed to train agents in the dual role of police investigator and counterintelligence officer. A group of military police were his first pupils. A postwar report by the Army described the training school's curriculum: "Students were taught the principles of observation and description, espionage and counterespionage, bombs and 'infernal machines,' undercover work, and numerous other topics that the well-trained investigator should know." Williams drew extensively from his federal law enforcement background when designing the course and even stipulated that students spend time with local and federal detective squads to reinforce lessons in undercover work, surveillance, handling informants and interrogation.[103]

As he had throughout his career, Williams forged order out of chaos. In July, he requested greater centralization of CIP efforts, complaining to his superiors that there were "14 different policies, 14 different practices, 14 different methods of work and in general, 14 separate and distinctive units..."

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[102] Stimson is quoted in Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, The Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 319. McCoy also writes about the career of Ralph Van Deman, a fascinating character in the history of American intelligence and the founder of the CIP. See also, Weiner, *Enemies: A History of the FBI*, which discusses Hoover's pursuit of radicals and the counterintelligence functions of the FBI.

[103] Williams training of MPs is reported in "Army Sergeants Get Training in M.P. Work," *Washington Post*, March 6, 1941, p. 4. The CIP/CIC training program, including a timeline of events and copies of training materials, are described in detail in the edited volume: John Mendelsohn, ed., *Covert Warfare: The History of the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC)*, vol. 11, 18 vols., (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989). For a sample of the curriculum, see a document titled "Corps of Intelligence Police, Investigators Training School" in Folder 1756, Box 161, Entry 136, RG 226 (Records of the Office of Strategic Services), NARA.

Williams's assignment ended in August 1941, but by that time he had had graduated nearly 300 agents, both officers and enlisted men, and set the organization on a path toward its formal transition from a police force to an intelligence agency. On January 1, 1942, the Corps of Intelligence Police was officially renamed the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) in recognition of its shift in mission.[104]

Around the same time that Williams helped overhaul Army intelligence, President Franklin Roosevelt created the Office of the Coordinator of Intelligence (COI), partly at the urging of British intelligence officers and influential Wall Street lawyer "Wild Bill" Donovan, who became its director. Seeking to further refine the American intelligence mission, in June 1942 President Roosevelt split the functions of the COI; wartime propaganda would be conducted by the Office of War Information, while the Office of Special Services (OSS), with Donovan at its head, would focus on espionage, intelligence and special operations. Commissioner Anslinger and Donovan were longtime acquaintances and shared an interest in all things cloak-and-dagger. Recognizing the value of the FBN's unique expertise, Anslinger enthusiastically recommended Williams for Donovan's new agency and secured Secretary Morgenthau's permission to serve as an outside consultant.[105]

Following his assignment with the CIC, Williams also briefly served as an instructor at the Infantry School in Fort Benning, GA and the Chemical Warfare School at Aberdeen, MD. In January 1942, he was hired by Preston Goodfellow, one of Donovan's top aides. Together, Williams and Goodfellow created a series of training camps designed to prepare the first batch of OSS operatives for assignments behind enemy lines in Europe.[106]

First, however, they needed a little training of their own. In February 1942, Williams attended a four week training course at a British outpost situated on the shore of Lake Ontario, near the Canadian hamlet of Oshawa. Designated "Camp X," the facility was established by the British Special Operations Executive to help train OSS instructors and share British expertise in asymmetric warfare. The

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[104] Quoted in Mendelsohn, ed., *Covert Warfare: The History of the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC)*, 38, 50.

[105] Anslinger and Donovan appear to have been acquainted at least as early as 1920, as indicated by a letter from Donovan to Anslinger dated August 11 of that year, thanking Anslinger for passing along some unspecified information while Anslinger was still a consular official in the State Department. See also a letter dated December 23 1941 from Morgenthau to Donovan, confirming Anslinger's role as a consultant, in Folder 19, Box and Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[106] Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 49–50.

subsequent training session in March was attended by fellow FBN agent George H. White, who dubbed the place "the Oshawa School of Mayhem and Murder" and (in an example of the kind of rumors that followed him everywhere) reportedly one night "got drunk and shot up the camp."[107] The British were keenly interested in helping the OSS get up and running and freely lent their expertise, training materials and even their own instructors to their new American partners.

Upon his return to the U.S., Williams immediately set about establishing similar camps in the areas surrounding Washington, DC, a venture chronicled in John Whiteclay Chambers's *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II* (2008). The first OSS training site was established at an old Civilian Conservation Corps work camp in the Catoctin Mountains north of Frederick, MD. Dubbed "Area B" (for Basic training), the site became an important training ground for OSS operatives, many of whom were dropped behind enemy lines in occupied Europe. A number of individuals who later played prominent roles in the American national security state, like future CIA Director William Casey and the controversial counterintelligence czar James Jesus Angelton, also received training at the site.[108] Later in the war, Roosevelt went up to inspect the school and was so impressed with the site that he took over part of the camp as a weekend retreat and dubbed the place "Shangri-La." Years later, President Eisenhower expanded the facilities and changed the name to Camp David, after his grandson.[109] A second training camp, called "Area A" (for Advanced training) was located in Prince William Forest Park, near Quantico, VA, also at the site of a former CCC camp. Area A became the central training facility for paramilitary operations and X-2, the OSS's counterintelligence division.[110]

Williams recruited heavily from the ranks of federal law enforcement to staff the camps and chose fellow FBN agent George White as Area A's first chief instructor. An internal OSS report described the purpose of Area A as "primarily an S.O. [Special Operations] training school for organizers of long-term sabotage activities in enemy occupied territory" and "long term direct action." Befitting a school dedicated

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[107] David Stafford, *Camp X* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1986); John C. McWilliams, "Covert Connections: The FBN, the OSS, and the CIA.," *Historian*, 53, no. 4 (1991): 657–679; Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 50–52. The "shooting up the camp" rumor comes secondhand from Carl Eifler, via Howard Chappell; see email dated October 18, 1994 from Chappell to Douglas Valentine, in Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection.

[108] Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 37.

[109] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 78.

[110] Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 54–56.

to unconventional warfare, the atmosphere was reportedly "very informal with no emphasis on military routine." The reported noted that training seminars given by White, now commissioned with the rank of Captain, "were well planned and well given."[111]

Williams helped create six camps in total, dubbed Areas A through F. The final one was situated on the grounds of the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, where a C-47 fuselage was parked in front of the clubhouse for parachute training and students were known to practice with demolitions on the sand and water hazards of the golf course. Chambers estimates that a total of around 3,600 American operatives received training at the camps, including the widely-celebrated "Jedburgh" commandos and the infamous Detachment 101, a unit led by Carl Eifler that organized indigenous resistance to the Japanese among the Kachin and Burmese tribes of Southeast Asia (and paid them in opium). Williams set up an additional facility at Lothian Farm, near Clinton, MD for training in human intelligence collection. The site's formal designation was RTU-11, but everyone called it "the Farm," a name that caught on when the CIA later set up its own version in Williamsburg, VA. [112]

Combining his own law enforcement background and knowledge of undercover operations with the training received from British commandos at Camp X, Williams designed a curriculum to instruct students in the clandestine arts. "The guerilla concept of warfare will be the guiding principle," Williams wrote in a detailed training guide. The first sessions served as a critical "weeding out" process to see which students lacked the necessary edge. A postwar report described the ideal recruit as "a complete individualist," and the organization quickly acquired a reputation for producing, as one of Williams's trainees put it, "a different breed of cats." Like the Bureau, the OSS recruited with an eye toward language and ethnicity and, according to Chambers, Donovan's master plan "was to recruit among various nationality groups in America's multi-ethnic society, individuals who knew the culture and language of their forbearers' country, and were willing to fight against its occupiers." In June 1942, for example, Williams accepted a group of Thai nationals to be trained for deployment against the Japanese.

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[111] Letter dated July 7, 1942 from J.R. Brown to J. R. Hayden, in "Folder 1754," Box 161, Entry 136, RG 226, NARA.

[112] Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, for graduates, Jedburghs and Detachment 101 see 41–42; for an overview of the camps, including Area F, see 54–63. Also see a November 30, 1994 email message from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine, which confirms William's acquaintance with Eifler and the use of opium as a form of payment. In Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection.

Throughout training, Williams insisted, "The students will also be physically and mentally conditioned . . . for the aggressive and ruthless section action which they will be called upon to perform at later dates." But that was just the beginning.[113]

As with undercover work, mental attitudes were as important as teaching technical skills and fieldwork. Special operations required a blend of mental and moral qualities that might not be readily apparent in all trainees. Williams wrote:

> In some cases the mental attitude of the individual will have to be changed from that of an intellectual and cultured man with high ethical standards to the practical ideas and reactions of a 'thug.' While in other instances the thoughts and ideals of the individual may have to be raised from the level he previously possessed. In all instances there must be a continuing development of the individual's power of memory as well as his power of understanding and utilization of a fellow man.

In the later stages of training, Williams and the OSS instructors sought to further refine, build upon and ultimately tested the recruits capacity for leadership and independent action by sending them out on exercises, like infiltrating actual industrial sites and planting fake explosives in nearby cities like Baltimore. As Williams recognized, the operatives came from a variety of backgrounds and would be given assignments of sometimes wildly different natures. Accordingly, he felt the ultimate goal was to "provide the greatest possible amount of elasticity" and adjust the actual instruction "in accordance with his previous experience, special qualifications or mission." On any given day, students might be trained in hand-to-hand combat, the use of technical equipment, the handling and recruiting of informants, demolitions and small arms fire, or selection of targets for sabotage.[114] A postwar assessment by the OSS wryly observed, "It has been jokingly said that the E courses [emphasizing operational methods] produced about two thousand potential post-war house breakers, forgers, thieves, and murderers, and it

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[113] Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 58, 41, 402; Garland Williams, "Training," in "Folder 1754," Box 161, Entry 136, RG 226, NARA. See also October 9, 1995, email message from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine. Folder "Chappell, Howard," Valentine Collection.

[114] Williams was insistent on the virtues of mock exercises and wrote, "Theoretical instruction must be supplemented by practical application. Whenever possible the system of instruction will follow the principles of explanation, demonstration, application, examination." Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 53, 58, 41, 402; Garland Williams, "Training," in "Folder 1754," Box 161, Entry 136, RG 226, NARA.

has been suggested (it is hoped without justification) that another Schools and Training program will be needed to untrain these men and their unAmerican ways."[115]

Some of the most advanced training took place at "finishing schools" held at the camps or in actual service with police agencies like the FBN. One OSS memo from November 1943 indicates that a number of OSS trainees were sent to the FBN's New York office to "gain actual investigative experience in surveillance, interrogation, search, etc." While the investigative pace had slowed during the war, the office still presented ample opportunities for OSS trainees to practice their new skills and the New York agents remained uniquely qualified to teach the fledgling spies tradecraft like wire-tapping, installing bugs, surreptitious entry and clandestine investigations.[116]

Now commissioned as a Major, George White supervised later stages of the training from a safe house on West 67th Street. Most of his students were slated for X-2, the OSS's secretive counterintelligence branch. While in New York, White even designed a set of lockpicks mounted in a standard pocketknife frame. By the time he was done with them, most of his agents were able "to open almost any lock within two or three minutes time." This was an important stage for the trainees and the OSS put a lot of confidence into White's instruction. "For the time being," a November 1943 memo read, "Major George White will act as Chief Supervisor until such time as he departs overseas. Major White will also make arrangements with outside enforcement officers, whose security has been approved, to make lectures in various phases of investigative technique. No set curriculum is proposed as it is believed the program should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the specific needs of the individual agents."[117] This final stage of training was also the OSS's last chance to discretely monitor the newly commissioned agents for any sign of misconduct or personal vulnerabilities that might jeopardize their overseas missions. White recommended that at least one student, an open and flamboyant homosexual, be

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[115] William L. Cassidy, ed., *History of the Schools and Training Branch, Office of Strategic Services* (San Francisco: Kingfisher Press, 1983), 84.

[116] See memo dated November 24, 1943 from Maj. John J. McDonough to Col. G. Edward Buxton, in Cassidy, *History of the Schools and Training Branch*, 119-201.

[117] See memo dated November 24, 1943 from Maj. John J. McDonough to Col. G. Edward Buxton, in Cassidy, *History of the Schools and Training Branch*, 119-201, and letter dated January 31, 1944 from White to Major John J. McDonough, in Folder 4, Box 1, White Papers.

removed from service, providing further evidence that FBN agents policed both drugs and American social norms.[118]

Not everyone, however, was impressed with the swift but slightly slapdash manner in which the OSS cranked out agents. Bill Donovan answered directly to Roosevelt, but behind the scenes tensions began to emerge between the upper ranks of the OSS and the Joint Chiefs over the direction of the training program. The military was hungry for useful intelligence but highly skeptical of the special operatives the OSS prepared for clandestine service. The instruction proffered to spies and commandos shared many features, but the priorities of the Special Intelligence (SI) and Special Operations (SO) branches of the OSS also began to diverge and undermined the unity of the training program. In OSS *Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, Chambers notes, "Most of the professionals continued to be suspicious of Donovan's citizen-soldiers, their neglect of normal military routine, and their unorthodox methods." There was also significant resentment of "direct commissions" for civilians like White, who lacked genuine military training. A history of the OSS training program produced after the war admitted that in the early years, "the same over-all policy which dictated a tremendous drive for speed, mass production, and mass results, at times gave the OSS an impression of hopeless confusion and indecisive direction." The Joint Chiefs were also slow to find assignments for the newly trained OSS commandos, who began to stack up at holding camps and grow frustrated.[119]

As a result, in August 1942 the OSS reorganized the entire training program and created a separate Schools and Training Branch to coordinate the process. Preston Goodfellow and Garland Williams, responsible for most of the training to date, were sidelined as the JCS took greater interest in the program. Goodfellow was put in charge of a new Strategic Services Command and Williams was forced out of the OSS entirely. Although Donovan's vision of a multi-ethnic global commando force eventually found supporters in the military, William's pushed too far too fast with the paramilitary training program. The OSS's own in-house report later summarized, "In many ways Williams revealed great

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[118] Memo dated November 24, 1943 from Maj. John J. McDonough to Col. G. Edward Buxton, in Cassidy, *History of the Schools and Training Branch*, 119-201. White reported on the homosexual behavior of one student in a report to Maj. McDonough dated January 25, 1944, in Folder 4, Box 1, White Papers.

[119] Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 33, 63–8; Cassidy, *History of the Schools and Training Branch, Office of Strategic Services*, 3, 35

talent and a genuine zeal for the work but his impatience with routine and his tendency to cut corners was beginning to hamper his efforts to improve his own program . . . he was one of the early sacrifices to the order which was deemed necessary for an ultimately successful organization**.** *Certainly it can be said that he was a year and a half ahead of his time.*" Professional soldiers began to replace the cops and FBN agents chosen by Williams as instructors, but as these men returned to their civilian agencies or, like White, took their talents overseas, the OSS lost the very same unconventional expertise it tried to instill in its operatives. One student complained, "with the exception of Capt. White, no single instructor had any major experience with undercover work. Consequently, the lectures seemed rather lifeless. As a graduate of this course, I still have no idea of how to deal with 'black market' operations, false entry, financial operations, or any of the present day operational problems."[120] In other words, in the absence of sustained instruction at the hands of agents like Williams and White, many trainees wound up lacking a true grounding in the clandestine arts they would soon be called upon to practice.

Although officially out of the OSS, Williams was quickly appointed as the commanding officer of the paratrooper school back at Ft. Benning, where he worked as a talent-spotter for the OSS and received the literal pick of the litter. From this vantage, Williams recruited men who went on to successful careers in not only the OSS, but also the FBN and the CIA. Howard Chappell was one of the students recruited by Williams, first into the OSS and later the FBN, where he worked under George White and became the supervisor of the LA office. It's likely that William Colby, another future Director of Central Intelligence, was also among the students Williams recruited from the paratroopers into the OSS.[121] Looking back, Chappell recalls, "Donovan pulled strings to get [Williams] appointed as C.O. at the Ft Benning airborne training school where he was able to pick those troopers who he believed would be beneficial to the OSS. I remember him at middle age reporting to the school as a student for his jump training before taking over as C.O. He insisted on doing everything required of the young men in spite of

[120] Chambers II, *OSS Training in the National Parks and Service Abroad in World War II*, 33, 63–8, undercover experience quote on 569; "ahead of his time" is quoted (with added emphasis) in Cassidy, *History of the Schools and Training Branch, Office of Strategic Services*, 3, 35.

[121] William Colby's career and recruitment from paratrooper school to the OSS are recounted in a fascinating documentary made by his son, in *The Man Nobody Knew: In Search of My Father, CIA Spymaster William Colby* (2011, 104 mins), dir. Carl Colby.

his age (38)." Chappell's service leading Italian partisans seemed to validate the potential of the OSS commandos and earned him both a Purple Heart and Silver Star.[122]

Chappell didn't join the FBN until after the war, but a number of active agents followed Williams and White into the WWII-era intelligence services and were recruited largely on the strength of their specific blend of language skills and experience as federal investigators. Charles Siragusa served with the OSS in North Africa and Italy, where, according to a memo bearing Donovan's signature, he was considered in a "scarce category of specialized skill" and especially well-qualified to organize counterintelligence activities "by reason of his four years secret investigative background and experience with the United State Bureau of Narcotics."[123] FBN agent Angelo Zurlo was similarly recruited to work behind enemy lines and organize partisan resistance in Italy.[124] Melvyn Hanks, a Customs agent specializing in drug investigations, served in a counterintelligence post with the Coast Guard.[125] Agents J. Ray Oliveira and Francis X. Di Lucia worked for the FBN and Customs and were both sent to Europe early in the war with cover as Financial Attachés, as was Charles Dyar, a close friend of Anslinger's and veteran of both the FBN and Customs service. Dyar was widely considered an expert on Germany and European finance and served directly under Allen Dulles in Berne, helping to coordinate the OSS's European intelligence network. After the war, Dyar was chosen as the top drug enforcement official with OMGUS, the Allied military occupation forces in Germany.[126]

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[122] Email dated March 23, 1994 from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine. Folder "Chappell, Howard," Valentine Collection. Chappell became something of war hero for his service leading partisan resistance in Italy. His exploits were recounted in William White, "Some Affairs of Honor," *Reader's Digest*, December 1945, 136-154 and in his OSS personnel file, "Chappell, Howard W; INF., 01285896," in Box 0118, Entry 224, RG 226, NARA.

[123] See memo dated September 20, 1943, bearing the signature of William J. Donovan, titled "Job Description of in the Case of Charles Siragusa," in Folder "Siragusa, Charles," in Box 0715, Entry 224, RG 226, NARA. See also Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia*, 58–63.

[124] See contents of Folder "Zurlo, Angelo A.," in Box 0865, Entry 224, RG 226, NARA

[125] Hanks, *Narc: The Adventures of a Federal Agent*, 191.

[126] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 79. See also an undated document tiled "War Diary; OSS, Berne," which describes Dyar's activities in some detail. A declass tag affixed to the upper right corner of the document (and copious redacting) indicates this is a CIA document, but the authorship is unknown. In Folder "Dyar, Charles," in Box 3, Valentine Collection, National Security Archives. Based on his frequent contact with Swiss banking and financial officials, as well as Thomas McKitterick (the American representative to the Bank of International Settlements), Dyar likely investigated Nazi finances.

The colorful George White also served overseas during the war, leaving OSS officials in despair over the loss of such an effective instructor.[127] White was a high-level X-2 operative, but records held in FBN files and his own personal papers indicate he served two masters: the OSS and Anslinger. Now a Colonel (much to his delight), White traveled throughout the Middle East and coordinated counterintelligence operations in India to support combat operations in China. White used the opportunity presented by all of the international travel to survey the narcotic situation in each country he visited. In Iran, White found the "opium situation" bleak. Despite the fact that Anslinger had bought up large quantities for the Allied reserve, both opium and morphine remained widely available and sold openly. Iranian officials told White that at least half of the population was addicted and Col. Herbert Norman Schwarzkopf told him that seventy-five percent of the Iranian gendarmerie forces were addicts. Moreover, the Iraqi city of Basra, a key terminus for Soviet lend-lease supplies, had become a potentially dangerous hub for smuggling. "It would be a cinch!" White exclaimed. "The Iranian Government will sell raw or prepared opium to all comers and it would be the simplest thing in the world for seamen smugglers from U.S. ships to obtain any amount of opium there and bring it directly to the U.S. Apparently no one is bothering their heads over this possibility at present and smuggling may well be going on at a good rate now." The situation was a little better in Palestine, he reported, where the British maintained "law and order" and allowed White to inspect a warehouse filled with 15 tons of seized opium, which, he suggested, could be added to the Allied stockpile. Anslinger followed White's reports closely and asked him to follow up on licit drug shipments and prices while abroad.[128]

In the spring of 1944, White arrived in India to support Allied forces engaged in the Pacific and OSS forces operating in China. Anslinger passed White intelligence reports he received from inside China indicating the "Place is hot with 'spy' and 'fifth' boys and Japs bomb the place with their assistance ever so often."[129] White's principal task for the OSS was to dig out a Japanese spy network that operated

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[127] In a report dated April 29, 1944, John C Hughes wrote to James R. Murphy, "White has assumed full responsibility for supervising the work of that set-up and has done an excellent job," and "great care should be used in picking White's successor." In In Folder 4, Box 1, White Papers.

[128] Letter from George White to Anslinger, dated January 6, 1943. In Folder "George White's Reports (folder)," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. See also Anslinger to White, October 15, 1943, in Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

[129] Letter from Gerald Close to Anslinger, dated May 3, 1944. In Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

in Calcutta. According to legend, after a bit of sleuthing White identified his target and one day approached an elderly Chinese lady shuffling down the street with the help of a walking stick. White seized the figure, yanked off her wig and upper garments to reveal a Japanese man and then shot him dead on the street. Other versions have him throttling the spy with his bare hands, then taking a photograph, which he later framed and hung on the wall of his apartment.[130]

Anslinger took advantage of having a trusted subordinate in a strategic position overseas and made informal arrangements for White's extracurricular activities.[131] Soon after White arrived in India, Anslinger asked him to survey the opium situation as he had in Iran and Turkey, and check out rumors that Allied forces were paying indigenous resistance groups in opium.[132] In fact, both British and American forces (including the OSS group Detachment 101, which had been assembled and trained by White and Williams early in the war), had made it a common practice. Anslinger, however, did not approve and complained to the rest of the Washington bureaucracy. Secretary of War Henry Stimson eventually acknowledged the issue in a letter to Secretary Morgenthau and wrote, "The War Department had not heretofore been informed that American Armed Forces in Northern Burma 'habitually' pay Kachin laborers with this drug [opium]. Inquiry has developed that small amounts have been employed by certain organizations in that theater where it was the only payment which would induce native addicts to perform certain essential hazardous missions." Stimson then reassured Morgenthau, "Developments in the military situation have now greatly reduced the need for such services. The Theater Commander has been . . . instructed to prohibit its further use as payment for labor and information."[133]

In the meantime, White found the wartime opium situation in India *complicated*. In a lengthy report to Anslinger dated October 30, 1944, White warned that, given the welter of competing national

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[130] This story is recounted in Stanley P. Lovell, *Of Spies and Stratagems* (New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1964), 60. See also Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 80.

[131] In a lengthy report to Anslinger dated October 10, 1944, White makes reference to a Lt. Col. Charles B. McGehee, described as"my commanding officer for administrative purposes but not for operational purposes…" White tells Anslinger that he has not really been informing McGehee of his activities and explained there were "arrangements which had been made in this matter with OSS and yourself." In Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

[132] "We understand that British officers in Burma are offering opium to Burmese natives in exchange for information," Anslinger wrote in a letter to White dated May 19, 1944, in Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

[133] Anslinger quotes the Stimson letter in a missive to White dated March 9, 1945. In Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

interests at play, drug control in India was a diplomatic nightmare. The main problem, White felt, was that lax control measures allowed opium to be "regularly be sold to all comers, including U.S. troops." Anticipating fears that became especially pronounced during the Vietnam War, White wrote to one colleague, "we know addiction occurs through association and is, in a sense, as 'infectious' as any other communicable disease." If American servicemen were exposed to opium, they would quickly become addicted, he assumed, and then spread addiction to other troops. "This is particularly true," he added pointedly, "in the case of negro soldiers." Worse still, these solider-junkies would bring their "foreign" addiction back to the homeland. "In the case of habit-forming drugs," White wrote, "the actual effects are such that contamination might not become visible until years later when such persons will fall into the hands of the authorities in the United States. I have little doubt that in my future peace time work, as an agent of the Narcotics Bureau . . . I will have occasion to interrogate drug addicts who will state they first became addicted in India while serving in the United States Army."[134]

Still more aggravating was the fact that no one was prepared to take responsibility for the situation. White consulted with a lot of people while investigating the Indian drug situation but admitted that "not many cases of drug addiction had come to the official attention of either the police or medical authorities." No stranger to bureaucratic politics, White knew that this was to be expected, as officials would not readily "admit a bad situation exists in their territory, particularly when it is their job to see the situation does not exist." Military authorities shrugged the issue off as a diplomatic problem. State Department officials avoided it for fear of offending the British. Ultimately, White concluded that if the U.S. was serious about drug control, it would have to step on some toes. "It is my feeling in matters of this sort, where vigorous steps are taken to change a long established policy and routine, someone's feelings must necessarily be hurt and some actual work must be done somewhere along the line," he wrote. White's experience overseas led him to the same conclusion as Anslinger—the only real solution to the illicit drug traffic was to restrict global supplies. The half-hearted control measures put in place by colonial authorities in countries like India, White argued, "can be of little avail in combating the illicit

[134] See letter from White to Anslinger, dated October 30, 1944, with an enclosed letter from White to Major John B. McDonough in Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers. For more on Vietnam War-era concerns with military addiction, see Jeremy Kuzmarov, *The Myth of the Addicted Army: Vietnam and the Modern War on Drugs* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

diversion of narcotic drugs. The only practicable method of restricting the traffic, lies in restricting the growth of the poppy itself." As long as control measures addressed only the sale and not the actual production of opium, the temptation to divert legal opium into the black market would remain.[135]

With White stationed in India, Anslinger got his first real taste of the investigative possibilities that would open up if he could keep a few men stationed overseas. Within a year of his arrival, White's network of informants began generating tips that led to several successful drug seizures. In February of 1945, a tip gleaned from White's network led to the discovery of 220 pounds of opium aboard the *SS Teucer* in Glasgow. "Even though this was seized in England we have every reason to believe it was coming to the United States," Anslinger assured him on a note accompanied by a reward voucher for White's informant. In September and October of 1945, another tip from White led to additional seizures aboard the *SS Chung Shan* in Baltimore and Galveston. With the war drawing to a close, cases were beginning to pile up back at the FBN and Anslinger looked forward to White's return, promising, "We are saving some big ones for your early attention." As he prepared to leave India, White leaned on colleagues in the Army's Criminal Investigation Command (CID) to maintain his network and, together with Garland Williams, even planned a few discrete investigations to be conducted in his absence.[136]

New Horizons

WWII was a clear turning point for the United States and no less so for the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. A number of the Bureau's most dynamic and influential agents enthusiastically served in an intelligence capacity that seemed to validate the skill sets and attitudes they developed while fighting the dope menace but had been widely considered un-American in earlier periods of U.S. history. By making important contributions to the war effort at both the individual and institutional level, the Bureau gained new stature and Anslinger and company were fully prepared to leverage this additional influence in the fight against drugs.

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[135] See letter from White to Anslinger, dated October 30, 1944, with an enclosed letter from White to Major John B. McDonough, and a letter from White to Anslinger dated October 1, 1945 in Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

[136] For the seizures aboard the *SS Teucer*, see Anslinger to George White, February 6, March 3, 1945 and April 12, 1945; for the *SS Chung Shan*, see White to Anslinger, October 1, 1945 and A.F. Scharff to the Commissioner of Customs, October 2, 1945; for planning investigations, see Garland Williams to George White, April 27, 1945 and Anslinger to Col. John Murray, October 26, 1945. All correspondence is from Folder 5, Box 1, White Papers.

White's investigations in India helped pave the way for Anslinger's renewed postwar emphasis on foreign drug control and demonstrated how vital it was to have agents stationed at both sides of the traffic. After the war, Garland Williams briefly returned to the helm of the FBN's New York office, but his career was irrevocably changed by WWII. Williams was a private man and his inner thoughts are likely forever lost to historians, but the experience of training an intelligence and commando force for world war appears to have expanded Williams's horizons and opportunities. It also made the government appreciate the unique expertise of such people. Ironically, given the fact that it was the military that forced Williams out of the OSS training program, he finished the war on the planning staff of the JCS following his stint at Ft. Benning.

When the Korean War began in June 1950, Williams was once again tapped by military intelligence. This time he was asked to create and command a new division, the 525th Military Intelligence Service Group.[137] Existing documents indicate the military was pleased with this new intel outfit and that Williams's influence was considerable. A letter of commendation from Maj. Gen. R.C. Partridge thanked him for his "outstanding contributions" to the development of intelligence in general and combat intelligence specifically, which he attributed to "the imagination, initiative and unceasing drive which you, as Commanding Officer of the 525th, have imparted."[138]

Williams, however, was tiring of military routine. In March 1951, he wrote to Anslinger from Fort Bragg, where the unit was stationed and trained, "I have gotten a reputation for organizing and training and it is being rumored that my unit will remain here and keep a flow of trained people going over. I will be thoroughly disgusted if this turns out true," he groused. When Anslinger sent him some case files to look over, Williams relished the chance to get back to his first love—narcotics investigations. The reports, he confided, "took me completely out of this world here and for awhile I was back in my office in New York concentrating on my real work." In October of that same year, Williams again checked in with Anslinger and reported that he had lately been shuttled around for training in a variety of functions and commands.

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[137] In *The Protectors*, Anslinger wrote, "He formed a completely new type of intelligence organization and became the first commander of the 525th Military Intelligence Service Group, training specialists in all fields of intelligence work." Most trainees were shipped to Korea, but "others were sent to many places in the world. Some are still deployed and heavily engaged in the war against communism." Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 78–9, 107.

[138] Letter dated August 28, 1952 from Maj. Gen. R.C. Partridge to Col. Garland Williams, in Folder "Williams, Garland," Box 8, Valentine Collection.

"It looks as though someone is giving me a rather broad field of knowledge," he wrote. "Maybe they are fattening me up for something." Williams, however, was weary of the constant travel and uncertainty of his military career. Both he and Anslinger recognized that the postwar world had opened a potentially new phase of the global drug trade and that America's geopolitical ascendance had also opened a new world of possibilities for drug control.[139]

Williams got a brief taste of foreign drug enforcement on a 1949 foreign tour (and was awarded the Treasury Department's Exceptional Civilian Service Award upon his return), but never did make it back to the Bureau following his second stint as an intelligence administrator.[140] In early 1953 Williams was chosen to be the Assistant Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), in charge of the department's intelligence division, but the appointment was short lived. In August, Williams was forced to resign when "discrepancies" were found in his own tax returns. It's not entirely clear from existing records what actually happened. It seems unlikely that Williams cheated on his taxes—a more probable explanation is that he was on the losing end of some kind of political game; as one of his colleagues at the Bureau remarked, "One lives by the sword and dies by the sword." Howard Chappell insisted that Williams was honest and contended, "it was generally accepted that the whitewash required a sacrifice and Garland was it. It was not possible that a man of his long record of integrity would have cheated on his income tax nor can I see how a Gov. employee could even try."[141] Momentarily defeated, Williams technically returned to the Bureau but went on immediate sick leave and retired in March 1954.

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[139] Undated letter (most likely March 25, 1951) from Williams to Anslinger and Garland Williams (525th Military Intelligence Service Group letterhead) to Anslinger, October 12, 1951, in Folder 14, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. Also of note is a letter dated June 23, 1952, from Williams to Anslinger, written just prior to his retirement from the military in which the two planned to vacation together with their families in Nag's Head, NC. "I really would like to have the leave in order to be sure the army is out of my system entirely and I can start work in the Bureau mentally as well as physically refreshed," Williams wrote.

[140] The award was announced in a United States Treasury Department Press Release dated October 27, 1949. In Folder "Williams, Garland," Box 8, Valentine Collection, National Security Archives.

[141] A memo dated September 22, 1953 from B.T. Mitchell (Assistant to the Commissioner) to Charles Siragusa in Rome reports that Williams has "discontinued serving" as head of the IRS intelligence branch and has returned to the Bureau as of August 31, 1953. In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. The "sword" remark is made in an undated letter to "Geo" (George White) from "Jno," in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers. November 30, 1994, email message from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine. Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection, National Security Archive. Also see the newspaper clipping: "Prober Resigns Over Own U.S. Tax Returns," *Evening Tribune* (San Diego), November 23, 1953, p. 1, in Folder "Williams, Garland," Box 8, Valentine Collection.

Little is known about the next three years of his life, but in February 1957, Williams embarked upon yet another remarkable career as a narcotics specialist with the State Department's International Cooperation Agency (ICA). In 1961, President Kennedy reorganized the ICA into the U.S. Agency for International Development and Williams became an important official in the Office of Public Safety, a sub-office dedicated to training foreign police forces. In *Modernizing Repression* (2012), Jeremy Kuzmarov identifies the training of foreign police forces as "critical to securing the power base of local elites amenable to U.S. economic and political interests," and "an unobserved constant" throughout the Cold War and into the present. Williams played an influential role in training police forces in Iran, Ethiopia and the Ivory Coast, and helped align their police structures—and, when possible, their drug control policy—with American interests.[142] As Chappell later remarked, Williams "was involved in so many things much of which was in sub-rosa activity not as an Agent or operator, but as an organizer or administrative position. This is probably true of all of his activity subsequent to 1941."[143]

Stepping back from the larger arc of Williams's career demonstrates the practical influence of counternarcotic operations and—to some extent—the ideology and culture of drug control on intelligence operations, revealing a near-obsession with field work and the importance of secrecy and deception as investigative tools. Moreover, Williams's later-day career in the State Department shows how the FBN contributed its expertise not only to the American intelligence services, but also to national police forces in strategic locations all over the world.

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[142] Jeremy Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), 1–2; See also, Nathaniel Lee Smith, "'Cured of the Habit By Force': The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970" (Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007), which chronicles some of Williams's time in Iran as he promoted American-style drug control, featuring tough interdiction and source-control efforts and punitive prison sentences for offenders. Details on the William's career are shown in his Civil Service and military personnel records held in "Williams, Garland," Box 8, Valentine Collection.

[143] November 30, 1994, email from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine. Folder "Chappell, Howard," Valentine Collection.

CHAPTER 4. GEORGE WHITE: A RED-BLOODED AMERICAN BOY AND TRUE-CRIME ACTION HERO

Within the Bureau and certain circles of true-crime literati, George Hunter White was a living legend. His fellow agents spoke of him with something between awe and exasperation. Journalists embellished his exploits with gusto. Famous actors portrayed him on the silver screen and narrated his adventures on the radio. Jazz singer Billie Holiday reportedly even took his song requests after White collared her for heroin possession. He counted judges, Congressmen, attorneys, writers, cops, mobsters, diplomats, spies and more than a few scumbags among his personal friends. In short, everyone seemed to know George Hunter White.

Maybe it was because he cut such a memorable figure. Everywhere he went, people commented on White's appearance. Basically, he looked the part of a tough street cop and his physical features made good copy. Journalist James Phelan did a whole series on White's adventures for *True: the Man's Magazine* and described him as "squat and powerful, built on the general lines of a beer keg, with a thick neck, balding head, and cold blue eyes that met the appraising stares head on." In *The New York Times*, White appeared as a "stocky, barrel-chested, two-fisted agent." Even the Old Man remarked, "As round as he was tall, White looked like Buddha."[1]

Much was also said of the rotund agent's talents and his professional colleagues larded him with superlatives. "The ubiquitous White," Anslinger called him, "always ready to shake hands with trouble…" Garland Williams considered him "the greatest investigator in the world." To James Mulgannon of the San Francisco office, White was simply "The Boss," while Jack Kelly wrote that "agents viewed him as a god-like figure." Charlie Siragusa called him an inspiration and "one of the finest agents the Bureau ever had." Howard Chappell ran the Los Angeles office under White's direction and remembered him fondly as "a liar and a B.S. artist without parallel." OSS colleague Stanley Lovell described him as a "half-legendary, half flesh-and-blood hero of the Morte D'Arthur day of Roland and Roncesvalles."[2]

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[1] James Phelan, "The Calculating Colonel and the Turkish Trap," *True: The Man's Magazine*, January 1960, Folder 7, Box 1, White Papers. Edward Ranzal, "Narcotics Ace, Jailed for Silence, To Name Tipsters on Chief's Order," *New York Times*, December 5, 1952, p. 12; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 79.

[2] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 125; James H. Mulgannon, *Uncertain Glory* (New York, Washington and Hollywood: Vantage Press, 1972); Jack Kelly and Richard Mathison, *On the Street*

The press poured on similar plaudits. Frederic Sondern of *Reader's Digest* described White as "well educated, articulate, charming, imaginative and very fast."[3] Author Derek Agnew dedicated his 1959 book *Undercover Agent—Narcotics* to White's escapades and called him "Agent Extraordinary," because he was blessed with an understanding of "the frailties of his fellow-men" more common to "a philosopher rather than a policeman."[4] Phelan called him "the shrewdest dope-buster in the world today" and attributed his success to "enormous personal courage, quick-acting intelligence, and keen insight into the criminal mind."[5]

In short, George White was something of a role model. He was an example to his fellow agents and represented the Bureau's undercover ethos to the American public. Today, George White is hardly a household name, but his mythic image lives on in a fascinating (though sensationalist) body of modern historiography, due almost entirely to his role in the CIA's infamous MK-ULTRA program. With a character as colorful as White, it's hard to resist seizing on the wilder aspects of his personality and career and contemporary accounts have created a figure just as exaggerated as his living legend image. *San Francisco Bizarro: A Guide to Notorious Sights, Lusty Pursuits, and Downright Freakiness in the City by the Bay* (2000) describes White paying prostitutes to dope johns with LSD, then perching "atop a toilet, sipping at a pitcher of martinis," to watch the action unfold from behind a two-way mirror. In *Acid Dreams; The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond* (1994), Martin Lee and Bruce Shlain depict a man tormented by inner demons, gin-drunk and "slumped in front of a full-length mirror . . . shooting wax slugs at his own reflection." In *The Strength of the Wolf*, Douglas Valentine locates White

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(Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974), 123; Charles Siragusa and Robert Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), 47. See also John McWilliams interview with George Belk, January 7, 1987, and letter from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine, dated December 20, 1995, in Folders "Belk, George," and "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection; letter from Stanely Lovell to George White dated December 22, 1952, in Folder 16, Box 3, and inscription on portrait of Garland Williams given to George White, Box 8, White Papers.

[3] Frederic Sondern Jr., *Brotherhood of Evil: The Mafia* (New York, NY: Manor Books, Inc, 1959), 124.

[4] Derek Agnew, *Undercover Agent--Narcotics* (New York: Macfadden Books, 1959, 1964), 90.

[5] Pierre LaFitte as told to James Phelan, "Tight Trap for a Top Dealer," *True: The Man's Magazine*, June 1957, Folder 17, Box 12, Anslinger Papers, Special Collections Library, Historical Collections and Labor Archives, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA (hereafter abbreviated "Anslinger Papers").

within a kinky Greenwich Village swinger scene and explains his purported sadomasochistic streak and leather fetish as "overcompensating for poor body image."[6]

The result is a distorted picture of a real person, a genuine historical actor, but there's more to White's story than colorful antics. The deplorable nature of the CIA's experiments with mind control and White's participation in this real-life conspiracy highlights the overlap between law enforcement and counterintelligence but also tends to overshadow other facets of his career that are just as important. White, more than any other member of the FBN aside from the Old Man himself, shaped public perceptions of the Bureau and counternarcotics police work more generally. One of White's most important roles was as a pioneer of foreign enforcement and his 1948 foreign tour, during which he created part of the FBN's intelligence network in the Middle East, directly presaged the genesis of the foreign drug war. Public accounts of White's many adventures, conveyed in print, radio and film, helped prepare the American people for the new obligations and tactics required of federal agents in the increasingly global threat environment exemplified by the drug trade.

Though agents of the FBN rarely used it, the term "narc" was originally short for narcotics officer. Today it's an epithet that frequently gets tossed around on playgrounds and street corners, synonymous with tattle-tale, traitor or rat.[7] The negative connotation reflects the broad libertarian streak running through American political culture and animosity for duplicitous tactics. The vast majority of narcotic cases, however, depended largely on deception. Given the periodic exposure of corrupt agents and public ambivalence about police tactics that seemed more characteristic of espionage than law enforcement, it was critical for the FBN to maintain a positive image of narcotics agents as daring soldiers in a necessary war fought to protect American values. The following chapter provides a biographical profile of White's career at the FBN and pays special attention to his role as an paragon of federal narcotic agents and the Bureau's undercover ethos. The rise and fall and many contradictions of George

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[6] Jack Boulware, *San Francisco Bizarro: A Guide to Notorious Sights, Lusty Pursuits, and Downright Freakiness in the City by the Bay* (St. Martin's Griffin, 2000), 105; Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams; The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond* (New York: Grove Press, 1994), 34; Douglas Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf: The Secret History of America's War on Drugs* (London and New York: Verso, 2004), 128–130.

[7] The term seems to have entered the American lexicon in the 1960s. See Online Etymology Dictionary, "Narc," (http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=narc, accessed January 3, 2014) and Urban Dictionary, "Narc," (http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=narc, accessed January 3, 2014).

White—the agent's agent—provides a unique window into the popular image of narcotics agents and the creation of a law enforcement legend.

A Hero's Fate

George Hunter White was born on June 22, 1908 and raised in a comfortably middle-class home in Alhambra, California, where his father worked as a city manager. After graduating from Oregon State College in 1928, White went to work as a reporter for the *San Francisco Bulletin* and *Los Angeles Daily News*. The future agent was a talented writer, but chaffed at the passive nature of the job. "Newspapering is all right," he reportedly explained, "but it makes a bystander out of you. I want to get out on the field where the game is going on."[8]

Looking for action, White joined the Border Patrol in 1933 but quickly soured on the job and grew tired of patrolling "some of the flattest, hottest, dryest [sic], least interesting geography available in North America." Later agents like Joe Arpaio drew a straight line between the dangers of illegal immigration and drugs; both erode American security, argues the former FBN agent and self-styled "America's toughest sheriff." White, however, found little to admire in locking up desperate immigrants. "I couldn't get enthusiastic over arresting a poverty-stricken Mexican whose only offense was a desire to live in a country where he could manage to feed his family," he remarked.[9] While covering the police beat, White enjoyed reporting on the exploits of the Los Angeles narcotics squad and resolved to find a job in the burgeoning field of drug enforcement.

In 1934, he transferred into the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and was soon assigned to his adopted hometown of San Francisco. "I'd like to say that dedication to law enforcement lay at the bottom of my first candidacy for a hero's fate but it wasn't," he later wrote. "True, the eradication of malefactors

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[8] For biographical background, see "Guide to the George White Papers, 1932-1970," (http://www.oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=tf6k40059b;query=;style=oac4;view=admin#did-1.8.1, accessed January 4, 2014); White is quoted in James Phelan, "When the Rookie Took the Tong," *True: The Man's Magazine*, December 1959, in Folder 17, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[9] For White's service with the Border Patrol, see Chapter 1 of White's unpublished autobiography, "A Diet of Danger," Folder 11, Box 3, and White, "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October 28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

For Arpaio's views on the dangers of illegal immigration, see Joe Arpaio and Len Sherman, *Joe's Law: America's Toughest Sheriff Takes on Illegal Immigration, Drugs, and Everything Else That Threatens America* (New York: AMACOM, 2008). "Illegal immigration is the starting point of expanding criminal conspiracies," Arpaio writes, and "the link between illegal immigration and illegal drugs" shows "just how far the long, malevolent tentacles of the cartels reach." (p. 78).

was semi-involved but a certain strange stubbornness about the truth, a nagging sense-of-humor and the official record of the moment forces me to admit that my own personal economy was predominantly involved."[10]

But White also clearly wanted action and recklessly rushed out to find it. His first attempt at a case was inauspicious but characteristic of White's brash personal style. When a local dealer known as Albert "Toughy" Jackson tried to cheat White during an undercover deal (in those days, buy money was often fronted out of pocket), the agent drew his gun and was immediately jumped by Jackson's bodyguards. In the ensuing melee, White's gun was taken by one of his assailants and pressed to his ear but failed to fire with the safety engaged. By the time the local police arrived to end the scuffle, White had been stabbed and Jackson shot twice at point-blank range with a Derringer—one directly between the eyes, with the small caliber bullet apparently scraping off Jackson's skull. White's first investigation thus resulted in gunshots on an open city street, a wounded suspect and no incriminating evidence. The young agent's supervisors were unimpressed and banished him to a dead-end post in the Seattle office. "Most of the men stationed there were former prohibition agents, thicker than thieves with a corrupt police department," White explained. "They were all under investigation themselves . . . I quickly discovered that if I wanted to catch anyone I had best do it by myself." Fortunately for the Bureau, White avoided the corruption and quickly punched his ticket to the big show in New York with the success of the Hip Sing Tong case.[11]

Under the supervision of Garland Williams, White proved a competent (perhaps even gifted) investigator and became one of the FBN's most effective agents. During the critical period of the late 1930s, White led a squad that included Charles Siragusa and helped break important cases against Manhattan-based traffickers like Lepke Buchalter and Eli Eliopoulos.[12] But this idyllic situation, with much of the FBN's talent gathered in New York, did not last long and the approach of WWII necessitated the expertise of agents like Williams and White be turned to new tasks and new enemies. At war's end, the

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[10] White, "A Diet of Danger," Folder 11, Box 3, White Papers.

[11] Account taken from Chapter 1 of "A Diet of Danger," Folder 11, Box 13 and "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October 28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

[12] In his memoir, Siragusa wrote about working under White's supervision and learning the craft of narcotics investigations. Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 46–49.

Bureau's erstwhile agents and part-time spies began to trickle back to the U.S. and return to civilian duty. As a reward for the extracurricular activities undertaken for Anslinger while working for the OSS and in recognition of his experience, White was promoted to District Supervisor and put in charge the important Chicago office. The assignment, however, was short-lived and the immediate postwar years proved turbulent ones for George White.

Mobsters and Crooked Politicians

Chicago in the late 1940s was something of a mob-controlled town and White's penchant for confrontation and drama made some manner of political conflict only a matter of time. Anslinger later observed that White "had an obsessive hatred . . . for trusted officials who abused public responsibility," and when he "started riding the behinds of some of those people, they could forget about getting off or away."[13] These were admirable qualities for a federal agent, but they also made White a liability.

White reported for duty on October 1, 1945.[14] With the international traffic still in disarray, there were relatively few heroin cases to be made in the Windy City, so White settled for an investigation of a major marijuana ring that stretched from Chicago to Mexico under the leadership of "a wealthy El Paso business man" named Arthur G. Zweier. During testimony, Zweier complained of entrapment and noted that an undercover White had "'completely and all by himself' drank a bottle of rare scotch." With a grin, the presiding judge replied, "I wondered why he looked so well and I envied him."[15] Few at the time remarked on the irony of a heavy drinker arresting a network of pot dealers.

Much of White's time in Chicago was spent investigating organized crime and the notoriously corrupt city politics. As a supervisor, White occasionally stepped into an undercover role but his growing visibility, both in Chicago and on the national scene, led him to adopt a more direct approach. White made a practice of brazenly questioning police officials about corruption while trailed by newspaper reporters and began paying regular visits to the city's illegal gambling dens, where, he suspected, drug

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[13] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 79.

[14] "George H. White, 37, New Anti-Narcotic Chief in Chicago," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 2, 1945, p. 10.

[15] "Federal Agents Smash 'Dope' Ring," New York Times, October 16, 1946, p. 30; "Marijuana Trial Begins," *New York Times*, December 3, 1946, p. 24; "5 in Marijuana Ring Are Sentenced Here," *New York Times*, December 5, 1946, p. 6. See also "$53,000 Dope Seized, 3 Nabbed as Chicago Officer Trips Ring," *El Paso Herald-Post*, October 5, 1946, in Folder 6, Box 1, White Papers.

deals were also arranged. "My solution was to visit each joint nightly and break up the furniture, scatter the money and paraphernalia and walk out," he recalled. But this strategy engendered resistance from the local police, some of whom accepted protection money from such establishments. Looking back, White wrote, "I later learned that the Cap't went to the Mayor who went to the President who went to the Sect'y of the Treasury who went to the Commissioner of Narcotics who asked me, 'What's going on?'"[16]

Anslinger usually afforded significant latitude to his trusted lieutenants and was apparently satisfied with White's explanation that he was trying to work new angles into the narcotics traffic.[17] But when the sometimes quixotic agent began to target the city's well-oiled political machine, not even Anslinger's considerable influence could protect him. His immediate target was U.S. Senate Majority Whip Scott W. Lucas, who, White suspected, was backed by financiers tied to the Chicago mob. The agent was repeatedly warned to back off, but as he wrote to one friend, "I was having FUN." He was also making enemies, so Anslinger moved him to Detroit in order to keep him out of trouble. As White's correspondent, a fellow FBN alum and native Chicagoan, recalled, "White's method backfired on him . . . that's why they sent him to Detroit—to keep him from being indicted on a State charge in Chicago. The Chicago outfit (Mafia) had the city and county government in their pocket for years..."[18] Lucas, meanwhile, ascended to the post of Senate Majority Leader in 1948. Unable to bridge the growing schism between the liberal and conservative wings of the Democratic Party, he proved an ineffective political boss and his connection to Chicago politics damaged his 1950 reelection bid as information gathered by White resurfaced in hearings held by the Kefauver Committee on the eve of the election—a development for which the agent took personal credit and delight.[19]

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[16] George White to Paul Newey, July 8, 1970, Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

[17] "In dealing with me," White wrote in his biography manuscript, Anslinger "rarely indulged in details. He often didn't know how I would accomplish an unusual or complicated assignment and he didn't particularly care. If the purpose was vital although the impediments were complicated but surmountable (or insurmountable) he merely wanted it accomplished. At once and to conclusion." See "A Diet of Danger, Chapter IV," Folder 11, Box 3, and letter from White to Newey, July 8, 1970, in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

[18] See White to Paul Newey, July 8, 1970, in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers, and email from Paul Newey to Douglas Valentine dated January 10, 1999, in Folder "Newey, Paul," Box 5, Valentine Collection.

[19] White to Paul Newey, July 8, 1970, in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers. See also Robert C. Albright, "Tight Race Puts Lucas in Danger; Majority Leader Could Lose Seat As Result of Crime Probe in Illinois," *Washington Post*, November 4, 1950, p. 1; "Kefauver Hits Chicago as U.S. Crime Center," *The Chicago*

White relished such confrontations; as he told another friend in the midst yet another political firestorm, "I'm also in the crusading department."[20] But White's focus on political corruption was also part of the FBN's effort to expose the Mafia. In the late 1940s, many Americans, including FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, scoffed at the that idea that organized crime on a national scale was real. But as White explained in an internal FBN memo, "Competent investigation by this and other agencies throughout the United States during the past several years . . . has indicated without a doubt the Mafia is a living organization and 'big business' today. Many of its members are no longer regarded as racketeers or criminals, but in some instances are pillars of society in the community in which they live."[21]

For a variety of reasons White's tenure in Detroit was also brief. Back in Washington, Commissioner Anslinger had long argued the only effective way to fight the dope menace was to reduce the global supply of illicit narcotics by going abroad, disrupting the trafficking networks and preventing the drugs from leaving their place of origin. As he later wrote in *The Protectors*, "It was my opinion that a few good agents overseas might help dry up the traffic at the source." By 1948, Anslinger judged the international situation sufficiently favorable to expand the Bureau's presence abroad. It was also a chance to put White back into an undercover role and after his Chicago escapades, Anslinger reasoned that the crusading agent was "due for a 'vacation.'"[22]

Preparing a Drug War

The year 1948 marked the start of a new chapter for both the Bureau and the history of American drug control. Agents like Garland Williams and Charles Dyar had previously gone abroad to develop investigations but confined most of their activities to coordinating with foreign police forces. With orders

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Daily Tribune, November 13, 1950, p. 1; William Moore, "Lucas Blocks Move to Seize 10 for Crime Quiz," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 5, 1950, p. 12; William Moore, "Lucas Succeeds in Battle to Save Gangsters," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, p. A2; Walter Trohan, "Kefauver Gains Power, Respect in Crime Probe," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 30, 1951, p. 3. See also Senate Historical Office biography (http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/People_Leaders_Lucas.htm, accessed January 5, 2014).

[20] Letter from White to J. Spaulding Arrington, dated January 29, 1952, in Folder 14, Box 3, White Papers.

[21] Case report dated November 8, 1946, in Folder 6, Box 1, White Papers.

[22] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 105-106. Anslinger mixed up some dates in this retelling and contended that White was "due for a 'vacation'" after an episode in which he accused a District Attorney of associating with the mob. This, however, was still 4 years in the future. But Anslinger is correct in remembering that the political heat was on, and it was a good time to get White out of sight for a while.

to initiate independent undercover investigations on foreign soil, George White's 1948 assignment was something altogether new and raised pressing political and legal issues—not least of which was the fact that the FBN had absolutely no legal jurisdiction in Europe or the Middle East. As White later recalled, "I was the first officer to have this type of assignment and all concerned were understandably vague as to how I should go about it."[23] This uncertainty was likely the major reason Anslinger chose White for the task—he trusted the experienced agent's ability to blaze a new trail.

White's 1948 foreign tour included stops in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, France and Italy, and returned the agent to many of his WWII-era haunts. His task was threefold: survey the drug scene in each area, extend the FBN's intelligence network by making contact with potential informants and initiate undercover investigations against the traffickers supplying the Atlantic heroin trade. The larger goal was to begin applying FBN tactics to the larger strategy of source control; that meant focusing on Iran and Turkey, the two largest poppy producers in the region.

White's first stop in Iran provides a good picture of how the agent approached his mission. He arrived in early May to find the "streets throughout city reeking with fumes of opium and at various times in day." Equally troubling was the fact that many Iranian officials were "habitual opium smokers and not considered immoral." Smoking was widespread and there was no stigma or social stratification in opium use. On the one hand, this meant that much of Iran's opium crop was consumed internally, but it also made for a potentially wide-open trafficking scene and White discovered a variety of foreign interests competing with local traffickers for a piece of the action. The French, he reported, appeared to be purchasing enormous quantities of opium and shipping it on actual French naval vessels to destinations unknown (most likely to colonial holdings in Southeast Asia). The Soviet Union had purportedly tried to buy Iran's entire official stock (estimated at approximately 4000 cases), but the deal fell through when the Soviets insisted on making the purchase with rials obtained from the sale of black market sugar in the northern part of the country. Further testimony to the confusion and ambiguous legal controls, it's unclear from White's report if these were licit or illicit transactions. Ultimately, he concluded, "Opium situation

[23] White, "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October 28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

here extremely bad and chaotic . . . Many agents here competing for opium business and permit system apparently very lax."[24]

The good news was that White had former OSS contacts and other associates scattered throughout the region. He quickly pulled together an intelligence network, featuring both Americans and foreign nationals, that helped the FBN monitor local conditions and prepare future investigations. One of White's contacts in Iran was Ahad Vahabzadeh, an "influential and wealthy merchant." White also proposed recruiting an Air Force attaché named Ernest Bryant, and suggested a number of ways to provide him with additional cover.[25] In Turkey, White found a large pool of acquaintances to draw upon, including many friends who were former OSS and "are now CIA, Robert College teachers, newspapermen, etc." He recruited a ship captain and former smuggler named Etham Underman and recommended the Bureau retain the services of a Turkish journalist named Rizi Chandir, who spoke Turkish, French, English, German and Greek, and had connections with the "Turkish Secret Political Police." Given his language skills and connections, White argued, Chandir "could successfully operate informant system all levels and has personal access to all officials." White also identified a former OSS official named Charles Edwards, then a Lt. Col. in the Air Force, as another candidate to manage the FBN's nascent Middle Eastern intelligence network and suggested that either General Hoyt Vandenberg or former OSS operative Amoss Ulius could arrange additional cover.[26]

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[24] State Dept. telegram from White to Anslinger dated May 1, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. Under pressure from the FBN and other U.S. officials, the Shah banned poppy farming in 1955 and adopted American drug enforcement models and police advisors. Ryan Gingeras, "Poppy Politics: American Agents, Iranian Addicts and Afghan Opium, 1945-80," *Iranian Studies* 45, no. 3 (May 2012): 315–331; Nathaniel Lee Smith, "'Cured of the Habit By Force': The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970" (Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007), 216–223.

[25] State Dept. telegram from White to Anslinger dated May 1, 1948, and report dated June 10, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[26] See reports dated May 29 and June 10, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. White also received information from Capt. Ivar T. Saunders, another U.S. Air Force officer who frequently traveled throughout the region. Although the FBN often employed foreign nationals as informants (who were encouraged to run additional informants), Anslinger balked at putting Chandir in charge of the FBN's Mid-East intelligence network. "Your recommendation concerning Rizi Chandir as Near Eastern representative cannot be followed," he replied, "because he is a Turkish citizen and cannot be appointed. Recently we tried to get two Koreans as narcotic agents and failed." See Anslinger to White, June 3, 1948, in Folder 8, and a letter from Ivar T. Saunders to White, dated July 13, 1948, in Folder 7, Box 1, White Papers.

White's reports clearly demonstrate the FBN's efforts to expand its overseas intelligence network. His confidence in Vandenberg, an influential player in Washington, is particularly revealing. A nephew of Sen. Arthur Vandenberg, Hoyt served as the second Director of Central Intelligence from June 1946 to May 1947 (just prior to the establishment of the CIA), and became the Air Force Chief of Staff in April 1948.[27] Throughout his tour, White frequently called upon U.S. military personnel on both a formal and informal basis, a trend that continued as the Bureau expanded its foreign operations.

Having laid the foundation for a Middle Eastern intelligence network, White turned his attention to disrupting the heroin trafficking networks. With much of Iran's opium crop consumed internally or sold on the legal market, White judged Istanbul to be "the most important diversion point for both opium and heroin" and the true "hot spot of the world." It also became the backdrop for one of the most celebrated cases in FBN history. Although by now White was well-known to many American hoodlums, he speculated that his portly image would actually provide valuable camouflage overseas. "It was impossible for me to be a policeman," he reasoned. "I was too fat, too rich and obviously a stupid American who couldn't even speak the language."[28] In late May, White began loitering around the Istanbul waterfront posing as a gangster and attempting what agents termed a "cold turkey" approach (basically initiating an investigation without the benefit of an informant's introduction). Hanging out in seedy bars and flashing his money, however, failed to produce a lead so White picked up an interpreter from the consulate and turned to the Istanbul police.

As it turned out, the Istanbul police were already on to a few separate trafficking groups. The first was led by a Greek named Anastasas, operator the Beniz Casino nightclub. Although White was able to meet with Anastasas, the cautious Greek adamantly refused to talk narcotics in the absence of a trusted introduction. White then pivoted to the second figure under investigation by the Istanbul police, a local pimp named Vasil Arcan who was already identified in FBN files as the proprietor of the (recently closed) Piccadilly Bar, an establishment where merchant seamen were known to purchase small allotments of

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[27] Douglas F. Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence as Leaders of the U.S. Intelligence Community, 1946-2005* (Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency: Washington, DC, 2005), 9-47.

[28] Report dated June 10, 1948 in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA; White, "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October 28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

narcotics. White later credited a tip from an American informant, but his actual report indicates that he was brought into the case by senior Istanbul detective Namik Karayel. Acting on the detective's information, White tracked Arcan through a series of squalid basement bars and nightclubs. Completing the scene, when White finally caught up to Arcan, he noted, "Several girls were hustling in the place and a few drunken brawls were in progress." After cautiously quizzing White on his criminal bona fides, Arcan agreed to help him purchase "a large quantity of heroin" and introduced him to suppliers Iradodos Terapyanos and Yasef Kariyo the following day.[29]

The next morning White rendezvoused with Terapyanos and Kariyo. As a precaution, the traffickers took White on a circuitous ride through the city in order to shake any police surveillance prior to arriving at the stash house. The three men then got down to the business of negotiating price and quantity. White was given a sample and made a show of haggling before agreeing to purchase three kilos of heroin at $2000 each, provided the quality was good. As the trio departed, White realized he had no idea where he was but managed to pick out the serial number on the gas meter in front of the house. (This became a key plot point later, but was recorded without much comment in White's report.) After reunited with Detective Karayel, the two men located the house and began planning their fated ambush. The following morning, Karayel arranged some forty officers "disguised," White reported, "as merchant marines, soldiers, postmen, laborers, etc.," around the house in anticipation of the bust. To complete the ruse, the disguised policemen began digging up the street. "By the time the deal was finally culminated the whole street was torn up," White noted wryly. Aside from the drama of White's hurled chair, the bust went more or less as planned. As the Turkish police swept the house, they even apprehended a third suspect named Sevket Dalgakiran, who turned out to be the real supplier behind Terapyanos and Kariyo, and subsequently seized an additional 15 kilos of heroin.[30]

The bust was front page news in Istanbul and picked up by several major American outlets that quoted White estimating the total value of the seized heroin at one million dollars. The story quickly became part of Bureau lore and was retold (with dramatic embellishment) in several outlets, including a

[29] In an interview with Turkish reporters, White later claimed to be acting on a tip "from confessions of heroin dealers seized in the United States." See "Summary Translation" and report to Anslinger dated June 10, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[30] Report dated June 10, 1948 in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

1950 *Reader's Digest* article titled "Our Global War on Narcotics," and a variety of radio programs, dime-store novels and true-crime magazines.[31] Even as White's tour was still in the planning stages, American audiences got a taste of what was to come with the February 1948 release of the film *To the Ends of the Earth*. Featuring the FBN's brand of roving undercover investigations and storylines drawn from old case files, the movie included a cameo from Anslinger and starred Dick Powell as a protagonist clearly modeled on George White. Critics were impressed with the film's "semi-documentary" true-crime feel and central theme that drugs posed a common threat to all humanity, requiring a sort of extra-judicial police force to fight it. As Anslinger declared in one promotional interview, "There are no national boundaries in our work. You can't afford national sovereignty when you're trying to break up the narcotics racket."[32] Only a few months later, White seemed to validate Anslinger's bold claim as he flashed his American-issue badge at the Turkish suspects.

While White's bust and globe-trotting career were celebrated in the American media, Turkish reporters portrayed the case in a rather different light. They noted that Arcan was already under investigation and that two clandestine heroin labs were busted prior to the agent's arrival. The *Son Telegraph* credited the Turkish police, with White in a supportive role. The *Yeni Sabah* was indignant that

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[31] For Turkish press, see undated memo titled "Summary Translation" in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. See also a report by U.S. Consul C.E. Macy in Istanbul, dated July 13, 1948, in Folder "(0660) Turkey Folder #3, 1940-1948," Box 25, RG 170, NARA. For U.S. coverage, see "United States, Turkey Join To Seize Drug Worth Million," *The Baltimore Sun*, June 5, 1948, p. 9; "U.S. Traps 4 in Istanbul," *New York Times*, June 5, 1948, p. 4; "U.S. Agent and Turk Police Capture Dope Peddlers in Istanbul," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 6, 1948, p. 26. For a small sampling of the true-crime literature inspired by White's bust, see, Sondern, "Our Global War on Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, April 1950; Agnew, *Undercover Agent—Narcotics*, 94-6; Phelan, "The Calculating Colonel *and* the Turkish Trap," and an undated draft of a radio program "The Silent Man," in Folder "(1690-8) Folder #4, Publicity, Radio, 1949 thru June 1951," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

[32] For the movie reference, see Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 122 and Jay Richard Kennedy, "One World—Against Dope," *The Sunday Star: This Week Magazine*, March 7, 1948 (also printed in *The Baltimore Sun*, same date, page 108) in Folder 13, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. See also Philip K. Scheuer, "'To Ends of Earth' Exciting Melodrama," *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 1948, p. 15; Norbert Lusk, "Powell Opus Wins Praise," *Los Angeles Times*, February 18, 1948, p. 21; Donald Kirkley, "To The Ends Of The Earth," *The Baltimore Sun*, March 27, 1948, p. 10. In letter to J. Raymond Bell of Columbia Pictures dated November 24, 1959, Anslinger commented, "I notice that 'To the Ends of the Earth' is getting quite a play on television throughout the country and I have received many favorable comments." In Folder 8, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

Western accounts "made a hero of the American detective," which the *Son Posta* chalked up to chauvinism on the part of the Associated Press.[33]

In retrospect, it also appears that Arcan was actually a police informant and was arrested prior to the bust when he unexpectedly turned up at the U.S. consulate as White and Turkish detectives planned the raid. After testifying against his co-defendants, Arcan was quickly released and went right back into business. Agents who checked in on him in subsequent years found that he was back to running a busy brothel and "the biggest retail heroin business in town."[34] At best, White was a catalyst for the bust but contributed little to the larger investigation. At worst, the operation was a ploy to throw the Americans a bone and speed the agent on his way.[35]

The bust had little impact on the regional traffic but reverberated within the American and Turkish governments for years. Treasury Department officials took the case as proof of both the FBN's efficacy and the need for an American presence in source countries like Turkey. When Embassy officials sought permission to return an FBN agent to the country, however, they were informed that all of the negative media attention had engendered "a considerable amount of ill will" among Turkish officials, who strongly preferred that the FBN be limited to submitting the names and addresses of suspected traffickers.[36]

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[33] See undated memo titled "Summary Translation" in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. See also a report by U.S. Consul C.E. Macy in Istanbul, dated July 13, 1948, in Folder "(0660) Turkey Folder #3, 1940-1948," Box 25, RG 170, NARA.

[34] See a report by American Consul P.C. Hutton, dated October 6, 1949, which includes a statement by Arcan and details on the fate of each defendant. See Ankara Embassy, General Records, 1949, 370.31 (Box 136), RG 84 [Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State], NARA. See also Charles Siragusa, Progress Report No. 2, July 25, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," and Martin Pera, Report No. 2., February 19, 1951, in Folder "(0660-A), Agent Martin F. Pera's Foreign Assignment," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[35] White and Namik Karayel exchanged gifts (including a snub-nose .38 revolver for Karayel and an ornate ceremonial sword for White) and correspondence for the next several years, suggesting some degree of sincerity and mutual respect. See letters from White to Karayel dated August 25, 1948 and January 6, 1954 in Folder "(0660) Turkey Folder #3, 1940-1948," Box 25, and Folder "(0660) Turkey, 1953-1955," Box 163, RG 170, NARA.

[36] In a letter to Secretary of State George Marshall dated March 20, 1950, Acting Treasury Secretary E.H. Foley wrote that the FBN had reported "a disturbing increase in heroin addiction in several cities of the United States, and is of the opinion that a large quantity of this heroin originates in Istanbul," and asked for State's support in returning an agent to the city. A second, slightly reworded letter was sent again on April 25, 1950. For the reply of the Turkish government, see a State Department telegram from Ankara Embassy dated April 11, 1950 and a report by Warwick Perkins (Counselor), dated April 14, 1950, in State Department Central Decimal File (hereafter abbreviated CDF) 1950-1954, 882.53 (Box 5433), RG 59 [General Records of the Department of State], NARA.

In the end, the Bureau achieved one notable bust that produced useful domestic publicity but threatened its own foreign policy objectives. The case, in that sense, is a perfect prologue to the foreign drug war. There are easily recognizable warning signs when looking back. The investigation clearly foreshadowed the kind of tensions that would emerge between the FBN and host nations and hinted at the murky relationship between local police forces and the regional drug trade. It also raised troubling questions about the conflict between sovereign rights and the American effort to extend an extraterritorial police presence under the auspice of a drug war. And, as ever in the history of America's drug wars, the narrative proved far more important than the actual results of the bust.

White, in the meantime, quickly moved on to the next city and the next case. In 1948, the French port of Marseille had yet to assume the central role it would play in the Atlantic heroin trade, but White was able to make a case that indicated the importance of Corsican traffickers in the regional drug trade. After the usual period of prowling the bar district, White got to chatting with the owners of the Hanoi Restaurant, an Indochinese man named Le Van Ngos and his French wife, Elise "Zize" Chabert. They agreed to send some of the Hanoi's staff on a quick "run" for White and when they returned with a quarter kilo of heroin, White took the group into custody and persuaded Chabert to introduce him to her supplier. This was a "Corsican known to her as Dominick," but known to the FBN as Lucien Santoni and suspected as a supplier to American traffickers. With Chabert's introduction, Santoni agreed to sell White sell 300 grams of heroin. Assisted by Detective Robert Pasquier (the leader of Marseille's four-man narcotic squad) and American Vice-Consul William Canup (who acted as interpreter), White successfully apprehended Santoni and his bodyguard Joseph Vitiello. After he spent a few days helping Pasquier with a case in Cannes, White departed for Rome where he made a few unsuccessful inquiries into the activities of suspected Mafia traffickers and returned to the U.S. in mid-August.[37]

Despite the conclusion of two successful cases, White's tour did little to disrupt the overall Atlantic heroin trade, but it was something of a prologue in terms of both foreign operations and the manner in which the FBN sold the necessity of a global counternarcotics police force to the American people through the medium of true-crime stories. Following White's Istanbul bust, Anslinger wrote that he was

[37] White, report dated June 26, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

"much pleased with the substantial results of your investigations in Turkey," and optimistic the case would "have an excellent long-range effect." Indeed, the case not only became a central part of FBN lore, but also a justification to extend the FBN's reach overseas. Working abroad was challenging, White noted, but his experience confirmed the assumption that American representation was necessary to fight the dope menace, particularly in cities like Istanbul and Tehran, where, he reported, "Opium is going to be produced there in large amounts from now on and . . . anyone with the money to pay can acquire all the opium they want. American representation will slow down the chicanery and should also result in the apprehension of smugglers in the U.S."[38]

Between 1948 and 1951, White was followed by several other agents who toured Europe and the Middle East and tested the FBN's approach to foreign enforcement. In September 1951, the Bureau established its first foreign office under Siragusa's leadership and called it District 17, a designation covering all of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. From their headquarters in Rome, the agents became directly involved in law enforcement operations in France, Holland, Germany, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and even Communist Yugoslavia. But they were following a trail blazed, at least in part, by George White.[39]

The Wilderness

As the agents of District 17 would discover, one of the major challenges in foreign drug enforcement was that the local traffic was often facilitated by political corruption. In *Webs of Smoke: Smugglers, Warlords, Spies, and the History of the International Drug Trade* (1998), Kathryn Meyer and Terry Parssinen argue, "Drug traffickers are entrepreneurs . . . As long as there is a demand for drugs and the drugs in demand are illegal, traffickers will seek out and establish alliances with politicians."[40] In contrast to the consistently exceptionalist portrayals of the American role in the discourse of the dope

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[38] Anslinger to White, June 17, 1948, in Folder 8, Box 1, White Papers; White, report dated June 10, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA

[39] Always eager for credit, in a letter to Stanford Law Professor John Kaplan, Write wrote, "I am proud that Anslinger sent me as the first of such Agents on a foreign assignment and that my success led to the routine establishment of such foreign operations continuing to this day." Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

[40] "These alliances are not conspiracies," they continue, "but are the political economy of the narcotics traffic." Kathryn Meyer and Terry Parssinen, *Webs of Smoke: Smugglers, Warlords, Spies, and the History of the International Drug Trade* (Lanham and Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 287.

menace, this proved no less true in the United States. And as Agent White discovered, there were consequences for challenging corruption within the American system.

Despite the success of his foreign tour, the years following White's return from Europe were marked by uncertainty. White was beginning to age out of undercover work and hope to move into a supervisory position, but his rogue personality made him a liability in position that demanded political sensitivity. He had hoped to succeed Garland Williams as District Supervisor in New York and was disappointed when the job went to Agent James C. Ryan, a veteran supervisor from New Orleans. White was briefly assigned as the District Supervisor in San Francisco but fouled up an important case when his negligence resulted in the murder of an informant named Abraham Davidian.

Davidian, a 28-year old neophyte drug dealer, was arrested in July 1949 just outside of Bakersfield, CA, with over 2.5 pounds of heroin and $8,000 in cash. Facing serious jail time, he offered to testify against a pair of notorious L.A.-based Mafia traffickers named Joseph and Alfred Sica. White took the case federal and persuaded the California authorities to drop the charges against Davidian. He then stashed his star informant somewhere in San Francisco but the months of isolation apparently wore on the young man. In late February 1950, Davidian paid a visit to his family in San Jose, who reported leaving him napping on the couch as they ran errands one afternoon. They returned to find him gunned down by an unknown assailant, leaving both Davidian and the case against the Sica brothers dead. The local U.S. Attorney suspected Mafia assassins and, as White lamented to reporters, "He was our key witness. Without him, our case against the Sicas probably will collapse."[41] The California state authorities were reportedly furious and once again Anslinger had to pull White out of a brewing political firestorm. White, unsurprisingly, remembered his departure a little differently and told an audience of Stanford University law students that he was removed because he had uncovered signs of corruption within the California Internal Revenue Bureau and become "unpopular with local politicians."[42]

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[41] "Key Witness in Dope Case Murdered," *Los Angeles Times*, March 1, 1950, p. 1; "Officers Hide Second Witness After Narcotics Case Murder," *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1950, p. 1. See also the entries for the Sica brothers in *Mafia: The Government's Secret File on Organized Crime* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 58–59.

[42] In an email to Douglas Valentine dated November 30, 1994, Howard Chappell later recalled, "There was so much hell raised by the State people that HJA had to pull George out of S.F. and put him on roving assignment for a couple of years." Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 1, Valentine Collection. See also, White, "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October

White spent the next few unhappy years as the District Supervisor in Boston, which, he noted, was "a sort of Siberia in the business."[43] The restless agent entertained himself with an elaborately over-the-top report, dubbed the Saga of Mike the Mouse, about the investigation of a former mental patient who mailed a mouse (dead from an apparent overdose) to FBN headquarters. The story later showed up in the July 1953 issue of *Real* magazine.[44] White got a lot of laughs out of his Mike the Mouse story over the years, but he had no fond memories of Boston.[45]

White, however, seems to have spent little actual time in Boston and worked instead as an investigator for the Senate's Kefauver Committee and a little-remembered federal corruption probe led by Special Assistant Attorney General Newbold Morris. White leapt at the chance to settle old scores. He dug up old leads from Chicago and ruffled feathers in New York as he probed the circumstances surrounding Governor Tom Dewey's pardon of mob-boss "Lucky" Luciano. When he got tapped to work for Morris, the "political garbageman," he gleefully wrote to an old friend that he intended "to take on some of the Brass who've been kicking me around the past 18 months." Both experiences, however, proved politically bruising. Morris's investigation blew up in April 1952, only a few months after it began, when President Truman's Cabinet threatened wholesale revolt. Both Morris and Attorney General J. Howard McGrath were dismissed from the administration and when the dust settled Morris ruefully told reporters, "It's like the end of a Shakespearean tragedy. We're all lying around on the stage."[46]

28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers. "I was booted out of an area for political reasons over which my own Bureau had no control," he concluded, an indication that White believed much of his own mythology.

[43] White, "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October 28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

[44] White, Memorandum Report dated June 5, 1952, Subject: "One Mouse, dead, known as 'Mike.'" Folder 3, Box 2 and Martin Abramson, "The Mystery of the Hopped-up Mouse," *Real Magazine*, July 1953 in Box 3, White Papers.

[45] In a letter to his friend Warren Olney III (a future Eisenhower Justice Department appointee), dated November 24, 1952, White wrote that he was going on "extended 'sick' leave" and refuse to return to Boston." In another letter dated December 23, 1953, he cheerfully reported that he had been assigned to duties "of more significance than chasing colored addicts down a Boston alley." Folder 16, Box 1, White Papers.

[46] Letter from White to Arrington dated February 11, 1952, in Folder 14, Box 3, White Papers. The *New York Times* reported: "Since his appointment on Feb. 1 [Morris] has been trying to induce men of ability and standing to join his staff, but as of yesterday only one had joined the staff. He is George H. White, a supervising narcotics agent who has been lent by the Treasury Department." "Morris Still Unable to Get Inquiry Staff." *New York Times*, March 1, 1952, p. 30. Morris is quoted in John Fisher, "Fired to Avert Cabinet Revolt, Morris Charges," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 11, 1952, p. 5.

That included George White, who found himself exposed and increasingly unpopular, particularly with the New York political establishment. Never one to shy from confrontation—or the spotlight—White unilaterally continued (as "a personal hobby," he told a friend) an investigation begun with Morris into the political connections enjoyed by Gaetano "Tommy" Lucchese. With Luciano in exile and Frank Costello discredited after his appearance before the Kefauver Committee, Lucchese became one of the most powerful gangsters in New York, largely on the strength of his political alliances. White thought he was "the most obvious link between organized crime and politics in the east."[47] In November 1952, a grand-jury investigation confirmed that Lucchese had strong backing from the Mayor and local U.S. Attorney and connections to several federal judges. The grand jury also called White and fellow agent Joseph Amato to testify about Lucchese's role in the drug trade.[48] The following month, however, White was briefly jailed for contempt of court after refusing to name an informant in the presence of the U.S. Attorney—who ran the grand jury but was among the very officials implicated by the investigation. Having lost several informants in recent years, including Davidian and Willie Moretti, an old-school mob-boss who was executed after talking to the Kefauver Committee, White was understandably reluctant to subject his source to mob reprisal. White's imprisonment was brief (about 90 minutes) and he seemed to take a perverse pride in the development. There are conflicting stories about the circumstances of his release, but it seems a deal was cut wherein the grand jury agreed not to ask for the informant's name after White walked back his allegations against the U.S. Attorney.[49]

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[47] Letter from White to Olney, dated November 24, 1952, in Folder 16, Box 1, White Papers. For the FBN file on Lucchese, see *Mafia: The Government's Secret File on Organized Crime*, 510.

[48] Meyer Berger, "Gangster is Heard," *New York Times*, November 15, 1952, p. 1; William Fulton, "N.Y. Crime Quiz Ties High Officials to Racket Leader," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 15, 1952, p. 3; "Luchese New Crime Boss, Probers Told," *Washington Post*, November 15, 1952, p. 1. The key figure was a political fixer named Armand Chanaklian, who seems to have been Lucchese's chief political liaison and (incredibly) was serving as U.S. Attorney Myles J. Lane's administrative assistant, who was ultimately responsible for running the investigation.

[49] Moretti's deteriorating mental condition was apparently of some concern to the Mafia and he was murdered on October 4, 1951 to prevent the divulgence of any incriminating evidence. Moretti was at least an occasional informant for White and the two had known each other, White told a friend, "since 1940, at which time I introduced myself to him by throwing a chromium plated bar stool thru the Bar Mirror of Duke's Bar and Grill, Cliffside, N.J. . . . the HQ of the mob." Letter to Olney, dated November 24, 1952, in Folder 16, Box 1, White Papers. See also Ed Reid, *Mafia* (New York, NY: Signet, 1954): 30-35-41-44. To this list of murdered informants could also be added Eugenio Giannini, a principle figure-turned-informant in an international counterfeit money and heroin scheme. See Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil,* 141-166, and Siragusa, *The Trail of the Poppy*, 64-81. On White's contempt charges, see Edward Ranzal, "Narcotics Ace, Jailed for Silence, To Name Tipsters on Chief's Order," *New York Times*,

Once again, White's political muckraking made him a target. The supervisor position in New York was out of the question and White began to fear for his future in the Bureau. With all of the uncertainty, it seems the usually irrepressible agent fell into a brief depression. Determined not to return to Boston, he wrote a friend, "I thereupon went on extended 'sick' leave and remained in my NY apartment." Making matters worse, a proposed second foreign assignment—this one "a grand tour of the Orient," followed by a stop in District 17—fell through. White seriously contemplated taking early retirement and told his friend that he intended to simply "find a spot smack on a California beach where I can lay in the sun and drink cheap gin the remaining days of my life."[50] Little did he know that the most bizarre chapter of his career lay just around the corner.

Operation Midnight Climax

White was moping in his New York apartment and considering a life outside of the Bureau, when he received a lifeline from an unlikely source: the CIA. Intelligence was a career path White had assumed closed to him. He clearly relished his time in the OSS but his love of the limelight and bull-in-a-china-shop antics were not wholly welcome in the newly created Central Intelligence Agency. White privately complained to Garland Williams that "a couple of crew-cut, pipe-smoking punks had either known me—or heard of me—during OSS days and had decided that I was 'too rough' for their league and promptly blackballed me . . . After all, fellas, I didn't go to Princeton."[51]

In June 1952, however, White was contacted by Sidney Gottlieb, a scientist in charge of the Chemical Division in the CIA's Technical Services Section (TSS). On the apparent recommendation of Stanley Lovell, who had served as Director of Research for the OSS, Gottlieb chose White as the perfect candidate to explore the operational potential of consciousness-altering drugs like LSD. Gottlieb first secured Anslinger's permission, and White was designated a "District Supervisor at Large" to provide him

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December 6, 1952, p. 12; "U.S. Agent Cleared in Contempt Case," *New York Times*, December 9, 1952, p. 40; and Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 133–4. Anslinger later wrote that White was released through pressure from his office.

[50] Letter from White to Olney, dated November 24, 1952, in Folder 16, Box 1, White Papers. See also a memo dated November 25, 1952 from Anslinger to State Department official George Morlock listing White's proposed itinerary, in Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[51] Quoted in John Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate": The CIA and Mind Control, The Secret History of the Behavioral Sciences* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979), 97; and John M. Crewden, "Abuses in Testing of Drugs by C.I.A. To Be Panel Focus," *New York Times*, September 20, 1977, p. 1.

with greater freedom.[52] Only one year removed from contemplating a life of sunburns and cheap gin, White wrote again to his friend Warren Olney III (recently appointed as an Assistant Attorney General), "My status is still 'quo'. I'm feeling little pain and as 'Supervisor at Large' am able to play around with various interesting projects."[53]

One of those projects was a quick jaunt down to Houston. While White waited for his official CIA clearance to go through, Anslinger sent him to investigate a Texas drug ring rumored to include members of the local police department. The investigation was a mess from start to finish. Several member of the Houston Police Department were discovered to be addicts, stealing drugs and colluding with local traffickers. One detective apparently commit suicide by shooting himself in the chest—twice—a mere hour after he was interrogated by White. The inquiry also brought the FBN into conflict with Customs, which was also interested in the case but annoyed that White's blunt style brought it to a premature conclusion. The tension was apparently so great that regional Customs supervisor Al Scharff challenge White and dared him to draw, as if they were a couple of nineteenth century gunslingers, before fellow FBN Agent Henry Giordano wisely intervened. Anslinger later reprimanded White for his behavior and for reportedly being drunk during most of the investigation. White shrugged the allegations off as slander and countered that both Customs and the Houston authorities were bitter over the scandal he had uncovered.[54]

The episode did little to harm White's career, perhaps because of his new benefactors at the CIA. Indeed, by the start of 1955, White was officially a part-time employee of the Central Intelligence Agency, thus beginning the most notorious chapter of his career. White's work as an adjunct to the CIA's MK-ULTRA experiments are without a doubt his greatest claim to fame (or infamy) among contemporary

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[52] A memo from Anslinger to White, dated December 10, 1953, indicates that White's "Supervisor at Large" position took effect January 1, 1954, in Folder 13, Box 3, White Papers.

[53] See White to Olney, April 22, 1954, in Folder 16, Box 1, White Papers. Additionally, see Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 95-99; John Jacobs, "The Diaries of a CIA Operative," *Washington Post*, September 5, 1977, p. 1.

[54] Agent Kelly was assigned to Houston soon after the scandal and observed, "The Police Department was in disgrace, the city in an uproar, and there were new headlines every day. City fathers and the police blamed the entire scandal on the muckraking tactics of George White." Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 123; Garland Roark, The Coin of Contraband: The True Story of United States Customs Investigator Al Scharff (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964), 387-396; Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 144-147. See also material in Folder 10, Box 2, White Papers, particularly correspondence between Anslinger and White dated November 30 and December 6, 1954.

audiences and much has been written about the CIA's investigation into mind control, behavioral science and the operational potential of psychoactive drugs. One of the first and best accounts is John Mark's *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate"* (1978). In *A Terrible Mistake* (2009), journalist H.P. Albarelli revealed additional details about the program in his account of the 1953 death of Fort Detrick scientist Frank Olson, who allegedly threw himself from a ten-story New York hotel room window during a period of profound psychological distress caused by an unwitting dose of LSD.[55] In *The Strength of the Wolf* (2004), Douglas Valentine goes so far as to characterize White as "the CIA's secret policeman."[56] A full recounting of the CIA's mind control program is unnecessary as readers can find them in the works above, but a few words about George White's role and the implications of his involvement sheds additional light on the FBN's position on the periphery of the intelligence community and the overlap between counternarcotics and intelligence.

White's research into the operational potential of various drugs began during the war years with the OSS's attempt to develop a "truth drug" to use during interrogations. The job was assigned to Stanley Lovell—dubbed "Prof. Moriarty," after Sherlock Holmes's mad-scientist nemesis, for the devious weapons and gadgets he devised. Some, like a portable train derailer, flashless pistols and various explosive compounds were useful. Others, like the stink bomb Lovell nicknamed "Who, Me?" or the female sex hormones he hoped to smuggle into Hitler's vegetable garden ("so that his moustache would fall off and his voice become soprano") were less so. A genuine truth drug, or "T.D." as it was abbreviated, was something altogether different and Lovell described the project as a "most urgent research job." "Everyone wanted it, and quite properly so," he recalled. "Our schools and recruiting people needed it to help screen out of our groups any German spies or sympathizers." Lovell thought mescaline or cannabis might work and went to Anslinger for help. Anslinger sent him George White.[57]

White's team experimented with a number of different compounds (and apparently on a number of different people, including some of White's criminal informants) but eventually settled on cigarettes

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[55] Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate"*; H.P. Albarelli, Jr., *A Terrible Mistake: The Murder of Frank Olson and the CIA's Secret Cold War Experiments* (Waltersville, OR: Trine Day LLC, 2009).

[56] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 141.

[57] Stanley P. Lovell, *Of Spies and Stratagems* (New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1964), 6, 29-66, 94.

adulterated with an extract of tetrahydrocannabinol acetate (better known as THC, the psychoactive chemical found in marijuana). No real surprise, the spiked cigarettes produced a wide variation in results and White ultimately concluded that the THC extract was "not a perfect 'truth drug' in the sense that its administration is followed immediately and automatically by the revelation of all the secrets which the subject wishes to keep to himself . . . such a goal is beyond reasonable expectation from any drug." The OSS's truth drug might be useful in certain circumstances, he allowed, but it "is probably not adaptable for mass interrogation."[58] In a strange twist, White's field testing apparently extended to the Manhattan Project. Marks reports that together with a "Manhattan Project counterintelligence man" (later identified as future Supreme Court Justice and UN Ambassador Arthur Goldberg), White toured a number of bomb-related military sites and interrogated soldiers suspected of Communist sympathies. They uncovered no spies, but, Goldberg contended, "The stuff actually worked," and most soldiers "gave us more information than we had before."[59]

Contemporary accounts tend to focus on White's OSS experiments as a prologue to the MK-ULTRA program later implemented by the CIA and the project takes on take on conspiratorial connotations in the process. While the CIA's interest in mind control and behavioral science was cloaked in secrecy, the OSS effort to develop a truth drug was openly acknowledged by the early 1960s. It was also one of many unorthodox stratagems pursued by the OSS, and Lovell explained, "It was my policy to consider any method whatever that might aid the war, however unorthodox or untried."[60]

This kind of no-stone-left-unturned mindset extended into the Cold War, particularly once it became clear that the U.S.-Soviet conflict would be fought via proxy wars and from the shadows. In the minds of policymakers like CIA Director Allen Dulles, the Cold War was about more than geopolitics or

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[58] George White, "Report on T.D.," dated June 2, 1943, in Folder 4, Box 1, White Papers. It's worth pointing out that White's memo was addressed to a number of psychologists and neurologists, as well as the military, Surgeon General, FBI, FBN, and OSS. See also Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 6-8.

[59] Goldberg is quoted Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 8, and identified in Albarelli, *A Terrible Mistake*, 802. White and Goldberg apparently followed a pretty standard routine, in which they would chat up the soldier in question and casually offer the loaded cigarettes. They always left a pitcher of ice water on the table "knew the drug had taken effect when they reached for a glass." Goldberg later quipped, "The fellows from my office wouldn't take a cigarette from me for the rest of the war."

[60] Lovell is quoted in *Of Spies and Stratagems*, 87. Both Lovell and Anslinger (in *The Protectors*) acknowledged the OSS truth drug project in books published in 1964.

ideology, it was a struggle to control thought itself—a literal "battle for men's minds." In an April 1953 speech, delivered just as the MK-ULTRA program was getting underway, Dulles warned an audience at Princeton University that the communists would not hesitate to employ psychological conditioning. "The minds of selected individuals who are subjected to such treatment," he claimed, "are deprived of the ability to state their own thoughts. Parrot-like, the individuals so conditioned can merely repeat the thoughts which have been implanted in their minds by suggestion from outside. In effect the brain . . . becomes a phonograph playing a disc on its spindle by an outside genius over which it has no control."[61]

The CIA's research into mind control and behavioral science emerged from these fears. In the battle for men's minds, knowing what made a person tick was imperative. Using a number of "cutouts" or front companies like the Human Ecology Fund and the Geschickter Fund, the CIA secretly bankrolled a number of university and institutional research projects, often without the scientists' knowledge. MK-ULTRA became the codename under which this program was conducted. (In earlier periods, it was also referred to as "Artichoke" and "Bluebird," later as MK-Search and MKCHKWIT.) Operating on the periphery of the program and unaware of these evolving codenames, White tended to refer to the whole thing as "Operation Midnight Climax," for reasons explained below. In *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* Marks observes that through its covert funding, "the intelligence community, including the CIA, changed the face of the scientific community during the 1950s and early 1960s by its interest in such experiments."[62] While the academy focused primarily on psychology and behavioral science, CIA and military scientists investigated the operational potential of powerful hallucinogens like LSD, which might be useful during interrogation or slipped to unsuspecting foreign leaders, causing erratic behavior. Most troubling was the fear that such drugs could be used in conjunction with torture and other forms of mental conditioning to program unwitting sleeper agents into carrying out an attack or conducting espionage. Driven by such fears, the program grew to encompass hypnosis, chemical and biological warfare, and covert assassination techniques.

Although the timing was fortuitous for White's career, the CIA's renewed interest in operational drugs was tied to two major events: the discovery of LSD and the Korean War. In *Cold War Captives:*

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[61] Quoted in Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 21.

[62] Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 151.

Imprisonment, Escape and Brainwashing (2009), historian Susan Carruthers discusses how reports that POWS were brainwashed into denouncing the United States and admitting the use of germ warfare aggravated American anxiety about captivity and loss of freedom. The cold war, she notes (and pointedly does not capitalize), was framed rhetorically "as a contest between 'slave world' and 'free.'" Soviet Communism implied a fundamental denial of human agency in subordinating the individual to the collective, while the West upheld freedom of choice and individuality as the bedrock of capitalism. Carruthers argues, "the rhetorical opposition between slavery and freedom took shape around concrete struggles over repatriation, defection, forced labor, incarceration, and mind control: issues that, to prominent opinion formers of the day appeared just as consequential as the threat of atomic war."[63] Not coincidentally, this was the same framework used by Anslinger to depict the dangers of addiction and the worldwide struggle for drug control, thus contributing to the issues around which the dichotomy between freedom and slavery continued to take shape.

The point is, while today they seem far-fetched, Cold War-era fears that people could be brainwashed and "reprogrammed" through a regime of torture and drugs were very real and reached the highest levels of government. Western policymakers needed only look to the example of Cardinal József Mindszenty for proof the threat was genuine. During and after WWII, Mindszenty helped organize Hungarian resistance to both the fascists and communists, but following his brief imprisonment during Hungary's communist coup, he reappeared at a 1949 show trial and confessed to an array of outlandish crimes. When American POWs captured in Korea were broadcast making claims similarly at odds with their presumed beliefs, American audiences were aghast and took some form of brainwashing as the only logical explanation.[64]

The same year of Mindszenty's shocking confessions, a new drug called Delysid arrived on the market and seemed to offer precisely such possibilities. Better known by its chemical name, lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), or (its street name) "acid," George White often referred to the drug as "stormy." LSD was first discovered in 1938 by Swiss chemists Albert Hoffman and Arthur Stoll. The two men used derivatives of ergot—a hallucinogenic fungus that grows on damp rye—to develop a stimulus for the

[63] Susan L. Carruthers, *Cold War Captives: Imprisonment, Escape and Brainwashing* (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2009), 21

[64] Carruthers, *Cold War Captives: Imprisonment, Escape and Brainwashing*, 17–8, Chapter 5.

body's circulatory system, but initial trials went nowhere so the effort was shelved for the next five years. One day in April 1943, as Hoffman created a fresh batch, he inadvertently absorbed a small amount through his fingertip and noticed a "remarkable but not unpleasant state of intoxication" that sent his imagination and sensory awareness into overdrive. Believing the drug required further exploration, Hoffman took a dose of 250 micrograms a few days later. Having taken what proved to be an enormous amount, Hoffman bicycled home and spent the next 24 hours in a hallucinatory daze. Coming out of it the next day, he realized the drug's incredible potential and filed for a patent almost exactly one year later.[65]

The drug's ability to induce states of dramatically altered consciousness caught the medical community's attention. As Martin Lee and Bruce Shlain note in *Acid Dreams; The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond* (1994), "Within less than a decade the drug had risen to a position of high standing among psychiatrists. LSD therapy was by no means a fad or a fly-by-night venture. More than one thousand clinical papers were written on the subject, discussing some forty thousand patients." Psychologists thought LSD could help treat alcoholism and disorders like schizophrenia, while neurologists used the drug to alleviate chronic migraines and cluster headaches. When LSD escaped the confines of the laboratory, however, it became the well-known recreational drug that it is today. Although its popularly is associated with far-out hippies and left-wing gurus types like Timothy Leary, it was also very popular with American elites. Mary Pinchot, the wife of notorious CIA agent Cord Meyer, reportedly told Leary that "top people in Washington are turning on. You'd be amazed at the sophistication of some of our leaders." Years later, in an appearance on the Dick Cavitt show, Clare Booth Luce—wife of famed publisher Henry Luce and, as the American Ambassador to Italy from 1953 to 1956, an associate of Agent Siragusa in the Rome office—casually admitted, "Oh, sure, we all took acid. It was a creative group..."[66] LSD, however, tended to disorient and confuse as often at it enlightened users, which caught the attention of intelligence officials who feared America's enemies might utilize the drug to interrogate—or worse, reprogram—captured American soldiers. This anxiety was captured perfectly in the 1959 novel *The Manchurian Candidate* by Richard Condon, which dramatically

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[65] Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 1–2; See also Albert Hoffman, "d-Lysergic Acid Diethylamide," U.S. Patent No. 2,438,259, March 23, 1948.

[66] Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 90, 85, 71.

portrayed a war hero "reprogrammed" as a Communist sleeper agent while imprisoned in Korea and has spawned multiple film adaptations.

Once again, it fell to George White to debunk much of the hoopla. White's essential involvement is unquestioned. References to CIA officials involved in MK-ULTRA projects are scattered throughout his address books and personal papers, as are references to "81 Bedford" and the name Morgan Hall (or initials "M.H."). Senate investigations conducted in the 1970s revealed that Morgan Hall was a pseudonym used by White to operate a series of CIA safe houses, the first of which was located at 81 Bedford Street in New York's Greenwich Village.[67] White's personal correspondences also include a number of elliptical references.[68] The safe house was rigged with extensive surveillance equipment and used for both undercover FBN investigations and White's experiments. The agents were responsible for keeping it stocked with food and liquor and maintaining a general "lived in" appearance. The CIA, meanwhile, paid the rent and occasionally commandeered the apartment for its own operations, which included the sexual blackmail of foreign diplomats and spies.[69]

White directly confirmed his involvement in a September 1970 letter to Dr. Harvey Powelson, Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California at Berkley. "Not too many years past," he wrote, "I became a sort of liaison officer between Federal law-enforcement and another rather obscure Dep't of the Gov't (that would like to remain obscure), which was interested in obtaining some factual information and data on the use and effect of various hallucinogens, including marijuana, tetrahydra-cannibinol and the then brand-new LSD." White described experiments conducted "under both clinical and non-clinical conditions on both witting and unwitting subjects" and even admitted to testing many of the drugs himself. "So far as I was concerned 'clear thinking' was non existent while under the

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[67] *Human Drug Testing by the CIA, 1977*; Hearings before the Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research of the Committee on Human Resources." 95th Congress, 1st Session, September 20 and 21, 1977. (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC: 1977).

[68] An undated from a "JNO" cheekily signed off, "Best regards to you and Mr. Hall." In a letter dated January 24, 1955, White instructed Agent Siragusa to write him "c/o Morgan Hall, 81 Bedford St., NYC." A letter dated February 25, 1955, also instructed the landlord to credit Hall's security deposit toward the next tenant. Documents can be found in Folder 1, Boxes 3 and 4, White Papers. See also Thomas, "C.I.A. Says it Found More Secret Papers on Behavior Control," *New York Times*, September 3, 1977, which quotes a letter found among White's papers dated May 26, 1953.

[69] Jack Anderson and Les Whitten, "CIA Love Trap Lured Diplomats," *Washington Post*, February 5, 1975, p. B15.

influence of any of these drugs," he wrote. "I did feel at times I was having a 'mind-expanding' experience but this vanished like a dream immediately after the session..."[70] This is a noteworthy admission. Not only did White reveal his participation, he also expressed his clear skepticism about the actual benefit of using such drugs—all while flouting his ostensible obligations as a federal narcotics agent.

With much of the historical record still cloaked in secrecy, MK-ULTRA has become prime fodder for conspiracy theories. When the existence of the program was revealed in the 1970s, for example, Timothy Leary claimed in the *San Francisco Sunday Chronicle and Examiner*, "The LSD movement was started by the CIA. I wouldn't be here now without the foresight of the CIA scientists."[71] Conspiracies do exist and MK-ULTRA certainly qualifies, but there are also simpler explanations. It was not a government conspiracy that unleashed LSD, for example, but the drug's profound psychoactive effects that attracted scientists and spies, as well as spiritual seekers and recreational users.

The program's effects on the career of George White, however, are clear enough and have secured him a permanent place in the murky history of the American security state. After the suicide of Frank Olson and White's impolitic jousting with the U.S. Attorney's office and New York political establishment, Anslinger decided to move White back to San Francisco in early 1955, where he served as the Bureau's top official on the West Coast and continued his sideline as an adjunct for the CIA for the next ten years. It was there that White's corner of the project took an even sharper turn toward the tawdry and earned the title "Operation Midnight Climax." White quickly set up a new CIA safe house in a Telegraph Hill apartment furnished with, as Marks describes it, "items that gave the place the air of the brothel it was to become: Toulouse-Lautrec posters, a picture of a French can-can dancer, and photos of manacled women in black stockings." Like the safe houses in New York, the apartment was rigged with extensive surveillance equipment and a two-way mirror from which to observe the action. (An agent later joked the place was "so wired that if you spilled a glass of water you'd probably electrocute yourself.")

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[70] George White to D. Harvey Powelson, September 30, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

[71] The mysterious circumstances surrounding the 1953 death of Fort Detrick researcher Frank Olson are the source of frequent conjecture. H.P. Albarelli, Jr.'s door-stopper of a book, *A Terrible Mistake*, speculates that Olson was killed by FBN informants Jean Pierre LaFitte and Francois Spirito to prevent revelations about both the MK-ULTRA program and an August 1951 chemical weapons experiment in Pont-St.-Esprit, France. The brainwashing element of the program is also frequently used to explain Lee Harvey Oswald's role as a patsy in the JFK assassination. Leary is quoted in Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, xx.

Joined by fellow FBN agent Ike Feldman and numerous CIA officials, White narrowed his focus to prostitutes and unwitting johns as test subjects. In counternarcotics work, White always thought prostitutes a valuable asset; "Acquire a prostitute-informant and you've got a pipeline to the traffic," he once wrote. Now they became his accomplices. White's team was also responsible for testing the various prototypes produced by Gottlieb. As one of the CIA members recalled, "If we were scared enough of a drug not to try it on ourselves, we sent it to San Francisco."[72]

The vast majority of the documents related to MK-ULTRA were destroyed by the CIA in 1973, so there will likely never be a full accounting of its scope or victims, which included convicts, hospital and mental patients, enlisted men and college students, as well as the individuals targeted by White. The nature of the program continues to raise troubling issues. Experimenting on unwitting citizens was both a violation of the Nuremburg Codes that the U.S. helped write after WWII and a profound abuse of power. Compounding the tragedy of this moral compromise was the fact that the program produced little of genuine value. Ike Feldman, one of the agents supervised by White, later scoffed, "LSD will no sooner work as a truth drug than an aspirin." In *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* Marks summarizes, "After 10 years of unwitting testing, the men from MKULTRA apparently scored no major breakthroughs with LSD or other drugs. They found no effective truth drug, recruitment pill, or aphrodisiac. LSD had not opened up the mind to CIA control."[73] In retrospect, the entire affair now seems little more than a tragic boondoggle, but its story offers valuable insights into the mindset and seeming imperatives of national security, as well as its overlap with law enforcement.

In terms of national defense, the MK-ULTRA experiments reflected the genuine fears of the intelligence community, as lead scientist Sidney Gottlieb pointed out during Congressional testimony in 1977. "I would like this Committee to know," he said, "that I considered all this work—at the time it was done and in the context of circumstances that were extant in that period—to be extremely unpleasant, extremely difficult, extremely sensitive, but above all, to be extremely urgent and important. I realize that it is difficult to reconstruct those times and that atmosphere today . . . should the course of recent history

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[72] Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 101-110. See also Crewden, "Abuses in Testing of Drugs by C.I.A. To Be Panel Focus," *New York Times*, September 20, 1977, p. 1; White, "A Diet of Danger, Chapter 1 - The Hard Way," in Folder 11, Box 3, White Papers.

[73] Crewden, "Abuses in Testing of Drugs by C.I.A. To Be Panel Focus," *New York Times*, September 20, 1977, p. 1; Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 110.

have been slightly different from what it was," he continued, "I can easily imagine a congressional committee being extremely critical of the Agency for not having done investigations of this nature."[74]

This is a style of thought that endures, the inevitable result of even a justifiable obsession with the national defense. In the midst of George W. Bush's war on terror, Vice President Dick Cheney famously proclaimed his "one percent doctrine," that in the realm of national security even slim possibilities must be treated as certainties. Five days after September 11, he warned the American public that the government would have to work through "the dark side" to protect the country.[75] Cheney's comments and Gottlieb's defense of MK-ULTRA both address one of the fundamental dilemmas of national security: exactly how far does a democratic society go in pursuit of the national defense? What odd corners and eventualities is it obligated to consider?

What is clear is that in the 1950s, working on the "dark side" required people like George White. In *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* Marks speculates that White may have actually been something of a patsy himself. Gottlieb and his colleagues in the CIA's Technical Services Staff kept minimal records and in subsequent inquiries, he notes, "put all the blame for actual testing on George White, who is not alive to defend himself." Perhaps. But White also filled a need and the CIA required his unique expertise. One project member recalled, "We were Ivy League, white, middle class. We were naïve, totally naïve about this, and he felt pretty expert. He knew the whores, the pimps, the people who brought in the drugs . . . He was a pretty wild man."[76] White was also someone who spent a career weighing the needs of security against the niceties of democratic society. "I freely admit I had a reputation for being a 'heavy-handed' cop," he remarked later in life, but was firm in his belief "that it was more humane to slap a prisoner at the first sign of resistance than to shoot him if such resistance developed to the point where extreme force became necessary."[77]

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[74] Quoted in Albarelli, Jr., *A Terrible Mistake*, 572–3.

[75] The "One Percent Doctrine" was quoted in Ron Suskind, *The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of Its Enemies Since 9/11* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2007). Cheney's "dark side" remarks were delivered on the September 16, 2001 edition of "Meet the Press." See Dan Froomkin, "Cheney's 'Dark Side' Is Showing," *Washington Post*, November 7, 2005.

[76] Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 105, 98-99.

[77] White, "Address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October 28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

White's willingness to embrace that compromise makes his thoughts on the MK-ULTRA project all the more pertinent. In a letter sent soon after his arrival in San Francisco, White wrote about the nuances of interrogation to Dr. Harold Wolff, a famous neurologist at Cornell who conducted classified research for the CIA. The experience of American POWs "subjected to BW [brainwashing] methods" in China and Korea, he argued, was not so different from "the countless thousands here in the US who pass thru the hands of the various police agencies. The American police generally get what they want thru 'interrogation' and 'conditioning' of their subjects. How much trouble they take is dependent on how much they want the information available." Sometimes that meant the "3rd degree with rubber hose" approach and sometimes it meant wooing intended informants until they became "more 'copper-hearted' than the cops and continued to inform because they liked it." (In an example of life imitating art imitating life, White recommended Eleazar Lipsky's 1947 novel *The Kiss of Death* as a "classic example" of how to cultivate a reluctant informant.) The American inability to duplicate Soviet and Chinese success with "BW techniques," he wrote, "is no doubt due to our unwillingness to go to the depths of brutality and ruthlessness as are they. That has always been and will always be a characteristic of the Democratic way of life and that is the way we like it in the long run." Yet there were circumstances, he argued, when cruelty and ruthlessness must serve the greater good. "If someone very near and dear to me—a young daughter," he speculated, "were kidnapped and threatened with death or mayhem . . . I might be willing to go to any depths of brutality . . . [to] obtain the right answers. For our side—this aint cricket. For the enemy, it's all in a day's work."[78] In other words, the guardians of American security were sometimes confronted with situations where nothing was out of bounds. The trick was in finding that elusive line between what could be justified and what was right.

That ultimately proved a boundary that White was all too ready to cross. White's eager embrace of the moral ambiguities inherent in both national security and narcotics enforcement was partly why the CIA included him in the MK-ULTRA program, but it also created an environment that proved ripe for abuse. For White, it was all part of the game, and it was fittingly to Sidney Gottlieb that he wrote, near the

[78] For the work of Dr. Harold Wolff and his research with the CIA, see Marks, *The Search for the "Manchurian Candidate,"* 35, 135–8 White's letter to Wolff is dated April 20, 1955 and can be found in Folder 16, Box 3, White Papers. See also Eleazar Lipsky, *The Kiss of Death* (New York: Penguin Books, 1947). There have been multiple film adaptations of this book. The most recent was a 1995 version starring David Caruso, Samuel L. Jackson and Nicholas Cage.

end of his life, "Of course I was a minor missionary, actually a heretic, but I toiled wholeheartedly in the vineyards because it was fun, fun, fun. Where else could a red blooded American boy lie, kill and cheat, steal, deceive, rape and pillage with the sanction and blessing of the All-Highest?"[79]

True Crime Action Hero

White's role in the MK-ULTRA program was revealed to the world in 1977, in the course of Senate investigations led by Edward Kennedy's Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research. The mid-1970s were a period of general political bloodletting; the stench of continued to linger and Kennedy's investigation came on the heels of the Church and Pike Committees (in the Senate and House, respectively) that revealed considerable abuses by American police and intelligence agencies. We can only speculate how White would have reacted to the attention. One thing is certain, however: it was not the agent's first brush with celebrity.

White's return to the District Supervisor position in San Francisco fulfilled a major professional ambition. "San Francisco, in my book, is the greatest city in the world and I hope to stay here the rest of my life," he wrote to a friend. But it came after several years in the wilderness, during which it appeared his career had reached a dead end. On the eve of his appointment to Newbold Morris's federal corruption probe, he wrote to another colleague that while lately he'd "been taking blows . . . I hope the day will come when I can take bows."[80] George White was a man who craved recognition and between March 1955 and April 1965, the most stable period of his career, he finally began to take some of those bows. Being called upon to assist the CIA and granted the authority to continue his clandestine work on the West Coast likely assuaged White's bitterness at having been initially left out of the intelligence community. Yet while "Operation Midnight Climax" drew him further into the covert dark side of national security, he was also becoming increasingly recognized as a public figure in the burgeoning true crime literature sponsored by the Bureau.

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[79] Letter from White to Gottlieb, dated November 21, 1971, in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

[80] The "taking bows" quote is in a letter from White to Olney, dated November 24, 1952, in Folder 16, Box 1. See also White to Malcolm Wilkey, March 12, 1955, Folder 1, Box 3. Although White was thrilled with his appointment to the San Francisco office, it also seems clear this was both a safe place for him and the highest position he was likely to attain the within the FBN. Soon after his transfer was announced, White received congratulations from Siragusa in Rome, who wrote in a letter dated January 27, 1955, "your new post in SF . . . will go no further, officially or otherwise. I am truly happy about it and wish you the very best of luck and success. In my opinion, you are much better off there than NY." In Folder 9, Box 2, White Papers.

Close analysis of these true crime and police adventure stories, an early form of today's ubiquitous "infotainment" programming, reveals a number of complexities in the cultural script produced by the Bureau and indicates that figures like George White—a frequent protagonist—helped shape the way the American people thought about the nature of the threats facing the country and the role of government in an increasingly complicated world. Out of these stories a number of archetypes emerge: heroic agents, servile informants, desperate dope fiends, treacherous foreigners, inscrutable Orientals and swaggering Mafiosi. Each image helped convey the existential threat represented by the illicit narcotics to the American people. And only the brave agents of the FBN held the danger at bay.

Exerting tight control over public perceptions of the Bureau necessitated close collaboration with journalists, so Anslinger and other Bureau agents carefully cultivated relationships with writers like Ed Reid, Michael Stern, Herbert Brean and James Phelan. The Bureau was most comfortable with like-minded professionals, usually crime reporters or those otherwise sympathetic to FBN prerogatives. Courtney Ryley Cooper, for example, wrote several books on crime, contributed to several prominent newspapers and co-authored Anslinger's infamous anti-marijuana tract "Marihuana: Assassin of Youth." J. Edgar Hoover considered him to be "the best informed man on crime in the U.S." (Until he hanged himself over paranoia with German fifth columnists that is.)[81] Both Anslinger and White were also on personal terms with the Hearst reporters Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, whose gossipy "Confidential" series reliably supported the FBN worldview.[82] Among White's contacts and closest friends in California was John Spaulding Arrington, a reporter for the *San Francisco Daily News* who occasionally fed him tips between 1938 and 1953.[83]

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[81] Hoover quoted in "White Slavery," *Time*, Vol. 33, Issue 14, April 4, 1939. See also Harry J. Anslinger and Courtney Ryley Cooper, "Marijuana, Assassin of Youth," *The American Magazine*, Vol. 124, No. 1, July 1937, and Cooper, "Double Dealers in Dope," *The American Magazine*, May 1938, in Folder 13, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. Cooper's suicide is described in "Author Kills Self Over FBI Spy Snub," *Washington Times-Herald*, September 30, 1940, in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers and "Fifth Column Expose Failure Blamed for Cooper Suicide," *The Evening Star*, September 30, 1940, in Folder "(1690-10) American Magazine, Courtney Ryley Cooper," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[82] Letters from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine, dated February 17, 1995 and June 30, 1996, in Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection. Entries for both Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer can also be found in George White's address book, in Box 7, White Papers. Anslinger also regularly corresponded with Lait and Mortimer. See, for example, a letter dated March 4, 1952 in which Anslinger thanks Mortimer for a signed copy of *USA Confidential* (1952), in Folder 13, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. See also Folder "(1690-10L) Lait & Mortimer," in Box 72, RG 170, NARA.

[83] See Folder 14, Box 3, White Papers for their correspondence.

The best documented example of how the FBN collaborated with journalists to forge public narratives is *Reader's Digest* Roving Editor Frederic Sondern, Jr., who served as the magazine's resident expert on law enforcement, European security issues, and, with the Bureau's help, America's early drug war.[84] Partnering with *Reader's Digest* was no coincidence. One of the best-selling publications in American history, the *Digest* exerted a clear influence on twentieth century American culture and had a large international audience. It also maintained a reliably conservative and anticommunist tone; advocating aggressive drug control measures fit right into the magazine's political agenda. Anslinger wrote occasional articles, but Sondern was the glue binding the *Digest* and the Bureau; as the Old Man informed Sondern's editor, "He is our favorite crime reporter and stimulates the interest of our men."[85]

As reward for his cooperation, Sondern was given unparalleled access to FBN files and personnel, particularly in the Rome office. Armed with letters of introduction from Anslinger (which, the reporter noted, "opened doors as though by magic"), Sondern received unique access to foreign police officials throughout Europe. His first piece on the FBN was an account of White's 1948 Istanbul case, provocatively titled "Our Global War on Narcotics." This partnership paid immediate dividends and Anslinger was thrilled when the article was read into the Congressional Record in support of the FBN's efforts abroad. Sondern invoked the narrative of a global drug war again in a second 1956 article, this one titled "The World War Against Narcotics" and featuring the work of District 17. Over time the two

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[84] See, for example, the following sampling of Sondern's writings throughout the decade: Sondern, "Our Global War on Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, April 1950; Sondern, "Lucky Luciano's New Empire," *Reader's Digest*, September 1951; Sondern, "Network to Catch International Crooks," *Reader's Digest*, December 1952; Sondern, "The Brainwashing of John Hayes," *Reader's Digest*, July 1955; Sondern, "The World War Against Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, January 1956; Sondern, Jr., "We Must Stop the Crime that Breeds Crime!" *Reader's Digest*, June 1956; Sondern, "Interpol: Scourge of the International Underworld," *Reader's Digest*, January 1958; Sondern, "This Problem of Narcotic Addiction—Let's Face it Sensibly," *Reader's Digest*, September 1959.

[85] Joanne P. Sharp, *Condensing the Cold War: Reader's Digest and American Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). In *American Dreamers: The Wallaces and The Reader's Digest, An Insider's Story* (Simon & Schuster, 1996), Peter Canning, a former Managing Editor, provides an inside account of the magazine's affairs. He alleges the magazine had an on-going relationship with the CIA and provided the Agency with operational cover and a reliable media outlet. See also Harry J. Anslinger, "The Facts About Our Teen-Age Drug Addicts," *The Reader's Digest*, October 1951; and letter from Anslinger to DeWitt Wallace (editor, Reader's Digest), dated December 28, 1955, in Folder "(1690-10) Reader's Digest," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

parties became so close that one FBN official privately remarked, "in the public mind, he is practically the voice of the Bureau."[86]

This decade-long partnership culminated in Sondern's 1959 book *Brotherhood of Evil: The Mafia*. Anslinger recognized this as an opportunity to promote his agency and secured permission to personally write the Foreword. "The book is highly laudatory of Treasury Department agents, particularly those in the Bureau of Narcotics," he assured his superiors, and would provide "good publicity." That it did; the book spent 15 weeks on the *New York Times* Best Seller List, was widely read in policymaking and law enforcement circles and was even cited in Congress as proof of the need for tough drug control and legislation targeting the Mafia. The book was assigned reading in FBN training courses and Bureau officials sent autographed copies (signed by Anslinger, rather than Sondern!) to European police agencies to build continued support for international enforcement.[87]

Journalists like Sondern who adhered to the Bureau line were assured cooperation. In March 1959, for example, George White encouraged a writer named Richard Hyer to contact Anslinger, secure in the knowledge that Hyer's project on Communist Chinese drug trafficking would meet the Commissioner's approval.[88] Both Anslinger and FBN Agent Sam Levine sat for extended interviews with J.A. Buckwalter, a high-ranking member of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, whose book *Merchants of Misery* (1961) duplicated FBN positions on the essential nature of addiction and the drug trade. Believing

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[86] Sondern, "Our Global War on Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, April 1950; Sondern, "The World War Against Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, January 1956 (condensed from *The Denver Post*, December 4, 1955). See also letters from Sondern to Anslinger, dated May 12, 1952; from Anslinger to Rep. James T. Patterson (R-CT), April 5, 1950; and Malachi Harney to Anslinger, May 1, 1959, in Folder "(1690-10) Reader's Digest," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

[87] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*; Sondern's Best Seller run is reported in Fanny Butcher, "Author's Hope Fulfilled--the Year's Best Sellers," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 29, 1959, p. D5. See also: Anslinger to Asst. Treasury Secretary A. Gilmore Flues, October 28, 1958; Anslinger to Roger William Straus, Jr. (Farrar, Straus and Cudahy), February 10, 1959; and a letter dated March 17, 1959, in which Rep. Gordon Canfield (R-NJ) thanks Anslinger for sending a copy of the book, noting it was the second he had received. For autographed copies, see Jack Cusack to Henry Giordano, May 29, 1959, and Cusack to Anslinger, August 31, 1959. Folder "(1690-10) Reader's Digest," Box 73, RG 170, NARA. Rep. William Cramer (R-FL) cited and read from *Brotherhood of Evil* while proposing legislation targeting what he called the "terroristic offenses" perpetrated by the Mafia, and using interstate commerce or communication as justification for federal charges. See "Congress Must Act to Stamp Out National Racketeering by Outlawing Terroristic Conspiracies," *Congressional Record*, March 3, 1959, p. 3213-3216.

[88] See Richard Hyer to Anslinger, March 18, 1959 and Anslinger to Hyer, March 25, 1959, along with attached report, in Folder "(1690-10-H) Hyer, Richard V.," in Box 71, RG 170, NARA.

the book "should serve as a guide in narcotics education for all adults," Anslinger once again ordered scores of additional copies for training classes and the field offices.[89]

Despite these many cozy relationships, the Bureau's official relationship with the press was rather conflicted. For Anslinger, it was difficult to escape the conflict between the need to educate the public and the danger of exciting curiosity, thereby contributing to demand.[90] FBN officials were actually approached quite frequently with projects designed to highlight their work and turned many down—adding additional weight to those that received their blessing. When Anslinger declined a proposed weekly comic strip on the FBN, he explained that "much harm is done through suggestion and curiosity provoked on the part of persons who otherwise would not become interested in pursuing the subject," and noted that revealing investigational strategies "would not be in the best interests of law enforcement."[91] Officially, the FBN followed Treasury Department policy, which recommended against actively participating or expressing approval of any "privately produced series." This was not quite a total prohibition, but over the years Anslinger decided it was a useful policy and had saved the Bureau "a lot of time and grief."[92]

Part of Anslinger's ambivalence stemmed from a reluctance to expose operational methods. During the 1930s, the Bureau tried in vain to keep the names of undercover operatives like White out of the papers and Anslinger warned supervisors, "Such publicity can serve no useful purpose and may be a serious detriment in the development of future cases."[93] In San Francisco, White was sternly rebuked

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[89] J.A. Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1961); Letter Anslinger to J.A. Buckwalter dated September 12, 1956, in Folder "(1690-10) Merchants of Misery," Box 72, RG 170, NARA.

[90] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 215–217. Indicative of this dilemma was an incident in 1958 when a young Chicago girl apparently suffered some sort of psychological breakdown after watching a program on addiction. Anslinger chastised the television executives, "This is a good example of the dangers of presenting lurid narcotic themes on Television." In Folder "(1690-8A) General #3, Publicity, Television, 1959 thru 1960," BOX 69, RG 170, NARA.

[91] Anslinger to Elan G. Campbell (private citizen), March 30, 1950, in Folder "(1690-9, folder #2) Publicity, Press, 1947 thru December 1968," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[92] For Treasury Dept. policy, see a memo dated June 15, 1950 from Leon Siler (Staff Member, Treasury Information Service) to Ben Pearson (Stempel-Olenick Agency, Hollywood). See also a memo dated October 25, 1960, from Anslinger to Fred J. Douglas (Acting Asst. for Law Enforcement). Both documents are in Folder "(1690-8A) General #3, Publicity, Television, 1959 thru 1960," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

[93] Anslinger, Circular Letter No. 434, dated March 25, 1937, in Folder "(1690-9, Folder #1) Publicity, Press, 1927 thru 1946," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

after accounts surfaced about the FBN's renewed use of drug dogs.[94] When an informant who helped make a 1951 narcotics case against Waxey Gordon tried to take his story public, the Bureau pleaded with him not to reveal the use of a secret wireless transmitter and then pressured the *Saturday Evening Post* not to run the story.[95]

Clearly, however, Bureau officials had no problem providing access to files or exposing law enforcement techniques when it suited their purpose.[96] The Bureau's primary concern with respect to the press was to remain in control of its public image and the narrative of drug control. One of the initial accounts of the Hip Sing Tong case, for example, was less than flattering. The article's depiction of White seducing one female suspect and allegations against corrupt Customs Inspectors prompted angry missives from both the Commissioner and Customs officials.[97] Yet over time, the Hip Sing Tong case became a core part of FBN lore and depicted as a daring undercover mission against long odds. While most FBN-sponsored stories romanticized the heroics of agents to demonstrate progress in the early drug war, occasionally this kind sensationalism worked against the Bureau. As supervisor of the New York office in the 1930s—and subject to one of the world's largest media markets—Garland Williams complained of the media's tendency to "greatly magnify each case and each trafficker's activities and

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[94] See memos from Anslinger to White, dated December 29, 1949, and from White to Anslinger, dated January 20, 1950, in Folder "(1690-9, folder #2) Publicity, Press, 1947 thru December 1968," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[95] See Morris (Kayo) Lipsius and John Lardner, "I Put the Finger on Waxey Gordon," *Saturday Evening Post*, February 23, 1952. See also teletype excerpt between James C. Ryan and Malachi Harney dated December 18, 1951; Ryan to B.T. Mitchell, February 1952 and letters from "Kayo" to "J.C." (James C. Ryan) dated February 14 and 21, 1952, in Folder "(1690-10) Saturday Evening Post," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

[96] A good example of the Bureau's conditional cooperation comes in an April 30, 1948 instruction from Anslinger to Agent Frank Sojat, the Acting District Supervisor in Chicago, in reference to a radio program called "The City Editor Speaks" that addressed FBN investigations into racehorse doping in the 1930s. Anslinger authorized Sojat to share Bureau files but wrote, "stress the fact that it was the Bureau of Narcotics which undertook the work of suppressing the abuse of narcotic drugs around race tracks, and that it was this Bureau which insisted on the saliva test." In Folder "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1949 thru June 1951, folder #4," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

[97] The unflattering account appeared as Joseph From, "Unmasking America's Monarchs of Dope," *Daring Detective*, October 1938. Anslinger demanded answers about who leaked the story, but Garland Williams assured him that no one talked to the reporter and speculated the information had come from newspaper coverage of the trial. The Bureau also found itself having to placate aggrieved Customs officials who assumed the allegations of corruption came from the FBN. See Folder "(1690-10) From, Joseph; New York City," Box 71, RG 170, NARA.

importance," which left the impression that "we are having little effect on the growth of the menace."[98] Sensational press, it seems, cut both ways.

Given the scandalous nature of drugs in America, the Bureau also ran a serious risk of being drawn into partisan political flaps. In August 1946, Williams had to defuse a mini-scandal when the *Daily Mirror* published a story on crime intended as a hit job on local Rep. Vito Marcantonio (D-NY), a noted leftist. Williams admitted "making strong representations to the newspaper" (reflecting his strong feelings on crime) but adamantly denied giving reporters access to Bureau files. In St. Louis, the editor of the *Summit County Democrat* frankly admitted to one agent that "his publication was a partisan newspaper" looking to score "a political advantage."[99]

In the end, the Bureau's clear record of collaborating with sympathetic authors indicates that FBN policy was flexible and subject to opportunity. G.W. Cunningham served in a headquarters capacity for a number of years and summarized FBN policy best in a warning sent to—who else?—George White. "One thing worse than no publicity is bad publicity," he noted. "If you can't call the tune, you had better hang up your fiddle and stay out of the orchestra."[100] This was advice White took to heart, as his celebrated cases were retold and embellished, but always for the greater glory of the Bureau.

Indeed, by 1960 a slew of true crime stories emerged featuring George White as the protagonist. Many of the stories told in this new crop of literature had been told before, but as White moved up the ranks and away from street-level enforcement or undercover roles, he took on an increasingly visible role in the literature with his real name taking the place of pseudonyms. The best examples of this evolution come from the retellings of White's 1937-8 Hip Sing Tong investigation and his 1948 Istanbul case.

White's role in the Hip Sing Tong case was initially a closely guarded secret and Williams told reporters that the agents involved "may never be revealed to the public." That was premature, and

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[98] Williams to Anslinger, May 2, 1938, Folder "(1690-9, Folder #1), Publicity, Press, 1927 thru 1946," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[99] See Williams to Anslinger, August 16, 1946. The reporter later admitted to Williams that "Hearst ordered my editor to get Marcantonio and that is what we are after." See also a memo dated August 16, 1946 from R.J. Ripberger to Joseph Bell. Documents are in Folders "(1690-9, Folder #1), Publicity, Press, 1927 thru 1946," and "(1690-9, Folder #2), Publicity, Press, 1947 thru December 1968," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[100] Cunningham to White, July 18, 1949, in Folder "(1690-9, Folder #2), Publicity, Press, 1947 thru December 1968," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

White's role was confirmed when he was called upon to testify against Tong defendants. The unauthorized account appearing in the October 1938 issue of *Daring Detective* also named White. Yet a nearly identical account published the following year by a sympathetic journalist in *True Detective* used a pseudonym. The first fully authorized account to identify White's role appears to be *Narcotics: America's Peril* (1952), by Will Oursler (Anslinger's future co-author on the 1961 book *The Murderers*) and Laurence Dwight Smith. By 1960, White's role in the case was routinely cited as part of the Bureau's self-generated mythology. In the mid-to-late 1950s, reporter James Phelan ran a whole series of articles on White's exploits in *True: The Men's Magazine*, including the Hip Sing Tong and Istanbul cases and several investigations conducted with White's mysterious conman-informant Pierre Lafitte. Anslinger also recited White's adventures in both *The Murderers* (1961) and *The Protectors* (1964).[101]

Marking the prologue to the FBN's foreign enforcement program, White's 1948 Istanbul case become even more widely celebrated and put to immediate use as both bureaucratic leverage and propaganda for public consumption. In addition to a Sondern article, the case was adapted to a radio program called "The Silent Man" and narrated by Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., famous for his portrayals of adventurers like Robin Hood and Zorro. Although the Bureau was discouraged from maintaining a formal relationship with radio and television programs like "Gangbusters" or "Treasury Agent," FBN records indicate that officials like Anslinger and Williams kept a close watch to ensure the Bureau was portrayed in a favorable light.[102]

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[101] "U.S. Agents Trap 36 Tong Leaders on Dope Charges." *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 5, 1938, p. 7; Joseph From, "Unmasking America's Monarchs of Dope," *Daring Detective*, October 1938, in Folder "(1690-10) From, Joseph; New York City," Box 71, RG 170, NARA; Richard Hirsch, "How Treasury Agents Broke the 'Poison Sleep' Gang," *True Detective*, May 1939 (see also Hirsch, "Freeing the Drug Slaves: An Interview with U.S. Commissioner of Narcotics Harry J. Anslinger," *True Detective*, October 1947) in Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. See also Pierre LaFitte and James Phelan, "'Horse" of Another Color," *True: The Man's Magazine*, March 1957; LaFitte and Phelan, "Tight Trap for a Top Dealer," *True: The Men's Magazine*, June 1957; Phelan, "When the Rookie Took the Tong," *True: The Men's Magazine*, December 1959; Phelan, "The Calculating Colonel and the Turkish Trap," *True: The Men's Magazine*, January 1960, in Folder 17, Box 12, Anslinger Papers; and Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers,* 125–131; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 79.

[102] A script of "The Silent Man" and a memo dated April 12, 1950 from Anslinger to a Mr. Saxon, confirming White's identity in the case, are held in Folder "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1949 thru June 1951, #4." For additional examples of FBN officials monitoring radio and television portrayals, see above and Folders "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1941-1948, #3," "(1690-8A) General #3, Publicity, Television, 1959 thru 1960," and "(1690-8A) General #4, Publicity, Television, January 1961 thru February 1963," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

The telescoping of one specific moment in White's Istanbul case, as it was retold over the years with different emphasis, is particularly revealing. After making contact with the suspects and being taken to a stash house to discuss the terms of their deal, White lost his Turkish surveillance team and was unable to pinpoint his location. Realizing he needed to return to the house in order to prepare the bust, White noted the serial number on the house's gas meter as he departed. In his official report, White described this detail in passing and without comment.[103] In "The Silent Man," however, this is a moment of high drama with suspect Iradodos Terapyanos's American affectations becoming the group's undoing. Known to his friends as "Little Bob," Terapyanos reportedly dressed in a Western style and peppered his speech with American slang. As "Ferid" in "The Silent Man," his affected American mannerisms are played up, as are the foreign accents and exotic locale. A few lines of dialogue describe his fancy American lighter, which he repeatedly insists on using to light everyone's cigarettes. As White leaves the meet and realizes he must confirm the location of the house, he stops Ferid and asks for another light and then reads the number on the gas meter in the glow, which becomes the key piece of information allowing White and the Turkish police to set their ambush.[104]

By 1959, as the story was told and retold, the Turks (both traffickers and police) become mere background players, as White is literally moved to the foreground. In Phelan's account in *True*, the moment when White reads the gas meter in the glow of a lit cigarette is similarly dramatic—one of only two illustrations in the article. This time, White lights his own cigarette, a heroic figure illuminated against the gloom in which the foreign traffickers lurk. Phelan painted a stark dichotomy between White and the Istanbul traffickers, right down to their physical descriptions. White was the "powerful" human "beer keg," while the Turkish traffickers were characterized by a "weak chin" and "ferret" face, speaking in "a flat metallic voice" or aping the style of a "young American hustler."[105] Accounts in Derek Agnew's *Undercover Agent—Narcotics* and Sondern's *Brotherhood of Evil*, both published in 1959, focused solely

[103] White, report dated June 10, 1948 in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[104] "The Silent Man," in Folder "(1690-8) Publicity, Radio, 1949 thru June 1951, #4," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

[105] Phelan, "The Calculating Colonel and the Turkish Trap," *True: the Man's Magazine*, January 1960, Folder 7, Box 1, White Papers.

on White's heroic attributes.[106] These retellings depict a battle of wits, pitting the valiant agent against the villainous drug traffickers, and the American is clearly the superior combatant. "The Silent Man" deliberately turned Bob's own pretenses at an American lifestyle against him as an actual "red blooded American boy," as White described himself, went abroad to fight the trafficking networks that threatened the United States.

True-crime literature was an important outlet for the Bureau's message and the FBN furnished crime writers with a wealth of material and reliably lurid storylines. Although it is tempting to dismiss the influence of such "middlebrow" literature on the wider populace, stories about drug investigations clearly had (and continue to have) a perverse appeal and often adhered to familiar plots and archetypes, all of which reinforced a basic American identity as a force of moral good in a troubled world. Ambiguities abound in the real world of drug addiction and control: is addiction a disease or a vice? Should counternarcotics strategy focus on supply or demand? Are traffickers resourceful antiheroes, operating at the margins of an economic system closed to them (an increasingly popular trope) or are they predatory criminals, exploiting the weaknesses of their fellow man? The great virtue of the true-crime genre, as far as the Bureau was concerned, was that its stories cut through these intractable questions and distilled real-life cases and events into an easily absorbed narrative of black and white, good versus evil.

And the villains in these tales were unmistakably evil. Anslinger often noted that drug traffickers were among "the most ingenious and ruthless type of criminal in the underworld." Narratives of their wrongdoings were often peppered with fanciful descriptions of their most telling physical features. In *The Elk Magazine*, a regular FBN outlet, smugglers appear as "a moldy, unsightly part of the fabric of America." Addicts, or "dopesters," in the familiar addiction-as-slavery meme were "people without souls" and "creatures of a dominating force." In the pages of *Reader's Digest*, *Special Detective Cases* and *True: The Man's Magazine*, addicts were almost completely dehumanized as "just a human pincushion with an infinite capacity for agony" or "monstrous beings seen fleetingly in a nightmare." Dealers were invariably described by their most unflattering physical features, identified by "a slick black mustache and beady black eyes," or as "a slick-haired, shifty-eyed gigolo." One Chinese dealer was described

[106] Agnew, *Undercover Agent—Narcotics*, 94-6; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 124-6.

eccentrically as "a grotesque figure . . . unusually husky and tall for a Chinese and his height was topped by a high, white chef's cap that almost brushed the ceiling."[107]

In an effort to further marginalize drug trafficking, agents and journalists repeatedly claimed that traffickers and peddlers were held in contempt even by other criminals. In Kansas City, District Supervisor TJ Walker told radio listeners, "Certainly there is no lower criminal than one who destroys human beings in order to make profit." In *Treasury Agent: The Inside Story* (1958), journalist Andrew Tully similarly asserted, "The dope shover and the kidnaper are regarded even in the underworld with loathing and contempt." Fellow journalist Phelan agreed, "Narcotics is a rough business and rates in the underworld with murder and kidnapping." But this led to an odd disconnect when discussing the high-ranking mob figures who organized the traffic and were often referred to with titles like lord, czar, tycoon, baron, king and prime minster. Drug traffickers were thus beyond the limits of respectability even for the criminal milieu, but were also given an unsavory aristocratic air.[108]

True-crime stories ultimately functioned to resolve popular antipathy toward the undercover tactics required of drug enforcement, and highlighting the dangerous nature of the job was a reliable way to cultivate sympathy. Agents John Van Treel and Anker Bangs both lost their lives in the line of duty, becoming two of the first martyrs of drug control, in much the same way that DEA Agent "Kiki" Camarena's kidnapping and murder at the hands of the Guadalajara cartel built support for Reagan's drug war in the 1980s.[109] Anslinger frequently invoked the deaths of Agents Bangs and Van Treel to

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[107] Quotes taken from: Boyden Sparkes, "The Cruelest Business in the World: Narcotic Drug Smuggling, and the Relentless Warfare Against It," *The Elks Magazine*, December 1930; Georges Corbot, "Elusive Diplomat and the King of Crime," *True Detective*, October 1940; Thomas Dickson, "Glamour Girl Wrecks Reno's Dope Ring," *Special Detective Cases*, August 1941; James Monahan, "Japanese Pipe Dream," *The Elks Magazine*, May 1942; Harry J. Anslinger, "The Facts about Our Teen-Age Drug Addicts," *Reader's Digest*, October 1951; Pierre LaFitte and James Phelan, "'Horse" of Another Color," *True: The Man's Magazine*, March 1957. These articles can be found in Folders 1, 9 and 10, Box 7, and Folder 4, 17 and 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. See also Herbert Brean, "A Short - and Horrible - Life," *Reader's Digest*, September 1951.

[108] "Crime is a Losing Game," program aired on Kansas City station KCMO, April 18, 1949, in Folder "(1690-8) Publicity #4, Radio, 1949 thru June 1951," Box 69, RG 170, NARA; Andrew Tully, *Treasury Agent: The Inside Story* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958), 133; Laffite and Phelan, Tight Trap for a Top Dealer," *True: The Men's Magazine*, June 1957, Folder 17, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[109] See William R. Doerner and Elaine Shannon, "Latin America Flames of Anger," *Time*, January 18, 1988, Vol. 131, No. 3. The November 7, 1988 issue ran a portrait of Camarena over the headline "Death of a Narc." See also Peter Dale Scott and Jonathan Marshall, *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies, and the CIA in Central America* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1991), 37-42.

illustrate the risks faced by FBN agents as they served their country. Bangs was killed during a routine search, while Van Treel literally worked himself to death during a grueling investigation that was spun into a tragic saga, retold in a five-part series in *Official Detective Magazine*, and under Anslinger's by-line in both *The Murderers* and a 1952 story in *SAGA: True Adventures for Men*. Van Treel "served and died for neither gold nor glory," the Commissioner wrote, "but for humanity."[110]

Practiced by honorable heroes against obvious villains, the extraordinary and duplicitous tactics characteristic of bold undercover work seemed justified. If the threat was great and the agent righteous, the ends justified the means—allowing men like George White or John Van Treel to step outside of the very belief systems they worked to uphold. The use of underhanded tactics, or, as White catalogued them, the need to "lie, kill and cheat, steal, deceive, rape and pillage" was defensible when deployed against a mortal threat to American values. In this context—the "vineyards"—these traits became heroic. In the course of their investigations, the agents were often required to physically merge themselves with the criminal underworld, making it difficult but all the more important for the public consuming these tales to maintain a sharp distinction between the heroes and villains, even as the reality of undercover work undermined this critical dividing line.

One of the greatest ironies of White's career was that despite his true-crime action hero status, his frequent attempts to tell his own story were repeatedly stymied. While still only a rookie in 1935, White sought permission to publish an article describing the work and philosophy of Treasury agents, but Anslinger shot him down with the explanation that it was "against the policy of the Treasury Department" for agents to write about their work.[111] Even before departing Europe during his 1948 tour, White was already talking to a reporter from *Time* and *Life* about a story. Once again, the Old Man put his foot down. "Such publicity usually backfires and headquarters gets burned whereas the field, which is responsible, escapes criticism," Anslinger wrote. "In any event," he continued, "Time and Life are off our list. Life made an unholy mess out of a story several years ago, and we do not intend to allow these

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[110] Anslinger wrote about both men (with Oursler) in *The Murderers*, 166-167, 201-6. See also Henry Jordan, "Crushing the Empire of the Living Dead" (Parts II, III, and V), *Official Detective Stories*, March, April and June 1948, in Folder 9, Box 12, and Harry J. Anslinger, "Walk with Death," *SAGA, True Adventures for Men*, August 1952, in Folder 11, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[111] Letter from White to Anslinger dated January 1, 1935 (enclosing article) and letter from Anslinger to White dated January 6, 1936, in Folder "(1690-9, Folder #1), Publicity, Press, 1927 thru 1946," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

people to double-cross the Bureau again."[112] Eventually White learned his lesson. In 1958, he was asked to comment on a lengthy history of the FBI appearing in *The Nation*. Expounding on the deficiencies of Hoover's Bureau was one of White's favorite pastimes, but he wisely demurred, knowing that his comments would "promote bad relations between two Government Agencies which have always had divergent opinions as the respective merits of the other."[113]

In 1961, Dean Jennings of the *Saturday Evening Post* offered White $10,000 to co-write a three-part series on his life and career and assured him, "this would not only boost the Bureau, but would really show how the Bureau fights the narcotic traffic against all sorts of odds, including a low budget and an insufficient number of agents. Surely Anslinger could not protest that kind of presentation." This time White included a personal plea in his request to the Commissioner. A few years earlier, the hard-drinking agent was diagnosed with cirrhosis, and, as he told Anslinger, "For whatever its worth, I badly need the money, having been stuck for about $5,000 in medical bills in the past nine months." Moved by his old friend's financial straits, Anslinger agreed to seek a ruling from both the Treasury Department and White House. Although Kennedy's press secretary, Pierre Salinger, signed off on the series, Treasury balked on the grounds that law enforcement officers should not write about their experiences while on active duty.[114] Anslinger, of course, was a rather prominent exception and often wrote about his work at the FBN and United Nations. Both *The Traffic in Narcotics* (1953) and *The Murderers* (1961) were written while the Commissioner was still on the clock, though he too faced rejection when publisher Thomas

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[112] In a report dated July 8, 1948, White mentions discussing a proposed article with *Time* and *Life* correspondent Robert Low. Anslinger firmly denied White permission in a reply dated July 13, 1948. See Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA and Folder 9, Box 1, White Papers.

[113] Letter from White to Carey McWilliams (Editor, *The Nation*), dated October 16, 1958, in Folder 16, Box 3, White Papers.

[114] Letter from Dean Jennings to White dated February 27, 1961, in Folder 7, Box 3, White Papers. See also William J. Stevens, Jr. (Asst. Managing Editor, *Saturday Evening Post*) to White, March 23, 1961; White to Anslinger, March 28, 1961 and April 18, 1961; Anslinger to A. Gilmore Flues (Asst. Sec. Treasury) and Dixon Donnelly (Assistant for Public Affairs), April 4, 1961; Anslinger to Donnelly, April 25, 1961; Anslinger to White, May 15, 1961, in Folder "(1690-10) Saturday Evening Post," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

Crowell passed on *The Murderers.*[115] The rules were different for the Commissioner and, for the time being, White's story had to wait.

In 1965, George White—OSS Colonel, San Francisco District Supervisor, CIA adjunct and true-crime action hero—finally hung up the badge. Anslinger, a few years into his own retirement, sent his congratulations and wrote, "...at last, you are going to write a book." He warned him, however, that his latest endeavor, *The Protectors* (1964), "got nowhere, in fact, I am out pocket."[116] White was undeterred. After moving to Stinson Beach, a small coastal community just north of San Francisco, he immediately set to work on an autobiography titled *A Diet of Danger*, only to find that his moment had seemingly passed. As White and a series of ghostwriters tried to attract a publisher, they found the market for true-crime detective stories and the fight against the dope menace had evidently played itself out. Anslinger tried to build support for his friend at Farrar and Straus (publisher of *The Murderers* and *The Protectors*), but was told, "One way or another, there seem to be a lot of books on the market or about to appear on the market on narcotics, police work, Synaon and all the rest of it, and we do not feel we could do justice to ourselves or to Colonel White." One prospective ghostwriter reported a similar reaction from his editors: "the whole narcotics subject is just too negative. I'm afraid that the festering nature of the subject will turn people off. Why pay six or seven dollars to be reminded of a horrible social problem?"[117]

That must have been a particularly bitter pill to swallow as the years between 1960 and 1975 witnessed a proliferation of agent-memoirs, including Anslinger's *The Murderers* and *The Protectors*. Books by other former agents followed, including White's one-time protégé Charles Siragusa (*The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia*, 1966), a second edition of Malachi Harney's (*The Informer in Law Enforcement*, 1968, orig. 1960), James Mulgannon, an agent who served under White in the San Francisco office (*Uncertain Glory*, 1972), as well as Sal Vizzini (*Vizzini: The Secret Lives of America's Most Successful Undercover Agent*, 1972) and Jack Kelly (*On the Street*, 1974). White was treated well in all of these accounts, but his resentment at being excluded one last time didn't fester for long.

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[115] See Anslinger to William Poole (Thomas Crowell Co.), January 6, 1958, in Folder 9, and Robert Crowell (Thomas Y. Crowell Company, Publisher) to Anslinger, July 21, 1959, in Folder 8, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[116] Anslinger to White, April 14, 1965, in Folder 8, Box 3, White Papers.

[117] John Peck (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, Inc.) to Anslinger, October 11, 1965; and Eugene Block to George White, November 11, 1971, in Folder 11, Box 3, White Papers.

On October 25, 1975, George White passed away in a San Francisco hospital at the age of 67. His unfinished memoir and many personal papers were donated by his widow to the Foothills College Museum in Los Altos, California and now reside at Stanford University. White died before news of the CIA's MK-ULTRA program broke, but he probably would have reveled in the attention as reporters from all over the nation rushed to pore over his papers. In the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, White was a unique figure and the energetic and authentic voice on display in his many reports, correspondences and writings suggests *Diet of Danger* would have been an entertaining and insightful read.

A Red-Blooded American Boy

George White was more interesting that either his "rock 'em, sock 'em" cop or maniacal CIA conspirator image. As an influential figure within the Bureau of Narcotics, White was a clear product of his time and place and served as an exemplar of the Bureau's undercover ethos. Above all, however, White embodies the trade-offs that were deemed necessary and appropriate in the worlds of drug control, counterintelligence and national security. His career perfectly demonstrates the need to create a context in which the ambiguities of both drug use and espionage can be resolved and understood.

The extensive use of undercover practices and covert operations—both at home and abroad—risked aggravating conflicted Americans attitudes toward spies, detectives and a national police force. In the early decades of the twentieth century, such practices smacked of European authoritarianism and seemed distinctly un-American. As the twentieth century progressed, however, attitudes shifted and the fear of a tyrannical state was transferred to the fear of external enemies and crime. Where Americans had once sought protection *from* the government, they began to seek the protection *of* the government. Yet ambivalent attitudes toward duplicitous law enforcement methods lingered, particularly around vices like narcotics, where agents were forced to resort to tactics more common to espionage than law enforcement. Split between his work for the FBN and CIA, for example, White suppressed illicit drugs by day and experimented with them by night. Exerting control over public accounts of counternarcotics work became an important way of managing public sentiment and expectations.

The central role of undercover work also had an effect on the Bureau itself. A few agents came to realize there was a catch to such a life—personally, professionally and within the bureaucracy. As veteran Agent Martin Pera later reflected, most agents "thought they could check their morality at the

door—go out and lie, cheat, and steal—then come back and retrieve it. But you can't." Over time, and led by agents like White, the ends-justifies-the-means mindset of the undercover ethos penetrated deeply into the actual bureaucracy. "If you're successful because you lie, cheat, and steal," Pera continued, "those things become tools you use in the bureaucracy. You're talking about guys whose lives depended on their ability to be devious and who become very good at it. So these people become the bosses, and undercover work became the credo..."[118] Even Anslinger, who tried so hard to project a world in images of black and white, would occasionally admit that drug control fell into a gray area, and wrote, "the truth is that we are all characters, with a certain measure of duplicity in us, whichever side of the governmental fence we may be on."[119] White was well-regarded by his fellow agents because, as Howard Chappell remarked, he "never crawled over another Agent to make himself look better."[120] But his career—particularly his involvement in the MK-ULTRA program—demonstrates that there was a price to pay for privileging the kind of undercover work and compromises he exemplified. While entertaining, White's career should also remind us of Friedrich Nietzsche's warning: "Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look long into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you."[121]

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[118] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 61.

[119] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 282.

[120] Letter from Howard Chappell to Douglas Valentine, dated December 20, 1995. Folder "Chappell, Howard", Box 2, Valentine Collection.

[121] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), Epigram 146.

CHAPTER 5. CONSTRUCTING A KINGPIN: LUCKY LUCIANO AND THE BUREAU OF NARCOTICS

It was a cold and overcast Sunday in February 1946 when mob-boss Charles "Lucky" Luciano was deported. Waiting for him at the Brooklyn pier was a run-down old Liberty ship called the S.S. *Laura Keene*. Once it delivered Lend-Lease supplies to war-torn Europe; now it prepared to return New York's most famous gangster to his native Italy. There were different versions of the scene at the docks. Frederic Sondern, unofficially representing the FBN, described a "phalanx" of federal immigration agents and "burly longshoremen" who separated Luciano from the press as he was escorted aboard the ship. Sid Feder and Joachim Joesten, sensationalist muckrakers both, complained that U.S. sovereignty and First Amendment rights were abridged by the by the army of stevedores who denied them the dock. All three bemoaned the lavish "champagne-and-lobster" party held on board with Manhattan's most prominent gangsters in attendance. But that was all written after the fact. The *New York Times* was actually on-scene and indicated a rather more low-key affair. The reporter acknowledged that a "farewell spaghetti dinner" was held the night before but confirmed only the presence of mobster Albert Anastasia. "Except for dock hands and a few newspaper men the pier was deserted as the Liberty ship sailed," the *Times* reported. "Neither [Frank] Costello nor any of Luciano's ex-henchmen were at the dock to bid him farewell, and Luciano stayed in his cabin until the immigration men left."[1]

In fairness, it *was* a peculiar situation. The image of Luciano, out of prison stripes and back in tailed silks but with only a cargo of flour for company, is a vivid one. More curious, however, were the legal circumstances of his departure. One month earlier, Governor Tom Dewey announced that after serving ten of a thirty-to-fifty year sentence for compulsory prostitution, "Lucky" Luciano's remaining sentence was commuted pending his deportation to Italy. Still the plot thickened: it was Dewey who put Lucky behind bars in the first place, but, as he explained, upon U.S. entry into World War II, "Luciano's aid was sought by the armed services in inducing others to provide information concerning possible enemy attack. It appears that he cooperated in such effort though the actual value of the information

[1] Frederic Sondern Jr., *Brotherhood of Evil: The Mafia* (New York: Manor Books, Inc, 1959), 100–101; Sondern, "Lucky Luciano's New Empire," *Reader's Digest*, September 1951; Sid Feder and Joachim Joesten, *The Luciano Story*, 2nd ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1954, 1994), 224–229; "Luciano Taken On Ship," *New York Times*, February 10, 1946, p. 12; "Pardoned Luciano on His Way to Italy," *New York Times*, February 11, 1946, p. 26.

procured is not clear."[2] The ambiguous nature of Luciano's wartime assistance hung like a pall over both Dewey and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics for years to come.

Luciano's pardon was a particularly thorny issue for the FBN, where Anslinger and company pegged the Mafia chieftain as the kingpin of the New York City vice trade and therefore a central figure in the heroin traffic. Although the war had temporarily closed international smuggling routes, FBN officials feared the Atlantic heroin trade would soon return with Luciano on the loose. The Bureau almost certainly exaggerated his central role in the drug traffic over the years, but the terms of Luciano's parole presented a major challenge to the FBN narrative. Luciano and his fellow *mafiosi* were frequent antagonists in the discourse of the dope menace. Now Lucky was not only a free man—he was presented in some quarters as a potential hero. This would not do.

The Bureau's focus on the Mafia and organized crime was a major influence on the future of the agency and popular perceptions of the mob. In *American Mafia: A History of Its Rise to Power* (2004), Thomas Reppetto notes, "the rise of the American Mafia is more than just a crime story. It is a window into American society illustrating the workings of political, governmental, bureaucratic, and economic forces."[3] One of the most important—and overlooked—forces in that story was the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Anslinger, as with most of his public positions, was unequivocal: the Mafia was a threat to America. "I believe that the organized syndicate in America, with its strong Mafia influence, presents an immediate and present danger to our society," he stated in *The Murderers* (1961). Convinced that organized crime was a central component of the drug trade, the Bureau spent considerable time and energy investigating the Mafia at a time when it was ignored by other law enforcement agencies. "We revealed the existence of [the] Mafia when many officials insisted that the organization, its rituals and rules and punishments, were largely myths," the Commissioner proudly claimed.[4] Unacknowledged is the extent to which the Bureau helped create a countervailing mythology of the Mafia as an all-powerful agency of crime.

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[2] "Dewey Commutes Luciano Sentence," *New York Times*, January 4, 1946, p. 26.

[3] Thomas A. Reppetto, *American Mafia: A History of Its Rise to Power* (New York: Henry Holt Company, 2004), xiii.

[4] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 295, 79.

At the center of that gestalt was Charles "Lucky" Luciano, who for much of his life served as a critical foil against which the Bureau defined itself and used to highlight the role of organized crime in the international drug trade. This chapter analyzes portrayals of the Mafia to show how the FBN constructed a unique "intermestic" security threat that furthered its bureaucratic agenda and helped build support for aggressive drug control measures at home and abroad.

The Syndicate

The Bureau's focus on the Mafia began in the 1930s and reached its apogee in the 1950s. Although FBN officials and affiliated crime writers shifted their emphasis from case to case, there was a pronounced overall tendency to portray the Mafia as a tightly unified, monolithic block—an idea neatly captured in one of the Bureau's favorite appellations: "the syndicate." The term "Mafia" was used with little differentiation. What agents and officials usually meant was the *American* Mafia—a collection of Italian-American crime "families" organized along a rigid hierarchy with a few powerful leaders at the top who settled disputes and made governing decisions on behalf of the entire organization. It's an image now familiar from countless Hollywood movies. But the Bureau also used the term to refer to the *Italian* or uniquely *Sicilian* Mafia.[5] This was mostly a product of the FBN's attention to the international aspects of the drug trade, but it also had the benefit of stressing the Mafia's foreign nature. If the agents conflated the two, so be it; a unified and undifferentiated enemy was more dangerous. "The hard truth is that such an organization does exist," George White told a friend preparing to join President Eisenhower's Justice Department. "It doesn't matter if we call it Mafia, Unione Siciliano, Camorra, Black Hand, the Syndicate, The Organization, The Mob . . . Personally, I like the name 'Mafia,'" White explained, because the term was "sufficiently descriptive and dramatic so that an advantage is gained thru such characterization."[6]

In the course its many public presentations, the Bureau helped create a "mythic" history of the Mafia and categorized organized crime as a threat to national security. Sympathetic journalists and crime writers were once again critical to this endeavor. The Mafia was attractive stuff to the ink-stained wretches; drugs and organized crime made good copy and the Bureau had a unique angle. Although

[5] In *American Mafia*, Reppetto argues the term *Mafia* is "misleading" because it "places too much emphasis on foreign organizations and alien conspiracies. A more accurate label is 'American Mafia,' which conveys the reality that Italian-dominated gangs arose primarily out of socioeconomic conditions in this country and often worked in partnership with mobsters from other ethnic backgrounds." (x).

[6] George White to Warren Olney III, November 24, 1952, in Folder 16, Box 1, White Papers.

many of the FBN's official dossiers and records on individual mob figures were destroyed or remain classified, the material produced in partnership with a number of true-crime writers offers important insights into the Bureau's official views.

A number of important themes emerge from this quasi-official discourse. One of the most apparent is the vivid and malevolent imagery used to describe the Mafia. As with most groups associated with drug trafficking, the Bureau stressed the Mafia's essentially evil nature. Anslinger called it a "monstrous organization."[7] Agent Charles Siragusa called the organization a "black-hearted brotherhood" and "a creature of more than 200 years."[8] The Bureau's pet journalists reliably echoed these sentiments while citing FBN records. For Sondern, the Mafia was the eponymous "Brotherhood of Evil" and Luciano was that evil's literal "personification." To J.A. Buckwalter, the Mafia were "merchants of misery." Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ed Reid of the *Brooklyn Eagle* was even more demonstrative. George White judged his 1952 book *Mafia* (revised in 1954 to avoid a libel suit) "extremely interesting and authentic." Reid called the organization a "monster," a "vampire," a "parasite," and just plain "evil." He was especially enamored of the octopus metaphor commonly used to describe both organized crime and the drug traffic, and he referred to the Mafia as the "dollar-studded octopus" and "the brain of a system of tentacles stretching around the world."[9] More plainly, Herbert Brean of *Life* magazine described the Mafia as "the most extensive, most effective criminal agency in the Western world."[10]

Much was also written about the Mafia's relentlessly subversive worldview and the organization variously was described as a way of life, a criminal philosophy or even a religion. Anslinger tended to portray the Mafia's "peculiar Sicilian mentalities, characters, personal habits and lives" as determinative. Sondern ultimately concluded that it was a philosophy, secret society and criminal caste all rolled into

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[7] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 214.

[8] Charles Siragusa and Robert Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), ix, x, 43.

[9] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil,* Chapter 7; J.A. Buckwalter, *Merchants of Misery* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1961), 87; Ed Reid, *Mafia* (New York, NY: Signet, 1954), 25, 38, 44–45, 60. See also Letter from George White to John Arrington (*San Francisco Daily News*), dated November 10, 1953, in Folder 14, Box 3, White Papers.

[10] Herbert Brean, "Men of Mafia's Infamous Web," *Life*, February 1, 1960, in Folder 7, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

one.[11] Tom Tripodi, a veteran of the FBN and CIA, thought "*una mentálita* [sic]" best described the Mafia: a mindset "that supersedes legalities, family, taboos, and traditional morality."[12] At *Life*, Brean similarly explained that it was "principally a way of life shared by groups of lawbreakers." Ed Reid suggested the Mafia should really be considered "the religion of the criminal classes," with Luciano its "god" or "High Priest." In the gossipy *Confidential* series, Hearst reporters Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer described the Mafia as a "terroristic secret society" and "giant conspiracy."[13] The line running through each of these interpretations was that the Mafia possessed an alien and deviant worldview that was inimical to American society.

Agents and crime writers often looked to the Mafia's purported origins for insights into its nature and to play up its ancient and barbaric past. Many accounts began with European feudalism and Sicilian opposition to foreign occupiers. During French Bourbon rule over Sicily, "*Morte alla Francia Italia anela!*" (Death to the French is Italy's cry!) reportedly became the battle cry of the embryonic Mafia movement; the word "Mafia" was supposed to be an acronym for this slogan.[14] Modern scholarship, however, contends this is almost certainly apocryphal as Sicilians of that era would not have thought of themselves as Italians or even spoken in the reported dialect.[15] According to this folk history, the *mafiosi*, hardened by their insurgency against foreign rule, turned to crime to support themselves. By the dawn of the twentieth century, they were preying on their neighbors and running protection rackets throughout the Sicilian countryside.

Like many Italians, the mythic history continues, the *mafiosi* looked to the West and were among their approximately four million countrymen who emigrated to the United States between 1880 and 1920. Once in the U.S., these bandits continued to prey upon their fellows as the "Black Hand." Most narratives

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[11] Anslinger and Sondern are quoted in Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, xii, 56

[12] Tom Tripodi and Joseph P. DeSario, *Crusade: Undercover Against the Mafia and KGB* (Washington, New York and London: Brassey's, 1993), 265. Tripodi's Italian is a little off; the phrase should be rendered "*una mentalità*."

[13] Brean, "Men of Mafia's Infamous Web," *Life*, February 1, 1960, in Folder 7, Box 12, Anslinger Papers; Reid, *Mafia*, 38, 50; Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, *U.S.A. Confidential* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1952), 10, 12.

[14] Sondern assured his readers this is "a historical fact." *Brotherhood of* Evil, xi, 53-4; Reid, *Mafia*, 25.

[15] "In America," Reppetto notes, "the Mafia would sometimes be portrayed as an ancient organization. This, too, was essentially a myth." Reppetto, *American Mafia*, 4.

paused at the site of a particularly gruesome murder or the death of innocents.[16] Siragusa even tried to track down the killers of NYPD detective Joseph Petrosino, who was famously murdered in 1909 while investigating Mafia activity in Palermo.[17] It was this larvae-stage of the Mafia that Anslinger claimed to encounter while working for the Pennsylvania Railroad, when Italian members of his crew were roughed up and shaken down for protection money.[18] In *Washington Confidential* (1951), Lait and Mortimer described this as a period in which the Mafia "colonized" the U.S. and the Black Hand evolved into the Mafia. All over the country, Reid elaborated in *Mafia*, the "Mafioso [sic] unfurled their black flag over one city after another." In the mythic history, there is an unbroken line from the decentralized terrorism of the Black Hand to the organized crime of the Mafia.[19]

Interestingly, given the context of drug control, most of these origin stories acknowledged that Prohibition provided the stimulus to put the "organized" into crime. A popular view, endorsed by the Bureau and many others, was that the suddenly illicit demands of the American public created widespread criminality as consumers turned from saloonkeepers to bootleggers to slake their thirst. Most of the gangs that formed around the illicit liquor trade were naturally organized by family and neighborhood. As profits grew, so did competition between gangs. Out of this tumult, the Mafia emerged triumphant as the nation's most powerful and threatening criminal organization. "As the smaller mobs destroyed each other," Anslinger wrote, "the shadow of one grew larger with each new 'execution.' This was the Grand Council of the Mafia, with its plan of an international cartel controlling every phase of

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[16] The murders of New Orleans police chief David Hennesy (1890) and NYPD Lt. Joseph Petrosino (1909) are frequently cited as evidence of the Mafia's longevity and violence, as is the 1943 murder of Carlo Tresca, a prolific labor organizer and critic of Italian fascism who was allegedly gunned down on the order of Vito Genevose to curry favor with Benito Mussolini. In his memoir, Agent Siragusa wrote about the *lupara*, a sawed-off shotgun that fired a specially-designed garlic-rubbed triangular buckshot that caused terrible wounds and blood poisoning. "*Lupara* is a lousy way to die," Siragusa wrote, and was "developed by evil minds over the more than 200 years that the *Mafiosi* have been slaughtering their way to vast riches." See Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 58–9, 61–4; Reid, *Mafia*, 70–72, 101–102, 118–131; Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 34.

[17] In a memo dated April 6, 1956, Siragusa reported that he had identified one of the probable killers (aged 76) and was gathering evidence, but the case never developed. In Folder "(1825-7) Reports Progress Dist #17, 1951-1957 (1 of 2)," Box 83, RG 170, NARA.

[18] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 9–10.

[19] In *Washington Confidential* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1951), Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer contend the Black Hand and Mafia are, in fact, "the same thing." (p. 220). See also Reid, *Mafia*, 9–23, 17; and *Brotherhood of Evil*, in which Sondern wrote, "The story of organized crime in the United States from Luciano through the Apalachin meeting up to this writing indicates that the brotherhood has not deviated from its essential principles by a degree." (p. 105).

criminal activity."[20] At the head of this Grand Council, was one man purported to control nearly all organized crime in America: Charles "Lucky" Luciano.

By all accounts, Luciano's rise to power was fast. Born on the island of Sicily in November 1897 (the date is variously reported as the 11th or 24th), young Salvatore Lucania emigrated to the United States with his family in 1907 and settled into the large immigrant community of Manhattan. Lucania disdained honest work and proclaimed throughout his life, "I never was a crumb, and if I have to be a crumb I'd rather be dead." Carrying out capers with petty street gangs, an adolescent Lucania displayed a knack for criminality and apprenticed with two important organized crime figures: Arnold Rothstein and Joe "The Boss" Masseria. As a young man, Salvatore Lucania took to calling himself Charlie Luciano—he apparently felt his nickname "Sally" was too effeminate. Though he always said it was because of his luck with the dice, Luciano earned the moniker "Lucky" following an October 1929 incident in which he was kidnapped from the streets of Manhattan and found beaten, bloodied and left for dead on Staten Island. Some writers speculated that he was worked over by an NYPD detective, aggrieved at the gangster's unwelcome advances on his daughter; some credited police looking for Luciano's associate, the hijacker "Legs" Diamond. Others insisted it was a warning from rival drug dealers. In any case, the stories agree, he was beaten within an inch of his life and "lucky" to survive—making it a nickname his associates used only with great care.[21]

It was around this time that Luciano came to the attention of federal agents. In 1923, he was arrested for selling morphine to undercover agents from the narcotics division of the Prohibition Unit (still under the umbrella of the Internal Revenue Service). This was Luciano's second narcotics violation, so he led the officers to a large cache of heroin in order to avoid prosecution. Whether the drugs actually belonged to him or a rival is unclear. Luciano always maintained he was no "stool pigeon," but Anslinger claimed the Prohis used him as an informant for several years. Providing further testimony to the Faustian nature of the bargain struck with criminal informants, Anslinger continued, "one by one his

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[20] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 7.

[21] This general account of Luciano's early life is drawn from a number of sources, including the following: Will Oursler and Laurence Dwight Smith, *Narcotics: America's Peril* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1952), 151–159; Joachim Joesten, *Dope, Inc.* (New York, NY: Avon Publications, Inc., 1953), 80–92; Feder and Joesten, *The Luciano Story*; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 100–122; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 100–109; Tim Newark, *Lucky Luciano: The Real and Fake Gangster* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2010).

competitors were sent away and Lucky improved his own position. Thus unwittingly the American government helped Lucky rise to power."[22]

Luciano and his cohort of younger gangsters supposedly had grand aspirations and realized that internecine violence hurt everyone's bottom line. The subsequent establishment of "the Commission" and purge of the old-world "Mustache Petes" was usually depicted as a kind of Americanization or modernization of the Mafia, a time when the mob shook off its limited ambitions and European-born leadership. The Castellammare War (1929-1931) began as a conflict between rival gangs led by Masseria and Salvatore Marazano (formerly of Castellammare del Golfo, Sicily). According to underworld legend and many FBN accounts, Luciano's clique of "Americanized" gangsters orchestrated the deaths of upper echelon leaders in both gangs. This cleared a path to the more cooperative style of management characterized by the "Commission" or "Grand Council," where the bosses could settle disputes and allocate territory without recourse to violence. Journalist Joachim Joesten portrayed this as a "purge in the grand manner" and compared it to the Nazis' "Night of the Long Knives." It was a poor metaphor but effectively lumped Luciano in with Hitler. Anslinger likewise emphasized the violence of the Castellammare War as characteristic of "Lucky's bespattered path to power."[23]

As head of the most successful Manhattan gang and the creator of the Commission, Luciano became the most powerful gangster in the city—the *capo di tutti capi* or boss-of-bosses—and thereupon laid claim to a veritable kingdom of crime, presided over from a suite at the Waldorf-Astoria. "No single racket was conducted without his approval," Anslinger wrote. "Name it; Lucky controlled it." In these accounts, Luciano emerges as a modernizer in the style of a CEO as often as a monarch and injected new cohesion into the New York's vice rackets.[24] This seemed to be how Luciano, too, liked to think of himself. "We're big business, is all," he reportedly told undercover FBN Agent Sal Vizzini. Although his

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[22] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 102; Feder and Joesten, *The Luciano Story*, 57–59. Anslinger was free with his criticism since this took place before the creation of the FBN. Luciano also admitted to his earlier arrests while under cross examination by Dewey during his 1936 compulsory prostitution trial. See "Lucania is Forced to Admit Crimes," *New York Times*, June 4, 1936, p. 1.

[23] Joesten, *Dope, Inc.*, 81; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 102.

[24] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 74. Lait and Mortimer claimed the Mafia "controls practically all crime in the United States." *U.S.A. Confidential*, 15. Ed Reid argued the Mafia was "the principal fount of crime in the world, controlling vice, gambling, the smuggling and sale of dope, and other sources of evil." Following Luciano's deportation, Reid ranked him at number 11 in the Mafia's global hierarchy. Reid, *Mafia*, 24, 47.

1936 conviction tumbled him from this lofty height, according to the authors of the 1952 book *Narcotics: America's Peril*, Luciano repeated this process of modernization upon reaching his Italian exile, where he "reorganized Mafia gangsters into the most powerful and far-reaching international drug syndicate in the history of this traffic." Sondern likewise insisted that Luciano was a "modern mafioso" who even updated the Mafia look by trading "wide-brimmed fedoras and odd overcoats" for "quietly elegant" suits.[25]

The Mafia's success was usually attributed to its ethnic cohesion, recourse to violence, and political protection purchased with the proceeds of the gambling and narcotics rackets. These claims came from both the streets and the agents. As Al, a former New York opium addict, recalled in David Courtwright's *Addicts Who Survived* (1989), the Mafia became so formidable that its members could "make a phone call to any part of the country . . . and have something done in a minute. That's how powerful they are, one to another. It's all one clannish gang, like. All one."[26] Anslinger, too, was sincere in his belief that the Mafia represented a genuine threat. As he wrote to Edward J. Allen, a California police chief and the author of *Merchants of Menace, The Mafia: A Study of Organized Crime* (1962), "Along with Communism, these traffickers in evil are a threat to the welfare of our beloved country."[27]

While the threat of violence and a reach lengthened by familial ties helped the Mafia lay claim to the underworld, corruption and political influence powered by control of the Italian vote and illicit profits allowed it to function within American society. In *Washington Confidential*, Lait and Mortimer claimed the Mafia "are the true subversives" and "succeeded in doing that which the Communists failed to do; they infiltrated and took over the government." Even if he wasn't their source, Anslinger concurred and warned in official writings that "members of this clandestine cosmos have controlled whole communities and cities, police departments and mayors, judges and district attorneys and juries." Luciano's own

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[25] Luciano is quoted in Sal Vizzini, Oscar Fraley, and Marshall Smith, *Vizzini: The Secret Lives of America's Most Successful Undercover Agent* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1972), 153. Meyer Lansky is now widely seen as the real brains behind Luciano's success and also saw the Mafia as a business enterprise. "Don't worry," he reportedly counseled his colleagues, "Look at the Astors and Vanderbilts, all those big society people. They were the worst thieves—and now look at them. It's just a matter of time." Quoted in Reppetto, *American Mafia*, 158. See also Oursler and Smith, *Narcotics: America's Peril*, 23–4; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 102, 105–107.

[26] David Courtwright, Herman Joseph, and Don Des Jarlais, eds., *Addicts Who Survived: An Oral History of Narcotic Use in America, 1923-1965* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 99.

[27] Letter from Anslinger to Edward J. Allen (Chief of Police, Santa Ana, CA), dated October 23, 1962, in Folder 4, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

connections reportedly extended "to Tammany Hall, City Hall, the state government at Albany and into the nation's capital itself."[28] In other words, it was not just ethnic unity and brutality but the venality of the political system that allowed the Mafia to maintain control over the underworld and organize the narcotics traffic. Yet aside from rogue agents like George White, most FBN officials realized that it was career suicide to attack the political establishment, which reinforced their insistence that source control was the only solution to the drug trade.

Historians of the Mafia tend to pay little attention to the specific issue of drug trafficking, perhaps due to the lack of firm documentation. Reppetto sums up a consensus view: "Narcotics were both a threat and an opportunity for the mob."[29] Many crime families eagerly embraced the profits brought by the drug trade, while others shied away from an activity sure to bring federal attention and bad publicity.

The birth of the modern drug trade dates primarily to the period between the late 1920s and early 1930s, due partly to the development of the international control framework established with the Hague Opium Convention of 1912 (codified in the 1919 Treaty of Versailles) and the 1931 Conference on the Limitation of the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs. Although these treaties established some formal control over the international drug trade, they also, Alan Block points out, inadvertently "pushed manufacturing for the illicit market ever more irrevocably into the hands of organized criminal entrepreneurs."[30] In the U.S., the development of the illicit drug trade was also tied the end of Prohibition, when, as Anslinger often noted, organizations like the Mafia sought a replacement for the bootleg liquor trade.[31]

The mythic history contends the Mafia pushed the older Jewish and Greek gangs out in the process. Many former addicts and low-level dealers recall the shift unfavorably. "It was a beautiful thing when the Chinese and the Jews had it," one African-American dealer reminisced. "But when the Italians

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[28] Lait and Mortimer, *Washington Confidential*, 225; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 74; Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 4.

[29] Repetto, *American Mafia*, 274. A notable exception is Alan Block; see in particular "European Drug Traffic and Traffickers Between the Wars: The Policy of Suppression and Its Consequences," *Journal of Social History* 23, no. 2 (Winter 1989): 315–337, and *Perspectives on Organizing Crime: Essays in Opposition*.

[30] Block, "European Drug Traffic and Traffickers Between the Wars: The Policy of Suppression and Its Consequences." By the time the an international control regime was in place, he continues, "professional criminals were almost alone at the beginning of the process, owning clandestine drug factories around the world."

[31] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 88; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 20–21.

had it-bah!-they messed it all up . . . I mean it was nothing but pure trash—you had more chemical in there and less narcotic."[32] It's possible the Bureau actually helped speed this transition along, since most of the FBN's early investigations focused on the leadership of the Jewish, Greek and Chinese gangs that once dominated the drug trade. But immigration patterns were also important and there was a certain level of ethnic succession at play in the Italian entry to the world of organized crime. Reppetto explains: "as the Irish and other groups moved into the middle class, they were less likely to be represented in criminal activity, so the late-arriving Italians filled the void, just at the time when Prohibition was adding vast revenues to organized crime's coffers." While violence was not uncommon in the drug traffic, open conflict between rival gangs was relatively rare and the lifelong partnership between Luciano and Lansky indicates that ethnic boundaries were never insurmountable.[33]

Watching the Detectives

Few scholars endorse this mythic history of the Mafia today. The chief challenge in studying the history of the Bureau and its treatment of the Mafia is separating the rich mythology from the poorly documented reality. The relative dearth of records has made consensus elusive in the modest historiography of organized crime and scholars continue to debate a number of important issues.[34] As

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[32] Block, "European Drug Traffic and Traffickers Between the Wars,"; Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*, 88.

[33] Reppetto, *American Mafia*, 269. In "European Drug Traffic and Traffickers Between the Wars: The Policy of Suppression and Its Consequences, Block writes, "Smugglers were mobile and opportunistic, trafficked in several types of contraband, rapidly entered into and quit partnerships, and seemed almost as likely to forge associations across ethnic and national lines as along them, although kinship was important." In Courtwright et al., *Addicts Who Survived*, Ralph Salerno, a 20-veteran of the NYPD, similarly recalled that the Jewish and Italian gangs worked "very, very well together since they formed their relationships during the Prohibition era." (200).

[34] A detailed survey of the historiography on the Mafia and organized crime goes beyond the requirements of this chapter, but some of the major disagreements center around questions of geography, scope, the level of organization and cohesion, and the timing and reasons for its rise and decline. Major works consulted in this chapter include: Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (England: Delacorte Press, 1969); Alan A. Block, *Perspectives on Organizing Crime: Essays in Opposition* (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991—this book was republished in the U.S. as *Space, Time and Organized Crime* in 1994); H. Richard Friman and Peter Andreas, eds., *The Illicit Global Economy and State Power* (Lanham and Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999); Lee Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace: Organized Crime in Cold War America* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002); Thomas A. Reppetto, *American Mafia: A History of Its Rise to Power* (New York: Henry Holt Company, 2004); Michael Woodiwiss, *Gangster Capitalism: The United States and the Global Rise of Organized Crime* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2005); Thomas A. Reppetto, *Bringing Down the Mob: The War Against the American Mafia* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006); Selwyn Raab, *Five Families: The Rise, Decline, and Resurgence of America's Most Powerful Mafia Empires* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, St. Martin's Press, 2006); David Critchley, *The Origin*

Alan Block, a pioneer in the field, pointed out in 1994, "Reliance on unsubstantiated accounts and the lawman's ideological preconceptions has mired the study of organized crime in the bog of conspiracy, allowing the term itself to be carelessly transformed to stand for the monolithic organization of criminals." In *The Greatest Menace* (2002), Lee Bernstein echoes Block's observations. "Organized crime did and does exist," he argues, "but its representation and policing are laden with ideological and political assumptions."[35] Here, that is precisely the point. Although the absence of a reliable documentary record makes the recovery of objective truths about the history of organized crime difficult, the very same assumptions and preconceptions that color the mythic history also provide useful insights into the fears and anxieties of political leaders and the agencies charged with protecting the American people. In the end, most of these depictions reveal a marked tendency to focus on conspiracies and foreign enemies.

Most modern scholars argue the criminal underworld was—and is—a decentralized, constantly shifting terrain only loosely organized by kinship and ethnicity, rather than a sharply delineated and hierarchical realm presided over by the Mafia. This is particularly true in the world of drug trade. H. Richard Friman and Peter Andreas point out:

> ...trafficking organizations come in all forms and sizes. While they are often lumped together as organized crime, this is misleading due to the extreme variation in the levels or organization and degree of criminality. Traffickers range from independent entrepreneurs to loose networks of transnational gangs, to highly developed and vertically integrated criminal organizations. Thus, the popular image of a concentrated, octopus-like global network of crime syndicates is a fiction.[36]

The image of a grasping octopus might be a fiction, but it was irresistible to agents and FBN officials who sought a striking and easily understood way to convey the dangers of drugs and organized crime. In retrospect, even former agents like Tom Tripodi came to dispute many of the claims once championed by the Bureau. "As powerful as the international Mafia is," Tripodi wrote, "as integrated into legal enterprise as it has become, it is still not nearly as organized or as big as it has been portrayed. There is no single

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of Organized Crime in America: The New York City Mafia, 1891-1931 (New York and London: Routledge, 2009); H. Richard Friman, ed., *Crime and the Global Political Economy* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2009); Tim Newark, *Lucky Luciano: The Real and Fake Gangster* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2010); and Peter Andreas, *Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[35] Block, *Perspectives on Organizing Crime*, 12; Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace*, 26.

[36] Friman and Andreas, eds., *The Illicit Global Economy and State Power*, 7.

man sitting in Palermo wearing a black fedora and pulling strings that trigger an assassination on the south side of Chicago. Any such description of centralized Mafia power is a myth."[37]

Few historians dispute the actual existence of the Mafia, even as they continue to debate it's precise nature. Taking implicit issue with Anslinger's focus on the Mafia's peculiarly Sicilian traits, Reppetto argues there was nothing innately criminal about Italian immigrants nor did the Mafia invent organized crime. But Italian-American gangsters did, he contends, make the mob "more powerful by being tougher, smarter, and more daring than their rivals or law enforcement." Rather than a religion or philosophy, Reppetto asserts the Mafia was more like a corporation, with figures like Al Capone and Luciano walking the path of early robber barons like John Jacob Astor and Cornelius Vanderbilt, who readily violated the law when it suited their business interests. "The success of the American Mafia," he argues, "was based on the ability of its leaders to rise above their street-tough ways and behave like corporate execs when the occasion required it."[38] In *Gangster Capitalism: The United States and the Global Rise of Organized Crime* (2005), however, Michael Woodiwiss counters, "even the largest networks, such as the Italian Mafia, have not become corporations of crime." In fact, he argues, the focus on foreign gangsters and criminal conspiracies usually serves to distract attention from corporate malfeasance that is ultimately far more damaging to the American people.[39]

The image of the Mafia as a corporation of crime hinges on an argument about modernization, with Luciano's "Grand Council" representing an evolutionary jump from the streets to the boardroom. Like the drug traffic itself, organized crime was one of the shadows cast by the light of modernity and globalization, and depictions of the Mafia reflected the discomfort and anxiety that accompanied profound social and economic changes like rapid urbanization. In his 1931 essay "The Underworld: Our Secret Servant," Walter Lippman observed that the modern city is "the place where the older American polity, its

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[37] Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*, 267.

[38] Reppetto, *American* Mafia, xi. Reppetto argues the "differences between the twentieth-century gang bosses and nineteenth-century robber barons . . . are smaller than they might seem. Astor acquired his fortune furnishing Indians with liquor and cheating them out of their furs. He used the money to buy up Manhattan real estate, converting it into slum dwellings which were the spawning grounds for New York's gangs. In both businesses he bribed public officials." Vanderbilt, similarly, used gunmen to obtain concessions in South America and violence to gain control of the American railroad industry. See also Reppetto, *Bringing Down the Mob*.

[39] Woodiwiss, *Gangster Capitalism*, 2-3.

premises, its purposes, and its methods, is confronted with the new American civilization."[40] It was also the place where the drug traffic and the Mafia emerged most clearly, and both became caught up in the resulting welter of competing visions of the nation's future.

The image of a corporate Mafia actually fares poorly in modern scholarship. Like Woodiwiss, David Critchley dismisses the idea that organized crime represented either a foreign conspiracy or a genuine threat to American security. In *The Origin of Organized Crime in America: The New York City Mafia, 1891-1931* (2009), he observes that the Black Hand was just a symbol commonly used in extortion schemes, while Prohibition was a highly contested site of criminal enterprise in which Italian-American gangs participated but never dominated. The "Americanization" of the mob, he continues, "owed nothing to the Castellammare War and everything to the death of first generation immigrant bosses, the slowly acting acculturation process, and the curbing of immigration from Mafia heartlands in Sicily."[41] Although Reppetto gives the folk history of the Mafia a little more credence (perhaps reflecting his background as a former Chicago detective), he, too, points out that Grand Council, supposedly representative of a new breed of *mafiosi*, was actually a mix of old world and new. While figures like Luciano, Frank Costello and Meyer Lansky were clearly more American-oriented, Mafia leadership continued to feature Italian-born holdovers like Joe Profaci and Joe Bonanno.[42] Alan Block likewise finds the popular image of the Mafia's Grand Council an "idealized" interpretation of organized crime that served "the bureaucratic needs of state agencies and fit, as well, with popular but erroneous social science paradigms; in this case the paradigm of modernization."[43]

While the size, power and nature of the Mafia remains subject to debate, the fact that it relied on political corruption is not. In Reppetto's words, "it was corrupt politicians who allowed the Mafia to exist in the first place," and the "police-political-organized crime alliances of the time were part of a complex system designed to maintain the equilibrium of all the groups involved." In *Five Families* (2006), Selwyn Raab similarly observes that "Corruption was . . . an underlying factor in providing New York's wiseguys a

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[40] Walter Lippmann, "The Underworld: Our Secret Servant," *Forum and Century*, January 1931.

[41] Critchley, *The Origin of Organized Crime in America,* 223, 138, 164.

[42] "While never comprising the totality of organized crime," Reppetto writes, "the American Mafia formed the most influential and cohesive element in the loosely organized national crime syndicate that emerged in the 1930s." Reppetto, *American Mafia*, 139-141, x.

[43] Block, *Perspectives on Organizing Crime*, 23.

comfortable environment."[44] Scholars who study illicit economies tend to argue that corruption functions as a de facto tax in the absence of state power. When muscling in on low-level criminal activities and demanding a "street tax," the Mafia was, according to Reppetto, "acting as an alternative government" and injecting a rough degree of regulation. Payoffs to corrupt politicians were likewise an informal "tax" on Mafia profits.[45]

One of the reasons organized crime has proven so difficult to root out, many observers contend, is because it performs certain functions. In arguing that organized crime served as a "secret servant" to the straight world back in 1931, Lippman drew a distinction between petty crime and the kind of powerful underworld represented by the Mafia. The first, he observed, "is wholly predatory, whereas the underworld offers something in return to the respectable members of society . . . and perform[s] services for which there is some kind of public demand."[46] Officials like Anslinger knew full well that restricting legal access to commodities like alcohol or drugs led to the creation of black markets that would inevitably be organized by the criminal element. While alcohol was largely accepted after the repeal of Prohibition, the Bureau's continued efforts to portray drug use as beyond the pale help explain why its denunciations of the Mafia also became so shrill.

The reciprocal relationship between crime and society acknowledged by Lippman is a frequent subject of debate. A predominant trend in modern American culture is to portray drug dealers as antiheros who manage to infiltrate an economic system largely closed to them. But in *Bandits* (1969), a seminal work on the relationship between crime and society, Eric Hobsbawm draws a sharp distinction between social bandits, who rebel against political systems but share core social values, and the criminal

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[44] Reppetto, *Bringing Down the Mob*, 125; Reppetto, *American Mafia*, 161; Raab, *Five Families*, 160.

[45] Reppetto, *Bringing Down the Mob*, 20. In *The Illicit Global Economy and State Power*, Friman and Andreas argue, "Paradoxically, the corruption that emerges from the interaction between state actors and nonstate criminal actors in the illicit global economy expresses the limits of state controls, but also their power . . . corruption reflects the penetration of the state, undermining the implementation of controls . . . [but also] imposing an informal tax on illicit cross-border economic activities." (p. 10). In *Smuggler Nation* (2012), Andreas elaborates, "Even corruption can be considered a peculiar form of regulation, the equivalent of paying an informal tax on illicit trade that smugglers pay for non-enforcement of the law. But instead of filling government coffers, the corruption tax lines private pockets." (p. 336).

[46] Walter Lippmann, "The Underworld: Our Secret Servant," *Forum and Century*, January 1931.

underworld, which is entirely "parasitic" and exists only as a kind of "anti-society."[47] Most academics, however, accept that there is symbiosis between the two. In an analysis of immigration and organized crime, legal scholar Herman Schwartz argues, "states and mafias are mutually constitutive, rather than pure rivals..." To say that organized crime is unavoidable would be an overstatement, but as political scientist H. Richard Friman explains, "By the very act of criminalization, states create a space for criminal activity. Depending on patterns of enforcement and corruption, states also remove themselves from a regulatory role within this space, and organized criminal groups emerge to fill the gap." In other words, far from being anti-state, the Mafia owed its existence (at least in part) to the American government.[48]

The reverse argument—that the state required organized crime—is rather counterintuitive and a little trickier to make. But as Friman and others have pointed out, "rather than simply eroding state power, crime has become a means to expand it."[49] In *Smuggler Nation* (2013), Peter Andreas observes how efforts to curb illicit commerce have expanded state power throughout American history. Prohibition, for example, is widely seen as an almost total failure. Law enforcement was admittedly "bruised and battered," but, Andreas contends, actually "came away from the experience greatly empowered" with new search-and-seizure and wiretapping authorities.[50] This is a crucial point: just as the threat of world war and communist expansion gave rise to the national security state, the growth of organized crime and fears of unchecked addiction also acted to expand the power of the federal government and prompted officials to claim new police powers to deal with new threats to American security.

As with the contradictions in narratives of the dope menace and the heroics of undercover agents, the numerous paradoxes and inconsistencies in popular accounts of the Mafia suggest an active mythology in the making. That subsequent accounts lack the firm documentation necessary to resolve

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[47] Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, 31, 84–5. Hobsbawm doesn't seem to consider a situation in which the government criminalizes activity which is not similarly condemned by social norms.

[48] Schwartz continues, "States also have a qualified interest in the emergence of organized crime because mafias speed capital accumulation in immigrant communities. In turn, capital accumulation creates pressure on and incentives for immigrants to enmesh themselves in the state's routines and in native circuits of capital." See Herman Schwartz, "Immigrants and Organized Crime," 119, 137, and H. Richard Friman, "Crime and Globalization," 10-13, in *Crime and the Global Political Economy*.

[49] Friman, "Crime and Globalization," (10-13) in *Crime and the Global Political Economy.* In *Policing the Globe: Criminalization and Crime Control in International Relations* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), Peter Andreas and Ethan A. Nadelmann similarly argue that "criminalization has been a powerful motor for state expansion." (225).

[50] Andreas, *Smuggler Nation*, 248–249.

basic questions about the nature and reality of the Mafia makes it difficult to sort fact from fiction. But again, in construing the Mafia as a threat to national security, that is partly the point. To the Bureau, the ancient or modern character of the Mafia was a secondary concern—colorful and illustrative window dressing. Its violence and influence were dangerous, but it was the takeover of the drug trade that made the Mafia truly threatening. And that's where Lucky Luciano came in.

Chasing Lucky

The FBN and its allies said a lot of things about Luciano over the years and very few of them were complimentary. To Justin Gilbert of *True Police Cases*, Luciano was the "king cobra of crime" and "a floating bit of wretched refuse in a Stygian sea." Joachim Joesten called him "Mr. Big Dope." Briefed extensively by Agent Siragusa, journalist Mike Stern observed that "legends have flourished about him like weeds around a cesspool." Siragusa described Luciano as a "Sicilian pimp and trafficker." George White's attitude was that "Lucky can go to hell," while Anslinger called him "the greatest white slaver of all times." Nearly all confided, with a knowing wink, that Luciano suffered from syphilis, a frequently deployed trope of the time. Publicizing Luciano's venereal disease took the glamour out of his kingpin image and reinforced the notion that he was a marginal character—impure and rotting from the inside out. Al Capone, it was also sometimes noted, was driven insane and died from syphilis and Anslinger alleged that Elias Eliopoulos, too, carried the disease.[51]

Luciano returned the Bureau's animosity in spades. While working undercover in the late 1950s, Agent Sal Vizzini noticed a stack of FBN literature in Luciano's Naples apartment, including Anslinger's *The Traffic in Narcotics*, Sondern's *Brotherhood of Evil*, Andrew Tully's *Treasury Agent*, and Joesten and Feder's *The Luciano Story*. Although Vizzini insisted that Luciano "was unable to understand words over two syllables," the mob boss was clearly paying attention. Luciano, Vizzini reported, frequently expressed a strong desire to "piss on Anslinger's grave." He thought the Commissioner was "worse than Hitler" and usually referred to him as "Ass-linger." This, of course, delighted the Old Man. Luciano also had cross words for Siragusa and once told reporters that for Christmas he would like "Siragusa in a ton of cement!"

[51] See Justin Gilbert, "King Cobra of Crime," *True Police Cases*, August 1947, and Michael Stern, "Lucky Luciano Today," *True: The Man's Magazine*, November 1952 in Folder 19, Box 12, Anslinger Papers; Joesten, *Dope, Inc.*, 80; Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 69; White and Anslinger are quoted in Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 102, 105, 59; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 81.

Both men wore Luciano's animosity like a badge of honor as they portrayed him as the king of the Atlantic heroin trade.[52] One of the most interesting aspects of the FBN attack on Luciano, however, is that it came roughly a decade after his fall from power.

Luciano was at the height of his power, in the mid-1930s, when Tom Dewey arrived on the scene. Today Dewey is remembered mostly as a failed presidential candidate, but for a time he was the toast of New York and putting Luciano behind bars was among his greatest achievements. In 1935, Dewey was appointed as a New York special prosecutor and tasked with cleaning up the organized crime rackets that proliferated in the wake of Prohibition. Among his first targets were the "beer barons" Irving "Waxey" Gordon and Arthur Flegenheimer (aka Dutch Schultz). Ironically, Luciano may have spared Dewey's life. Schultz reportedly demanded Dewey's assassination, but Luciano ordered a hit on the unpredictable Schultz instead.[53] In 1936, Dewey pivoted to Luciano and sought a case on which to prosecute the carefully insulated mob-boss. Luciano was targeted primarily for his purported control over the gambling and narcotics rackets, but his dominion over the sex trade ultimately proved his undoing. In February, NYPD officers assigned to Dewey's task force raided brothels across the city, gathering suspects and potential witnesses. A dramatic legal battle ensued as Dewey first extradited Luciano from Hot Springs, AK and then successfully prosecuted the gangster on sixty-two counts of compulsory prostitution. The most damaging testimony ultimately came from three madams and a former debt-collector who all agreed to testify in exchange for reduced sentences. None were ideal witnesses, but their testimony got Dewey his conviction.[54]

Luciano's crimes were not limited to prostitution but these were the only charges Dewey could make stick, as everyone seemed to accept at the time. This was an important precedent, Tim Newark

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[52] Sal Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 83; Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, ix; Tully, *Treasury Agent*, 104. See also two memos held among Anslinger's papers—retained specifically because they reference Luciano's personal animosity toward Anslinger and as material for *The Murderers*. See Memorandum Reports by Sal Vizzini, dated September 30, 1959 and February 9, 1960, in Folder 8, Box 2 and Folder 8, Box 4, Anslinger Papers.

[53] Robert A. Rockaway, *But He Was Good to His Mother: The Lives and Crimes of Jewish Gangsters* (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 2000), 144–150.

[54] Feder and Joesten, *The Luciano Story*, 135–166. Luciano's trial was well-covered in the national media. For the specific testimony of Luciano's former debt-collector and madams, see "Lucania Ruled, Vice Witness Says," *New York Times*, May 22, 1936, p. 48, and "Operator Indentifies 'Lucky' as Vice King," *The Atlanta Constitution*, May 23, 1936, p. 17.

observes in *Lucky Luciano: The Real and Fake Gangster* (2010); "The conviction of Lucky Luciano was a landmark in U.S. legal history as it was the first against a major organized crime figure for anything other than tax evasion."[55] The Bureau subsequently made a lot of hay out of the "white slavery" charges, and sex trafficking perfectly complimented the Bureau's depiction of the dope menace. According to Anslinger, "Lucky liked the ladies," and developed a routine of dating young professional and working-class girls "eager for a way out of the enslavery of drab routine." But when he tired of their company, he would get the girls addicted to heroin and send them to work in one of his many bordellos. Anslinger and company thus linked Luciano to older anxieties about Chinese opium dens drawing American women into addiction, miscegenation and sexual depravity.[56]

Luciano spent the next decade at Dannemora Prison in upstate New York where, by most accounts, he was a model prisoner. His reprieve came with U.S. entry into World War II. The story of Operation Underworld, as Luciano's wartime assistance was called, is a long and complicated one and need not be recounted in full here. The collaboration between the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and the Mafia emerged out of concern with the number of American ships sunk by Nazi subs off the coast of North America, particularly in the vicinity of New York City. The Navy feared these subs were resupplied off the American coast, so an ONI group led by Lt. Cmdr. Charles Haffenden approached Joseph "Socks" Lanza for assistance. Lanza was a member of the Luciano family and held dominion over the Fulton Fish Market on the southern tip of Manhattan. Concern for American security, as if often does, trumped all other considerations. Haffenden explained, "I'll talk to anybody, a priest, a bank manager, a gangster, the devil himself. This is a war. American lives are at stake." With Lanza's assistance, Navy intelligence officers were placed among New York's fishing fleet and monitored the waterfront for signs of Nazi sabotage. As Haffenden sought to expand the operation, Lanza ran into resistance from other mob figures who worried he was informing to the District Attorney. So Lanza suggested bringing in Luciano,

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[55] Newark, *Lucky Luciano*, 127; "Dewey, N.Y. Prosecutor-Elect Won Fame Smashing Rackets," *Washington Post*, November 3, 1937, p. 4. As the article summarized: "When the Dewey staff was unable to uncover any evidence that would link Luciano with the narcotics and handbook 'rackets,' Prosecutor Dewey learned from frightened 'bookies' who were adequately protected, that Luciano was 'the Boss' of Manhattan prostitution."

[56] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 103, 25. See also Joesten, *Dope, Inc.*, 39, which described how Luciano "methodically linked his dope and vice operations in the early days of his crime career" by getting girls addicted to heroin and then putting them to work as prostitutes.

who still had the stature to green-light the operation with the Mafia. To facilitate communication, Luciano was transferred from Dannemora (near the Canadian border) to Great Meadow Prison (outside Albany) and afforded lenient visitation rights as he hosted a number of associates, including Lanza, Meyer Lansky and various Navy officers. After helping secure the New York waterfront, the story goes, the Mafia then supplied intelligence for the invasion of Sicily, helping chose discrete landing points and vouching for local anti-fascist contacts.[57]

The actual value of Luciano's contribution has been debated ever since. Despite ambiguous results, his wartime service was cited when Dewey commuted the remainder of his sentence. Although Dewey specified that "the actual value of the information procured is not clear," the issue of Luciano's pardon remained controversial for both Dewey and the Bureau.[58]

Luciano's release contributed to what looked to the Bureau like a storm gathering over the postwar world. Although the European powers had pledged to end their colonial opium monopolies and addiction rates dropped to an apparent all-time low during the war, the agents knew peace would bring a renewal of the drug trade. As *Life* magazine summarized, the FBN "knows that all over the world dope brokers and their gangs are busy with their postwar plans for taking advantage of the psychological confusion and release from discipline expected with an armistice." There were even fears that the Nazis would continue to haunt the world as wartime medical stocks melted into the black market. As Anslinger put it in a 1946 article, "With the coming of peace our country faces a foe that can be just as deadly as the enemy on the field of battle."[59] Hence the focus on Luciano. The Bureau knew he had sold drugs in the past and, with the Mafia suspected as one of the biggest participants in the illegal trade and Luciano free, Bureau officials feared it was only a matter of time before the heroin trade returned in force.

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[57] Rodney Campbell, *The Luciano Project: The Secret Wartime Collaboration of the Mafia and the U.S. Navy* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1977). See also Newark, *Lucky Luciano*, 147-178, Haffenden is quoted on 147.

[58] "Dewey Commutes Luciano Sentence," *New York Times*, January 4, 1946, p. 25; Emanuel Perlmutter, "Lucky Luciano's Story: Prison and Politics: Former Racket Boss, 4,000 Miles Away, Still is a Campaign Issue," *New York Times*, p. E9.

[59] Joesten, *Dope, Inc.*, 63–4; Gerard Piel, "Narcotics: War Has Brought Illicit Traffic to All-Time Low But U.S. Treasury Fears Rising Postwar Addiction," *Life*, July 19, 1943, and Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946, in Folders 7 and 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

The FBN responded with an intensive postwar focus on the Mafia. The first order of business was to chase down old leads that had languished during the war. In November 1946, George White circulated copies of an address book confiscated from Mafia trafficker Nicola Gentile back in 1937 and requested that all offices update their files on the individuals listed therein. As he explained, "On the theory that members of the Mafia throughout the United States are generally engaged in the narcotic traffic . . . the Bureau has instituted a long-range project, with the object of identifying and obtaining all available information concerning members of this criminal organization throughout the United States."[60]

Over time, the Bureau compiled an extensive catalog of dossiers it called "the Mafia Book." It was actually two books—one bound in green, the other in black—and the use of these files became a carefully guarded privilege. The green book was to share with other agencies, but the black book was classified and its circulation sharply restricted. In time, the Mafia Book became the federal government's most detailed ledger on organized crime and the narcotics agents a valuable resource for their unique expertise, which allowed the FBN to leverage access to material and agents in exchange for influence with journalists, Congressmen, judges and other public officials.[61]

In the meantime, however, the Bureau's worst fears were seemingly realized when news surfaced about a December 1946 Mafia summit in Havana, Cuba. Somehow Luciano was able to acquire an Italian passport and Cuban visa in order to attend. The meeting was apparently called by Luciano and Lansky to discuss the future of the narcotics traffic and the establishment of a lucrative Cuban casino industry, developed in cooperation with factions of the Cuban government (soon to include Fulgencio Batista).[62] Although subsequent FBN accounts claimed that agents were tracking Luciano's movements the whole time, his discovery on the island didn't reach the public until February of 1947, when Walter

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[60] White, report dated November 8, 1946, in Folder 6, Box 1, White Papers.

[61] Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade: Undercover Against the Mafia and KGB*, 63. A reprinted version of the Mafia book (circa 1960) is available today as *Mafia: The Government's Secret File on Organized Crime* (New York, NY: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009).

[62] T. J. English, *Havana Nocturne: How the Mob Owned Cuba and Then Lost It to the Revolution* (New York: William Morrow Paperbacks, 2009).

Winchell broke the news that not only was Luciano in Havana—he was allegedly being considered for the Congressional Medal of Honor.[63]

The Commissioner and his agents immediately swung into action. Anslinger later claimed he was approached by the Cuban Ambassador, who sought his advice on the growing problem of organized crime in Cuba. As Anslinger put it, "I decided that our bureau was the only American agency in a position to take direct action without causing too great an international upheaval," so the Commissioner promptly issued an embargo of all U.S. medical supplies to Cuba until Luciano was expelled from the country. John C. McWilliams and Alan Block contend this move "usurped the State Department's traditional jurisdiction," but it was not the first time Anslinger leveraged access to American pharmaceuticals to make a political point. In 1940, for example, the Commissioner suspended medical exports to Mexico until health clinics in the capital ceased ambulatory treatment of addicts.[64]

Bureau stalwarts Garland Williams and George White quickly backed Anslinger's play in the press. In New York, Williams briefed reporters: "We are very much concerned that Luciano has been permitted to establish a residence so close to our shores . . . where he can exercise his dangerous influence over the American underworld." Williams added it was an "interesting coincidence" that in the three months since Luciano was at large, a European heroin shipment worth $250,000 was seized in New York. In Chicago, White spun a similar tale and said the Windy City was the intended capital of the Mafia's new narcotic empire. Calling Al Capone a "small fry" compared to Luciano, White told reporters, "This criminal rat Luciano has gigantic money-making plans dealing in gambling vice and narcotics and

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[63] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil: The Mafia*, 115–117; Sondern, Jr., "Our Global War on Narcotics" *Reader's Digest*, April 1950; Sondern, Jr., "Luciano's New Empire," *Reader's Digest*, September 1951. In *Brotherhood of Evil*, Sondern includes an odd incident in which a troop of Girl Scouts, intent on meeting a famous movie star friend of Luciano's (likely Frank Sinatra), pay a visit to Luciano's suite at the Hotel Nacional and come upon a scene of total debauchery with "bottles on the floor, lingerie hung from wall brackets and a number of people . . . sleeping where they had collapsed." According to Sondern, the nun leading the troop reported the incident to her mother superior, who reported to the bishop, who evidently made a stink in Washington and the Bureau had to quiet the situation lest their Cuban assets be revealed. Walter Winchell, "Cuba: Hoodlum on the Wing," *Time*, March 3, 1947. Winchell's Medal of Honor story is also reported in both Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 67 and Campbell, *The Luciano Project*, 261. It appears that Winchell was the only source for the claim that Luciano was to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor.

[64] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 106; John C. McWilliams and Alan Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954," *Intelligence and National Security* 5, no. 1 (January 1990): 171–192. See also Anslinger to Sharman, March 28, 1940, in Folder 21, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

hoped to center his activities in Chicago," but he reassured them the Bureau was "doing all possible to keep him away from this country." Government officials like former OSS chief William Donovan, meanwhile, dismissed Luciano's wartime assistance as "nothing but cheap talk from irresponsible persons and completely without foundation."[65]

The pressure worked. Luciano was taken into custody by Cuban police on February 22. Three days later, Anslinger lifted the embargo (it lasted only five days) and on March 19, Luciano was deported to Italy for the second and final time. Privately, Williams fired off a missive to Anslinger calling the embargo "one of the finest pieces of law enforcement work I have ever known."[66]

Italy: The "Aircraft Carrier of the Narcotics Traffic"

Following Luciano's sojourn in Cuba and return to Italy, the Bureau's crusade against the Mafia moved into a new phase with the first overseas tours and the establishment of a foreign office in Rome. The September 1951 creation of District 17—the Bureau's internal designation for the region covering Europe, the Middle East and North Africa—was a result of the FBN's increased clout in Washington after World War II and a reflection of the American commitment to a supply-side counternarcotic strategy that echoed and complimented an increasingly global perception of American security. But the focus on Italy had a lot to do with Luciano.

During the years 1948 to 1951, select narcotics agents were sent on roving tours of Europe and the Middle East to scout a location for the new office and assess the potential for international cooperation in the field, but another important goal was to uncover hard evidence of Luciano's drug

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[65] For press coverage and quotes, see "Luciano in Cuba; Drug Shipments Shut Off by U.S.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 22, 1947, p. 8; "U.S. Ends Narcotic Sales to Cuba While Luciano is Resident There," *New York Times*, February 22, 1947, p. 1; "Officials Deny Luciano Aided America in War," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 23, 1947, p. 10; "Luciano Called Kingpin of Drug Peddlers in U.S.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 24, 1947, p. 2; "Luciano Plot to Rule Drug Gangs Cited," *Washington Post*, February 24, 1947, p. 1.

[66] "U.S. Narcotic Ban on Cuba is Lifted," *New York Times*, February 26, 1947, p. 52; "Luciano Put on Ship," *New York Times*, March 20, 1947, p. 10. In a strange and violent epilogue to Luciano's time in Havana, on March 19, Cuban Sen. Eduardo Chibas, an important party leader, drew a pistol on the floor of the Cuban legislature and attempted to shoot Prime Minister Prio Socarras for bowing to U.S. pressure and preventing a court hearing that would have revealed the Mafia cozying up to President Ramón Grau. Socarras responded by challenging Chibas to a duel. The duel was fought with swords eight days later by Socarras's brother Francisco and Chibas and ended with both combatants bloodied but apparently satisfied. Gustavo Reno, "Senator Pulls Pistol in Row Over Luciano," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 20, 1947, p. 1 and "'Lucky' Leaves a Souvenir; Face Slap and Cuban Duel," *Washington Post*, March 28, 1947, p. 13. See also letter from Williams to Anslinger dated February 24, 1947, in Folder 18, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

trafficking operation. Following stops in Istanbul and Marseille in the summer of 1948, George White finished his tour in Italy, where he tried to make a case on Luciano. White began with an undercover approach to a Mafia solider named Nick DiMarzo, hoping that he would lead to Luciano's associate Ralph Liguori (another of the gangsters deported after World War II). "This affair appears very promising and with good luck we might even involve Luciano," White reported. Within days, however, White was confronted by an irate Liguori, who arrived at the agent's hotel pointedly displaying a pistol permit and hinting he had been tipped off by "friends" in the Italian Questura. White feared it might have been "the Istanbul publicity." Exposed, he broke off the Mafia probe and, with the help of an Italian police informant, made a consolation bust on three low-level players trafficking heroin and cocaine between Austria, Trieste and Italy—an operation the Bureau embellished in subsequent reports as the Enzi Syndicate.[67] With the help of local police, White made arrests in three different countries and demonstrated that foreign enforcement was possible, but a concrete Mafia tie-in remained elusive.

In 1949, the Bureau kept the pressure on as Garland Williams toured the region to gather intelligence and promote international cooperation. In April, he called on Italian police authorities to discuss their control efforts but found a distinct lack of concern. In a lengthy report to Anslinger, Williams concluded that "narcotic law enforcement in Italy is actually non-existent." No FBN officials acknowledged the point at the time, but this was a mixed blessing. The lack of control in Italy increased the availability of drugs in the U.S., but it also helped to justify the Bureau's foreign expansion. Although Italian officials pledged cooperation and allowed access to Luciano's police file, Williams remained impatient and told them "in no uncertain terms about the flow of drugs from Italy to America . . . and that the world expected the proper agencies in Italy to take a serious view of their responsibilities."[68]

The message was driven home in June when a New York man named Vincent Trupia was discovered attempting to smuggle three kilos of heroin and nine kilos of cocaine out of the Rome airport. In response to Bureau pressure, the Italian police brought in Luciano, Liguori and other suspected Mafia traffickers for questioning. Subsequent investigation by the Italian police revealed that Trupia was in

[67] See reports dated July 6 to August 3, 1948 and memo report "The Enzi Syndicate" dated August 25, 1948 in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. See also Folder 9, Box 1, White Papers, which includes much of the same material.

[68] Report from Williams to Anslinger dated April 6, 1949 in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder #2," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

contact with Luciano but evidence of their connection was otherwise circumstantial. Nevertheless, the news made the papers in the U.S. and jarred the Italian authorities, who responded by banning Luciano from Rome.[69]

In the spring of 1950, the Bureau renewed its effort to link Luciano to the drug trade, and this time sent Agents Benny Pocoroba and Charles Siragusa. The FBN tasked Pocoroba with chasing down Mafia leads in Trieste and Italy, while Siragusa tried to open a few investigations further up the supply chain in the Middle East. Pocoroba was one of the FBN's most experienced undercover operatives but struggled to gain traction in Europe. "In my thirty-three years of undercover work . . . I have never been confronted with such a kaleidoscopic investigation as this," he complained. The juxtaposition of White and Pocoroba's failure to implicate the Mafia with the Bureau's strident public accusations initially did little to help the Bureau's image. As Pocoroba reported to Anslinger, "you ought to know that the 'INTERPOL' is still laughing at Mr. White who came here all the way from the U.S.A. to buy a few grams of dope, after all the advance publicity he received." He also warned that all of the tough talk was making Luciano "a hero in the eyes of the underworld." Pocoroba managed to cozy up to several suspected Mafia traffickers and gathered good intelligence, but found nothing concrete and suspected that most of Italy's narcotics were smuggled in from West Germany.[70]

Meanwhile, back in the U.S., the Navy belatedly joined the chorus of government officials disavowing Luciano's WWII assistance. In April, Navy spokesmen issued a categorical denial to *The Washington Post*: "There is absolutely nothing in the record to show that Luciano ever gave any information that contributed to the war effort in any way so far as the United States Navy is concerned." Dewey's office released a similar statement and explained that there was ample precedent for deporting

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[69] See State Department telegram to Anslinger from Williams, dated July 7, 1949, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder #2," Box 159, RG 170, NARA. *New York Times* characterized Trupia's arrest as the climax of a "series of raids by narcotics agents that began after the recent visit to Rome of Garland Williams . . . [who] demanded that Italy cut off the flow of narcotics from Italy to New York and insisted on tighter police control of Luciano." See "Rome Narcotic Raid Nets New York Man," *New York Times*, June 26, 1949, p. 39; "U.S. Asks Watch on Luciano in Dope Drive," *Washington Post*, June 27, 1949, p. 7; "Narcotics Charge Jails Ex-Army Deserter in Italy," *Washington Post*, September 28, 1949, p. 9; Siragusa, *The Trail of the Poppy*, 82-91.

[70] Pocoroba to Anslinger, August 3, 1950, Folder 15, Box 1, White Papers. Pocoroba to Anslinger, August 20, 1950, Folder "(0660) Italy, 1950, Folder #3," Box 159, RG 170, NARA. For more on his investigations in Trieste and Italy, see Anslinger to Giuseppe Dosi, May 24, 1950, and Malachi Harney to Siragusa, September 21, 1950, in Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164, RG 170. See also Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 27, 60.

criminal aliens and that Luciano's pardon relieved the New York taxpayers of the expense of his incarceration. Garland Williams, however, got the last word and countered that, with Luciano free, the feds had to pick up the tab and send agents abroad to check his influence. "I regard Luciano as one of the most dangerous criminals in the world today," Williams said. "His influence in racketeering circles in the United States is almost as powerful as when he was on the scene."[71] Yet the pressure was building for the Bureau to back up these accusations by making cases against Luciano and the Mafia.

In August 1950, Anslinger pulled Siragusa out of the Middle East and ordered him to rendezvous with Pocoroba and crack the traffic moving across northern Italy and Trieste. At the time, Turkey's rich poppy fields were the largest source of supply (both licit and illicit) in the region and Siragusa spent the previous months trying to develop leads in Istanbul, the Anatolian interior and Beirut—fruitlessly, it turned out, as each investigation was thwarted by powerful local interests. But as Anslinger explained, "our pressing concern at the moment, after Turkey, seems to be Italy."[72]

Siragusa was a logical choice for European operations. The 37 year old agent was a second generation Sicilian immigrant, spoke fluent Italian and earned a Bronze Star for his wartime counterintelligence service with the OSS in Italy.[73] He also saw his work at the FBN as a way to counter the stigma left by the Mafia on the Italian-American community and explained to Frederic Sondern, "There are so many other Sicilians who have worked hard and raised decent families. Then there is this small group of mafiosi who make us all look like jerks." Many agents of Italian ancestry felt the same; Sal Vizzini similarly wrote, "the world is quick to paint all Sicilians with the same dirty brush. So by striking back at the Mafia, I felt that I was striking at a few bad apples who gave millions of decent, law-abiding people a bad name."[74]

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[71] Edward T. Folliard, "Navy Explodes Lucky Luciano 'War Hero' Myth," *Washington Post*, April 2, 1950, p. B1.

[72] Letter from Anslinger to Siragusa dated August 22, 1950, in Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. For Siragusa's investigations in the Middle East, see next chapter.

[73] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 46–63. Siragusa's OSS file is in Box 715, Entry 224, RG 226, NARA.

[74] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 132; Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 13. In his own memoir, Siragusa describes his hatred for the Mafia: "They say it is wrong to hate, that one should feel compassion. I have learned, however, that to hate evil is good, for it gives one the drive and the courage to fight and defeat evil." Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 33-55.

Continued investigations in Italy, however, led to a startling discovery: most of the heroin entering the illicit traffic came not from Europe or underground labs supplied by Turkish opium, but from legitimate medical wholesalers and pharmaceutical companies. In mid-September, the Bureau received information from a confidential source that two residents of Trieste, Giorgio Negrin and Matteo Carpinetti, were seeking to expand a middling trafficking operation. When Siragusa met Pocoroba in Trieste, the agents focused on these new targets and quickly convinced Carpinetti to help them buy a load of heroin. The FBN agents were joined by Hank Manfredi, a U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (CID) agent with the Trieste occupation forces who assisted Italian authorities in the Trupia investigation and soon after joined the FBN (becoming Siragusa's right-hand man in Rome) and later the CIA. Frustrated with Pocoroba's efforts in Italy, Bureau officials in Washington were reluctant to provide the advance funds necessary for an undercover buy. But when Manfredi's superiors learned that Yugoslav communists might be implicated in Carpinetti's operation, they volunteered $3,000 in cash for a "flash roll." As the FBN team settled into the operation and used Manfredi's authority to tap the targets' phone lines, they learned that Carpinetti and Negrin planned to use their cut of the deal to open a clandestine heroin lab supplied with morphine base from Austria and Yugoslavia. In the short term, however, their main supplier was a "physician-pharmacist" named Dr. Angelo Peggion, located in nearby Padua, Italy.[75]

The Carpinetti case revealed extensive diversion from Italy's legal industry through a host of middle-men, some shady and some well-regarded. Peggion, for example, was the President of the Pharmaceutical Chamber of Commerce in Padua. He and Carpinetti had a falling out after a recent deal went sour, however, so the enterprising trafficker took the undercover agents to another source: the Treiste office of RAMSA Medicinale and Produti Chimici, where officials Dr. Riccardo Morganti and Dr. Cesare Melli offered to sell Siragusa five kilos of pharmaceutical grade heroin for $10,000. After scraping the rest of the buy money together from a combination of FBN and CID funds—as well as their own pockets—the agents were ready to spring their trap. Over the weekend of October 6-8, Siragusa and Manfredi arrested the Carpinetti gang, as well as Morganti and Melli. There was much celebrating at CID

[75] Pocoroba and Siragusa investigations, as well as the Carpinetti/Negrin tip (in a memo by Harney dated September 19, 1950) are detailed in Folders "(0660) Italy, 1950, Folder #3," Box 159 and "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164. See also a memo from Harney to Siragusa dated September 21, 1950 in which he explains Bureau reluctance to send advance funds in Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

headquarters that weekend, complete with the requisite portraits behind a table loaded with seized drugs.[76] Morganti apparently didn't handle the arrest well and was stunned when Siragusa revealed his identity. "It happened just as in the movies—it is fantastic," the stunned doctor repeated over and over. He also readily gave up a handful of his Yugoslav contacts, leading Siragusa and Manfredi to additional arrests in Trieste and—working with Yugoslav authorities—Belgrade.[77]

The Carpinetti/RAMSA bust failed to turn up a definitive Mafia (or communist) angle, but it was a promising start to operations in Italy and revealed that licit diversion was a major component of the trans-Atlantic heroin trade. Afterwards, Siragusa concluded, "it is unnecessary and unprofitable and probably more dangerous for smugglers and criminal traffickers to procure their supply of heroin by the operation of clandestine laboratories. It is very easy for these same people to buy either directly from the manufacturers or from the wholesalers." With a successful case, the Bureau improved its standing with European agencies and uncovered additional leads to pursue as the agents interrogated the prisoners. Perhaps most importantly, Siragusa believed the Bureau had demonstrated the necessity of having agents stationed abroad. As he wrote to Anslinger, "The only solution to our problem of trying to strike at the source here . . . is to have a Narcotic Agent personally supervise investigations in Italy."[78] The key, however, remained implicating Luciano in the Italian traffic.

Both Siragusa and Pocoroba went home to the U.S. for the winter of 1950-1951, but Siragusa returned several months later intent on connecting Luciano to the traffic diverted from legal sources. In his absence, Italian police authorities in Rome allowed Manfredi to review Luciano's police file and follow-up on the Carpinetti investigation. By the spring, the FBN had developed a number of leads and sent agents Martin Pera and Joseph Amato to conduct separate investigations in Turkey and Germany, while

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[76] Reports numbered 33-42, dated September 22 - October 11, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. "Many pictures, with a plate identifying the date, place and quantity of the seizure plus photographs of the beaming persons who participated in this case, were taken by the C.I.D. photographer," Siragusa wrote. Siragusa later tracked Peggion down, but he refused to sell any heroin and ultimately escaped prosecution.

[77] In his memoir, Siragusa recounts turning the information over to the Communist authorities in Belgrade, who then carried out their arrests and insisted that Siragusa and Manfredi join them in another rowdy brandy-fueled victory party. Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 89–90.

[78] "We are held in high esteem," Siragusa effused. "A compliment from the Bureau is considered a valuable possession." Siragusa, Report No. 42, dated October 11, 1950. See also Report No. 45, dated October 16, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

Siragusa coordinated their efforts from Italy. Soon after returning to Rome in February 1951, Siragusa reported, "Our work is rapidly shaping up and before very long I hope to report our first successful venture . . . If our work continues to be as fruitful as I think it will be," he wrote, "there is definitely enough to keep several men busy all year round."[79]

The mystery of Morganti and Melli's suppliers was at the top of Siragusa's agenda. During the RAMSA bust, Siragusa discovered a heroin wrapper marked with the label of Schiapparelli, a major pharmaceutical company based in Turin, so he asked the Italian police to audit the records of the five companies licensed to manufacture heroin in Italy. Despite lax regulation, four of the companies seemed to be on the up and up. But Schiapparelli, the other four complained, broke informal price control agreements and sold below cost to a veterinarian supply company called SACE (*Soceita Anonima Italiana*), which was run by a shady Milan businessman named Egidio Calascibetta. Italian police couldn't prove the company had knowingly diverted heroin into black market channels, so Siragusa sent an informant to make an undercover buy from Calascibetta, hoping to find narcotics from Schiapparelli. The scheme convinced Siragusa that the Italian pharmaceutical industry was a major source of supply for the American black market and estimated that 90% of the heroin coming from Italy "represents diverted heroin," which made Calascibetta "the largest and most important diverter of heroin in all of Italy," and perhaps "one of the biggest heroin peddlers of our time."[80]

With an FBN informant working up the supply chain toward Calascibetta, Siragusa focused on connecting Luciano and other suspected traffickers. Part of the Bureau's plan in Italy was a harassment campaign intended to keep Luciano off balance. "If we cant [sic] put LUCIANO behind bars I will see to it that the police continually harass him and I will probably do a great deal of this myself," Siragusa wrote soon after his return in February 1951. On the one hand, this was not a subtle approach and Luciano

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[79] Siragusa to Anslinger, Progress Report No. 6, dated February 17, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[80] The five authorized firms were SALARS, SIFAC, CARLO ERBA, SIRCAI, and Schiapparelli. Siragusa discusses the audit in Progress Report No. 47, dated October 21, 1950, Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. The assignment of informant Count Vittorio San Martin di Valperga are discussed in Progress Report No. 6, dated February 17, 1951. For more on the investigation of Calascibetta see Siragusa, Progress Report No. 26, dated April 5, 1951, in which he described Calascibetta as an "important diverter" and detailed his follow-up with officials from the Italian Department of Health and Sanitation. The "90%" quote comes from Siragusa, Progress Report No. 27, dated April 9, 1951. See also Siragusa, Progress Report No. 31, dated April 14, 1951 in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

was likely more circumspect knowing that he was watched. The Bureau, however, was more interested in isolating Luciano and disrupting his network than convicting him in a court of law. After chasing Luciano out of Cuba, a key part of the Bureau's strategy was to impede the mobster's international travel and FBN agents in Europe actively investigated rumors that Luciano had violated his visa by traveling to Germany. In Rome, Siragusa tried to have Luciano's Italian passport revoked, while Anslinger sent warnings to Interpol and other European police officials requesting that he be denied visas on the grounds that he represented a "threat" as a "potential international narcotic trafficker."[81]

A major break came in April, when an anonymous tip led the Italian police to pull a man named Frank Callaci from a flight departing Milan for Palermo. Callaci's name was on the FBN's list of suspected traffickers, so the Italian police invited Siragusa to interrogate him at the offices of the Guardia di Finanza. The agent arrived expecting to find a middle-aged Mafia trafficker, known to the Bureau as another gangster deported from New York. What he found was Callaci's nephew of the same name. In an apparent repeat of the Trupia operation, the younger Callaci was recruited in New York and sent to Italy to fetch a shipment of heroin from his uncle. Under questioning, Callaci denied seeing his uncle, who, unbeknownst to Siragusa, was on the same flight and was arrested when an alert policeman recognized him in Palermo. The police then shipped the elder Callaci to join his nephew in Rome for criminal prosecution. Inquiries made in the U.S. turned up no leads, but the arrest of the Callacis opened the investigation up on the Italian side. Given the pressure to prove Mafia drug trafficking, Siragusa observed, "This case developed at an opportune time." Although he was reluctant to trust the Italian police, Siragusa found an effective partner in Capt. Guliano Oliva of the Guardia di Finanza. Working together, Siragusa and Oliva tracked the younger Callaci's movements in the days leading up his arrest

[81] Harassment quote is from Siragusa, Progress Report No. 6, dated February 17, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA. For Luciano's passport, see Siragusa, Progress Report No. 24, dated April 5, 1951. Luciano's passport was finally ordered seized in July 1952 by Giuseppe Dosi, the Italian Interpol representative. See State Department telegram from Siragusa to Anslinger dated July 2, 1952 in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA. Anslinger sent a batch of letters dated February 19, 1951, whose recipients included L. Ducloux (Secretary General, Interpol), P. Thornton (British Home Office), the Director of the Services de Police Judiciare (France), and B. Schneider (Chief, Federal Board of Public Health, Switzerland). In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

and discovered that he had placed several phone calls to Joe Pici, a well-connected trafficker and known associate of Luciano.[82]

Here at last was a hook upon which the Bureau could hang Lucky Luciano. Pici went into hiding after learning of the Callacis' arrest, but discrete inquiries confirmed that he was a high-level organized crime figure in the region and an active participant in the Atlantic drug trade. Desk clerks at the Hotel Manin in Milan, where Luciano was a frequent guest, also recognized his picture.[83] Better yet, Siragusa learned that local police had spotted Luciano in the company of Egidio Calascibetta. Finally, a picture of Luciano's trafficking network came into focus. "Everything seems to indicate that LUCIANO is verily the head of this combine," Siragusa reported. "PICI was he chief lieut; they purchase all their drugs from CALASCIBETTA (SACE) and SIMES. The loose ends are starting to tie in and most of our suppositions have turned out to be correct."[84]

But with the Italian press publicly linking the Callacis to Luciano and the relatively open style of investigation being run by Siragusa and Oliva, the Bureau's strategy backfired just as the case was coming together. Siragusa mollified himself, reasoning, "Even if we cant [sic] put him in jail we are at least putting the 'heat' on him."[85] Yet by the end of April, critical leads were drying up. Pici was officially in the wind—Siragusa called him "the most sought, hunted, and hounded man in all of Italy." Meanwhile, the attempt to get Calascibetta to sell to an FBN informant hit a snag when the trafficker refused all contact with Americans and shut down operations because he was "scared stiff." Siragusa, however, remained upbeat after identifying a number of important trafficking figures, and exclaimed to Anslinger,

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[82] In retrospect, Siragusa thought the anonymous tip leading to Callaci's arrest was likely from a competitor. At the time, Siragusa identified the nephew as a "typical New York City Italian rackateer [sic]," but in his memoir describes him merely as a relatively innocent janitor caught up in a Mafia scheme. Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 92–101. For Callaci (the elder) and Joe Pici's entries in the Bureau's "Mafia Book," see *Mafia*, 781, 828. For the actual case, see Siragusa, Progress Report Nos. 24-29, dated April 5 (-7) through April 11, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[83] See in particular Progress Report Nos. 28 and 29, dated April 10 and 11, 1951, in which Siragusa reported that Pici was likely a supplier for Albert Anastasia, held several passports and recently purchased a 1400 ton ship. Pici apparently intended "to make a million dollars and then retire forever from the narcotic business which was getting too risky." Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[84] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 34, dated April 19, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[85] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 27, dated April 9, 1951, Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

"THIS IS A HUGE CONSPIRACY." Luciano, Siragusa was convinced, was "the complete lord of the narcotic activities of these violators" and ruled the mob "with an iron hand." Continued investigation revealed a trafficking network spread across Italy, with regional lieutenants like Pici in Milan, Gaetano Chiofalo in Udine, and Nick Gentile in Palermo, all presided over by Luciano and shuttling untold amounts of heroin into the U.S.[86]

In the grand scheme of things, Siragusa was getting ahead of himself and Luciano managed to avoid direct involvement. Pici was not so lucky and was arrested in September 1951, but he was the most senior member of Luciano's organization caught by the investigation into licit diversion. Jailing Luciano was certainly a goal for the Bureau, but in a reflection of the way drugs were (and are) both a security and law enforcement concern, a more important objective was preventing heroin from reaching the United States in the first place, and that meant disrupting Luciano's network instead of waiting for an airtight legal case. This rationale was never explicitly stated by any Bureau agent or officials, but it was clearly an assumption that informed foreign operations. As his targets began to batten down the hatches, Siragusa explained:

> I do not aim to make any undercover case here because I think it is out of the question at this time. There is a virtual panic here, both in the instances of the criminal element, composed of those Italian-American deportees, as well as among the guilty wholesale and manufacturer registrant diverters . . . I believe that trafficking will be temporarily suspended here. I also think that this will be reflected in a temporary panic in the illicit market in the United States...

Eventually the Bureau learned patience, particularly with respect to Luciano. A few years later, Anslinger warned Siragusa to omit mention of Luciano "until we have him 'in the bag.'" In the short term, however, Luciano remained a useful figurehead and even if Siragusa's investigations in Italy failed to provide enough evidence for a conviction, they certainly provided ammunition for the Bureau's on-going public attacks and justification for continued foreign expansion.[87]

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[86] "All Italian Americans coming from the United States," Siragusa wrote, "get into immediate communication with either of these people or directly with LUCIANO if they are big enough and important enough to warrant his personal audience." Siragusa, Progress Report No. 36, dated April 21, 1951. See also Progress Reports 37 and 38, dated April 23 and 25, 1951. Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[87] Pici's arrest, on September 21, was relayed to Anslinger via State Department telegram on September 22, 1951. The "panic" quote comes from Siragusa, Progress Report No. 38, dated April 25, 1951. Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA. The "in the bag" quote comes from a memo from Anslinger to Siragusa dated February 24, 1953, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

For the next several years, Anslinger and FBN-sanctioned journalists cited Siragusa's investigations as definitive proof of Luciano's control over the Atlantic drug trade. In Anslinger's 1953 book *The Traffic in Narcotics*, he claimed these "notorious deportee gangsters of Italy" enjoyed "a virtual monopoly" over the heroin trade. After meeting with Siragusa in Rome, journalist Michael Stern wrote about Luciano's control over the drug traffic in both *True: the Man's Magazine* and the 1953 book *No Innocence Abroad*. He reminded readers that Luciano remained "as grave a menace to the American people as he was when he operated out of a tower suite in the Waldorf Astoria." These claims prompted some complaints from the Italian government and by mid-decade the Bureau began to scale back its public accusations as Anslinger acquiesced to diplomatic necessity and took his own advice to wait until Luciano was in the bag.[88] Questioned specifically about Siragusa's early investigations in Italy and asked to name names during a 1955 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Anslinger readily cited the activities of Calascibetta and Pici but declined to identify Luciano. He even began to request that journalists omit mention of Luciano while covering FBN efforts in Europe.[89] Luciano, it seems, had served his purpose. By 1955, the Bureau was firmly entrenched in the Rome office and the Italian government's reluctance to outlaw heroin production gave the FBN the talking points it needed.

The investigation of Luciano's activities in Italy was, however, a formative experience for the Bureau. In portrayals that bore the unmistakable stamp of the drug war, Anslinger and others continued to occasionally cite his purported trafficking organization as justification for a foreign office. *Life* magazine characterized Italy during this period as "the aircraft carrier of the narcotics traffic," and in *Brotherhood of Evil*, Sondern described Luciano's activities as "an internationally organized narcotics attack against the

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[88] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 11; Michael Stern, *No Innocence Abroad* (New York: Random House, 1953), 33 and Michael Stern, "Lucky Luciano Today," *True: The Man's Magazine*, November 1952, in Folder 17, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[89] See "Excerpt from Report of Proceedings Hearing held before Subcommittee on Narcotics of the Committee on the Judiciary; Illicit Narcotic Traffic, S. Res. 67," dated June 3, 1955, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA. Scripps-Howard reporter Andrew Tully worked with Anslinger on the controversial Bluebook article which mentioned Luciano even though Anslinger requested that "all references to Luciano be deleted." See letter from Anslinger to Tully dated March 10, 1955, in Folder "(1690-10 B) Bluebook Magazine," Box 70, RG 170, NARA. Anslinger also reportedly removed several references to Luciano from the draft of a 1957 *Saturday Evening Post* profile on Siragusa. See Anslinger to Siragusa, February 7, 1957, in Folder "(1690-10) Saturday Evening Post," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

United States which dwarfed everything that had gone before."[90] Not everyone was convinced. J. Edgar Hoover, in particular, dismissed the notion that national or international criminal organizations threatened the U.S., but the Bureau did catch the attention of Sen. Estes Kefauver, who saw the issue of organized crime as a major political issue and opportunity for a national platform.

Kefauver's Three-Ring Media Circus

On the heels of its investigations in Italy, the Bureau got a new chance to put its stamp on public perceptions of the Mafia when Anslinger, Siragusa and a number of other agents were invited to participate in the Special Senate Committee to Investigate Crime in Interstate Commerce, better known as the Kefauver Committee for its energetic chairman Democratic Sen. Estes Kefauver (D-TN). The Kefauver Hearings were a critical event in the history of American organized crime and the Bureau played a central role.

Running from the spring of 1950 into the fall of 1951, the Kefauver Hearings were essentially a traveling media circus dedicating to exposing organized crime in America. After a few closed sessions in Washington, the committee hit the road and official hearings were held in nearly every major U.S. city. It was the first occasion in which the American people were confronted with the specter of crime on a grand scale since the days of Prohibition. In *The Greatest Menace: Organized Crime in Cold War America* (2002), historian Lee Bernstein describes how the advent of television turned the event into a national spectacle. The New York hearings, held in March 1951, were particularly riveting and featured the testimony of well-known crime figures like Frank Costello and Virginia Hill (the paramour of murdered would-be Vegas tycoon Bugsy Siegal). Kefauver estimated the hearings captured an audience of 30 million Americans. Bernstein puts the figure at a more conservative 17 million. In either case, Bernstein points out, the Kefauver Hearings were the "most widely followed Senate hearings of the decade," and eclipsed coverage of the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg trial, as well as the audience for both the 1951 World Series and McCarthy-Army hearings. As the *New York Times* observed, "Housewives have left the housework undone and husbands have slipped away from their jobs to watch. The city has been under a

[90] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil,* 99; Herbert Brean, "Crooked, Cruel Traffic in Drugs," *Life*, January 25, 1960, in Folder 7, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

hypnotic spell, absorbed, fascinated, angered and amused."[91] The spell was cast, at least in part, by the Bureau, and its carefully honed image of organized crime reached not only critical Congressional allies but literally millions of Americans who were enthralled by the notion of a sinister conspiracy of crime led by the Mafia.

The timing could not have been better. Until a 1957 raid on a Mafia summit held in Apalachin, New York received national attention, J. Edgar Hoover remained deeply reluctant to acknowledge even the possibility of the Mafia, fearing it represented a failure of federal law enforcement or a threat to his bureaucratic empire.[92] The FBI's loss was the FBN's gain, and, during the Kefauver Hearings, Anslinger and company stepped into the breach and promoted the FBN's image as a cutting-edge international police force of equal importance to the better-known FBI. The hearings were also a chance for the Bureau to promote its view of the Mafia as an ethnically unified foreign transplant that posed a unique security threat through the subversion of American institutions and drug trafficking.

The Bureau found a ready audience for its message in Sen. Estes Kefauver, who drew on both Bureau personnel and expertise to conduct his investigation. Kefauver frequently lauded the FBN's contributions and called it the "leading authority on the Mafia, because of the Mafia's dominance in the dope trade."[93] A number of agents played central roles in the Committee's operations; Anslinger provided classified testimony in one of the Committee's first hearings, and agents George White, Charles Siragusa, Claude Follmer and Sam Levine all testified to the dangers posed by the Mafia and drug trafficking.[94]

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[91] Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace*, 62; Jack Gould, "The Crime Hearings; Television Provides Both a Lively Show and a Notable Public Service," *New York Times*, March 18, 1951, p. X13.

[92] The fallout from the Apalachin raid is widely discussed in Mafia literature and its extensive national coverage finally forced Hoover's hand. Playing catch-up, FBI agents quickly drafted an in-house monograph titled "Mafia" in July 1958. Echoing earlier FBN claims, the FBI study fixated on the Sicilian rather than American character of the Mafia and described it in now familiar terms as "a diabolical criminal philosophy, offering its adherents domain over crime in return for their souls." In terms of drug trafficking, the FBI described the 1950s as the "zenith" of Mafia influence and wrote that it "had acquired its monopoly of this racket through a long, deadly, but unpublicized [effort] launched as far back in the past as the late 19th Century." In other words, the FBI endorsed the well-established FBN view that Mafia was an alien parasite rather than an internal development, symptomatic of American socioeconomic trends. A mostly illegible copy is available at: Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Mafia," July 1958. Federal Bureau of Investigation Electronic Reading Room, "The Vault," http://www.fbi.gov/foia/ (accessed January 18, 2013).

[93] Sen. Estes Kefauver, "What I Found In the Underworld," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 7, 1951.

[94] Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace*, 66; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 167–188.

The dueling testimonies of Agent Sam Levine and Frank Costello during the New York hearings made for one particularly memorable moment. Costello's racket was gambling, but, with Luciano in exile, Costello assumed a leadership position and was often regarded as the political-minded "prime minister" or "czar of America's underworld." For two days, March 13-15, Costello faced tough questioning from Committee members eager to uncover his political connections. Reluctant to make himself a spectacle for the television cameras, Costello insisted his face not be shown. The cameras famously focused on his hands instead, and Costello's nervous fidgeting seemed to betray his guilt to captivated audiences. Toward the end of the second day, Costello abruptly quit, complaining of poor health. Following him on the stand, and providing a sharp contrast with the squirming gangster, was Agent Sam Levine. To protect his identity, the Bureau requested that he too have only his hands shown on camera. Levine was remembered by his colleagues as charismatic and "one of the most beloved agents in the Bureau." He tended to speak with expressive gestures and as one agent recalled, "I truly believe Sam could communicate most of his thoughts with his hands alone." Levine's composed testimony and "articulate hands" provided a clear distinction between the assured agents and the shifty mobsters.[95]

George White was one of the first agents assigned to the Kefauver Committee. In addition to his public testimony, White served as the lead investigator and "advance man" during the Committee's early travels across the nation. His contributions were singled out by Kefauver, who praised the agent as "an authority on the Mafia, whose work as an investigator for the committee was invaluable."[96] The Hearings provided the Bureau with both a captive audience and, with Congressional backing, new investigational authority, including a Presidential order to open the previously restricted tax returns of important mob figures. White was particularly interested in mob finances and recalled he "had to become a sort of accountant in order to unravel the true ownership of racing wire information services, lay-off books, and other forms of organized commercial crime." He also got the chance to dig back into the connection

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[95] The Bureau's investigations of Costello are detailed in Tully, *Treasury Agent*, 1–10. Costello and Levine's testimony are described in Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 39; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 179–181 and Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace*, 61, 77–78. See also Larry Wolters, "Gambling Boss' Hands Betray His Fears to TV," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 14, 1951; "Excerpts from Third Day's Proceedings Here In Senate Committee's Inquiry Into Crime," *New York Times*, March 15, 1951 and James A. Hagerty, "Costello Defies Senators, Walks Out of Hearing Here; Faces Arrest on Contempt," *New York Times*, March 15, 1951.

[96] Sen. Estes Kefauver, "What I Found In the Underworld," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 7, 1951.

between the Mafia and corrupt politicians, "with the result there were some sudden retirements," as he followed up on unfinished business from his Chicago days.[97]

White was not alone and other agents joined the Committee to make important—perhaps decisive—contributions. In May 1951, Siragusa came back from Italy to take over White's duties and brief the Committee on his experience in Europe.[98] As Bernstein notes in *The Greatest Menace*:

> The FBN became much more than a resource for the Kefauver Committee. Bureau agents provided committee members with lines of questioning and flowcharts to help them identify relationships between interstate Mafia organizations and international smuggling operations. Perhaps most important, by the inception of the committee in 1950, the FBN had already established a way of thinking about the Mafia that attracted Kefauver's interest along with that of a public drawn to the secretive world of organized crime.[99]

Historian John C. McWilliams goes even further, arguing the narcotics agents wielded a not altogether honest influence. "Given their unique positions with the Kefauver Committee," he contends, "White and Siragusa had the ability to choose targets and sway investigatory policy. They influenced the selection of individuals for hearings, manufactured data, testified as experts, and used each other as sources. In short these two FBN agents partially controlled the information process..."[100]

One of the subjects of greatest concern to the agents was the dueling images of Lucky Luciano as war hero and drug lord. During the New York hearings, the Committee heard testimony from both White and Charles Haffenden, the ONI officer who ran Operation Underworld. The two men gave conflicting accounts of the sequence of events that led the Navy to collaborate with the Mafia. White testified that the idea had originated with the Mafia and that he rebuffed an initial approach from an old-school mob figure and occasional informant named August Del Grazio, who offered Luciano's services to the OSS. By then in poor health and near the end of his life, Haffenden gave somewhat confused

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[97] Chalmers M. Roberts, "Crime Probe to Get Gamblers' Tax Data," *Washington Post*, June 13, 1950; White, "An address made before the Law Forum of Stanford University Law School," October 28, 1970, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers. When the Committee visited Chicago, White followed up on some old leads linking State's Attorney John S. Boyle to the Trans-American News Publishing racing service, which was a rival of the Continental Press service run by James Ragen, whose murder was investigated by White in 1946. "Link Boyle to Racing Wire," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 6, 1950.

[98] In a letter dated May 25, 1951, Siragusa informed Lt. Col. Vittorio Montanari (Commander of the Investigative Division of the Guardia Finanza) that he had returned to the U.S. to serve as the Chief Investigator for the Kefauver Committee. Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[99] Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace*, 66. See also organizational charts prepared by George White in Folder 17, Box 1, White Papers.

[100] McWilliams and Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954," 183.

testimony but took pains to clarify that a letter he sent to Dewey's office suggesting that Luciano had provided "great" assistance to the Navy was merely his opinion and not an official Navy position. He also claimed the idea to collaborate with the Mafia in monitoring the waterfront came from the New York District Attorney's office and not his own intelligence shop.[101]

None of this discussion made it into the Kefauver Committee's Final Report, which was intended as a summary of the Committee's findings and a list of policy recommendations. In fact, the Final Report didn't even bother to refute the existence of Operation Underworld and Luciano was only mentioned in a detailed discussion of his Italian drug trafficking operation. During the hearings, Siragusa was able to air the results of his investigations in Italy without the troublesome technicalities of a legal trial, including the arrest of the Callacis, their connection to Luciano and the problem of diversion from Italian narcotic manufacturers. Nearly all of Siragusa's charges were repeated verbatim in the Final Report, which blamed "the present influx of heroin from abroad" on the network "managed by the Mafia with Charles 'Lucky' Luciano, notorious gangster, vice king . . . as the operating head." When asked under oath if Luciano was the kingpin of the Mafia, Siragusa replied that he was at least "one of the royal family."[102]

In the end, the Kefauver committee endorsed the FBN's views without reservation and the Final Report (later revised as Kefauver's 1952 book *Crime in America*) gave them a Senatorial rubber stamp. Organized crime was national in scale, present in both large cities and "Main Streets throughout America." The Mafia was described with the familiar monstrous imagery, complete with "tentacles [that] reach into virtually every community throughout the country." Drugs—"an evil of major proportions"—were central to the mob's activities. "World-wide in scope, the Mafia is believed to derive the major source of its income from the distribution and smuggling of narcotics," the report claimed. Addiction was "a contagious disease which brings degradation and slow death to the victim and tragedy to his family and friends." And the cause of the nation's drug problem was attributed solely to the arrival of drugs smuggled from foreign lands. In his own writings, Kefauver continued to promote the Bureau line and warned in a *Saturday Evening Post* article that "America has come to the saturation point of criminal and

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[101] James A. Hagerty, "Costello Defies Senators, Walks Out of Hearings Here; Faces Arrest on Contempt," *New York Times*, March 16, 1951; Campbell, *The Luciano Project*, 265–9.

[102] U.S. Senate, *Final Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce* (United States Printing Office, Washington: August 31, 1951). For Siragusa's testimony, see also Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 184-187.

political corruption which may pull us down entirely." The chief embodiment of this threat was the Mafia, which he called "the cement that binds organized crime." Many of the crimes committed in America, he continued, are "not isolated, self-contained local activities," but are coordinated by a "loosely organized, but cohesive" national crime syndicate "guided by an evil coalition." Finally, Kefauver twice repeated one of the Bureau's most conspiratorial charges and called the Mafia an "outlaw government-within-a-government" and a "secret international government-within-a-government" whose drug trafficking "saps the strength of America, cheats us of our rights and freedom."[103]

Given the Committee's unambiguous endorsement of FBN positions, it's no surprise that the Final Report was highly laudatory of the Bureau itself. The agents were commended for "serving long hours in . . . the most hazardous type of enforcement work." The Report also noted the agency was "pitifully undermanned considering the enormity of the task assigned to it" and suggested that an increase in personnel and resources would allow the FBN to "do more than any other force toward stamping out the illegal importation and sale of narcotic drugs."[104]

This was great publicity for the Bureau at a time when Anslinger sought to enlarge his force and expand FBN jurisdiction. In *The Greatest Menace*, however, Bernstein concludes that the Kefauver Committee promised much but delivered little of genuine substance. The Final Report was full of tough rhetoric but failed to conclusively prove the existence of the Mafia. "Estes Kefauver and his committee won few short-term political victories," he notes. "Of the 221 crime-related proposals the senators submitted for legislation, only a handful passed and federal courts dismissed or reversed on appeal most of the committee's cases..." The 1951 Boggs Act, which introduced federal mandatory minimum sentencing standards for narcotics violations, was a "major victory" for the FBN and a significant milestone in the genesis of the drug war, but it was also the only real legislation passed as a result of the investigations. "Ultimately," Bernstein concludes, "it was the glitz that became the lasting contribution of the Kefauver Committee."[105]

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[103] "Cement" comment quoted in Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 106; See also Sen. Estes Kefauver, "What I Found In the Underworld," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 7, 1951.

[104] U.S. Senate, *Final Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce*.

[105] Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace,* 81-2.

The "glitz," however, was important. It left a lasting impression on Americans and the Bureau's high-profile involvement with the Committee nicely complimented its growing stature in true-crime literature. As Bernstein notes, the convergence of television and politics meshed seamlessly with the "infotainment" produced by the Bureau. Television was a democratizing medium and allowed American citizens, regardless of geography or social standing, to witness events like Costello's trembling hands with their own eyes. In the specific case of the Mafia, testimony before the Committee, Bernstein writes, "allowed the public to learn about the social and economic costs of organized crime by causing them to reconsider previously held notions about the innate pathology of Italian American criminals within the context of concerns about conformity, communism, and 'fronts.'" While the Kefauver Committee may have produced few tangible results, it did capture the attention of the American people. Part of that fascination was with the mysterious agents who fought the menace of organized crime. In a conclusion that is particularly germane to the figures like George White and Charles Siragusa, Bernstein contends that the Kefauver Committee's was an early hybrid of news and entertainment and meant, "The public experienced the Kefauver Committee, true crime literature, popular fictional representations, and law enforcement as overlapping and reinforcing visions of criminality and legality."[106]

On this count, the Bureau was rather pleased with the results. In *Brotherhood of Evil*, Sondern summarizes Kefauver's efforts: "The colossal job of charting the underworld of the United States took him a year, 52,000 miles across the whole country and cost approximately $250,000. But never has an awakening of the American public cost so little." Sondern described the Final Report, not as a list of unrealized goals, but as "one of the most shocking indictments of an American city and its government ever put on paper."[107] While the existence of the Mafia may not have been demonstrated in a court of law, the Bureau was confident it had succeeded in the far more important court of public opinion. Together, the FBN and Kefauver planted the image of a subversive government of crime that remained dominant for years to come.

An additional legacy of the Kefauver investigations was the continued collaboration between the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and Congressional investigative committees. Bureau agents went on to

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[106] Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace,* 78-9, 63, 73, 64.

[107] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 168, 181, 187.

assist legislative inquiries led by Sen. Price Daniel in 1955 and partnered with Robert Kennedy to investigate labor rackets under the leadership of Sen. John McClellan in 1958.[108] These connections deepened the cooperation between the FBN and Congressional leaders—a relationship that Anslinger adeptly used to his bureaucratic advantage—and ensured the continued dissemination of the Bureau's particular brand of analysis.

The King is Dead

For the remainder of the 1950s, the Bureau used Luciano as the antagonist against which it shaped the dangers of the dope menace. Blaming Communist China for supplying the drug trade was useful in geopolitical situations, but the Mafia presented a danger that was both here and abroad and Luciano remained a top target for the agents of District 17. Ironically, the former mob boss managed to outlast Siragusa in Italy and the agent was brought home to take a headquarters job in 1958.

In fact, Siragusa never again got as close to Luciano as he did in the spring of 1951. The following year, the Bureau calculated that, between 1948 and 1951, 600 kilos of heroin were diverted from legal Italian sources and smuggled to the U.S. A chemist working for the pharmaceutical company Schiapparelli named Carlo Migliardi (the supplier for middlemen like Calascibetta and Morganti/Melli) was suspected of diverting an estimated 423 of that total 600. Yet even as Siragusa came across rival trafficking organizations, he continued to insist Luciano was behind it all. "The Sicilian Mafia had a virtual monopoly over all the diverted heroin which they supplied to the organized Mafia narcotic gangs of principal east coast, mid-west and west coast American cities. The internationally notorious Salvatore Lucania alias Charles Lucky Luciano, through his deportee gangsters in Italy, controls this traffic," he wrote in a 1952 report for Anslinger's public use. A significant component of this traffic, however, was an organization run by Frank Coppola, described in Siragusa's memoir as "an arch competitor of Luciano." The case made against Coppola's organization was even celebrated at the "Green Trunk Case" and used to pressure the Italian government into outlawing the legal production of heroin.[109] Later agents of the

[108] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 224–235; Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, Chapter 21.

[109] Siragusa, report dated March 20, 1952, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159. In a memo to Anslinger dated June 28, 1955, Agent Paul Knight provides exact figures for the heroin and morphine base diverted into black market channels by Migliardi, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. See also "Italy Halts Dope Output of Big Firm," *Washington Post*, February 15,

Bureau complained the focus on Luciano was a product of bureaucratic politics rather than a reflection of the actual trafficking scene. As former agent Howard Chappell observed to journalist Douglas Valentine, Siragusa "played up to the Old Man" and "made a career out of writing memos about Lucky."[110]

Discrediting rumors of Luciano's war aid remained a top priority. While a steady drumbeat of government officials from the Navy and OSS continued to deny that Luciano contributed anything of substance, the Bureau embarked on what John C. McWilliams and Alan Block describe as a (potentially criminal) disinformation campaign. Anslinger and his top agents, they claim, gave perjured testimony to the Kefauver Committee and did everything in their power to discredit both Luciano and Dewey. As part of this strategy, the Bureau surfaced rumors in a 1952 magazine article by Michael Stern that Luciano made payoffs to Haffenden, Dewey and Republican party officials. Siragusa provided Stern with a memo on the subject based largely on "underworld gossip" of questionable reliability. The ostensible reason for all this skullduggery, McWilliams and Block speculate, was that the Bureau was "helping to build the cover for military intelligence's co-operative endeavors with organized crime."[111] Given the importance of Luciano to the Bureau's cultural script and drug war myth-making, McWilliams and Block now appear slightly off the mark. This was not, as they describe it, an "anti-Dewey operation." The target was always Luciano; smearing Dewey by undermining the rationale for Luciano's pardon was simply collateral damage. Bureau agents also suggested that the compulsory prostitution charges upon which Luciano was convicted were rather thin and that Dewey wanted the gangster out of the country before, George White confided to a friend, "suborned witnesses threatened to blow the whistle," a charge repeated in Feder and Joesten's *The Luciano Story* (1954).[112]

1953, p. M3. Additionally, see Siragusa and Weidrich, *The Trail of the Poppy*, 92-101; Tully, *Treasury Agent*, 105-6; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 130-131.

[110] Emails from Howard Chappell to author Douglas Valentine, dated January 22, 1994 and May 1, 1994, in Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection.

[111] McWilliams and Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954." In a letter dated July 24, 1952, Siragusa informed Anslinger that he provided information to Stern, including an August 15, 1951 report prepared by Agent Joseph Amato on the subject of Luciano's payoffs. In Folder 13, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. See also Michael Stern, "Lucky Luciano Today," *True: The Man's Magazine*, November 1952, available in Folder 17, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

[112] Letter from George White to John [Ehrlich, an attorney based in San Francisco], dated January 25, 1955. White contends that Dewey's "sensitivity" on the subject of Luciano's pardon was due to the weak legal case on which he was convicted and that rumors of wartime collaboration were a ruse

The exact circumstances of Luciano's pardon will remain murky and controversial but ultimately have more to do with Dewey than Luciano. In many ways, Dewey was an innocent bystander in all of this. The plan to use Luciano to secure the cooperation of the Mafia came from the partnership between Haffenden at ONI and "Socks" Lanza at the Manhattan waterfront. After the war, the whole thing got dumped in Dewey's lap when Luciano came up for parole with a deportation order already in his file alongside Haffenden's note that cited unspecified contributions. As Thomas Reppetto summarizes, "Whatever the explanation, by 1946 Dewey had transformed himself from racket buster to politician, and in that capacity his interests were better served by a free Luciano 3,000 miles away than one carrying on a high-powered campaign to obtain release from a New York State prison cell."[113]

Dewey was also not without resources of his own. In 1954, he authorized New York State Commissioner of Investigation William B. Herlands to lead a secret inquiry into the whole affair. The actual results of Operation Underworld are ambiguous at best; the general consensus is that the Mafia did help secure the Manhattan waterfront and prevented a potentially damaging strike organized by union activist Harry Bridges, but contributed little to the invasion of Sicily. Herlands was able to document the fact that Operation Underworld actually took place, a conclusion that should have vindicated Dewey. But all of this remained unknown to the public because the Navy demanded secrecy in exchange for its cooperation. As Dewey himself explained, "Since the Navy allowed the officers to testify only with the expressed wish that the report not be made public, I never released it." As a result, Herlands's inquiry was kept under wraps until 1977 when Dewey's estate authorized the publication of *The Luciano Project: The Secret Wartime Collaboration of the Mafia & the U.S. Navy* by Rodney Campbell.[114]

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to ease Luciano out of the country. In Folder 1, Box 3, White Papers. In *The Luciano Story* (1954), Sid Feder and Joachim Joesten observe "there has never been one syllable of proof that Lucky, himself, extorted money from a prostitute or madam, or that he, personally, procured a girl for a bawdyhouse." They don't dispute that Luciano leant his name and authority to the organization of New York's prostitution trade, but note that the three most important witnesses all recanted their testimony after the trial (140, 163-164). The recanted testimony is also acknowledged in Newark, *Lucky Luciano: The Real and Fake Gangster*, 133-134.

[113] Reppetto, *American Mafia*, 179. See also Edward T. Folliard, "Navy Explodes Lucky Luciano 'War Hero' Myth," *Washington Post*, April 2, 1950, p. B1.

[114] Campbell, *The Luciano Project.* In particular, see pages vii-ix and 1-19 for an explanation of both the Herlands Investigation and the circumstances surrounding the publication of the book.

In the meantime, the FBN still had a kingpin to chase. The closest the Bureau ever got to Luciano was an on-again, off-again deep cover operation featuring FBN Agent Sal Vizzini as the slightly crooked U.S. Air Force Major Mike Cerra. For the better part of three years, 1959 to 1962, Vizzini shuttled between Istanbul, where he led FBN efforts in Turkey, and Naples, where he worked undercover to gain Luciano's friendship during the final years of the gangster's life. The Bureau spent countless hours and resources trying to uncover Luciano's influence with the American Mafia and control over the international drug trade. Vizzini claimed Luciano's "tentacles were long and his influence powerful" but failed to provide the Bureau with any real evidence of his criminal associations or activities. The best the agent was able to do in the three years he spent in and out of Luciano's company was to obtain some marked American currency used by agents in New York for an undercover buy, which indicated that Luciano still received tribute from the American Mafia. "The king might be in exile," Vizzini concluded. "But it was now absolutely clear that the king wasn't dead."[115]

Not yet, anyway. The Bureau lost its arch-nemesis when Luciano suffered a fatal heart attack in the Naples airport on January 26, 1962, bringing Vizzini's investigation to an abrupt conclusion.[116] Luciano died in the arms of a man named Martin Gosch, a would-be producer trying to develop a book or film based on the mobster's life story. Although American Mafia chieftains quietly opposed the endeavor, Gosch's account emerged as the error-filled *The Last Testament of Lucky Luciano* (1975). An FBI memo sent to J. Edgar Hoover a few months later indicated that narcotics agents were still working on Luciano's ties to the drug traffic "but all indications are that the case will be closed with no startling developments."[117] Vizzini's three-year investigation, the Bureau's most successful and sustained undercover operation run against Luciano, ultimately uncovered little. Luciano took most—but not all—of his secrets to the grave.

Comparing the image of Luciano constructed by the Bureau with the real Luciano is a difficult task and there's little certainty in the history of crime. Throughout Luciano's years in Italy, the Bureau insisted that he was the "lord" of the Atlantic heroin trade. Even at the time, there were hints that this was, at best,

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[115] Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 84.

[116] Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 203–217; Newark, *Lucky Luciano*, 255–256.

[117] See Newark, *Lucky Luciano*, 261-267, for analysis of Gosch's work. The FBI memo is quoted on page 256.

an overstatement. Luciano remained a respected figure in the American Mafia and received "tribute" payments during his forced retirement in Italy. But Lucky was no drug baron, possessed little authority or influence in Italy and was not taken seriously by Italian gangsters.[118] Luciano's life in Italy was comfortable but hardly affluent, and it was certainly a step down from the days when he was installed in Manhattan's Waldorf-Astoria. At best, Luciano functioned as an organizer or facilitator. He remained a person who, for a cut, could make introductions and get people together in a room—an interpretation that comes through between the lines of many FBN reports even as the agents typed platitudes about Luciano's kingpin status.

Tim Newark's *Lucky Luciano: The Real and Fake Gangster* (2010) is one of the most recent attempts to sort fact from fiction. As the title suggests, Newark argues that, for a time, Luciano actually did enjoy a status approximating "the multimillionaire king of the New York underworld," but his power and influence took a hit with his 1936 arrest and were totally diminished following his eviction from Cuba. At that point, Newark contends, he was "a fake master criminal without real power, his evil reputation manipulated and maintained by the government agents who put him behind bars." Newark argues that, even at the height of his influence, Luciano was actually moving away from a kingpin role and, with the formation of the Commission, "had abandoned a dictatorial vision of organized crime and settled on something more discreet and collaborative." Ironically, it may have been the Faustian bargain struck by the Navy that convinced U.S. officials that Luciano really did rule a kingdom of crime. "From this point onward," Newark writes, "government agencies would always regard Luciano as the underworld kingpin and this view of him would continue long after the war ended—whether it was true or not." Even before Luciano's deportation from Cuba, Rodney Campbell points out in *The Luciano Project*, his celebrity status "made him useless within the organization as everything he did attracted too much heat." Indeed, Luciano's discovery in Cuba nearly derailed Lansky's carefully laid plans to turn Havana into a mob-financed entertainment Mecca.[119]

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[118] Thomas Reppetto records, "According to historian Luigi Barzini, he was laughed at by genuine Italian mafiosi, who constantly cheated him." Reppetto, *American Mafia*, 180. Newark similarly observes that if Luciano had real influence, he would have been better equipped to deal with the Italian police. Newark, *Lucky Luciano*, 213.

[119] Newark, *Lucky Luciano*, xi–xii, 56-71, 223, 158; Campbell, *The Luciano Project*, 89–110; English, *Havana Nocturne*.

The ultimate irony of Luciano's life, Newark contends, was that even as officials like Anslinger spun tales of his secret power, Luciano was subject to forces beyond his control. "He was reputed to head a massive transatlantic network," Newark writes, "but, in truth, Luciano was being used by government agents to justify their own bloated law enforcement budgets. It was a complex conspiracy in which Luciano—the fake master criminal—became the victim of far bigger powers around him."[120] Here Newark is a little off; the FBN's budgets were far from bloated and Anslinger kept appropriations low as a bureaucratic survival strategy. But whether it was a New York prosecutor or the Commissioner of Narcotics, portraying Luciano as a criminal mastermind and government action as necessary to meet the threat buttressed support for state power while depictions of sinister conspiracies led by criminal masterminds necessitated the existence of organizations like the Bureau of Narcotics as bulwarks of American values and, ultimately, American security.

The image of a kingpin is often a misleading one, but it has an important function. In *Smuggler Nation* (2013), Peter Andreas argues that if the "image of an octopuslike network of crime syndicates . . . matched reality, the challenge to law enforcement would be actually far less difficult: one would need only to cut off the head of the octopus and the tentacles would die with it."[121] Throughout the history of American drug control—a framework that can reasonably be pushed into Prohibition—a succession of "kingpins," from Arnold Rothstein, Al Capone, Eli Eliopoulos, Lepke Buchalter and Lucky Luciano, all the way through to Khun Sa and Pablo Escobar, have been identified by U.S. law enforcement or security forces and neutralized. Yet the fall of the "beer barons" did nothing to stop the flow of alcohol during Prohibition and the capture or isolation of various drug lords has done little to impede the international drug traffic. Kingpin imagery actually risks making law enforcement efforts look worse; as Andreas suggests, if it's as simple as taking out one guy, why hasn't the problem been solved? Since this tendency toward constructing kingpins appears ineffective yet supersedes any one individual, agency or time period, it's worth asking: why does it persist?

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[120] Newark, *Lucky Luciano*, xi–xii.

[121] Andreas, *Smuggler Nation*, 334. In both *American Mafia* and *Bringing Down the Mob*, Reppetto observes that part of the Mafia's strength was is its corporate structure and the fact that it didn't depend on a few charismatic leaders, noting, "Lucky Luciano and Al Capone led corporate organizations. If the leader went to prison, the organization continued." Reppetto, *Bringing Down the Mob*, 193.

Ultimately, kingpin images are the product of hidden assumptions and the need for simplicity. The image of a drug lord renders all the complexities of the drug trade into an easily delivered package and reinforces the notion that the drug problem is a essentially a one of supply and not the more complicated and ambiguous issue of demand. Kingpins demand little self-reflection, only an enemy to destroy. In the context of Luciano and the FBN, the public had little time or inclination to absorb the complexities of licit diversion or the shifting terrain of the drug traffic, but a drug-dealing monopoly run by Luciano complimented public expectations and reinforced ethnic and class prejudice. Kingpin imagery is cyclical, reinforcing the very assumptions that create it. Reppetto explains: "The belief in a hidden Mr. Big who really ruled the mobs was in part a class issue—how could immigrants or kids from the wrong side of the tracks become so successful?"[122] Kingpin imagery also plays on and emerges from what Richard Hofstadter identified as a discernible "paranoid style" of American politics: "a way of seeing the world and expressing oneself" that reflects "the way in which ideas are believed and advocated rather than with the truth or falsity of their content." The Bureau's portrayal of Luciano and the Mafia, laden as it was with dire warnings about subversion and hidden influence, clearly falls into what Hofstader described as the central image of a "vast and sinister conspiracy."[123] In other words, kingpins simultaneously render the mysteries of the criminal underworld tangible (by singling out one mortal individual) and intangible (by evoking complex criminal conspiracies). This framework is incredibly useful in a bureaucratic context.

Above all, however, kingpins serve to identify enemies and reinforce a security worldview. For the FBN, Luciano put an instantly recognizable face not only on Mafia drug trafficking but also on the nascent American drug war; he helped the Bureau draw the lines. Though the FBN never caught him (in some ways he was more useful as a free man), Anslinger and his agents were very pleased with the influence of their portrayal. When *Brotherhood of Evil* was published in 1959, glorifying a decade of international drug control and the Bureau's war on the Mafia, Sondern practically crowed, "The Boys aren't going to like this a bit. It will, I think, be the biggest publicity blast that ever hit them."[124] Such portrayals incorporated the FBN into the Cold War and comparisons between the Mafia, the drug traffic

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[122] Reppetto, *American Mafia: A History of Its Rise to Power*, 158.

[123] Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, 3–5, 29.

[124] See generally Folder "(1690-10) Reader's Digest," Box 73, RG 170, NARA. Sondern's remark is quoted in a letter to Anslinger dated November 15, 1958.

and communism were often explicit. One of the most frequent claims about the Mafia was that it represented a "government within a government," a framework adopted by the Kefauver Committee and others. As Lee Bernstein notes, this was "rhetoric that both defined insiders and excluded outsiders, much like the anticommunist crusade taking place as the same time..."[125] Widely read writers like Lait and Mortimer echoed the Bureau in describing the Mafia as both a "well-organized and semi-sovereign state" and "an international conspiracy, as potent as that other international conspiracy, Communism..."[126] And finally, there was Anslinger's warning that drugs could serve as a "political weapon" and allow the communists and Mafia to "make narcotics a new 'sixth' column to weaken and destroy selected targets in the drive for world domination."[127]

Many of these claims were clearly a product of their time and place, but the Bureau's focus on Luciano—the manner in which it constructed a kingpin—had a determinative influence on the agency itself and ultimately, the future of drug control. The focus on kingpins remains an obvious component of modern drug control and is symptomatic of the stubborn adherence to supply-side solutions; government focus remains fixed on traffickers and producers, while alleviating the conditions leading to drug abuse is left almost entirely to private initiative. In its day, the Bureau spent considerable time and energy managing public narratives of Luciano specifically and the drug war more broadly, which, in turn, shaped actual counternarcotic operations. The problem of licit diversion in Italy was significant in the early 1950s, but it paled in comparison to the volume of drugs moving through the Turkey-Marseilles-New York pipeline later dubbed the "French Connection" and as early as 1948 the agents knew that Turkey was the real source of supply in the region. In other words, the politics of constructing a kingpin played a greater role in determining where the Bureau focused its initial efforts abroad than actual counternarcotics strategy. This, too, remains an important legacy of early international drug control as politics continue to impede an effective solution to America's drug problem.

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[125] Bernstein, *The Greatest Menace*, 67.

[126] Lait and Mortimer, *U.S.A Confidential*, 21; Lait and Mortimer, *Washington Confidential*, 218.

[127] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 295.

Chapter 6. Charlie Siragusa and District 17, Part 1:

The Drug War Goes Abroad

There were times when Charles Siragusa rued the life of an undercover agent, like in September 1950, when he got stuck working a dead-end case in Athens. A rising star in the FBN, Siragusa was on assignment in Europe with the understanding that if he could make cases abroad (particularly one on Lucky Luciano over in Italy), he would get his own office in the region. But for now, the agent was going nowhere fast. Posing as "Cal Salerno," a New York gangster looking for a European heroin connection, Siragusa spent the last days of summer on a week-long bender with Anastasio Voutsinas, an Athens jeweler reputed to be one of the biggest drug traffickers in the city. For five days in a row, the two met for idle chit-chat over seemingly bottomless glasses of whiskey and brandy. "I think he plied me with liquor in an effort to assure himself that I was o.k.," the agent surmised. Voutsinas was the "very personification of geniality" but got evasive whenever drugs came up. "We have drank countless cognacs together and swapped numerous obscene stories. He appears to completely trust me, but he will not sell me heroin," Siragusa complained in a report to Anslinger, perhaps through the fog of a hangover. Finally cutting his losses, Siragusa decamped for Beirut and parted company with Voutsinas, promising to keep in touch and send him penicillin and "obscene photographs."[1]

Siragusa's stop in Athens was part of a series of tours through what would soon be known within the Bureau as District 17: a region encompassing Europe, the Middle East and Africa. The establishment of District 17 was a critical—though largely unacknowledged—milestone, not just for the Bureau, but also in the wider history of American drug wars. It was the first time American police agents were stationed on foreign soil with the specific mission of drug control. From that moment on—September 1951—an American foreign drug enforcement presence continued to expand, with source control serving as the central counternarcotics strategy around which the foreign drug war is organized. Today, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) maintains 86 foreign offices in 67 different countries.[2] The history of those outposts and of America's foreign drug war date back to Charles Siragusa and the establishment of

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[1] See Siragusa, Progress Reports 25-28, dated August 31-September 6, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[2] "Foreign Office Locations," Drug Enforcement Administration website (http://www.justice.gov/dea/about/foreignoffices.shtml, accessed January 27, 2014).

District 17. Ever thereafter the U.S. has kept federal agents on foreign soil to fight the drug war "at the source."

The war on drugs is often said to begin with Richard Nixon in 1971, partly in reaction to the cultural battles of the 1960s.[3] But that narrative overlooks significant continuity between the actions of the FBN and subsequent control efforts, particularly when it comes to foreign enforcement, which makes the foundation of District 17 a tempting, if historiographically heretical, starting point for the "war on drugs." Although the U.S. had long supported a counternarcotics policy of source control, District 17 represented the dawn of a new era in which policymakers like Anslinger believed they could directly implement American policy solutions abroad instead of relying on diplomacy and moral suasion.

Due partly to neglect and the recent declassification of many FBN records, the history of District 17 has received little scholarly attention and remains largely untold until now.[4] This chapter and the next describe how the establishment of District 17 and subsequent expansion of FBN operations throughout the world inaugurated an American global drug war. America's early efforts to fight the drug war abroad reveal much about the history of drug control and American foreign policy more broadly. Law enforcement is an inherently sovereign priority and the arrival of American agents was a potentially major political challenge to host nations, requiring diplomatic finesse and a light touch from the agents, who,

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[3] Robert Young, "Nixon Declares War on Narcotics Use in U.S.," *Chicago Tribune*, June 18, 1971; "Excerpts From President's Message on Drug Abuse Control," *New York Times*, June 18, 1971. See also Edward Jay Epstein, *Agency of Fear: Opiates and Political Power in America* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977); Michael Massing, *The Fix* (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998).

[4] Given that the FBN has received relatively little scholarly attention, the foreign offices established in 1951 (and thereafter) have received even less. The Bureau's police actions abroad receive some attention in John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990) and Alan Block and John C. McWilliams, "On the Origins of American Counterintelligence: Building a Clandestine Network," *Journal of Policy History* 1, no. 4 (1989): 353–372. In *Cops Across Borders: The Internationalization of U.S. Criminal Law Enforcement* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 129–139, Ethan Nadelmann also provides brief account of the Bureau's foreign offices. More recently, in *The Drug Wars in America, 1940-1973* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Kathleen Frydl details aspects of foreign enforcement but maintains a largely domestic focus. The main impediment to a history of foreign enforcement under the Bureau has been the limited availability of official records. In recent years, however, both country and correspondence files have been declassified and provided a closer look at the Bureau's activities abroad. See also Ryan Gingeras, "Poppy Politics: American Agents, Iranian Addicts and Afghan Opium, 1945-80," *Iranian Studies* 45, no. 3 (May 2012) and Ryan Gingeras, "Istanbul Confidential: Heroin, Espionage, and Politics in Cold War Turkey, 1945-1960," *Diplomatic History* (Advanced Access, May 13, 2013).

Siragusa noted, functioned as the "roving ambassadors of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics."[5] Source control and international enforcement were part of a larger effort to project American influence abroad and bring foreign nations—particularly troublesome "producer" or "transit" nations—into line behind policies that American officials assumed were a universal aspiration: defeat of the dope menace. Fighting a foreign drug war was yet another reflection of the persistent American belief that security lay in global leadership. As Anslinger argued, "the United States will always have to lead—if for no other reason than self-protection."[6]

Ultimately, the history of District 17 reveals a mixed record of success. Within the U.S., the Bureau consolidated support for source control and a foreign policy solution to the drug problem. Abroad, the Bureau facilitated greater cooperation between international police agencies and developed a better (though still incomplete) picture of the global drug trade. The presence of narcotic agents was challenged by local authorities more often than not. Despite frequent political conflicts and international turf battles, however, the Bureau steadily expanded the reach of its operations, first opening satellite offices throughout District 17 and establishing new FBN Districts in Latin America (District 16) and the Far East (District 18) in 1962. The impact of these offices on the actual drug trade is debatable, but the fact that they remain—many of them to this day—reveals the undeniable impact of the Bureau on drug control policy and counternarcotics strategy and shows that the FBN at least succeeded in its goal of making source control an international norm, even if it failed to stop the traffic at its source.

Early Challenges: Beirut, 1950

Before making its bid for a foreign office, the Bureau had to demonstrate that source control—and FBN agents operating on foreign soil—could work. Fresh off of his World War II accomplishments, Anslinger thought the new era of American predominance would offer new opportunities to the Bureau. Between 1948 and 1951, he sent his most effective undercover agents on several "foreign tours" to open investigations throughout Europe, the Mediterranean and Middle East. In 1948, George White was the first agent sent abroad and his (mis)adventures subsequently became part of Bureau lore. Even though

[5] Charles Siragusa and Robert Weidrich, *The Trail of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia* (Prentice Hall, Inc.: Englewood Cliffs, NJ), 144.

[6] Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946, Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

busts in Istanbul, Marseille and Rome had a negligible impact on the international traffic, White's colorful escapades were useful in building support for international drug control. During a break between assignments with military intelligence, Garland Williams went over for a brief tour in February 1949 and spent most of his time liaising with high-level foreign officials (which often meant brow-beating those he found lacked enthusiasm), negotiating local production agreements and studying the regional traffic. In March 1950, the Bureau sent Benny Pocoroba, an accomplished undercover agent, to target Mafia traffickers in Trieste and Italy. And finally, after a two-month stop in Puerto Rico to train local police forces, Siragusa was the fourth agent to arrive on the scene.

Anslinger assigned Siragusa a combination of duties and gave him overall supervision of the FBN's efforts in the region. Although he worked cases, Siragusa's larger task was to collect intelligence and study the regional traffic. He began in Istanbul, but it was an inauspicious start. Turkish officials were resistant to the idea of another FBN agent running amok in their city after the White episode and declined several FBN requests to return an agent to the city. Under pressure from the State Department, however, the Turks agreed to allow Siragusa to visit, provided he abide by a set of strict guidelines—the most important being that he (unlike White) keep his presence "completely secret" and do nothing without the supervision of Turkish police.[7] Siragusa arrived in late July 1950, nearly two full years after White's departure, but he received a decidedly tepid reception and found any potential cases obstructed by Istanbul police chief Kemal Aygun, who feigned cooperation but quietly thwarted all of the agent's efforts to develop undercover investigations.[8] Siragusa's next stop was Athens, where he was stymied by the hard-drinking but wily Anastasio Voutsinas. The string of setbacks continued to Beirut, a city that illustrated the multitude of challenges facing the early foreign drug war.

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[7] The conditions are set forth in a telegram from the Ankara Embassy dated June 27, 1950 in State Department CDF, 1950-1954, 882.53 (Box 5433), RG 59. See also Warwick Perkins (U.S. Embassy, Ankara) to Secretary of State, April 14, 1950; and letter from E.H. Foley Jr. (Acting Secretary of the Treasury) to George Morlock (State Department, Division of United Nations, Economic and Social Affairs), dated April 25, 1950, and Anslinger to Morlock, July 11, 1950, in Folder "(0660-A) Special," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[8] For Siragusa's stay in Istanbul, see Progress Reports No. 1-21, dated July - August 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," 1950, RG 179, Entry 9, Box 164, NARA. See also Ryan Gingeras, "Istanbul Confidential: Heroin, Espionage, and Politics in Cold War Turkey, 1945-1960," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 4 (September 2013): 779–806.

On the afternoon of September 8, 1950, Siragusa hurried to keep an appointment at the American Embassy. But as he left the dim confines of the Victory Bar, a waterfront dive frequented by sailors and roustabouts from a nearby oil pipeline, all the agent could think about was the food roiling his tender stomach. The plan was a simple one: acting on intel in Bureau files, Siragusa was to meet with proprietor Artin Geudikian, get a quote on six kilos of opium and then turn him over to the local authorities for arrest upon delivery. Geudikian was a Fagin-like character to a small army of knife-fighting street urchins, adolescent pimps and teenage pickpockets that operated in the neighborhood and his garrulous boasting seemed to confirm that he had connections in the Beirut underworld; he knew which Customs and police officials could be greased with a little bribe money (*baksheesh*, the locals called it) and, for the right price, he could acquire all kinds of drugs: hashish, opium, heroin, whatever his clientele sought.

When approached the previous night by the undercover agent, Geudikian was eager to do business and asked Siragusa to return the following afternoon. Intent on impressing his new business partner, Geudikian insisted on making a big lunch of steak, potato and eggs. Siragusa arrived to the horrific scene of Guedikian busily preparing this feast on a small gasoline stove set up in a sink immediately adjacent to a "wall urinal which was in constant use" by his teenage minions. Guedikian exhibited "great pride" in the meal, so Siragusa choked back his bile and sat at an "equally filthy table to dine," where the men were joined by a (presumably crooked) police captain in civilian clothes. The agent dutifully picked at his food and managed to get his quote: $70 U.S. dollars per kilo of raw opium or $1500 for heroin. But when Siragusa finally typed up the day's events, he was morose: "I am merely describing these irrelevant details," he wrote, "to illustrate the hardships I am suffering for the sake of duty. Between the extremely unsanitary food I am eating and the bad liquor I am consuming, I will undoubtedly contract our occupational disease—ulcers."[9]

Siragusa's meeting at the Embassy did little to improve his mood. That same afternoon, diplomats Robert Stanger (the Embassy's top political officer) and Paul Tenney (Chief Assistant of the American Legation) sat the queasy agent down for a crash course on the realities of Lebanese politics.

[9] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 29, dated September 9, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. See also Jonathan Marshall, *The Lebanese Connection: Corruption, Civil War, and the International Drug Traffic* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012), 14-16.

Under no circumstances, they stressed, was Siragusa to arrest any Lebanese nationals—Geudikian included. The Lebanese government, they revealed, had little love for Uncle Sam. U.S. recognition of Israel, cavalier treatment of other Arab states and refusal to lend aid under the Marshall Plan had all created serious resentment, even "contempt," and the Lebanese would look with "extreme disfavor upon any act covert or overt" by the Bureau. Any arrest, the diplomats cautioned, could end with a dead agent and Lebanon in the Soviet orbit. Tenney pressed Siragusa to keep his cover intact at all costs—or he might "conveniently disappear."[10] Of course, another way the diplomats could have described the situation would have been to say that Lebanon, an independent nation for going on seven years, insisted upon its sovereign rights and would actively resist any American attempt to claim extraterritorial powers.

But there were also more practical concerns, and Stanger and Tenney warned Siragusa that Beirut's thriving drug trade was also under the protection of top government officials. A prominent politician named Sabri Bey Hamede, for example, was the both the President of the Chamber of Deputies (the unicameral Lebanese parliament) and "the richest and biggest landowner in the Bekaa district," a major center of hashish production. Hamede occasionally ordered showy suppression campaigns, but the destroyed crops always seemed to belong to his rivals. So far heroin was a relatively minor problem, the diplomats noted, but hashish, a highly concentrated and potent form of marijuana resin, was woven into the very structure of the Lebanese economy. Stanger and Tenney estimated that the government drew at least 15 percent of its total revenues from the hash trade.[11] In *The Lebanese Connection: Corruption, Civil War, and the International Drug Traffic* (2012), Jonathan Marshall observes that hashish was like the "petroleum of Lebanon" and historically one of the country's most lucrative exports, rivaling silk, olive oil and tobacco. Cyrus Schayegh similarly notes the drug trade's importance in spurring both state and economic development. In short, there were deep structural components to the regional traffic.

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[10] "He has convinced me and I fully intend to return home vertically," Siragusa wrote. Progress Report No. 29, dated September 9, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[11] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 29, September 9, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. Some of this was news to Siragusa, but the Bureau had received reports on the state of the Lebanese drug scene from State Department officials since at least 1945. One confidential report, dated July 21, 1948, outlined the growth of the hash trade and participation of influential politicians like Hamede. U.S. official Bruce Kuniholm observed that "it would take a minor revolution to break up the gang which is now operating in the Lebanese hashish market." Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

Marijuana cultivation in the Bekaa valley, Marshall points out, followed "feudal traditions of Lebanese agriculture" and replicated longstanding political, economic and even social relationships.[12]

The historical and social conditions leading to drug use and an active black market were not totally lost on the agents. In Beirut, Siragusa noted that the sharp class divide and absence of a middle class created both a "fertile ground for breeding Communism" and an incentive to participate in the lucrative regional traffic. He also reported on the permissive drug culture and observed that there was "absolutely no stigma attached" to hashish, which the locals gave the playful nickname "bubbly-bubbly" for the water pipes in which it was typically smoked.[13] Rather than a reflection of differing cultural perspectives, however, the agents often interpreted tolerance for drugs or the involvement of local powerbrokers like Hamede as a sign of the venality of foreigners. This cultural bias led the agents to overlook signs of political corruption within the American system (as well as, according to Al McCoy, CIA ties to the heroin traffic) and bred an attitude dismissive of long-term social and political trends.[14]

Despite the admonition to make no arrests, Siragusa stuck around to see what else he could learn about the situation in Lebanon. The day after meeting with Stanger and Tenney, Siragusa rejoined Artin Guedikian for a night on the town. Geudikian took the agent a few miles outside of Beirut to a restaurant owned by a friend. The three men retired to a scenic balcony and discussed the nightlife and price of various drugs while Geudikian proceeded to roll two very large hash cigarettes. Heeding Tenney's warning to maintain his cover, Siragusa reported, "I was compelled to take a few 'drags' but put on a good show." Siragusa pocketed the remainder of his reefer and told Geudikian he would keep it as

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[12] Marshall, *The Lebanese Connection*, 14-32; Cyrus Schayegh, "The Many Worlds of Abud Yasin; or, What Narcotics Trafficking in the Interwar Middle East Can Tell Us About Territorialization," *The American Historical Review* 116, no. 2 (April 2011): 273–306. Schayegh's essay focuses largely on the question of "territorialization" and argues that the development of trafficking networks and a modern Lebanese state was a mutually constitutive process.

[13] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 29, dated September 9, 1950, and Report No. 3, dated July 26, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA

[14] Siragusa, for example, complained of Hamede's "avariciousness" and the "rank" corruption of Turkish opium monopoly officials in Ankara. Siragusa, Progress Report No. 29, dated September 9, 1950, and Report No. 3, dated July 26, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. See also Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade*, Revised (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2003); Daniel Weimer, *Seeing Drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and U.S. Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969-1976* (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2011); Walker, *Drug Control in the Americas*, Revised (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989); and Walker, *Opium and Foreign Policy: The Anglo-American Search for Order in Asia, 1912-1954* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

a sample—which was true, but Geudikian probably never imagined it was intended for FBN labs. Though he chafed at the inability to make arrests, Siragusa readily agreed to accompany the amiable Geudikian on a road trip into the Bekaa valley, where they saw the marijuana fields up close and visited another friend who was sitting on a massive stash of opium and hashish. Along the way they encountered a farmer who posed for photographs as Geudikian and Siragusa took turns brandishing a pistol. The agent's time in Beirut convinced him the drug scene was "wide open." As was often the case in these early years, Siragusa railed against the diplomatic and political constraints that prevented him from making cases. "I am powerless," he complained, not for the first time. "The unbelievable situation here enables me to understand what tremendous quantities of narcotic drugs and hasheesh reach our shores, and there is very little we can do to stop it!"[15] Most of the hashish was bound for Egypt and not the U.S., but Siragusa was right about the lack of control.

Fortunately, his luck improved in Italy and Trieste, where the discovery of Italian pharmaceutical diversions provided a critical opening for the Bureau. Siragusa's initial foray into Beirut, however, indicated the array of diplomatic, political, social, cultural and economic obstacles faced in implementing American-style drug control abroad. Whether despite or because of these challenges, however, the FBN persisted and the successful creation of District 17—the Bureau's first official foreign outpost—was a pivotal moment in the history of American and international drug control.

Headquarters: Rome

The period immediately after World War II was a time of general belt-tightening as the Truman administration scaled back the spending of the war years, so the Bureau initially faced an uphill battle in returning to its prewar budget. Anslinger scored a strategic victory when his old friend Charles Dyar was chosen to set up a drug control regime in occupied Germany.[16] In the short term, however, the Bureau lacked the resources to take on the role of a global narc. In March 1947, (just as Luciano was kicked out

[15] Siragusa, Progress Report Nos. 29-32, dated September 9 - 16, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164. See also Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, which includes the photographs taken with Guedikian. Each is in RG 170, NARA.

[16] Although Germany was not a major focus of District 17, having a reliable ally and FBN veteran like Dyar appointed as a Narcotics Officer with the Public Health Branch of the Office of Military Government for Germany was a useful connection. Dyar was appointed in October or November of 1947 and served until his death in August 1951. See letters from Dyar to Anslinger dated November 8 and 20, 1947 and a letter from Customs Agent Francis X. Di Lucia to Anslinger dated October 19, 1951 in Folder 15 and 18, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

of Havana) the two men discussed establishing an official FBN presence in Europe, but knew they would have to overcome Congressional foot-dragging. As he watched the House Appropriations Committee slash the Customs budget for foreign inspectors, Anslinger feared the worst. "Our funds are so low that we couldn't even send an agent across the border from El Paso unless he walks," Anslinger told Dyar. "To send someone to Paris . . . would just about take our whole appropriation."[17] Fortunately, Anslinger had influential allies, and he later credited Helen Moorhead, a drug control expert at the Foreign Policy Association, and Congressional ally Gordon Canfield (R-NY) with helping secure the funding necessary to send agents to Europe.[18]

The foreign tours conducted between 1948 and 1951 were the Bureau's first close look at the traffic in Europe and the Middle East. Throughout their travels, the agents found a wide assortment of drugs readily available for both consumption and smuggling, and they gradually pieced together a picture of the regional drug trade: poppy crops raised in the hinterlands of Turkey and Iran were processed into raw opium by local brokers, then sold to larger traffickers for refinement in clandestine labs located around major trade centers like Istanbul, Milan and Marseille, and were finally shipped as heroin to North America via any number of smuggling routes believed to be under the control of the American Mafia. By the 1960s, this well-established Middle East-to-Europe-to-America pipeline was known to as the "French Connection," but during the 1950s it remained only loosely organized. The agents consistently exaggerated Luciano's role, but Anslinger felt the well-publicized busts made in connection with Italian pharmaceutical diversion had demonstrated "that we could most effectively halt illicit narcotic traffic by maintaining offices overseas and thus block shipments of drugs before they could be loaded aboard ship

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[17] Congressional determination to scale back on all non-military spending initially created a great deal of confusion about whether the FBN, Customs or the Foreign Service would take the lead in foreign drug enforcement. In a letter to Anslinger dated March 24, 1947, Dyar noted, "Tall rumors are heard relative to the consequences of the slash in Customs budget. Some say the foreign service will be done away with entirely; others say the present skeleton staff will be maintained..." In a reply dated April 1, 1947, Anslinger confirmed, "Customs took an awful walloping from the Appropriations Committee." Both Customs and the FBN, Anslinger worried, were going to be "out of the running until more money shows up." in Folder 18, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[18] In a letter to American diplomat Herbert May, dated March 17, 1950, Anslinger mourns the passing of Moorhead and writes that "She was always willing to go out of her way to do things that we could not very well accomplish in our official capacity . . . One of her fairly recent actions was getting us $16,000 from the Appropriations Committee to send agents abroad. You have no idea how this helped us out." Folder 15, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. See also a letter dated September 20, 1954 from Anslinger to Canfield, thanking the Congressman for his help in increasing the Bureau's appropriations budget, in Folder "(280-1) Bureau Operations, 1931-1954," Box 48, RG 170, NARA.

or plane for the United States."[19] In order to get District 17 up and running, however, the Bureau had to firmly establish its presence in the region and choose a headquarters—a process that revealed a great deal about the complicated realities of international drug control.

Nearly every city visited by the agents seemed ripe for a Bureau office. Given the importance of Persian and Turkish poppy, both White and Williams favored a Middle Eastern focus. In Tehran, White found that opium dens were "about as difficult to locate as New York speakeasies during prohibition" and reported to Anslinger, "Situation here requires full time Bureau representative for proper treatment." White also thought Istanbul might be the true "hot spot of the world" and well-suited to an FBN outpost.[20] During his 1949 tour, Williams was struck by the scene in Tehran. He estimated that Iran was home to over one million opium addicts. In Tehran, there were just over 160,000 addicts serviced by an estimated 250 to 500 opium dens. Williams found that addiction was "not confined to any particular social strata" and quipped to White that proof of drug use in Tehran was "like getting evidence that they are selling rubbers in New York." As in the U.S., Williams associated drug use with deviance and noted the dens were patronized by homosexuals, "child prostitutes" and even infants who became addicted "at their mother's breasts." Reports of smuggling to and from Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Turkey and other neighboring countries seemed to confirm that Iranian opium reached the regional traffic and Williams thought the "weakness" of the Shah and central government were major contributing factors. Moreover, just as Siragusa would discover in Beirut, the Iranian poppy industry was protected by large landowners, including the royal Pahlavi family.[21]

As was often the case, Williams took all of this as proof of the need for American leadership—specifically, his own. The first step, he wrote, would be to appoint "an informed and energetic person" to advise the Iranian government and work out a regional control system. The 1953 CIA-engineered coup

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[19] Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 140.

[20] White, State Department cables to Anslinger, dated May 1 and 9, 1948, and report dated June 10, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[21] See undated letter (February 1949) from Williams to White and entries January 26, February 1, February 4, February 9 and February 11 in a document titled "Letters from Garland H. Williams to H.J. Anslinger, Commissioner of Narcotics Regarding The Narcotics Situation in the Near East," in Folder 7, Box 1, White Papers. See also a February 1, 1949 report from Williams to Anslinger, titled "Opium Addiction in Iran," Folder 16, Box 2, Anslinger Papers, and the contents of Folder "12 June 1955 letter from Knight in Paris to Siragusa in Rome," which discussed the suspected trafficking activities of Mahmoud Pahlavi, brother of Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, in Box 4, Valentine Collection.

drew Iran firmly into the American orbit and two years later, the Shah banned the recreational use and production of opium. Some authors have suggested Williams may have played a role in the coup. The FBN did have ties to the CIA, but there's little evidence to indicate that he took part in the operation. From 1957 to 1961, Williams did serve as a State Department police advisor and helped reform the Iranian drug control system in accordance with American expectations, but his often imperious manner sometimes complicated relations with foreign governments. "Williams smacked of official Washington," Anslinger observed, "and the police over there, like their governments, took a dim view of Washington venturing into places where it was not only unwelcome but not overtly tolerated either."[22]

The resurgence of the international heroin trade after WWII was due primarily to the recovery of the global economy, but the Bureau tended to scapegoat local governments for lax control over what the Americans saw as a deadly commodity. When he encountered a display featuring opium production at the Turkish Ministry of Commerce, for example, Williams lectured his hosts that it was "a shameful thing" to promote "a drug that the world considered a menace" and "terrible to profit from the destruction of others." Following his 1949 tour, Williams painted a dire picture. "Those governments are so unreliable and their motives are so contrary to ours, that they will never regulate themselves," he wrote. "Now that the Middle East is kicking over the last of Anglo-Saxon control, I expect the flood gates will be open wider than ever before."[23]

Indeed, governments throughout the region were often quite resistant to what they saw as an American intrusion into a largely domestic concern. White's bust in Turkey resulted in spectacular press

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[22] "Letters from Garland H. Williams to H.J. Anslinger, Commissioner of Narcotics Regarding The Narcotics Situation in the Near East," in Folder 16, Box 2, Anslinger Papers; Nathaniel Lee Smith, "'Cured of the Habit By Force': The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970" (Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007), 216–223. Both Smith (218n51) and McAllister (*Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 307n227) speculate that Williams was involved with the 1953 CIA-sponsored coup that overthrew Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh. There is no direct evidence in FBN records that Williams was involved in the coup, which took place during his controversial appointment to the IRS. There is also no mention of Williams in Iran's country files during the summer of 1953, nor anyone matching Williams's description in accounts of the coup like Kermit Roosevelt *CounterCoup: The Struggle for Control of Iran* (McGraw Hill, New York: 1979) or Donald M. Wilber, Central Intelligence Agency, *Clandestine Service History: Overthrow of Premier Mossadeq of Iran November 1952-August 1953*, CS Historical Paper No. 208 (written March 1953, published October 1969). Had he any involvement, Williams almost certainly would have been identified in Wilbur's classified CIA study. Anslinger is quoted from Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 107.

[23] Letter from Williams to Anslinger, dated February 18, 1949, in Folder "(0660) Turkey #4, 1949-June 1950," Box 25, RG 170, NARA; and letter from Williams to Anslinger, dated October 12, 1951, in Folder 14, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

for the Bureau but hampered relations with the Turks for years to come. French officials likewise showed little patience for American meddling and Siragusa's experience in Beirut indicated that cooperation would not soon be forthcoming from the Lebanese government either. The only places the Bureau could count on total cooperation were in occupied territories like Trieste and West Germany (as well as Japan, which was important to the Bureau because of its proximity to Communist China). But even in Italy, where the FBN enjoyed the most tangible success during these early years, Bureau agents often encountered disinterest in the broader problems of the international drug trade.[24]

The establishment of the Rome office demonstrated the importance of political considerations. While the Bureau's initial efforts in the Middle East were greeted with muted but active resistance, the pharmaceutical investigations in Italy and focus on Luciano came at an opportune time and, as Williams observed, put "a fire under the Italian police." After defeat in WWII, he claimed, Italy was eager to "reestablish herself in the community of Nations."[25] Siragusa similarly took lax pharmaceutical controls and the presence of the Mafia as proof that the Bureau required a "permanent base" in the region and argued, "It is necessary for one of us to direct operations, give orders, see that things get done."[26]

During the pharmaceutical and Mafia investigations run throughout 1950 and into the summer of 1951, the Bureau applied pressure to the Italian government both on the ground and at the UN, where Anslinger pointed out huge disparities in the amount of narcotics produced by Italy and its neighbors.[27] Siragusa reported a noticeable change in attitude after working directly with Italian police and health

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[24] In *NarcoDiplomacy: Exporting the U.S. War on Drugs* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), H. Richard Friman argues that cooperation with U.S. drug control often turned on questions of capacity or compliance. States capable of meeting U.S. drug control demands typically faced political pressure to carry out their responsibilities while states lacking the capacity to enforce drug control were targeted for greater U.S. involvement.

[25] Letters from Williams to Hank Manfredi, dated July 12, 1949, and Anslinger, dated April 15, 1949, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder #2," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[26] The "permanent base" quote comes from Siragusa, Progress Report No. 6, dated February 17, 1951, In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159. The "direct operations" quote is taken from Siragusa, Progress Report No. 45, dated October 16, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[27] In a letter dated October 4, 1950, Anslinger asked Colonel "Clem" Sharman, an FBN ally and the Canadian Delegate to the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, to "hold up the Italian estimates until we complete these cases" and pointed out that Italy anticipated producing 150 kilos of heroin, whereas France anticipated producing only 50 kilos, despite having a population of roughly the same size. In a letter dated November 17, 1953, Siragusa provided Anslinger with additional statistics to use against Italy at the UN. See Folders Folder "(0660) Italy, 1950, Folder #3," and "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

officials, who, he said, were "doing their utmost" to remove "the stigma which has been placed upon the Italian Government." After a few successful busts and exposure to FBN law enforcement methods, Siragusa thought the "cops are being increasingly narcotic conscious" and, in the midst of the Pici manhunt, he reported that "present circumstances here auger well for our type of vigorous enforcement. I feel happy in the conviction that our assignment has already paid its way."[28]

In May 1951, Siragusa returned to the U.S. to brief the Kefauver Committee on his work in Italy. Much of Siragusa's evidence was circumstantial, but it was enough to convince the American public and legislators that Italian negligence contributed to the American drug problem. The Committee's final report, released in August 1951, portrayed heroin going directly "from the back door of the factory in Italy to addicts' blood" in America. When Siragusa returned to Rome in September, it was as Supervisor of the newly created District 17. Now safely ensconced in the U.S. Embassy in Rome, he promised to "keep beating the drum" for a ban on the production and use of heroin.[29]

Although Siragusa briefly considered locating the FBN office in Milan, where much of the Italian pharmaceutical industry was based, practical considerations favored the selection of Rome. The Italian capital was a convenient travel hub, which eased logistics for investigations scattered throughout the region. The Bureau could also make use of State Department facilities at the Embassy and the heads of the various Italian national police agencies were all close by. Italy also had one further advantage; despite what the Bureau viewed as lax local control, there was comparatively little local drug use compared to Turkey, Iran or Lebanon. Italy was what's known in the business as a "transit" rather than a "producer" or "consumer" nation. To demonstrate progress, all the Bureau had to do was shut off leaks from the Italian pharmaceutical industry and disrupt the Mafia trafficking networks, a comparatively simpler task than imposing changes on the deeply entrenched poppy agriculture and broad cultural, social and economic trends that produced drug use in Middle Eastern cities.[30]

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[28] Siragusa, Progress Report Nos. 26 and 34, dated April 5-7, and April 19, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[29] Siragusa to Anslinger, September 10, 1951, Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA; U.S. Senate, *Final Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce* (United States Printing Office, Washington: August 31, 1951); and Harold B. Hinton, "Luciano Rules U.S. Narcotics From Sicily, Senators Hear," *New York Times*, June 28, 1951, p. 1.

[30] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 6, dated February 17, 1951, and Progress Report No. 34, dated April 19, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159. In an earlier report, filed while Siragusa

Rather conspicuously missing from this account, of course, are the Italians and limited access to foreign archives presents a challenge in reconstructing the history of FBN relations in each host country. It's entirely possible that Italian archival sources would tell a rather different story and would at least provide valuable insights on the response of the Italian government to the Bureau's efforts. FBN records include a great deal of correspondence with various Italian officials, but the files are quiet on the specific terms of the FBN presence or any Italian debate on the matter, as are American State Department records. Italian officials were, however, definitely consulted and Siragusa was issued new credentials by the Italian government upon his return.[31]

Giuseppe Dosi, the Italian representative to Interpol, played a key role. To put it generously, every Bureau agent who encountered Dosi considered him an eccentric and a threat to the operational security of any investigation. Working around his office became a delicate dance about which the agents frequently complained. Anslinger preached patience, and reminded Siragusa, "it was his acquiescence which originally allowed us to place you in Italy." Dosi was part of the deal and Anslinger explicitly warned Siragusa not to "antagonize" him. "Dosi may be irrational and unpredictable," Anslinger lectured, but "if his Interpol connections can help keep from you the onus of a 'meddling Yankee' that is worth some special effort on your part."[32] A few years later, Treasury official Malachi Harney briefed Ambassador Clare Booth Luce as she prepared to take up her duties in Italy and explained that while "the active participation of American agents in police work in a foreign country was a delicate matter," the FBN had utilized "UN connections and prestige, treaty background, and . . . some protective coloration from

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was still with the OSS, the agent observed that drug use in Italy was mostly confined to the entertainment world and criminals. See Siragusa to Anslinger, February 5, 1945, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder #1, Sept. 1927-Dec. 1947," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[31] In a letter to Anslinger dated September 10, 1951, Siragusa reports that he has received new official credentials which he anticipated would "make for smooth sailing and precludes several instances which occurred during my last trip when local police stations in the hinterlands refused to give me certain data." In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

Documents held in State Department records held in RG 59 (General Records of the Department of State) and 84 (Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State) provide some additional insights, but Turkey appears to be the only country where State Dept personnel regularly and independently reported on American drug control efforts.

[32] Regarding Dosi, see letters from Anslinger to Siragusa, dated October 23, 1951 and September 18, 1951, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

INTERPOL" to open the Rome office, where Siragusa now enjoyed "good official acceptance from Italian authorities."[33] The legal arrangement was rather vague and that's precisely how the Bureau liked it.

Although the Italian government publicly welcomed the Bureau, there was some resentment about the FBN's portrayal of the country as a platform for drug smuggling to the U.S. The drumbeat of accusations concerning Luciano were particularly irritating to the Italian government and Siragusa's testimony before the Kefauver Committee finally prompted the Italian Embassy to politely ask the FBN to put or up shut up. Noting that "rigorous investigations conducted by the Italian Police" had failed to uncover Luciano's criminal activities, the Embassy requested that the Bureau present hard evidence to Italian judicial authorities.[34] Officials from the Italian Public Health Commission, which was responsible for regulating the legal trade, were often rather prickly and defensive with the agents. One even suggested that the Italian drug trade was run not by the Mafia but by American communists.[35] Police officials, meanwhile, bristled at the Bureau's claim that "deportee gangsters" controlled the drug trade and complained that Italy was treated like an American "penal colony."[36]

Part of FBN strategy revolved around shaming other countries into accepting an FBN presence or increasing their own control efforts. Due to its role in WWII, Italy was more vulnerable to international pressure than most, but in each country there was a danger in going too far and the language used to discuss drugs was so laden with moral arguments that it was difficult to avoid giving offense. After

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[33] Memorandum from Harney to Anslinger, dated March 17, 1953. Harney reported that "Mrs. Luce seemed very interested and sympathetic to the problem." In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[34] See statement by the Italian Embassy, dated September 20, 1951, forwarded to Siragusa by Anslinger in a letter dated October 10, 1951, available in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159 and Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[35] The official was Giovanni Battista Migliori, the Italian Public Health Commissioner from 1951 to 1953. "U.S. Reds Said to Run Europe Drug Traffic," *New York Times*, August 30, 1951, p. 3. In a letter to Anslinger dated September 13, 1951, Siragusa reports his intention to visit Migliori and investigate the claim. In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[36] In a letter dated June 20, 1952, Siragusa reported on a conversation with Dr. Gerlini, a high-ranking Italian police official, who informed him that "the high echelon of the Italian police resented the connotation of the word 'deportation' and 'deportee' . . . and naturally resent the insinuation that Italy could be construed as a penal colony." Frank Kelly, "Italy Shuns Ban on Narcotics Despite U.S. Deportation Drive," *New York Herald Tribune*, December 17, 1952. Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

dealing with initial Italian resentment over the Bureau's portrayal of Luciano, Siragusa became more attuned to the required political balancing act and explained:

> I have created the understanding at the outset that a new office of the Bureau has been established in Rome, which will be used as a headquarters for Europe and the Middle East. I have been very careful not to infer that all of my activities are restricted to Italy—that I am sort of a watch-dog . . . I do not wish to offend the Italians.[37]

The agents continued to grumble about the lack of Italian commitment and the slow pace of reforms in the Italian pharmaceutical industry. But in a pattern typical of each country into which it expanded, the Bureau switched from condemnation to praising Italy's cooperation once the Rome office became well-established.

"Don't Wear Spats"

The creation of District 17 was an important achievement for the Bureau, but it had humble origins and, for the first few years, Siragusa was something of a bureaucratic nomad. Bounced around between different Embassy properties, he later remembered the period as one when the office was "headquartered mostly in my briefcase." *Brotherhood of Evil*—a book that was half paean to District 17—romanticized a shoestring operation: Siragusa "wrote his meticulous reports on a battered old portable, kept his individual records in shoeboxes, and caused one important arrest after another with the seizure of enormous quantities of narcotics before they reached the American market."[38]

The details of these cases are lost unless they were set aside as material for true-crime stories, but it's clear from extant FBN records that Siragusa was a busy man.[39] In October 1951, he was joined by Hank Manfredi, the Army CID Agent who worked on the Luciano investigations. After transferring to the Bureau, Manfredi split time between Rome and Trieste, and (when not on loan to the CIA) became one of the most valued and experienced agents of District 17.[40] The Bureau rotated a handful of other agents (like Jack Cusack and Mike Picini, both of whom later became Supervisors) through the office for

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[37] Letter from Siragusa to Anslinger, dated September 17, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[38] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 135.

[39] In addition to routine casework and correspondence, the records of Siragusa's extra-curricular work on East-West trade issues are voluminous. See Box 8, Entry 10 (Classified Subject Files), RG 170, NARA.

[40] "Henry L. Manfredi Dies at 54; Aide to Narcotics Bureau Head," *New York Times*, January 8, 1970.

undercover roles, but Siragusa quickly decided he needed more men. "It is imperative, if Bureau finances can withstand it, that a fourth agent by assigned here," he wrote in July 1952. "We have an enormous amount of work. It becomes increasingly difficult for me to coordinate the field activities of our staff, handle the administrative duties, and perform field work . . . with only three officers, including myself."[41] Successful cases were central to the Bureau's future in Europe but were time consuming and the District 17 staff was often pulled taught between the demands of undercover investigations, administrative challenges and a general lack of hard intelligence about the regional and international drug traffic.

Much of the office's early success was due to Siragusa personally, who served as the District Supervisor from September 1951 until July 1958. The job was a tough one and most of its challenges revolved around the unique nature of the assignment. Siragusa characterized the agents of District 17 as "roving ambassadors of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics," but they weren't quite diplomats and Anslinger explicitly warned him, "Don't try to wear spats." They were American cops a long way from home, with a vaguely defined authority and deeply ambiguous position. As Siragusa remarked, "My present 'neither fish nor fowl' status has had its disadvantages..."[42] There were so many political and bureaucratic sensitivities involved, on top of the challenges of developing and running criminal investigations in foreign lands, that the job of District Supervisor was often a high-wire act. Anslinger, however, had great expectations (and rare affection) for Siragusa. "You are on this job because you have been able to balance intelligence and aggressiveness with discretion," he wrote. The balance between cop and diplomat was a tricky one, but Siragusa promised he would do his best and avoid "the social whirl."[43]

One of the challenges, as noted above, was to promote the FBN's image as a vigorous and increasingly global police force without giving offense to host nations, and Siragusa often struggled to

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[41] Siragusa to Anslinger, July 15, 1952, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[42] Siragusa and Weidritch, *The Trail of the Poppy*, 144; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 135; letter to G.W. Cunningham dated July 29, 1955, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[43] Anslinger is quoted in a letter to Siragusa dated September 18, 1951. In a letter to Harney dated November 12, 1951, Siragusa wrote: "I am enjoying my work as much as ever and hope that it will continue to be as productive as in the past. I have purposely avoided the usual pitfalls that Foreign Service people fall prey to, as for example getting involved in the social whirl . . . I have alerted my wife to notify me the minute she detects the slighted trace of an Italian accent in my English." In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165 and "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

check his jingoistic attitude. Right from the start, he was prone to politically damaging statements like: "It is necessary for one of us to direct operations, give orders, see that things get done."[44] Although it was partly a reflection of his enthusiasm for the Bureau's emerging foreign enforcement program, that kind of language tended to exacerbate tensions over an already sensitive issue. "In deference to the fact that we are guests in a foreign country," one Bureau official dryly remarked, "statements indicating that you are taking charge of foreign police should be avoided."[45] Siragusa's élan was undoubtedly one of his virtues as a narcotic agent, but his headstrong attitude periodically got him into trouble, as when Anslinger chided him for announcing the creation of the Rome office before the Italians had officially signed on. Malachi Harney, then supervising all Treasury law enforcement, similarly remarked of Siragusa's tendency toward dramatic overstatement, "...we have sometimes been concerned because Siragusa will occasionally set out as an unequivocal statement of fact, something which is probably only an allegation from what he considers to be a reliable source."[46]

The ambiguity of the FBN's status also created complications for Embassy officials. Upon his return to Europe in September 1951, Siragusa was fortunate to share the voyage with Outerbridge Horsey, the acting Resident Minister of the Rome Embassy, who agreed to provide him with office space.[47] He also received valuable cooperation from Norman Schute, a State Department security officer who helped in an unofficial capacity with a number of investigations, though Siragusa cautioned FBN

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[44] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 45, dated October 16, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[45] "Better to say," G.W Cunningham corrected him in a letter dated April 25, 1951, "'Following my suggestion, the police did etc.'; rather than, 'I instructed the police etc.' We here, of course, clearly understand what you are required to do but in view of the fact that copies of these reports may circulate outside the Bureau a careful line should be followed." In Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[46] See letter from Anslinger to Siragusa, September 18, 1951. See Siragusa to Leonard N. Caswell, September 20, 1955, and Harney to B.T. Mitchell, November 18, 1955. Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[47] Siragusa to Anslinger, September 10, 1951, Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159. For the location of the Rome office see memos prepared by Siragusa and dated October 28, 1952 and October 27, 1953, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. After October 1953, the address for the office was Room 330, Embassy Annex, Via Veneto #62, Rome, Italy.

officials to keep his assistance a secret.[48] The agents ran a constant risk of wearing out their welcome. In April 1951, for example, Schute warned Siragusa that Bureau officials in Washington had disseminated documents sent via State Department cables; "if this leaks out to the State Department," he cautioned, "they will raise hell for possible compromise of secret codes." Siragusa again stressed the need for discretion: "It's a serious matter and may lead to cutting off use of Foreign Service facilities."[49] Anslinger and other Bureau administrators appreciated the assistance rendered, both formal and informal, and were quick to send adulatory letters to maintain goodwill.[50] With a background in the State Department, Anslinger was well aware of the sensitivities involved and took the importance of discretion to heart, down to the fine details like the unauthorized use of Embassy letterhead.[51]

The agents often encountered a mildly schizophrenic reception from Foreign Service Officers. Informally, State Department personnel were almost uniformly ready to lend a helping hand, make introductions, maintain communication with informants, pass intelligence and news clippings, and sometimes even take part in investigations. Officially, however, the diplomats worried that Foggy Bottom would frown on these activities. One good example is William Canup, an American Vice-Consul stationed in Marseilles, who assisted George White during his 1948 tour. Acting mainly as an interpreter, Canup accompanied White throughout his investigations in the city and participated in arrests. But when the publicity hungry agent proposed writing up an account of their adventures, Canup asked White to leave him out. Although the thought of their escapades appearing in "a detective magazine is amusing," Canup cautioned, "my activities might cause embarrassment to the Government should the French find out what

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[48] Schute's assistance, and desire to keep it confidential, are mentioned in Siragusa, Progress Report No. 27, dated April 9, 1951, and a letter to Anslinger dated September 10, 1951, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[49] Siragusa, Progress Report No. 36, dated April 21, 1951, Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA. Siragusa elaborates: "I have been unusually diplomatic with people in the Foreign Service and repeatedly express my thanks for the facilities they put at my disposal, especially cable messages. I have been told on numerous occasions that I impose a burden upon their code clerks with the volume of work I give them, but I soften them with plenty of praise, etc."

[50] G.W. Cunningham, one of Anslinger's top assistants, wrote to Schute on June 1, 1951, "We realize that the visits of our officers on these expeditions make many demands on an office which already has its hands full with the daily routine. Our agents have commented on unvarying courtesy and very effective assistance which is extended to them. For this we are most grateful." Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[51] Anslinger to Siragusa, September 27, 1951, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

Vice Consuls are capable of doing at Marseille." In a postscript that testifies to the kind of foreign relations sometimes carried out beyond the view of the capital, Canup repeated his warning to exercise caution "in transmitting any of my information to your bosses. This letter, for example, is full of references to and criticisms of the French judicial system, which are not very politic. Don't let anything get into the wrong hands."[52] When the cooperation was informal and off the books, however, most U.S. government personnel were willing to assist the Bureau in its mission of preventing dangerous drugs from reaching American shores.

In the summer of 1955, Siragusa sought to resolve some of these issues by requesting formal diplomatic status. He explained that he had been careful to heed Anslinger's advice: "I have yet to wear 'spats' nor do I think I ever will," he wrote, but complained that his poorly defined status hampered relations with the Rome Embassy, other American diplomatic outposts and foreign police services. Siragusa argued that diplomatic status would cut a few operational costs, but his real motivation was to gain broader authority in his various dealings. The State Department, however, refused to entertain the idea, no doubt fearful of the unforeseen consequences of a U.S. diplomat running around apprehending foreign nationals. Anslinger agreed and wrote, "...you are extremely fortunate to be in Rome in your present status which we feel is very generous of the Italian Government . . . a similar assignment could not be accomplished in most other countries."[53] By necessity, the agents of District 17 were to be in but not of the world of European diplomacy. When a few years later Siragusa began to circulate business cards advertising the FBN office in "Roma," Anslinger insisted he switch to an English spelling to further distinguish the American agents from their European counterparts.[54] Like it or not, however, diplomacy remained a component of District 17's work and an inevitable counterweight to operational concerns.

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[52] George White, report dated June 26, 1948, in Folder "(0660) George White's Reports," Box 164, RG 170, NARA. William Canup to George White, October 21, 1948, Folder 8, Box 1, White Papers.

[53] Siragusa initially raised the issue of diplomatic status in the context of costs associated with registering the agents' automobiles with the Italian government, but this was something of a fig leaf. See Siragusa to Cunningham, July 29, 1955, and Anslinger to Siragusa, August 4, 1955 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[54] Anslinger to Siragusa, October 4, 1957, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2." Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

Ironically, the FBN's biggest competitor overseas was not a foreign police force but the U.S. Customs service, even though both agencies were housed within the Treasury Department. One FBN agent characterized the long-simmering rivalry as "like one of those mountain family feuds which can't be traced to any specific incident."[55] Prior to the establishment of the Rome office, foreign drug control was largely Customs' turf. Although a few top agents like Charles Dyar and Garland Williams were sent abroad during the 1930s, it was always on a temporary basis; they never set up shop like Siragusa did in Rome. The informal nature of those assignments was due partly to the lack of clear guidelines as to which agency had jurisdiction for foreign enforcement. The Bureau was assigned the task of breaking up drug trafficking rings, but Customs had a mandate to police smuggling in general and felt that made for a strong claim on drug control. Prior to WWII, Customs was often designated the lead agency in international investigations because it already had the personnel overseas and liaison relationships with foreign police. One of the problems, however, was that Customs agents typically did not do much investigating; their primary function was to facilitate the flow of information. There were also major differences in strategy, as Customs officials felt that any intelligence gathered by the Bureau should be used to make seizures at the borders and ports, while FBN agents were more interested in following potential drug shipments to the eventual distributors and rolling up the trafficking networks. In other words, Customs was interested in the product while the Bureau was interested in the perps.[56]

Soon after the establishment of the Rome office, Treasury officials huddled in Washington to squash the beef and iron out an effective working relationship between the two agencies. Behind the scenes, FBN officials were harshly critical and thought Customs was "completely falling down on the job" when it came to drug enforcement. "While there is little effective activity from Customs," Harney complained, "heroin is available practically every place in the country, its price steadily declining, our arrests are soaring and narcotic agents are worked to the limit of physical endurance." Assistant

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[55] Jack Kelly and Richard Mathison, *On the Street* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974), 161.

[56] In *The Protectors*, Anslinger mentions sending Agents Charles Dyar (p. 24) and Garland Williams (p. 46) overseas to investigate the Eliopoulos and Katzenberg rings. See also an informal letter dated October 25, 1955 in which Harney explained to B.T. Mitchell, "The tendency for the Treasury Representative was to consider himself primarily a Customs technician . . . also there was an inclination to regard himself as some sort of sub-diplomat who could not dirty his hands with the actuality of narcotic investigations." In Folder "(0395) Customs, Dist. #17," Box 59, RG 170, NARA.

Treasury Secretary John Graham evidently agreed and decided that Customs would remain the lead agency in Mexico and the Far East, but he rewarded the FBN with formal jurisdiction in Europe and the Mediterranean, where, Anslinger happily informed Siragusa, "it was considered that narcotics agents are doing an excellent job, and that nothing should be done which would interfere with our present program." Resolving this dispute in favor of the FBN began a slow but almost total eclipse of Customs involvement in actual drug investigations. Capitalizing on the victory, Anslinger encouraged Siragusa to demonstrate the Bureau's team spirit by forwarding any information on gold or diamond smuggling in Europe to local Customs attachés.[57] When Graham later visited Siragusa in Rome, the agent extolled the virtues of undercover work to the Assistant Secretary and explained it was a style of investigation generally eschewed by Customs and European police but was key to the Bureau's success.[58]

Stateside, however, the most pressing concern was simply for better intel. In June 1952, James Ryan, the District Supervisor in New York, expressed his frustration with the Bureau's inability to keep up with new smuggling routes. "In spite of the excellent work being done by you and your aides in Europe," he wrote, "heroin is still reaching this country in ample quantity, and we would like very much to know how this is being accomplished. Actually, we cannot speak authoritatively on the subject, since most of what we know is based on hearsay from informants." Dependence on informants was perhaps even more central to foreign operations, where actionable intelligence was often harder to acquire than in the U.S. In the early years, District 17 was so pressed for information that agents occasionally poached informants from other agencies.[59]

There were also important changes afoot in the actual traffic. In the summer of 1952, Siragusa and Ryan believed that "most of the heroin reaching this country is carried ashore at New York concealed

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[57] For FBN complaints on Customs see Harney to Anslinger, July 21, 1950, in Folder "(0395-1) Customs Co-operation #1, 1933-1955," Box 59, RG 170, NARA. See also Anslinger's summary of the meeting, reported to Siragusa in a letter dated September 24, 1951, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[58] Siragusa to Anslinger, October 12, 1951, in Folder "(0395-1) Customs Co-operation #1, 1933-1955," Box 59, RG 170, NARA.

[59] See James C. Ryan to Siragusa, June 9, 1952. For poaching informants, see a memorandum report by Agent Joseph Amato dated October 29, 1951, in which he observed that a man named Vincenzo Amaturo had served as a "most able" informant for the Alcohol Tax Unit but was arrested in Italy for suspected drug trafficking and counterfeiting. Amato suggested that Siragusa use his influence to spring Amaturo and put him to work for the Bureau. In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

beneath the clothing of passengers." Publicly, the Bureau was consistent in depicting the drug traffic as highly organized and hierarchical, but early analysis indicated a relatively de-centralized, low-scale and piecemeal traffic carried out by small-time entrepreneurs. As the agents began to gather better intelligence, however, it became clear that the traffic was increasing in both volume and complexity. It wasn't quite the "internationally organized narcotics attack" portrayed by FBN allies like Sondern, but cases made in both New York and Italy signaled a greater level of organization and a shift to large-scale shipments concealed in cleverly designed trunks and multi-gallon drums of olive oil.[60]

Due to the fact that the drug trade operated in the shadow of legal international commerce, American private companies, particularly in the airline and shipping industries, became important resources. While monitoring their own personnel for signs of smuggling, many executives readily furnished the FBN with covers and informants. Among Siragusa's official disguises, for example, was "Constantino Salerno," a pilot for TransWorld Airlines. The agents promised (somewhat improbably, since they often posed as smugglers) not to use their covers in a way that would "reflect unfavorably" upon the companies. They also returned the favor by occasionally providing specialized training to security personnel at companies like Pan American Airlines.[61]

Over the years, the ambiguous nature of the foreign office caused some confusion with agents who thought the job was liaison and diplomacy first and drug enforcement second. The Bureau wanted aggressive and resourceful agents who took charge of investigations and made cases, regardless of the unique challenges. The collection and exchange of intelligence was important but only in service to tangible results: seizures, arrests and headlines. In short, the Bureau valued operators over analysts. Agents with a more contemplative and patient style often faced criticism for relying on informants instead of going directly after suspects. The undercover ethos celebrated in FBN propaganda and true-crime

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[60] Ryan to Siragusa, June 9, 1952, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165. See also Folder "(0660) Italy, Oil Drums," Box 159, RG 170, NARA; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 99.

[61] Siragusa to Early A. Greenman (TransWorld Airlines), January 21, 1955. References to various official covers are scattered throughout FBN correspondence, and the training provided to Dixon Arnett of Pan American Airlines is discussed in a letter from George Gaffney (DS, NYC) to Jack Cusack (DS, Rome), dated September 23, 1960. "The fact that Pan American has taken this unusual step of training their security personnel is testimony to their genuine cooperation in the field of enforcement," Gaffney wrote. See Folders "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," and "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

literature was even more of a defining feature in District 17 and provided a sharp contrast with European services that remained leery of undercover tactics due to their historic association with political suppression.[62] One agent serving in Lebanon, for example, was criticized for sharing the opinion "of many European police agencies . . . that undercover work is beneath the dignity of a law enforcement officer. The French," a supervisor added, "not only dislike agents working undercover but they dislike informants."[63] Several agents were recruited specifically on the strength of their previously established relationships with European police agencies, which added to the confusion of being caught between the culture of the Bureau and the reality that agents serving overseas were required to work through local police forces. But, as one of Anslinger's assistants sternly clarified, "the only purpose of liaison is to make cases . . . there is absolutely no place in our organization for social fraternizing under the disguise of official liaison."[64] The lines between fraternizing and liaison, however, were always blurry and the cop-to-cop diplomacy that paid repeated dividends for agents like Siragusa and Manfredi often took place during social hours and over (many) drinks.

None of these challenges, however, proved insurmountable and District 17 quickly became the central focus of the Bureau's global counternarcotics strategy. With each passing year, Anslinger claimed

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[62] See Mark Mazower, ed., *The Policing of Politics in the Twentieth Century: Historical Perspectives* (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997), particularly the introductory section, "Political Police and the European Nation-State in the Nineteenth Century," by Clive Emsley, p. 1-25.

[63] In a memo dated September 24, 1958, Anslinger criticized Agent Joseph Salm, who served primarily in the Beirut office from 1956 to 1958. "Agent Salm continues to rely too much on informants," Anslinger wrote, "instead of taking the initiative and making an immediate undercover approach to violators." On October 2, 1958, Acting DS Andrew Tartaglino agreed with Anslinger's assessment and shared the observations quoted above. In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2," Box 165. Agent Jacques Changeux faced similar criticism during his work in Lebanon and was also reprimanded for over-reliance on informants. See Jack Cusack to Paul Knight, April 16, 1956, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[64] This clarification was sent in regard to Agent Joseph Vullo, who was recruited from an ONI posting in Naples because of his relationship with Italian police authorities. But District Supervisor Jack Cusack, who replaced Siragusa in 1958, was dismayed to learn that Vullo had no investigative experience and the "mistaken impression that . . . his assignment here is to develop liaison and that working undercover and developing cases is secondary to this." See letters from Cusack to Anslinger, dated March 14, 1961, and Wayland Speer to Anslinger, dated March 22, 1961, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

that an ever greater percentage of illicit drugs was prevented from reaching American shores.[65] In October 1953, Siragusa was rewarded with a permanent home in an annex across the street from the Rome Embassy. As Sondern described it, "Siragusa was given the secretaries and the office space he needed, along with an electronically controlled wire mesh door, combination lock files and the rest of the trappings of a highly secret government operation."[66]

The FBN got an added boost when President Eisenhower unexpectedly addressed the dope menace in November 1954. Thanks to Anslinger's lobbying efforts, federal mandatory minimum sentencing for drug offenders was already the law of the land when Eisenhower took office and, in one of the first acts of his presidency, Eisenhower signed a bill authorizing courts in the District of Columbia to forcibly commit drug offenders for treatment and rehabilitation.[67] Preoccupied with negotiating an end to the Korean War and managing an increasingly dangerous Cold War, however, there were few indications that Eisenhower was interested in drug control. But on the eve of his 1954 Thanksgiving holiday, Eisenhower issued a public letter to his Cabinet ordering them to convene a special committee to study the problem. Calling drugs a "scourge," the President ordered his administration to "omit no practical step to minimize and stamp out narcotic addiction." Although some media outlets professed greater interest in whether Eisenhower would root for the Army or Navy in their annual football game, the *New York Times* reacted with a laudatory editorial and rhetoric popularized by the Bureau, calling the move a "Drive on Narcotics" and declaring that Eisenhower had opened a "War on Drugs."[68]

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[65] Anslinger reported a 30% drop in U.S. narcotics arrests in September 1951, which he attributed to the work of agents in Italy as well as toughened legislation and punitive jail sentences at the state level. In *Brotherhood of Evil*, Sondern reported a 40% drop in the illicit trafficking volume as of 1954, a figure Anslinger also gave during Senate testimony in 1955. See "Narcotics Arrests Reported Off 30%," *New York Times*, September 26, 1951, p. 17; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 135 and "Doubt U.S. Can Halt Flow of Narcotics; Reveal 40% of Dope Blocked at Source," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 4, 1955, p. 11. See also a report from Henry Giordano (Commissioner of Narcotics) to James A. Reed (Asst. Secretary of the Treasury), dated March 23, 1964, including charts documenting the quantity of narcotics seized in foreign operations from 1954 to 1963. In Folder "(0280-1) Bureau Operations, 1955-1969, Folder #2," Box 48, RG 170, NARA. It's worth pointing out, however, that seizure figures actually declined from 1955 to 1959, and then skyrocketed from 1960 to 1963.

[66] Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 135.

[67] "Narcotics Bill is Signed," *New York Times*, June 25, 1953, p. 20

[68] For press coverage, see: W.H. Lawrence, "President Launches Drive on Narcotics," *New York Times*, November 28, 1954, p. 1; Editorial, "The War on Narcotics," *New York Times*, November 29, 1954, p. 24; Laurence Burd, "Ike Directs 5 in Cabinet to Study Drugs," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 28, 1954, p. 30; William Knighton, Jr., "Dope Report Asked by Ike," *The Sun*, November 28, 1954, p. 22.

It was two years before his Cabinet delivered its report, but Eisenhower's comments immediately brought new attention to the issue. During his 1955 State of the Union Address, he announced that his administration would take "vigorous action" to "improve the international control of the traffic in narcotics and . . . combat narcotic addiction in our country." A few weeks later, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles responded by ordering all Foreign Service Officers to report on the drug situations prevailing in their postings and endorsed the FBN view that American addiction was a foreign policy problem. "Addiction to narcotic drugs in the United States feeds upon the raw materials, opium, coca leaves, cannabis sativa (marihuana) and their derivatives which are smuggled into the United States from abroad," he wrote and ordered American diplomats to "solicit the cooperation of all countries, which may be sources of illicit narcotics in a joint effort to dry up such areas." Seizing the moment, Siragusa immediately fired off a memo to all diplomatic and consular posts in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, and asked them to copy any such reports to his office.[69]

By mid-decade the future of District 17 looked promising. The Bureau had strengthened its hold on the Rome office and, although there remained room for improvement, brought the Italians around to supporting American drug control efforts. Even in countries where they were not especially welcome, FBN agents circulated throughout the region as the Bureau began to consolidate and regularize its foreign enforcement. It also improved collaboration between the Rome office and New York, where much of the Atlantic heroin traffic was bound. Over the years a dedicated "Mafia Squad" in the New York office evolved into an "International Group" and later a "District 17 Liaison Group" that worked on leads generated from overseas.[70] In November 1955, Siragusa proudly declared to one Bureau official, "This

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The full text of Eisenhower's letter is also available in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[69] "President Eisenhower's Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union," *New York Times*, January 7, 1955, p. 10-11. See also Department of State Instruction dated February 14, 1955 and Siragusa memo to Siragusa to All Diplomatic and Consular Posts in Europe, Africa and Middle East dated February 21, 1955 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[70] Douglas Valentine characterizes the Rome office as a "sub-office of District 2," but that's agents would likely disagree. FBN records indicate that District 17 was seen as the frontline for global counternarcotics efforts. The relationship between Rome and New York was definitely close, however, and a duplicate filing system was installed to facilitate the flow of information. See Paul Knight to Anslinger, April 26, 1954, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA; Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 117.

office, jointly with District 2 and other districts, has made several big international cases involving professional large-scale smugglers. I would think that we are achieving our mission."[71] Anslinger clearly agreed. The dope menace was a persistent foe and the Commissioner clearly thought District 17 was the key to holding it at bay. Trying to intercept drugs at the border was a hopeless strategy, and, during June 1955 Senate testimony, Anslinger argued, "...if you had the Army, the Navy, the Coast Guard, the F.B.I., the Customs Service and our service, you could not stop heroin coming through the port of New York." The increasingly interconnected and globalized world exemplified by the drug traffic required a more aggressive and proactive counternarcotic stance. The only solution, he thought, was to go abroad and stop drugs at the source, where, he claimed, the agents of District 17 were "worth 100 men here."[72]

It's difficult to corroborate these claims from a historical standpoint. Seizure numbers, for example, represent merely an unknown percentage of the overall traffic, but prominent busts and confiscated drugs also represented hard-won bureaucratic victories and strengthened the FBN's argument that American security required international involvement and American leadership. Progress in the drug war, however, was difficult to measure, and the illicit traffic continued to expand even as Bureau improved its bureaucratic footing at home and abroad. Increasingly sure of themselves, Siragusa and the agents of District 17 turned their attention to structural reforms and meaningful investigations that they hoped would reduce the global supply of narcotics.

The Italian Heroin Ban: "A War of Attrition and Memoranda in Quadruplicate"

One of the first and initially most pressing tasks for the Bureau was to build on the momentum of the Rome office and shut down the legal heroin industry in Italy—a process that is instructive on the way the Bureau pushed foreign nations to adopt domestic reforms in line with American drug control. Around 1953, Siragusa and Anslinger dropped their focus on Lucky Luciano and began pressing the Italian government to issue a total ban on the use and production of the drug diacetylmorphine—better known by its street name as heroin.

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[71] Siragusa to B.T. Mitchell, November 21, 1955, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[72] "Doubt U.S. Can Halt Flow of Narcotics; Reveal 40% of Dope Blocked at Source," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 4, 1955, p. 11.

On July 1, 1951, the Italian Public Health Commission announced an indefinite suspension of heroin production as a result of the Carpinetti and RAMSA busts.[73] The Bureau wanted to make the ban permanent and to wean the Italian medical community from the use of diacetylmorphine. But to some extent the damage was done; vast quantities of pharmaceutical-grade heroin had already escaped into the black market. Follow up on these investigations, conducted by Siragusa and the Guardia di Finanza, indicated that approximately 600 kilos were diverted from legal stocks between 1948 and 1951. The main culprit was Carlo Migliardi, a chemist and executive at the pharmaceutical company Schiapparelli, one of the largest in the country. Narcotics manufactured by Schiapparelli were discovered in the RAMSA busts, in the possession of the Callacis and in the hands of Luciano-rival Frank Coppola. Using Edigio Calascibetta (of the SACE company) as a middleman, Migliardi was suspected of single-handedly diverting nearly half a ton of legally manufactured narcotics into black market channels. Though denounced by judicial officials, Migliardi wasn't actually arrested until 1953, when a legal case was finally put together. In the meantime, Schiapparelli was allowed to remain open and the company's license was even renewed, Siragusa suspected, after the owners "contributed heavily towards the Democrat Christian campaign funds."[74]

Italy did eventually outlaw heroin, but it was a slow process. Short of a legislative decree, the decision rested with the Commissioner of Public Health (part of the Ministry of the Interior), who was in turn advised by a Superior Health Council comprised of distinguished scientists, physicians and industry leaders, and a Narcotics Section that oversaw the pharmaceutical industry. Public Health Commissioner Giovanni Migliori (the same official who blamed American communists for the Italian drug trade) was

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[73] In reflection of the way the FBN mixed gratitude and menace, Siragusa thanks Giovanni Battista Migliori (Public Health Commissioner, Ministry of Interior) for suspending the production of heroin and promises in a letter dated September 28, 1951 that he "will be watching with great interest your continued efforts to control these narcotic registrants..." Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 4 (1951)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[74] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy,*92–101; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 11, 105–112; "Italy Halts Dope Output of Big Firm," *Washington Post*, February 15, 1953, p. M3. For an overview of licit diversion problem and the renewal of Schiapparelli's license, see a two-page report prepared by Siragusa and sent to Anslinger with a letter dated March 30, 1952, and a report from Siragusa dated May 8, 1953, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159. On Schiaparelli and Migliardi, see a letter dated June 28, 1955 from Agent Paul Knight to Anslinger, in which he tallies the narcotics diverted by Migliardi at 423 total kilos (heroin and morphine base). In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165. See also Folder "(0660-A-1C) Little Green Trunk," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

quick to issue a temporary suspension of all heroin manufacture in the wake of the Schiapparelli diversion, but it would be more than two years before Italian health officials revisited the topic.

In the spring of 1953, Siragusa was hopeful that an upcoming meeting of the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs would coax the Italians into action. Anslinger made no bones about his intention to raise the issue and several members of the Health Council privately indicated their wish to counteract "the unfavorable publicity" created by "the Schiapparelli affair." The Public Health office, however, failed to act before the meeting and received tough criticism from Anslinger and other UN representatives. Back in Rome, Siragusa noted an abrupt change in attitude on the part of health officials. The chief of the Narcotic Section, he reported, had "previously been indifferent, unfriendly and even antagonistic" but was suddenly "most convincing and very friendly" after the UN hearing. The official promised the temporary ban would remain in force and "went on at great length" about the "political embarrassment" caused by the discussion at the UN.[75]

The next meeting of the Public Health Commission was scheduled for that summer and Siragusa set to work pulling every string he could find, promising Anslinger that he would continue to "push this thing along" and "influence the votes of some of the council members." As the July meeting approached, Siragusa convinced members of the Superior Health Council to remove heroin from the official Italian *Pharmacopeia* (a regularly updated list of prescription medicines) and happily reported, "The outlook has never been better for this heroin ban." Unfortunately for the Bureau, however, most of the physicians argued that the government should continue to prohibit the domestic manufacture and export of heroin, but should retain the authority to import it for use under medical supervision. Although this reduced the amount of pharmaceutical-grade heroin available for diversion, it was not quite a total ban and Siragusa sheepishly informed Embassy officials, "The victory to us was not total."[76]

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[75] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 92–93; Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 11, 105–112. Siragusa described his meeting with Carlo Angius, chief of the narcotic section, in a letter to Anslinger dated May 8, 1953, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[76] See letters from Siragusa to Anslinger dated March 16, 1953; April 23, 1953; May 6, 1953; July 13, 1953 and July 18, 1953. Siragusa was introduced to members of the Supreme Health Council by a "high ranking official" in the Prime Minister's office. See also a Memorandum from Siragusa to Mr. F. Williamson (Counselor, U.S. Embassy, Rome) dated July 24, 1953, in which he asks the Embassy to thank members of the Superior Health Council (Carlo Ranazzi, Augusto Giovanardi, and Domenico

Progress on the heroin ban was further slowed by steady turnover among the Italian health authorities. Elections held that summer produced a new government and debate over the use and production of heroin was put aside as the entire Public Health Commission anticipated replacement by incoming Prime Minister Giuseppe Pella. Giovanni Migliori, the current Commissioner of Public Health, was the first to go. His former assistant, Carlo Angius, supervised the Narcotic Section and convinced the incoming Commissioner to delay any official announcements on the matter in the hope that the full council could be recalled and persuaded to adopt a total prohibition. Under the production ban, the Italian government intended to use confiscated heroin instead of importing a new supply, but Siragusa and Anslinger worked behind the scenes to ensure that the UN's Permanent Central Opium Board would deny this request and "force Italy's hand" toward "total prohibition."[77] The Americans, however, were dealt another setback when Tisiano Tessitori, the new Public Health Commissioner, turned out to be totally hostile and used his first meeting with Siragusa to complain about the unrelated dissolution of the Free Territory of Trieste. Tessitori also made it clear that he deeply resented the depiction of Italy as a platform of drug smuggling, and, according to Siragusa, "turned the discussion into a political one and used me as the whipping boy." Siragusa managed to appease him with platitudes about improvements in Italian drug control and assured him that the Bureau viewed Red China as the largest source of illicit supply, but relations with the Italian Public Health authorities remained tense and Tessitori stayed rather prickly about American portrayals of Italian drug trafficking.[78]

Throughout 1954 and 1955, the Bureau kept up the pressure. Using a carrot-and-stick approach, the FBN praised the Italian government for improved control over legal registrants and punitive prison sentences, but also continued to feed the Mafia-controlled Italy-to-America heroin pipeline story to the

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Marotta) for their support. In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[77] See letters from Siragusa to Anslinger, dated July 30, 1953 and August 4, 1953. In a letter dated September 1, 1953, Siragusa reported Italy's intention to use contraband heroin and suggested to Anslinger, "Perhaps the Permanent Control Opium Board can be influence to deny this request. This will force Italy's hand and perhaps expedite a total prohibition." In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[78] Siragusa and Tessitori's first meeting is described in a report to Anslinger dated October 26, 1953. In a letter dated January 26, 1954, Siragusa reported on a second unproductive meeting, in which Tessitori said he was "extremely disturbed" by recent criticism at the UN, for which he blamed the Bureau and Siragusa. In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

press and cited the situation in Italy from earlier in the decade as an example of the need for robust drug control and a total ban on heroin. An FBN-sanctioned article appearing in the June 1955 issue of *Bluebook* magazine further escalated tensions. The article's sensationalist rhetoric and title, "How Italy's Government Lets Heroin Flood the U.S.," provoked vociferous protests from the Italian health authorities and caused a minor diplomatic furor that prompted White House discussion and disavowals from the U.S. State Department.[79]

That same month, Anslinger again raised the issue during Senate testimony. Contending that heroin should be outlawed "in every country," the Commissioner described international efforts to affect a global ban on heroin production and told Senators, "We really only have six more countries to convince. One of those countries is Italy, which should have made the decision a long time ago." When asked about the controversial *Bluebook* article, Anslinger confirmed the facts were "absolutely true" and blamed the "last wave of drug addiction" on the Schiapparelli diversion. The resulting "misery, tragedy, [and] slavery," he continued, "should be placed right at the doorstep" of Migliardi and Calascibetta. (Although Migliardi was finally sentenced to 11 years in prison for his role, Calascibetta remained a free man.) Ultimately, Anslinger contended, the situation indicated that Italy needed to enact a permanent ban on both the production and consumption of heroin (even under medical supervision) and to ratify the 1953 Opium Protocol, a UN treaty that limited global opium production to medical need. Left unsaid but heavily implied was the insinuation that Italy would never take this action in the absence of pressure and supervision from the Bureau.[80] While Anslinger rallied the Senate, Siragusa enlisted the direct aid of the

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[79] See Henry Jordan, "How Italy's Government Lets Heroin Flood the U.S.," *Bluebook*, June 1955, Vol. 101, No. 2. The article included an editorial note indicating Anslinger's approval next to jump quote that read: "YOUR CHILDREN STAND IN DANGER OF INCURABLE ADDICTION TO THE MOST TERRIBLE OF NARCOTICS—BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY REFUSES TO STOP ITS OWN MANUFACTURE." For the reaction of Italian authorities, see Folder "(1690-10 B) Bluebook Magazine," Box 70, RG 170, NARA. See also a State Department document dated July 15, 1955 that indicated White House discussion in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #1, Sept. 1953 thru Aug. 1955," Entry 10, Box 13, RG 170, NARA.

[80] "Excerpt from Report of Proceedings Hearing held before Subcommittee on Narcotics of the Committee on the Judiciary, Illicit Narcotic Traffic, S. Res. 67," June 3, 1955, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

diplomatic mission in Italy, including Ambassador Clare Booth Luce and chargé d'affairs Elbridge Durbrow, who "promised to apply diplomatic pressure."[81]

In the spring of 1956, the Italian government finally bowed to American demands, but only after a final bit of chicanery from Siragusa. In early March, Siragusa induced an informant named "Carpi," a lawyer who represented pharmaceutical concerns, to circulate a letter declaring his firm's ostensible support for the heroin ban. A few weeks later, after Carpi's letter circulated among members of the Italian Public Health Office and "about 700" other physicians, Commissioner Tessitori finally signed off on an official decree permanently prohibiting the import and manufacture of heroin. Although the use of heroin under medical supervision was not specifically mentioned, the restriction on imports effectively ended the medical use of heroin once current stocks were exhausted. Siragusa was quick to declare victory and fired off a cable to Anslinger: "Happy we won our five year battle." He noted there was some trepidation that Italy "would again be criticized at forthcoming UN session," but ultimately thought his self-described "scheme" with Carpi was "instrumental" in achieving the ban. In January, Italy also considered the 1953 Opium Protocol and formally ratified the treaty in November 1957, bringing the country fully into line with American expectations.[82]

Lobbying for the heroin ban revealed new aspects of the challenges faced by the Bureau in implementing American-style drug control on foreign soil. As Siragusa worked toward the total prohibition of heroin, he was dangerously drawn into Italian politics and conflicts between the pharmaceutical industry and the public health bureaucracy. The Italian medical community was not eager to give up the powerful and fast-acting opioid derivatives often referred to as heroin. As a result, the Bureau's hard-line

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[81] As the wife of publisher Henry Luce, Clare Booth Luce was a famously influential diplomat. Durbrow, too, had a distinguished career at the State Department, and served in Moscow before coming to Italy. From 1957 to 1961, he was the American Ambassador to South Vietnam. For Siragusa's enlistment of Durbrow and Luce, see letter from Siragusa to Anslinger dated May 14, 1953; a memo from Siragusa to Mr. F. Williamson (Counselor, U.S. Embassy, Rome) dated July 24, 1953; and a letter from Siragusa to Durbrow dated June 24, 1955. In Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159. See also a letter dated June 15, 1955 from Siragusa to Anslinger, in which Siragusa reports that "Ambassador Luce expressed to Mr. Durbrow her strong wish that the Italian Government outlaw heroin." In Folder "(1690-10 B) Bluebook Magazine," Box 70, RG 170, NARA.

[82] Siragusa and Carpi's actions are revealed in declassified FBN records. See letters from Siragusa to Williamson, dated March 12, 1956, and Anslinger, dated March 27, 1956, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #3, Feb. 1956 thru April 1956," Box 13, Entry 10. See also State Department telegram from Siragusa to Anslinger, dated March 27, 1956, and letter dated July 12, 1956, in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

stance created conflict between the Public Health Commission, which tried to accede to international pressure, and the Superior Health Council, which represented drug manufacturers and doctors and resisted political intrusion into a largely medical debate. The various pharmaceutical houses were also always competing for commercial advantage and Siragusa's industry informants threatened to draw him into their legal and political maneuvering with their eagerness to report on the wrongdoing of competitors. Carpi, for example, acted out of clear self-interest and spent years trying to undercut rival companies, including Shiapparelli and other companies accused of licit diversions.[83] Providing historical support for the "balloon theory" that suppression in one area simply shifts production and trafficking routes to new areas, it also appears the Italian heroin ban encouraged the diversion from the French pharmaceutical industry and the growth of clandestine manufacture. Soon after the Italians stopped producing heroin, Anslinger noticed a "tremendous increase" in French legal narcotic production and possible licit diversion, which became a major FBN concern in years to come.[84]

On the whole, however, the Bureau was extremely pleased with the results of the Italian heroin ban campaign. It was a drawn-out affair, but in Bureau literature these events were compressed and held up as an important victory for the FBN and global drug control. In rhetoric bearing the stamp of the early drug war, Anslinger later summarized, "It was a long and difficult war of attrition and memoranda in quadruplicate, but . . . heroin was no longer legally manufactured in Italy."[85] The Italian heroin ban campaign also serves as a good example of the way the Bureau pursued control-related policies in each

[83] Generally, see Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159. For a few examples, see letter dated October 21, 1952, in which Siragusa reported resistance from retail pharmacists. In letters to Anslinger dated March 27 and September 30, 1953, Siragusa reported that Carpi's motivation was to have the license of rival companies suspended and revealed his efforts to have the agent directly intercede with members of the Italian parliament. In a classified report dated March 27, 1956, Siragusa noted, "Carpi is not content because the cartel he represents does not want any competition from SIRCAI," a rival company. In Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #3, Feb. 1956 thru April 1956," Box 13, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[84] Anslinger to Siragusa, November 21, 1955, Folder "(0660, France) Alleged French Diversion," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

[85] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 220.

country in which it gained a presence, including criminalizing drug use, instituting punitive prison sentences for drug offenders and creating specialized police agencies.[86]

Beirut Redux

During their 1948 and 1949 tours of the region, George White and Garland Williams both advocated for an FBN outpost in Istanbul or Tehran, where the U.S. enjoyed relatively warm relations. Yet it was in Beirut, where Siragusa experienced such morale-sapping powerlessness in 1950, that the Bureau gained its first foothold in the Middle East in November 1955. During his September 1950 visit, Siragusa gleaned a pretty good understanding of the situation in Lebanon and the many difficult obstacles the Bureau would face there. Although the Bureau was far more concerned with heroin than hashish (as most of it went to Egypt and not the U.S.), the hash trade did have the effect of forging clandestine relationships between producers, trafficking groups and the politicians who protected them. Given Lebanon's proximity to Turkish and Persian poppy fields, both Siragusa and the American diplomats feared the arrival of opiates in Beirut's black market—a fear, it turned out, that was well-founded.[87]

The first indications of a Beirut opiate trade arrived in the fall of 1952, when Siragusa heard rumors that vast amounts of Turkish opium and morphine base were arriving in Italy by way of Lebanese couriers, many of whom utilized formal diplomatic status to facilitate their smuggling. In hindsight, it's likely that Italian traffickers looked east to compensate for the loss of product diverted from the pharmaceutical industry. In October, the Italian police came to Siragusa with a promising lead. Adopting FBN tactics, an Italian undercover officer began talks with a Rome merchant who claimed his Lebanese partners "could supply any amount of morphine base and opium" in exchange for cocaine. Using this as a

[86] Examples of the Bureau lobbying for domestic changes in host countries are scattered throughout FBN country files. The specific topic of promoting foreign nations to adopt American-style punitive drug laws is explored in Smith, "'Cured of the Habit By Force'."

[87] In *Smack: Heroin and the American City*, Eric C. Schneider turns the notion that "marijuana is a gateway drug" on its head and argues the drug may not have lead individual users to experiment with harder drugs like heroin, but it did carve out critical relationships and associations in New York during the 1930s and 1940s that later facilitated the illicit heroin market. It appears something similar happened in Lebanon during the 1950s, where the criminal and political relationships that grew up around the hashish trade quickly adapted to include trafficking in opiates. See also Schayegh, "The Many Worlds of Abud Yasin."

teaching opportunity, Siragusa briefed the Italian officer and set him up in a hotel room but refrained from direct involvement to avoid "the complaint of provocation and Yankee meddling."[88]

The case never developed but Siragusa and the Italian undercover officer were able to identify the courier as Habib Khoury, a Lebanese diplomat assigned to the Vatican. Back in Washington, Anslinger and State Department official George Morlock contacted Charles Malik, the Lebanese Ambassador. Malik was an influential figure at the United Nations, close to Lebanese President Camille Chamoun and generally supportive of the Bureau's efforts, so the Old Man was optimistic that a discrete approach might yield some good will. Malik duly notified Beirut and several diplomats (including Khoury) were fired, but if Anslinger thought this would open to the door to official cooperation, he was disappointed, and the Lebanese Foreign Office told the U.S. Ambassador that the presence of an FBN agent was "unwarranted" since the diplomats had been removed.[89] Temporarily stymied once again, the Bureau opted for gentle prodding over the next year as Siragusa and Anslinger sent periodic updates on the suspected trafficking activities of additional Lebanese diplomats.[90]

In the fall of 1954, Siragusa began to develop cases in Rome with the intention of working back up the supply chain toward the Lebanese middle-men and using proof of their participation as a lever to pry Beirut open for the Bureau. In Rome, he sent an informant to socialize with Lebanese diplomats in the hope one would offer to sell a few kilos of heroin.[91] In the meantime, Siragusa also dispatched FBN Agent Paul Knight to Beirut to covertly build a network of informants. A handsome man who bore a passing resemblance to Paul Newman, Knight had been with District 17 since July 1952 and, with a

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[88] See reports from Siragusa to Anslinger dated October 29 and 31, 1952 in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, RG 170, NARA; and Siragusa report dated December 3, 1952 in Folder 13, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[89] In a letter dated January 29, 1953, Harold Minor, the American Ambassador in Beirut, reported on conversations with the Lebanese Foreign Office and warned that "an American operator attempting to work covertly in Beirut is certainly inadvisable." See also a letter from Minor to Richard Funkhouser (State Dept., NEA), dated February 4, 1953, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[90] See letters from Anslinger to Malik dated February 10 and March 20, 1953 in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[91] Siragusa to Anslinger, November 3, 1953, Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

knack for foreign language and intrigue, became one of Siragusa's most dependable agents.[92] Posing as a travel agent named Robert Martel, Knight entered Beirut under cover and quickly set up an intelligence network managed by two gatekeeper informants. While Knight remained in the background, the two cut-outs, George Bliss and Philip Siman (a member of the English faculty at the American University in Beirut), approached individuals who might provide advance warning of smuggled drug shipments with the promise of a $500 reward for actionable intelligence.[93]

Knight concentrated his network on penetrating the notoriously corrupt Lebanese Customs service or recruiting informants in the shipping industry, but since the FBN was officially unwelcome in the country, it was a delicate operation. Siragusa cautioned him to protect his cover but also to collect any evidence that could "serve as added ammunition" to coerce the Lebanese government into permitting an FBN outpost. Knight had his network operational by December 1953 and soon had a stream of tips flowing back to Rome and Washington. Many leads went unexploited while the FBN presence remained covert, but Knight thought the intelligence could still be used to "embarrass the local constabulary."[94]

In a lengthy report sent that spring, Knight described a situation essentially unchanged since Siragusa's 1950 visit. Like Istanbul, Beirut's geography and importance as a commercial center made the city a critical transshipment point. Economic woes contributed to Beirut's growing role in the drug trade, as "large numbers" of refugees arriving from Palestine/Israel diluted an already poor standard of living,

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[92] For Knight's assignment to District 17, see Siragusa to Anslinger, July 15, 1952. In a letter to G.W. Cunningham, the Assistant Commissioner of Narcotics, dated November 20, 1953, Siragusa explained, "Knight is very dependable and an excellent worker . . . I need a man of Knight's caliber to handle matters which I would not ordinarily entrust to some of the undercover officers who have worked here." Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. Years later, Agent Howard Chappell griped good-naturedly of Knight, "He got better looking as he got older." Email to Douglas Valentine dated December 14, 1994, Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection.

[93] Knight's frequently used alias and travel agent cover is referenced in a letter from Siragusa to Early A. Greenman (TransWorld Airlines), dated January 21, 1955, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165. For the informant network, see correspondence between Knight and Siragusa, dated December 7, 19 and 20, 1953, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[94] In a letter to Knight dated January 29, 1954, Siragusa wrote: "You are already aware of the fact that the Lebanese authorities oppose any collaboration with us. Your operations in Beirut must be exercised with caution. Our aims are to (1) make seizures in the United States and France (2) arrest the carriers and receivers (3) expose the Lebanese culprits..." Knight sent information regarding the clandestine labs in a letter dated March 5, 1954 and sent notice of a 400 kilo drug shipment aboard the SS *Marchal Joffre* to French police official A.E. Bailleul in a letter dated March 29, 1954. In Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

sharpened a glaring class divide, harbored a "number of old-time narcotic smugglers" and generally created a large pool of recruits for local gangs. Drug use remained common and Knight frequently observed "persons apparently under the influence of narcotics in public places." Lebanese diplomats continued to function as bagmen and couriers, and political corruption posed such an impediment to drug enforcement that Knight believed it was "absolutely impossible for any investigation to be conducted." He described the Customs service as "more like a semi-official corporation than a police body" and observed that so many government officials were active in the drug trade "that one might well state that the Lebanese Government is in the narcotic business." Knight agreed that Siragusa's strategy of using outside cases to implicate Lebanese participants was forcing the government to acknowledge the problem, but it produced few lasting results. Layered atop all of this, of course, was also the problem of Lebanon's historic and deep-rooted religious divisions and chronic political instability.[95] In short, the enforcement situation was incredibly challenging, but Beirut's pivotal role in the regional and international drug trade made it imperative to make the effort.

Throughout the summer of 1954, the Bureau responded by applying pressure from multiple fronts simultaneously. Knight remained undercover and continued to expand his network of eyes and ears, including foreign nationals like Bliss and Simian, Lebanese government officials and a handful of highly-placed criminal informants (including known traffickers).[96] In Europe, Siragusa enlisted the help of Interpol and French police officials to establish communication with Emir Farid Chehab, Director of the Sûreté Générale (the Lebanese security and intelligence service).[97] In Washington, Anslinger brought fresh intelligence to Ambassador Malik and again requested that the FBN be allowed to work cases in Beirut.[98] This time the pressure and potentially damaging reports did the trick, and Lebanon was spared

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[95] Knight to Anslinger, April 12, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[96] Numerous references to Knight's network are made in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[97] See letters from Siragusa to Anslinger, dated June 16, 1954, and to A.E. Bailleul, dated June 22, 1954. See also Bailleul to Siragusa, July 2, 1954; Siragusa to Anslinger, August 7, 1954; Knight to Siragusa, September 29, 1954; and Knight to Siragusa, October 13, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA

[98] In a letter dated June 18, 1954, Anslinger supplied Malik with sanitized FBN reports, a list of suspected traffickers and the biography of Agent George Abraham, the agent chosen to work in Beirut.

the kind of public shaming that the Bureau inflicted upon Italy. In August, President Chamoun personally authorized an agent to visit Beirut, and Chehab agreed to formally exchange information with the FBN after Siragusa furnished him with evidence against two wanted traffickers.[99]

Working in the Middle East posed new problems. Knight spoke at least some Arabic, but the agents often had trouble with both the language and spelling of Arabic names. (Siragusa discovered that many suspects were indexed in FBN files under separate phonetic spellings of the same name.) For this first official venture, Bureau officials needed someone capable of going under cover in an Arab region and chose Agent George Abraham. Though Abraham was relatively new to the Bureau, he was of Syrian descent, spoke fluent Arabic and, in Siragusa's opinion, became "an excellent undercover man."[100] Arriving on September 17, 1954, Abraham immediately set to work with a broad "sweep" strategy designed to implicate as many suspects as possible, including Siragusa's old chum Artin Geudikian, the Fagin-like tavern keeper. Most of the targets chosen were relatively small-time players who operated at the retail level, but Abraham's tour was designed as another trial balloon for continued U.S.-Lebanese cooperation, so the idea was to pick as much low-hanging fruit as possible and see what impact it made on the city's drug traffic and Lebanese authorities.[101]

Abraham successfully brought in nine separate defendants over a two-month period but faced a number of impediments. Farid Chehab proved recalcitrant when Abraham first arrived and agreed to help

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See also, Siragusa to Anslinger, July 14, 1954 and August 4, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[99] Siragusa reported an agreement to exchange information with Chehab in a letter to Anslinger dated August 7, 1954. In a memo dated August 26, 1954, George Morlock (State Dept.) informed Acting Commissioner G.W. Cunningham that President Chamoun had authorized the visit of Agent Abraham. See also correspondence between B.T. Mitchell, Siragusa and Abraham dated August 27 and September 3, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160. See also a September 3, 1954 letter to Harold B. Minor, the Ambassador to Lebanon, in which Siragusa explained that Abraham was personally cleared by President Chamoun but instructed to work only with Farid Chehab. In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[100] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 11. See also a short biography provided to Malik in a letter dated June 18, 1954 and list of targets given to Abraham in a memo dated July 3, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160. For District 17's trouble with Arab names, see an October 6, 1955 memo from Siragusa to all agents, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[101] Abraham's cases are listed in a memo to Siragusa dated October 30, 1954. Of the targets listed, only Gamil Masri ranked as a influential supplier and the rest operated mostly at the retail level. Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

only after prodded by Malik. There was an additional legal technicality to overcome in that the sale of drugs to an undercover agent was insufficient grounds for arrest in Lebanon, requiring the guilt of each party to be independently corroborated. Undercover tactics were also unpopular and Abraham received a decidedly hostile reception from the Lebanese judiciary when the cases went to court.[102]

The most damaging problem, however, was the dubious loyalty of the Bureau's informants in Beirut. One of the key figures in Knight's network was a man named Darwish Beydoun, described by Siragusa as a treacherous but "powerful political and underworld figure in Lebanon." Beydoun put his own network of minions at Knight and Abraham's apparent disposal, but was treated with caution and fear by other informants. American largesse often smoothed foreign cooperation—usually in the form of reward money or modern equipment—and relations with foreign informants were no different. At their first meeting, Abraham showed up with a squirt gun for Beydoun's young nephew, as well as clothes and several packs of cigarettes for Beydoun and his men, but loyalty apparently did not come cheap. As the two planned a series of undercover approaches to various targets, Abraham quickly realized that Beydoun was broke and conning the Bureau.[103]

FBN funds remained tight, so Abraham's plan was to make relatively small purchases from each target. Beydoun, however, was adamant that he and his men make the initial contact and purchase expensive samples of at least one kilo to demonstrate good faith. Although Abraham was able to make a few direct purchases, Beydoun kept his own men squarely between Abraham and most of the targets and made a show of sending his trusted nephew Slameine to purchase samples from various suppliers. The samples, however, were suspiciously uniform in color given the rudimentary nature of the different labs in which they were supposedly refined. When Abraham dutifully sent them on to Siragusa and FBN headquarters for analysis, the narcotics turned out to be morphine base refined in a single lab, rather than heroin purchased from separate suppliers. It quickly became apparent that Beydoun was simply pocketing the buy money and providing his own product. In other words, the FBN was buying drugs

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[102] Abraham reported on an unproductive meeting with Chehab in a letter to Siragusa dated September 18, 1954, and of Malik's assistance on September 21, 1954. See also Siragusa to Knight, October 27, 1954, and Knight to Siragusa, January 1, 1955, in Folders "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," and "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[103] Siragusa to Anslinger, December 16, 1954; Abraham's initial meeting and subsequent suspicions are described in letters to Siragusa dated September 18, 1954 and September 21, 1954. Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

directly from its own informant. Siragusa and Knight instructed Abraham to proceed on his own with whatever investigations he was able, but with the Lebanese authorities providing only grudging cooperation, the Bureau continued to rely on Beydoun for introductions and information.[104]

Nevertheless, Abraham was able to collect sufficient evidence against a number of targets and, on November 19, he and the Lebanese police rounded up their suspects. In a summary written the following day, Knight noted that very few of the arrests were accompanied by seizures (which meant many of the targets walked) and that Abraham's cover was blown when word of the impending arrests leaked to the underworld. He was convinced, however, that despite the problems, this first group of cases represented "a great step forward" and thought, "The underworld, as well as the police, are very impressed by the (to them) magnitude of the operation." The Bureau had demonstrated its capabilities—both to the traffickers, who would be more circumspect in their activities, and to the police, who would be more accepting of formal cooperation.[105]

Abraham's cases imparted some valuable lessons about working in Beirut. The most important concerned operational security and the likelihood of leaks. Knight's sources quickly confirmed that many of Abraham's targets received advance notice of their planned arrests, so Knight argued it was time to switch tactics. "I do not feel that we should attempt to prepare a large number of simultaneous cases here again," he wrote. Given the need to operate in secret and the constraints of the Lebanese legal system, Knight thought it would be best to focus on one high-level target at a time.[106] Fortunately, District 17 had a perfect case already lined up and, while Abraham was making his arrests in Beirut, Knight and Siragusa were climaxing a critical investigation that would be held up for years to come as a model of international cooperation in the fight against the dope menace.

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[104] See letters from Abraham to Siragusa dated September 21, 22, and 29 and October 5, 1954; as well as Siragusa to Knight, October 5 and October 22, 1954; Knight to Abraham, October 13, 1954; and Abraham to Siragusa, November 4, 1954. Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[105] See Knight to Siragusa, November 20, 1954, and Abraham to Siragusa, November 22, 1954, Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[106] Knight to Siragusa, November 20, 1954, Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

The Abou Sayia Case

The Abou Sayia case was important for a number of reasons and, because it featured the cooperation of police from five different countries, was frequently cited by the Bureau as a model of international drug enforcement. The investigation began in Greece during the summer of 1954, after Siragusa and Gerasimos Liarommatis, the Director of the Greek National Police, bonded over a night of drinking. "Jerry," as Siragusa preferred to call him, offered to let the Americans use one of his best criminal informants, a conman and smuggler named Carlo Dondola. Seeking revenge after he was cheated on a counterfeit money deal, Dondola proposed setting up an associate in Beirut, a man named Abou Sayia, who was purported to be the head of an international gang of drug traffickers and a principle figure in the Mediterranean supply chain. Siragusa quickly agreed to the plan.

Over the course of the next few months, Dondola approached Sayia on behalf of a fictional American buyer and introduced Agent Knight as the bagman. During these talks, Dondola convinced Sayia to identify his source in Aleppo, Syria. Accompanied this time by Agent Abraham, also in the role of a prospective courier, Dondola hooked up with Sayia's supplier, a large man who introduced himself as Tifankji (subsequently identified as Haji Mehmet Deniz). Dondola, the smooth-talking conman, then convinced Tifankji to not only cut Sayia out of any future deals, but also persuaded him to introduce his own source in Adana, Turkey. Thus, a third angle opened up, and this time Siragusa and Liarommatis met Dondola in Adana to woo Mehmet Ozsayar, the wholesale supplier of the organization. Dondola then enlisted Ozsayar in a triple-cross to cut out both Sayia and Tifankji. Ozsayar, however, insisted on a large purchase of 250 kilos of raw opium and demanded payment of $25,000 up front. Siragusa, interestingly, turned to Turkish official Kemal Aygun for the buy money. As the police chief in Istanbul, Aygun had torpedoed all of Siragusa's cases back in 1950. Now serving as the head of Turkey's Directorate of Public Security, however, Aygun agreed to cooperate and provided the necessary funds. With targets set up in three different cities, the entire operation was poised for execution.

In November 1954, just as Agent Abraham wrapped up his tour in Beirut, the agents of District 17 orchestrated a series of raids and sting operations to conclude the Abou Sayia investigation. Over the course of 24 hours, the agents and local police forces arrested the three principle defendants in Beirut, Aleppo and Adana, brought in an additional nine suspects, issued warrants for another five fugitives, and

seized just under 800 pounds of narcotics they estimated was worth $40 million in retail. Siragusa was justifiably proud of what they had accomplished and summarized in his official report, "This case, in addition to wiping out what was probably one of the most important international organizations of narcotic traffickers, may serve as a heartening and exemplary pattern of international cooperation of police agencies combating the international traffic in illicit narcotic drugs."[107]

The case did indeed become a celebrated part of Bureau lore and was retold in a number of outlets. Frederick Sondern called it "one of the Bureau's classic stories." As an artifact of true-crime literature, the case was perfect for clarifying the various roles and identities in the drug trade. Dondola (identified in Siragusa's account as "Dimitri), the conman-informant who offered such an important case that Siragusa was willing to "work with the devil," was humanized with "gall and imagination" and enthusiasm for his role in the investigation. Abou Sayia was villainized as a "depraved" fat man who reveled in violence and callously inducted his own small children into a life of addiction and crime. Tifankji was parodied as "a curious mixture" of East and West, attired in tailored suits and "a flaming red fez." The cops, meanwhile, were valorized for their moxie, bravery and eagerness to overcome historic national enmities for the sake of a good case.[108]

A little reading between the lines, however, indicates that the case was never quite what the Bureau made it out to be in either internal reports or subsequent retellings. Bureau reports described the ring as "a large, well-organized, international gang of narcotics traffickers," led by Sayia, who Siragusa identified as "a major source for the Mafia bosses." But that was pure speculation and the Bureau had no evidence to link Sayia with the Mafia or any other buyers. Siragusa's own narrative suggests that Sayia had a limited role in the organization and was eagerly betrayed by his supposed subordinates. The undercover buys negotiated by the Bureau further demonstrated that the ring had little cohesion and likely

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[107] The case is described in Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 3–32. See also a Memorandum dated November 29, 1954, filed in both Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160 and Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. The Abou Sayia investigation is also described in Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf,* 122. In Siragusa's account, Dondola is identified only as "Dimitri," but Valentine identifies him as Dondola, a Lebanese-Greek smuggler and member of the Lebanese Phalange in the occasional employ of both Israeli and Arab intelligence services.

[108] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 3–32; Sondern, *Brotherhood of Evil*, 137–140. See also Sondern, "The World War Against Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, January 1956 and Vera R. Glaser, "Traffic in Debauchery," *Western World*, June 1958, Folder 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

only functioned one deal at time. Instead of a hierarchical gang, the network appears to be a good example of a loose association of independent entrepreneurs. The picture of a tightly organized ring run by Sayia was a product of the Bureau's tendency to depict kingpins rather than a genuine reflection of the drug trade, where actual kingpins seem to be few and far between. The Bureau also characterized the group as "one of the most important international organizations of narcotic traffickers," but this, too, appears to be something of an overstatement as the regional traffic continued unabated.[109]

The case did feature police officers from the United States, Greece, Turkey, Syria and Lebanon all acting in an operational capacity, but this much-vaunted international cooperation was also far more tenuous than depicted. In *The Trail of the Poppy*, Siragusa ended his narrative with a raucous international celebration and featured several eloquent appeals to police fraternity, but the whole operation was nearly derailed on at least three separate occasions when various officials balked at cooperating with national rivals. Siragusa also cited Farid Chehab, of the Lebanese Sûreté, for special credit, but internal Bureau communications from early in the investigation reveal that Siragusa carefully kept Chehab in the dark on the Sayia investigation in order to protect FBN informants.[110] Perhaps the tension between the image the Bureau wished to project and the reality of the drug trade makes the Abou Sayia case an even more effective example than Siragusa and his men imagined. Multilateral cooperation in the drug trade was possible—at both the diplomatic and operational levels—but it was tenuous, transactional and constrained by a host of problems.

Nevertheless, the case was a precedent for the Bureau's evolving counternarcotic strategy in Lebanon and District 17 generally. Abraham's series of cases and the Abou Sayia investigation make a useful comparison and could be characterized as a "sweep" vs. a "probe." Abraham's scattershot investigation against a handful of unaffiliated traffickers was a classic sweep operation, the equivalent of "clearing the corners" in the American drug war. The Abou Sayia investigation, in contrast, focused on neutralizing one organization and seemed to confirm the agents' belief that, as Knight argued, "the best

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[109] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 3–32. Memo dated November 29, 1954, filed in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[110] Siragusa and Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy*, 3–32. Letter from Siragusa to Anslinger, dated August 7, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

chance for successful work lies in preparing a single case, or perhaps two, for arrest and seizure."[111] Few of Abraham's arrests were accompanied by seizures, which meant that sentences were light and the overall impact on the drug trade was minimal. But if the Bureau could take out one high-level player at a time, it might eventually make a discernible impact on the regional drug trade. Thereafter, the Bureau employed a kingpin-type strategy to target well-known, large-scale traffickers in Lebanon like Samil Khoury and Gamil Masri.[112]

The Beirut Office

Upon the conclusion of Abraham's tour and the Abou Sayia case, Anslinger began to identify Lebanon as "the center of an enormous traffic in heroin." But there were also signs of improved cooperation. In Washington, Anslinger tried to encourage the budding relationship by suggesting that Ambassador Malik report the result of these investigations to the UN to show the "determination of your Government to stamp out this illicit traffic."[113] Agent Knight, meanwhile, was left to sort out the complexities of Lebanese law enforcement and found that the Sûreté and Customs had overlapping jurisdiction on drug enforcement and were in frequent conflict with one another.

Officially, the Sûreté was supposed to take the lead on all criminal investigations and the Bureau was only authorized to work with Director Farid Chehab. Chehab, however, was a deeply reluctant collaborator. The Lebanese Customs service, on the other hand, was generally more active in drug control and the agents found a willing partner in Edmond Azzizeh, a Captain in charge of a small investigative squad. There was also a religious coloration, as Chehab owed his patronage to the Maronite Christians, while Customs was under the control of Muslim factions in the Lebanese

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[111] It's worth noting the clear disparity in the financial resources afforded each investigation. Although Siragusa had to borrow buy money from the Turks, the Bureau allowed Dondola/Dimitri to spend freely while wooing the suspects, and in *Trail of the Poppy*, Siragusa wrote, "Dimitri was spending the Federal Bureau of Narcotics' money to ply Abou, the lush, with every imaginable pleasure," and admitted that he "shuddered at what my bosses would have said if our case had failed." (p. 10, 12). Abraham's fiscal constraints, on the other hand, are mentioned throughout his investigations in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA. See also Knight to Siragusa, November 20, 1954, Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[112] See in particular, Folder "(0660) Lebanon: Masri, Gamil; Aleppo, Syria and Lebanon," Box 160, RG 170, NARA, which documents the investigation of Gamil Masri from 1954 to 1958.

[113] Anslinger to Malik, December 3 and 16, 1954, Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA. See also "Doubts U.S. Can Halt Flow of Narcotics," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 4, 1955, p. 11.

government. Unfortunately, that meant there was little cooperation between the two agencies, and the competition between Chehab and Azzizeh soon drew the embryonic Beirut office into a bureaucratic proxy war. "This is a bad situation from an enforcement viewpoint," Knight observed.[114]

The conflict between Chehab and Azzizeh illustrates the way American-led drug control not only intruded upon a country's sovereignty but also threatened to draw the FBN into internal disputes. Chehab was a cousin of Fuad Chehab, the influential commander of the Lebanese army (and President from 1958 to 1964), but French police officials cautioned Siragusa to keep his distance and warned him that Chehad was a difficult man and rumored to be active in black market currency counterfeiting.[115] By January 1955, Agent Knight's concerns were also mounting and he urged "somewhat more discretion" in the Bureau's relationship with Chehab. His sources confirmed reports of Chehab's counterfeiting and close association with a Sûreté official named Hadji Touma, widely thought to be "completely corrupt" and allied to Samil Khoury, Lebanon's most notorious drug trafficker. There were other troubling signs: FBN mail was routinely opened and Sûreté detectives targeted Knight's informants for minor offenses. Knight suspected that Chehab was under pressure to impede the FBN. "In this regard," he added in a cryptic note to Siragusa, "I might note the remote possibility that another agency, even an American one, may have suggested to the Amir that he slow up in his work with us, for one reason or another. I believe that you have more knowledge of this possibility than I." Both Chehab and Touma were rumored to be British intelligence agents and Siragusa was explicitly told to back off by an unnamed CIA official, who warned him that the Bureau was stepping on Company toes after Knight tried to recruit a CIA asset in the Lebanese shipping industry.[116]

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[114] Knight to Siragusa, April 4, 1955, Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[115] In a letter dated July 2, 1954, Bailleul warned Siragusa, "it would be dangerous to confide in him too much and give him details on the information you may have regarding the international narcotic traffic . . . I believe that the narcotic traffic is too profitable for Lebanon, for an open governmental action to be seriously undertaken." Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[116] The first indication that the Bureau's mail was screened was recorded in a December 17, 1954 letter from Siragusa to Abraham, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2." Agent Knight reported his concern about Chehab in a letter to Siragusa dated January 6, 1955 (including allegations that he was working with British intelligence) and that Bureau SEs were targeted for arrest on January 16, 1955. In a letter dated January 28, 1955, Siragusa reported his hostile reception from the local CIA officer to Anslinger. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160. The possibility of CIA interference is particularly interesting given an October 29, 1953 memo to Assistant Treasury Secretary H. Chapman Rose in which Anslinger lamented that the Bureau would not "be able to help out C.I.A. with a Treasury

There was little the agents could do but scale back their cooperation with Chehab. "We will have to work more closely with the Customs and try to keep Chehab from knowing about it," Siragusa concluded. Above all, he emphasized, "We will do our best not to give Chehab or anyone else in Lebanon an opportunity to 'invite' us to leave that country. It took the Bureau many years to effect this collaboration and we will try to sustain it—the area is too important to us."[117] Fortunately, another series of cases involving the infamous Samil Khoury reached fruition at an opportune time. Working with the Bureau, Captain Azzizeh made a handful of arrests and seizures targeting the leadership of Khoury's gang. He even captured their "secret weapon," a Jaguar sports car modified to conceal 140 kilos of contraband. Further testimony to the unstable political environment and welter of conflicted loyalties in the Lebanese government, however, Azzizeh was unceremoniously arrested for his troubles and held for five days while Khoury evaded capture.[118]

It may have been a product of bureaucratic or religious rivalry, but Azzizeh's willingness to go after Khoury (a Christian), cemented the Bureau's decision to transfer its collaborative efforts to the Customs service. Thereafter, Siragusa took to calling Azzizeh "our sparkplug collaborator." Yet troubling rumors swirled around Azzizeh as well, including sudden wealth and association with known traffickers. A short time later, Farid Chehab's nephew Claude went to work as an FBN informant in Istanbul and claimed that Azzizeh was actually a member of the Khoury organization. Claude said his uncle had no knowledge of his actions, but it's likely he was a plant. The truth, as it often is in the underworld, was murky, but in Lebanon the Bureau was prepared to take what it could get. Siragusa rationalized that "no one in an enforcement job there can be assumed to be of unqualified integrity," and pointed out that Azzizeh "has been one person upon whom we have been able to rely in our efforts to make progress in

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Representative in Beirut," after the Lebanese authorities denied their initial request to enter the country. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160, RG 170, NARA. See also Marshall, *The Lebanese Connection*, 33–48.

[117] Siragusa to Anslinger, January 28, 1955, Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[118] Azzizeh was arrested after he was accused of beating a suspect. See State Department telegram dated March 12, 1955 from Siragusa to Anslinger. For press coverage, see also: translated copy of article appearing in *Al Janhour Al Jadid*, March 27, 1955; Stan Swinton, "Ring Smuggling Dope Into U.S. Smashed," *Buffalo Evening News*, April 5, 1955; and "Rip Dope Ring in Middle East Supplying U.S.," *New York Post*, April 5, 1955. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

Lebanon against the narcotic traffic."[119] In a further sign of how bureaucratic politics influenced foreign counternarcotic operations, Knight thereafter began to advertize Azzizeh's services to the rest of the American intelligence community. "Through us," he wrote, Azzizeh "is at the disposal of any such agency which cares to ask information of us" and noted that he already provided intelligence to naval intelligence and economic defense officials.[120]

Chehab and his cohort within the Sûreté were the ones who ultimately settled the issue when a newly assigned FBN agent named James Attie was arrested and beaten by Chehab's associate Hadji Touma. Attie was working undercover against the Khoury organization and trying to locate a clandestine laboratory when he was picked up by Sûreté detectives. Cuffed and brought before Touma, Attie was interrogated and beaten but refused to divulge his identity. He was then openly paraded on the street before an alert Lebanese prosecutor secured his release. Azzizeh suggested it was because Attie was getting too close to Khoury. Both Knight and Siragusa were incensed, but there was little they could do. As one of Anslinger's assistants in Washington cautioned, "if we made too much of an issue of this matter, we might be told to leave the country." On that count, Siragusa agreed, but Chehab and Touma's actions confirmed Siragusa's conclusion: "Our future lies with the Customs."[121]

The Attie episode capped the period of uncertainty that accompanied the Bureau's initial attempts to conduct investigations in Beirut. Once the agents cast their lot with Customs, it was comparatively smooth sailing. In November 1955, Agent Knight was finally authorized to open District 17's first official branch office.[122] A number of significant challenges remained. The first, Knight discovered, was that the

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[119] State Department telegram dated March 12, 1955 from Siragusa to Anslinger; Claude Chehab's allegations are included in report by Agent Paul Gross dated October 20, 1955. See also, Siragusa to Anslinger, June 15, 1955, Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA. In *The Lebanese Connection*, Marshall concludes "the FBN and Azizeh had enough enemies in common to do business together" (40, 33-48).

[120] Knight, memo report dated July 26, 1955, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #1, Sept. 1953 thru Aug. 1955," Entry 10, Box 13, RG 170, NARA.

[121] Knight to Siragusa, April 30, 1955; Attie to Siragusa, May 3, 1955; Siragusa to Anslinger, May 10, 1955; Mitchell to Siragusa, June 2, 1955; and Knight to Siragusa, June 10, 1955, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[122] In a memo dated September 7, 1955, Knight indicated he would report for duty on November 8 and operate out of the American Embassy, a move that was accompanied by a formal transfer from Rome. "In accordance with Mr. Siragusa's instructions," Knight wrote, "I shall work out of [the Beirut] office in order to be able more efficiently to handle the large volume of work we have in the Middle East area. In general, the area covered will be Lebanon, Syria, Greece, Egypt, Turkey, and Iran." In Folder

investigative wing of the Lebanese Customs service was woefully unprepared to take on an effective partnership and lacked basic resources like index files, duplication services, modern office supplies, or photography and fingerprinting equipment. One of the benefits of partnering with the Bureau, however, was that foreign police services often received a crash modernization. Modest appropriations prevented the Bureau from footing the bill, but the agents provided lots of training and advice on modern investigative technologies and used their connections to acquire specialized equipment. In Beirut, Azzizeh's office was the beneficiary of this attention. Knight explained to Siragusa, "if our assistance to the Customs produces an increased speed and efficiency of operation, we too shall benefit in our work with them." As he helped pick out equipment from the U.S. and designed a new filing system for the Customs office, Knight pointedly wrote to Azzizeh, "I look forward to a really permanent association between us in Lebanon."[123]

This kind of treatment was a fixture of FBN foreign operations and ensured the agents remained on good terms with their hosts. Another way of institutionalizing American influence and cultivating foreign allies was to bring foreign policemen to the United States for training, a policy the Bureau began in Lebanon soon after the establishment of the Beirut office. Although Azzizeh never benefited from the policy, the Bureau frequently teamed with the State Department's International Cooperation Administration to ensure that select foreign police officers received training at the Treasury Department's Law Enforcement Officers Training School. Because most of the Lebanese policemen selected were drawn from the Gendarmerie or municipal police forces, the Bureau was able to expand its influence to new branches of Lebanese law enforcement.[124] There were also other ways to secure the loyalty of

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"(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[123] Quotes from Knight to Siragusa, May 26, 1955, and Knight to Azzizeh, July 21, 1955. See also Siragusa to Anslinger, August 3, 1955; Knight, memo report dated December 23, 1955; and Knight, memo report dated January 3, 1956, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160. The Bureau's assistance in securing modern equipment continued throughout the FBN's tenure. For other examples, see letters dated January 5, 1965 and March 19, 1965 from Agent Dennis Dayle to Supervisor Mike Picini in Folder "(0660) Lebanon #4, 1961-1967," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[124] Knight and Siragusa discussed sending Azzizeh to the U.S. in a memo dated December 6, 1955. Although Knight argued, "I am convinced that we should gain a great deal," Azzizeh was never sent to the U.S. It appears the State Department's ICA program selected most of the Lebanese officers, probably because they paid for the expense. In a letter dated February 17, 1956, Siragusa remarked, "Thanks to Agent O'Carroll [head of the Treasury Department school] we now have another Lebanese police friend." For more examples, see Knight memo report dated December 6, 1955; Siragusa to Agent

individual officers, and Azzizeh was awarded a consolation prize with a unique certificate from the Treasury Department that thanked him for his cooperation.[125] American firearms and blackjacks made for particularly effective gifts and were almost universally desired by foreign police officers. As Siragusa explained to FBN officials a few years later, "With a gift costing about $75 we can get thousands of dollars worth of necessary investigations conducted for us, at no cost. It is a regrettable fact, but one we have to face realistically, that often it is necessary to 'purchase' foreign friendships to ensure future good will and cooperation on official matters."[126]

Although the FBN was able to grow its influence in Lebanon, intractable problems faced the Beirut office. There was little follow-through from the Lebanese judiciary, which passed lenient sentences on drug offenders. Siragusa was particularly incensed when he learned that Abou Sayia was released after only one year. Knight continued to have problems with informants who tried to manipulate the Bureau, and the Lebanese government itself remained torn by factional rivalries that interfered with the office's investigations.[127] In a long personal letter sent soon after taking up his duties in the new office, Knight itemized the challenges facing the Beirut office and complained that everything "is a technicolor production here." Having to work around Chehab remained a delicate issue, but Knight reasoned "if I were in his position, and felt the way I am certain he feels about our having a man in his country permanently, I would do precisely what he is trying to do." That is—put on a show of cooperation while

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Joseph Salm, September 25, 1957; Salm to Siragusa, October 9, 1957. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[125] Apparently, Azzizeh requested the citation. Siragusa was aware that the Treasury Department didn't really do this kind of thing, but as he explained to Anslinger, "We can't let him down without losing considerable 'face.' He attaches tremendous importance to receiving it . . . it took us a long time to get to first base with the Lebanese police." See Siragusa to Anslinger, June 6, 1956, and Anslinger to Siragusa, October 12, 1956, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[126] Exactly which officers received American guns from the Bureau was rather inconsistent. In June 1955, Capt. Azzizeh expressed his wish for a Colt .38 but Bureau officials denied permission. They did provide one to U.S.-trained Gendarmerie officer Chachine Joseph Azzi. See Siragusa to Giordano, October 9, 1957. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[127] Lenient criminal penalties were an unending source of irritation to the agents. See Siragusa to Knight, November 16, 1955 and a December 5, 1955 memo prepared by Knight that described problems with an SE named Ramez Gourayeb, who tried to use his informant status as a cover for continued trafficking activities. One particularly good example of how factional rivalries influenced drug investigations were the dueling allegations of drug trafficking emanating from a Beirut postal facility, which turned out to be purely the product of in-fighting. See Siragusa to Knight, November 15, 1955; Knight, Memo report, November 30, 1955. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

doing everything possible to ensure the Bureau failed. In the meantime, Siragusa did what he could to keep Chehab on board and even secured him a position with Interpol as the chairmen of a subcommittee on narcotics. As Siragusa explained to one agent, Chehab continued to tolerate the FBN presence because "(a) he is more concerned with his primary security function, and (b) I have . . . assisted him in gaining influential police circles—in the Interpol hierarchy." All of this made for a challenging enforcement situation and the agents struggled to check their impatience. As Siragusa patronizingly explained to the Secretary General of Interpol, "Our policy has been never to become frustrated with the Lebanese authorities. Instead we try to be as patient and understanding as possible."[128]

Despite the challenges, the office endured and became a critical cog in the FBN's global efforts in terms of both narrative—as in the Abou Sayia case—and practical results. Operations in Lebanon led the Bureau's 1957 summary of important cases, as leads developed in Beirut led to arrests downstream in Marseille and Detroit. The Beirut office facilitated Lebanon's cooperation with other law enforcement agencies in the region and the agents began to see the country's endemic internal conflicts as a potential benefit as various police services competed for influence with the FBN.[129] The office also managed to survive Lebanon's political crisis of 1958. Although the turmoil exacerbated political and religious tensions and dramatically slowed FBN operations in the region, it also cleared the decks when a new government was formed. Both Farid Chehab and Edmond Azzizeh were replaced and the Bureau established new and more effective liaison with their replacements, most of whom were military officers.[130] The new government took on a somewhat more Muslim and ostensibly anti-Western character, but Knight optimistically reported, "I think that we shall be able to cooperate with the new Security Forces and with any new group in the Customs, if we get off to a good start and win their

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[128] Letter from Knight to Siragusa dated November 29, 1955; Salm, memo report dated July 15, 1957; Siragusa to Salm, September 25, 1957; Siragusa to M. Sicot, November 16, 1956, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[129] Undated (circa 1958), "Examples of Significant Cases in the Illicit Traffic." See also letter from Siragusa to Captain Mario Re of Italy's Guardia di Finanza, dated March 15, 1957, and a letter from Siragusa to Agent Salm dated September 25, 1957. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[130] Chehab was eventually appointed as the Ambassador to Tunisia, and quickly came under investigation by the French Sûreté. See memo dated January 23, 1961, from Andrew Tartaglino to Cusack, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #9, Sept. 1960 thru Sept. 1961," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

confidence." A dedicated narcotic squad was even created within the Lebanese Gendarmerie, based on the model established by Garland Williams in Iran.[131]

By the end of the decade, District 17 had strengthened the institutional bonds between the FBN and Lebanese security and police forces, but Beirut remained a problematic area. A 1960 memo prepared for Treasury Department officials reported:

> There is a serious narcotic problem in Lebanon with collateral, adverse effect on other countries in the Middle East, Europe, Central and North America, including the United States. Lebanon has the dubious distinction of being a focal country in the international illicit traffic of all three categories of narcotics: opium and its derivatives morphine base and heroin—hashish (marihuana)—and cocaine.

On the plus side, Bureau operations expanded to include a safe house, in addition to the office at the Embassy, and the agents built a noteworthy case record: the Bureau estimated that roughly 75 joint investigations were initiated between 1952 and 1960, producing around 150 total defendants. Most, however, were let off with a fine by a judicial process the Bureau deemed "unrealistic, antiquated and ineffective," and law enforcement remained "badly splintered."[132] Yet from a bureaucratic standpoint, this seemed to justify the Bureau's continued presence and sustained American intervention.

Although the details changed from country to country, this was a general pattern common to Bureau foreign operations—an example of where the Sisyphean policy of source control strengthened the interventionist claims of the Bureau and echoed a broader U.S. national security strategy of bringing foreign institutions, rather than physical territory, under American influence.

Exit Charlie Cigars

By 1958, things were going well for Agent Charles Siragusa—now referred to in some quarters as "Charlie Cigars" due to his fondness for stogies (and predilection for sending them through the diplomatic

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[131] The FBN's response to the 1958 crisis is discussed in a State Dept. telegram from Siragusa to Anslinger dated May 26, 1958, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2." Box 165. The fallout from the change in government was discussed in various memos and correspondence throughout 1958 and into 1959. In a memo dated November 22, 1959, Knight reported that Azzizeh was being investigated by the new authorities and suspected of accepting bribes from smugglers." The Lebanese Gendermerie's narcotic squad and the model established by Garland Williams are referenced in a report by Knight dated July 6, 1959. Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[132] Henry Giordano to A. Gilmore Flues, October 3, 1960, Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160. For the safe house, see Knight to Cusack, October 18, 1960 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

pouch—itself a form of smuggling!).[133] Under his leadership, District 17 added an office in Beirut and strengthened FBN ties to foreign police services in France, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Lebanon. In Italy, where Siragusa enjoyed the best relations, he was awarded the Order of Merit and was even knighted by the Italian government.[134] As tales of District 17's exploits spread, Siragusa joined the ranks of FBN celebrity crime-fighters, much like his mentor George White. "I suppose you read Toni Howard's article glamorizing Charlie Chan, alias Sherlock Holmes, alias Charlie," Anslinger dryly wrote after reading an advance copy of a profile on Siragusa.[135]

As the article, appearing in the April 1957 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*, made clear, Siragusa's position had improved considerably since 1951. No longer merely tolerated by American Embassy and foreign police officials, District 17 had put down roots. The agent who promised to avoid the "social whirl" and never wear spats was photographed squiring the actress Marlene Dietrich around a Rome cocktail party, while the text romanticized the "brash, fast-talking New Yorker" as a "character straight out of murder-mystery fiction." The story referenced a number of District 17's exploits against the Mafia and wrapped up with a detailed account of the Abou Sayia case. If there were any doubts that Siragusa was one of Anslinger's favorites, this article put them to rest. At a time when other agents were denied permission to publicize their work, the Old Man personally cleared the *Saturday Evening Post* article and only gently chided Siragusa for allowing his photograph to be "splashed across the front page of magazines."[136]

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[133] For nickname, see Tom Tripodi and Joseph P. DeSario, *Crusade: Undercover Against the Mafia and KGB* (Washington, New York and London: Brassey's, 1993), 57. Other agents contend Siragusa was given the nickname by the Chicago press, after his retirement from the Bureau. See Paul Newey to George White, August 19, 1970, in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers. In a letter dated November 12, 1951, Siragusa tells Harney to be on the lookout for cigars sent to Washington via diplomatic pouch, in Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[134] In a letter dated November 29, 1955, Siragusa thanked Colonol Vittorio Montanari, the Chief of Staff of the Guardia di Finanza, for all of his assistance and for a photo of the two of them taken during the award ceremony for the Order of Merit. Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165. In a letter dated November 20, 1957, Siragusa discussed his nomination for Italian Knighthood (conferring the title "Cavaliere") with Anslinger. In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2." Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[135] Letter dated February 7, 1957 from Anslinger to Siragusa, in Folder "(1690-10) Saturday Evening Post," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

[136] In a letter dated December 5, 1956, Siragusa reported that he had been approached about a profile in the *Saturday Evening Post*, but planned not to cooperate. Anslinger, however, authorized the

In fact, Siragusa's undercover days were mostly behind him. Within the Bureau he was widely rumored to be Anslinger's pick as the next Commissioner. A reflection of the importance of foreign enforcement to the Bureau's broader goals, Siragusa's work overseas put him on the fast track and, in July 1958, he was promoted to "Field Supervisor" and brought back to the U.S. to supervise both foreign and domestic operations. He also became the Bureau's formal liaison to the CIA and took charge of the FBN-CIA safe houses established by White in Manhattan.[137] In September 1962, Siragusa was promoted again to the rank of Deputy Commissioner but was ultimately on the losing side of the bureaucratic in-fighting touched off by Anslinger's retirement. The following year, he left the Bureau to take charge of the Illinois State Crime Commission and continue his crusade against the Mafia.[138]

Although he was one of Anslinger's favorites, not everyone was impressed with Siragusa's accomplishments and many agents found his grandstanding irritating. Howard Chappell, an agent close to George White, later remarked that Siragusa "made a career out of writing memo's about Lucky and drug cases made in any part of the middle east which came to his attention . . . Charlie was a good report writer but to my knowledge never initiated anything." When former FBN Agent Arthur Giuliani one day came across Siragusa's memoir *The Trail of the Poppy* while killing time at an airport, he observed to

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article the following day, writing that he had "an understanding" with the magazine's editor and "This should be a good thing and comes at a propitious time." See also letters from Siragusa to Anslinger dated February 11 and 23, 1957, in Folder "(1690-10) Saturday Evening Post," Box 73, RG 170, NARA.

[137] In *Strength of the Wolf*, Douglas Valentine writes that upon his assignment as District Supervisor in Rome, Siragusa received a "a promise from Anslinger that he would succeed him as Commissioner if all went well." (p. 110). For Siragusa's promotion to Field Supervisor, see Field Information Circular No. 32, dated July 24, 1958, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. Finally, for Siragusa's role as the CIA-liaison, see his 1977 testimony before the Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research of the Committee on Human Resources, in *Human Drug Testing by the CIA, 1977* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), 110–120.

[138] For promotion to Deputy Commissioner, see a letter from Jack Cusack to Siragusa dated September 19, 1962 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, July 1961 thru December 1962," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. In a letter dated December 17, [1963], Anslinger told George White that Siragusa "was feuding with [Assistant to the Commissioner George] Gaffney and [Commissioner Henry] Giordano and was, in fact, driven out of the bureau." In Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers.

White that Siragusa was "still on the horseshit circuit" and remarked with delight: "Ick! Noted the copy I looked at was dusty, which is about right."[139]

Assessing Siragusa's importance to the history of the Bureau and the success of District 17 is further complicated by questions about his relationship to the Central Intelligence Agency. In journalist Douglas Valentine's account, District 17 was little more than a CIA cutout where Siragusa and Manfredi ran errands for counterintelligence chief James Angelton, shuttling "black-bag CIA money to Italian politicians" and providing access to the criminal underworld and foreign police files. Both Valentine and historian Alan Block contend that Charles Siragusa may have recruited or even been the mysterious CIA assassin codenamed QJ/WIN.[140] When called before Senator Ted Kennedy's committee to answer for FBN and CIA misdeeds, Siragusa emphatically denied ever working for the CIA. He did admit to maintaining the New York safe houses, but disavowed any knowledge of the kind of human drug testing conducted by White under the auspices of the MK-ULTRA program and testified that he would have opposed any such operation as "contrary to my personal beliefs."[141] Although it's doubtful Siragusa was a CIA assassin or even a recruiter—he had too great a personal animus toward the Mafia—it's certainly possible and perhaps likely that the relationship was deeper than Siragusa acknowledged. Given the dearth of evidence directly linking the Bureau to some of the Company's more questionable practices, the extent of Siragusa's involvement with the CIA will remain at least partly a mystery.

However, FBN records strongly suggest that drug control was always a first priority—even if it wasn't for the rest of the American intelligence and security community. The Bureau knew that it was playing second fiddle to the Cold War in terms of demands on resources, but preventing deadly drugs like

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[139] Chappell is quoted from emails to Douglas Valentine, dated January 22 and May 1, 1994, in Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection, National Security Archives. See also Arthur Giuliani to White, July 31, 1970, in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

[140] "The Kefauver Committee had determined that local law enforcement officers used the vice squad pattern to allow politicians in America to control the rackets," Valentine notes (though he seems to have the relationship backwards—politicians on the take protected but did not *control* the rackets). "Simply stated, Siragusa and Manfredi performed a similar function, internationally, for the CIA." Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 106, 109–114, 227; Alan A. Block, *Perspectives on Organizing Crime: Essays in Opposition* (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991), 216; Bruce Bullington and Alan Block, "A Trojan Horse: Anti-communism and the War on Drugs," *Contemporary Crises* 14, no. 1 (March 1990): 39–55.

[141] See hearings chaired by Senator Edward Kennedy, *Human Drug Testing by the CIA, 1977*, 110-120.

heroin from reaching the U.S. was an urgent priority that the agents took very seriously, even if they reveled a bit in their "bad boy" status.

It is also clear that Siragusa played a unique and important role in the history of the Bureau, particularly in the growth of foreign drug enforcement. Despite his preoccupation with the "deep politics" of the CIA, even Valentine acknowledges, "Charlie Siragusa's contribution to the FBN was incomparable. By proving that an FBN agent could forge relations with foreign policemen and still make cases, he made the FBN's overseas expansion possible."[142] As the next chapter shows, Siragusa's departure ushered in a period of dangerous instability in District 17—which Siragusa himself helped precipitate. For whatever reason, whether it was his ability to schmooze with foreign police officials, organize international drug investigations or his bureaucratic acumen, Siragusa initiated a dramatic expansion of the foreign drug war that continued even after the Bureau's own eventual demise.

[142] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 114.

CHAPTER 7. JACK CUSACK AND DISTRICT 17, PART 2:

THE DRUG WAR GOES GLOBAL

Jack Cusack had a problem. Actually, he had a lot of problems and two of them were Charles Siragusa and Wayland Speer. Newly appointed as the Supervisor of District 17, Cusack arrived in January 1959—right in the middle of an unfortunate dry spell in the Rome office. Making matters worse, direction of the foreign drug war had become something of a pawn in the intramural competition to replace Anslinger. Speer and Siragusa both coveted the Old Man's job and seemed intent on micromanaging every aspect of District 17's affairs from their perch back in the U.S. Cusack had scarcely unpacked his bags before FBN headquarters began to announce abrupt shifts in policy, second-guess decisions made in the field, and demand more arrests and bigger seizures. The flood of memos—and Siragusa and Speer's attempt to outdo one another in feats of administrative management—generally ensured that Cusack would spend as much time fighting Washington as he did the dope menace.

Cusack's tenure as Supervisor of District 17 can best be described as embattled, and the sustained conflict between Rome and Washington hastened his eventual replacement in May 1963. The odd thing was that it should have been a time of celebration. Even in the face of new budget constraints and fewer cases, the District continued to expand under Cusack's direction and won several hard-fought bureaucratic victories, including the establishment of long-anticipated branch offices in Paris, Marseille and Istanbul, after which came the Bureau's final triumph over Customs. By the time Treasury Department officially awarded the FBN with global jurisdiction for all U.S. drug enforcement in September 1962, the Bureau stood among the world's preeminent law enforcement agencies—an accomplishment that makes the conflict between headquarters and District 17 all the more perplexing.

This chapter concludes the "origin story" of America's foreign drug war and focuses on Cusack's tenure as District Supervisor from 1959 to 1963. It reveals how the Bureau's expansion into France and Turkey, followed by Thailand, put it on a trajectory to assume global responsibility for all American drug control efforts. The Bureau, however, was plagued by internal rivalries as Anslinger's once-firm grip on the agency loosened and competition to replace him directly influenced the manner in which operations were conducted. By the mid-1960s, important changes were also afoot, both within U.S. foreign policy and the foreign drug war. The tactics used in the early 1950s, against both traffickers and on foreign

governments, proved less effective as the years wore on, requiring the agents to refine the manner in which they cultivated influence and attacked the regional drug trade. Yet there were also remarkable continuities in the way the Bureau conducted itself on the world stage and approached the challenges of international enforcement, many of which extend into the present.

This story has real implications. District 17 established, shaped or contributed to many of the law enforcement and diplomatic control strategies that remain in place today. The Bureau's victory over Customs signaled a critical total shift in American counternarcotics strategy from a conflicted and relatively passive stance, driven by intelligence collection and focused on borders, to a far more pro-active posture in which federal narcotic agents now went out into the world—not just Europe and the Middle East—to disrupt the global drug trade. Subsequent decades witnessed a sharp increase in the number of interdiction programs run by the FBN's successor agencies, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and Drug Enforcement Administration, but the shift—the events that put the U.S. on this path—came out of the Bureau's experience in District 17.

Musical Chairs

By most accounts, Jack Cusack was a widely respected agent. He had a reputation as a sharp detective with a knack for handling informants. Sal Vizzini, one of his subordinates in Europe, remembered him with a bald head, "a blacksmith's jaw and hard blue eyes." Others recalled Cusack's natty Brooks Brothers suits. He had a temper, but he was usually mild in manner and managed to avoid the resentment that more flamboyant agents like White and Siragusa sometimes engendered.[1] He was, however, a true believer. Like Anslinger, Cusack dismissed public health advocates and other challengers to the drug war framework as "false prophets."[2] He also had the distinction of busting jazz legend Charlie "Bird" Parker for possession of heroin paraphernalia back in 1948. During the early days of District 17, Cusack was among the first agents to rotate through France, but he wasn't good with foreign languages and struggled to make a case. He made the most of his time, though, by feeding

[1] Sal Vizzini, Oscar Fraley, and Marshall Smith, *Vizzini: The Secret Lives of America's Most Successful Undercover Agent* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1972), 29; Jack Kelly and Richard Mathison, *On the Street* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974), 38–40; Frederic Sondern Jr., *Brotherhood of Evil: The Mafia* (New York, NY: Manor Books, Inc, 1959), 43–44.

[2] Cusack to Anslinger, September 15, 1960, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1957-1963," Box 163, RG 170, NARA.

Anslinger's hunger for tales of drug-addled jazz musicians and filed reports claiming that American musicians like Bird, Thelonious Monk and Miles Davis corrupted European musicians with their evil habits and should have their passports revoked as carriers of addition.[3] Following his initial foreign service, Cusack worked out of the New York office and served as the District Supervisor in Atlanta for one year before he replaced Siragusa in Rome in 1958.[4]

Cusack's appointment was itself the product of in-fighting back in Washington, foreshadowing the tone of his own tenure. Most of the rank and file assumed the Supervisor job would go to Knight or Manfredi, effective agents who had been in District 17 from the start, but that would have left the office under Siragusa's influence.[5] Douglas Valentine contends that Cusack was the pick of Henry Giordano, the newly elevated Deputy Commissioner and another claimant to Anslinger's soon-to-be-vacant throne. Wayland Speer, meanwhile, demonstrated his value to the Bureau during tours of East Asia, where, in the mid-1950s, he sought (rather elusive) proof of Red China drug-running. Afterwards, Speer served as the lead investigator for the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security and came under the protection of its chairman, Texas Senator Price Daniel. When he wasn't busy opposing desegregation, Daniel used the issue of juvenile drug to raise his own profile and capture the Texas governor's mansion, after which Speer's career was entrusted to fellow Texas Democrat Sam Rayburn. Daniel's hearings were a major platform for the Bureau and, once Speer had his own supporters on Capitol Hill, he was given the number three job of Assistant to the Commissioner in 1958. When Siragusa returned from Europe that summer,

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[3] It appears that either a French police official or New York gangster blew Cusack's cover. See Siragusa, memo dated December 3, 1951 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1." See also Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, 157–8. In a report dated November 7, 1951, Cusack describes several jazz musicians of "very questionable reputation" who introduced Swedish musicians to marijuana and speculated they might create new addicts and put the U.S. in an "embarrassing position." In Folder "(0660) France #3, 1951-1953," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

[4] For Cusack's appointments, see: Anslinger, Field Information Circular No. 20, dated January 28, 1958 and a letter to M. Sicot (Interpol), dated December 16, 1958, in Folder "(0370-3) Field Information Circulars, 1-170," Box 56 and Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[5] "I don't know who will take over," Arthur Giuliani wrote in a March 31, 1958 letter to White. "I guess it's a toss up between Manfredi and Paul Knight. M has a host of friends, being an expert politician, but I would imagine that Knight has much more finesse…" Folder 16, Box 3, White Papers.

all that remained was a brief stint as Field Supervisor and the number four job of Assistant Deputy Commissioner.[6]

Getting trapped at the bottom of the headquarters hierarchy surely galled Siragusa after the excitement and acclaim of District 17. Tom Tripodi, an agent assigned to help him update the Mafia Book, described Siragusa as "clearly the least political of those enmeshed in a power struggle for control of the bureau," but it was apparent he still felt the tug of old responsibilities. "I regret my inability to restrain my impulse to run District 17," he apologized in one memo to Speer.[7] He did, however, quickly come to appreciate that the view from Washington was very different from the view in Rome and began to issue orders that resulted in abrupt changes in District 17 policy and strategy. With Anslinger focused on diplomatic affairs and preventing the adoption of the UN Single Convention, management of the Bureau's day-to-day affair fell to Giordano, Speer and Siragusa.

The fundamental problem was the drop-off in cases. Drug seizures in District 17 had declined since 1955 and reached an all-time low of approximately 34 kilos in 1959. Seizures in New York, meanwhile, climbed steadily from roughly 36 kilos in 1957, to 64 kg in 1958, to 73 kg in 1959 and exploded to around 172 kilos in 1960.[8] Bureau officials strongly suspected that much of New York's heroin arrived via France, but cases there were hard to come by. In one March 1961 memo, Speer complained, "we have not made a case in Italy in fifteen months and we have never made a worthwhile case in France..."[9] The pressure to make busts and drain the illicit traffic, however, exacerbated another long-running problem: money. In September 1957, Treasury officials ordered department-wide fiscal restraints, which included the Bureau and soon trickled down into the field offices. District 17 was hit

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[6] Anslinger, Field Information Circular No. 34, dated October 30, 1958, Folder "(0370-3) Field Information Circulars, 1-170," Box 56, RG 170, NARA. See also Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 155–157, 190–191; King, *The Drug Hang-up*, 121–150. See also Folder "(0660-A-3) Wayland Speer's Foreign Assignment, Correspondence and General File," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[7] Siragusa's work at FBN headquarters and the Bureau's power struggles are described in Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade: Undercover Against the Mafia and KGB*, 57–67. See also letter dated May 27, 1959, from Siragusa to Speer, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[8] See charts comparing heroin seizures in Districts 2 and 17 between 1954 and 1963, sent in report dated March 23, 1964 from Giordano to James A. Reed (Asst. Secretary of the Treasury), in Folder "(0280-1) Bureau Operations, 1955-1969, Folder #2," Box 48, RG 170, NARA.

[9] Speer to Anslinger, March 22, 1961, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

particularly hard as costs associated with turnover in the staff and operational expenses continued to rise while appropriations remained flat and the rivalry to succeed Anslinger began to heat up.[10] It wasn't (all) personal, but Cusack's appointment signaled an abrupt shift in the resources allocated to District 17. It was as if the party of the Siragusa years was suddenly over and Cusack got the check.

One of Siragusa's major initiatives was to modernize the Lebanese and Italian police services partnered with the Bureau, but Cusack arrived to find the Rome office needed modernization of its own, with obsolete equipment and agents going out of pocket to cover routine expenses. The office's reel-to-reel recording device, he complained, was "a relic" and the agents lacked the modern photography equipment necessary to identify suspects and build case files. Where Siragusa had once happily covered the tab when entertaining foreign officials or undercover targets, the men were now admonished to "be careful and discriminate in the manner of expending Government money."[11]

The budget pinch had a discernible impact on District 17's operations and made it difficult to end the case slump. Privately Speer and Siragusa considered easing their criticisms. "Their morale is low but one good seizure should bring them out in the front again," Siragusa remarked. In their communications with Cusack, however, both men made it clear they expected the District to make cases without the benefit of additional resources. When Cusack countered that ramping up field operations would strain his already meager funds and pleaded for an increase, he was denied. In frustration, Cusack threatened to shutter the Beirut office and the newly opened Paris outpost, but he was countermanded and Giordano barked at him to stop "continuously taking exception to instructions" sent from Washington. Caught between the need to make cases and empty coffers, Cusack reluctantly implemented austerity measures that did little to advance undercover investigations.[12]

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[10] In Field Information Circular No. 14, dated October 7, 1957, Anslinger ordered several cost-cutting measures and warned supervisors to be "constantly aware of the pressing need for efficiency and economies..." Folder "(0370-3) Field Information Circulars, 1-170," Box 56, RG 170, NARA.

[11] See Cusack to Anslinger, March 27, 1959; Speer to Cusack, April 22, 1959; and Cusack to Anslinger, January 5, 1961; and, generally, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[12] Siragusa is quoted in an addendum to a memo dated May 27, 1959 from Cusack to Speer. See also Cusack to Giordano, July 20, 1959; Cusack to all District 17 agents, August 11, 1959; Cusack to Speer, August 11, 1959; Giordano to Cusack, August 24, 1959; and Cusack to Anslinger, November 20, 1959. Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

The battle over District 17's expenditures continued for years. Personal favors and gifts were a key feature of operations under Siragusa and, as Cusack pointed out in November 1962, the agents needed the freedom to do some "representational spending . . . to obtain the cooperation needed and remain competitive with other U.S. agencies operating abroad." It's telling that Cusack put the dilemma in the context of American bureaucratic competition and not global counternarcotic strategy, but as he rightly pointed out (echoing arguments made by Siragusa a few years earlier), "whenever you give a foreign police official a bottle of whiskey, a carton of cigarettes or a box of cigars he owes you something and will come through with that little extra favor when needed." When, less than a year later, Siragusa decreed that all such purchases would have to come out of pocket, Cusack canceled bulk cigarette purchases for the entire office in a fit of pique. In response, Siragusa admonished, "Your unabated and impertinent manifestations of philological prowess reflect a disconcerting retrogressive comprehension of basic standard operating procedures in the administrative area."[13]

It's unclear from Bureau records if Siragusa was responding primarily to institutional pressures to rein in the budget or trying to hamstring a bureaucratic rival. It was probably both. Eventually the pressure began to get to Cusack and he took his frustration out on underperforming agents, which Siragusa took as further proof that he was unfit to lead the District.[14] Personal antagonisms actually crowded in to such a degree that Speer sharply criticized Cusack for delaying an undercover drug deal in order to remain with his wife during a difficult labor that resulted in the stillbirth of their infant son.[15]

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[13] "One U.S. agency operating abroad"—the CIA—"has made a science of this technique," Cusack continued, in reference to purchasing influence. "So far as I know, the FBI, Customs, State Department Security, I & N, ONI and the U.S. Army CID and CIC use it extensively." See letter to Giordano dated November 12, 1962, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, July 1961 thru December 1962, Book #4," Box 165. The debate continued into the new year, as evidenced by correspondence between Siragusa and Cusack, dated January 14, 1963; January 23, 1963; and January 29, 1963. In Folder "0660-A-1C), General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, January 1963 thru September 1963, Book #5," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[14] In a memo dated May 20, 1960, Siragusa reported that Agent Fred Wilson had failed to make a case after six months in Italy and told Siragusa he was "literally terrified of DS Cusack – says Cusack disproves [sic] of just about everything he does." Siragusa then critiqued Cusack's micromanaging style, failure to participate in undercover investigations and complaints about money. Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[15] In a note to Anslinger dated May 26, 1960, Speer wrote, "Unless the condition of Cusack's wife is far worse than indicated . . . I do not have enough patience to excuse this kind of development . . . there is little a husband can add to the delivery of a baby when the wife is in the hospital where she will be well cared for." In Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #8, April 1960 thru Aug. 1960,"

The fight over District 17's budget and operations injected a detrimental level of animus into the Bureau's foreign enforcement program, but the underlying problem was the natural dialectic between trafficking and enforcement tactics. The Beirut office generated a lot of work at mid-decade, but it went quiet during and after Lebanon's political crisis and exposed the lack of cases elsewhere in the District. In response, Siragusa and Speer pushed Cusack to stop relying on informants and get his agents into the field. "Within the past six months," Speer wrote in May 1959, "tremendous seizures of heroin have been made in the New York City area. This certainly indicates there is a fertile field and ample opportunity for District #17 agents to initiate cases leading to comparable seizures." The problem, headquarters felt, was that agents spent too much time "in the office or in a hotel room" while informants did the legwork. But, Speer warned, few special employees could be trusted and most "jump at an opportunity to fabricate stories, with the possibility of obtaining per diem and money to finance their trips." Instead, he and Siragusa insisted, the agents should attempt "cold turkey" approaches (without the benefit of an informant's introduction) in the "ginmills, taverns, etc.," despite the admonition to spend less money.[16]

The dubious reliability of informants in District 17 was certainly a real and pressing issue. Aggravating the problem, however, was the fact that officials like Speer (and Giordano) lacked prolonged investigative experience overseas and believed—incorrectly—that "making cases in Europe is no different from making cases in the States."[17] In point of fact, it was very different. Cusack acknowledged that a "slump that has plagued this district for many months" and the availability of heroin in New York indicated there were cases to be made. But, he countered, why hadn't New York generated leads for District 17? (A point with which Siragusa grudgingly agreed.) The real impediment, he argued, was that "our means are not the equal of District 2," particularly when it came to police authority. In New York, the "the lever of

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Box 12, Entry 10. The stillbirth is mentioned in a memo from Cusack to Giordano dated October 15, 1962, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, July 1961 thru December 1962, Book #4" Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[16] See letter dated May 20, 1959 from Speer to Cusack and Cusack's reply dated May 27, 1959, with notations from Siragusa in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[17] In a memo to Anslinger dated February 4, 1960, Speer complained that two unproductive agents "must realize that making cases in Europe is no different from making cases in the States." Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165. Siragusa, at least, knew better and wrote to Anslinger in 1950, "I dont want to glamorize the work here but it is definitely dissimilar to narcotic law enforcement in the U.S." Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

prosecution and increased sentences" furnished a stream of potential informants, but overseas, Cusack pointed out, that mechanism is "not available to us nor is the manpower nor technical equipment…"[18] Cusack was right; it was a lot easier to makes cases in the U.S., particularly after the implementation of mandatory minimum sentencing. In the nations comprising District 17, sentences were far less punitive and the agents lacked the authority to regularly intervene in the judicial process or make the kind of routine arrests that generated informants. Operating on foreign soil, the agents had to settle for long-term conspiracy investigations and were explicitly prohibited from making "exploratory cases." That meant the District had to motivate informants with financial rewards instead of avoiding prison. This had predictable results, and as Siragusa observed, "Too much time has been wasted on unreliable informants who in addition rob our money."[19]

Speer and Siragusa pushed "cold turkey" approaches as the solution for all that ailed District 17. No more per diems or venal informants, just an undercover agent *mano-a-mano* with a drug trafficker in a battle of wits. Cusack, however, was aghast and argued the technique was outdated, ineffective and "a last resort." Few agents had much confidence in the cold turkey approach and when one was reprimanded for not making the attempt, he replied, "I did not believe that I could arrive in Paris or any other city and simply go out and make a case without a Special Employee." One of the readily apparent causes of District 17's case slump was that regional traffickers had caught on to American techniques and cold turkey cases were no solution. "The traffickers have all heard of the dangers of dealing with anyone who looks American," Knight reported during a stop in Istanbul. Siragusa, at least, knew better and frequently noted the heightened scrutiny and fear of Americans that inevitably followed successful busts. After ten years, the traffickers were bound to catch on and, Cusack protested, "We are wearing out the gimmick in many areas." Moreover, given the pressure to rein in expenses, it took a seriously canny agent to make undercover approaches in "ginmills and taverns" without buying drinks.[20]

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[18] Cusack to Speer, May 27, 1959, Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[19] In a report to Anslinger dated May 20, 1960, Siragusa continued, without a trace of irony, "This district requires substantive type cases, and not very long-range conspiracies on tenuous investigative leads." Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[20] Knight is quoted from a lengthy report dated March 30, 1959. His point was apparently strong enough that someone at FBN HQ (most likely Siragusa) underlined the sentence. In Folder "(0660)

While the agents in District 17 were ordered to do more with less, impatience continued to mount in Washington and the Bureau issued new guidelines that required each agent to submit quarterly reports detailing their progress. For the first time in the District's history, agents were held to a de facto quota and those who failed to make a case every three months were unceremoniously shipped home, creating pressure to focus on results-oriented short-term busts at the expense of potentially more valuable long-term investigations.[21] Clearly, the freewheeling days of District 17 were over and the only agents afforded any latitude were the ones who consistently made cases. Fortunately, for the Bureau, however, three new branch offices were on the horizon, offering new leads and expanding the FBN's geographic reach.

"...Getting Our Foot in the Door..."

Even as District 17's caseload sunk to an all-time low, the institutional bonds painstakingly forged with foreign police services over the previous decade facilitated a critical expansion, particularly in France, which quickly became the new focal point of the Atlantic heroin trade and American counternarcotic efforts. By the summer of 1959, Cusack reported, it was "increasingly evident that almost all heroin smuggled to the United States is of clandestine manufacture in France." The name hadn't stuck yet, but the Bureau was witnessing the crystallization of the infamous "French Connection," as opium and morphine base from around the Mediterranean was increasingly destined for the Marseille region of France, where it was converted to heroin in clandestine labs and smuggled to the U.S. "The narcotic situation in France, so far as it concerns us, is as serious as it has ever been," Cusack concluded. For once Washington was in agreement and Speer relayed word to Anslinger that the FBN "will make little progress in District 17 until the continuous flow of heroin from the Marseille underworld is blocked."[22]

Turkey File No. 9, 1957-1959," Box 164. Cusack is quoted in a letter to Speer dated June 18, 1959. In a report dated March 31, 1960, Agent Anthony Mangiaracina frantically tried to justify a request for reimbursement and wrote, "Because of the nature of this particular operation I found myself, because of compelling circumstances, having to purchase these drinks in order to maintain my undercover role." In the future, he promised to concoct a ruse—such as ulcers—to avoid drinking, which might lead an observant target to wonder what the agent was doing in a bar. The unnamed agent is William Davis, who was effective stateside but whose struggles in Europe were discussed in a February 12, 1960 memo from Cusack to Anslinger. Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[21] See memo dated January 11, 1960, from Anslinger to Cusack, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[22] Cusack is quoted from an addendum to a Agent Andrew Tartaglino dated July 22, 1959, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961,

The enforcement situation in France, however, was daunting. The Bureau quickly zeroed in on the "Corsican Mafia" as its primary target and believed it had "almost complete control" over the French underworld as well as a monopoly on the region's critical heroin manufacturing process. Much like Sicily to Italy, Corsica is a Mediterranean island under French domain. Both were home to communities that tended to be somewhat separatist in outlook and marginalized on the mainland—a common background that facilitated their cooperative Mediterranean smuggling ventures and reinforced the FBN's predisposition to see the Corsicans as a unified "Mafia," rather than a series of disparate gangs sharing a common background. One 1966 FBN briefing paper stated that the Corsican Mafia was "very similar to and operates by almost the same criminal code as does the Italian Mafia." Although active throughout France, Corsican influence was concentrated in the Marseille area.[23] There were also troubling rumors that many Corsican criminals had ties to the French intelligence services (as well as the French Gestapo) dating back to the Resistance, and Al McCoy contends that certain influential gangsters received additional backing from the CIA as a check on Marseille's influential labor movement.[24]

Compounding the challenge of enforcement in France were profound differences of opinion between French and American law enforcement. As one agent observed, the French have "a deep feeling of independence and do not like to be advised [on] the manner in which to conduct an investigation."[25] The Bureau had long sought better access to the country, but the relationship was strained by Gallic ambivalence toward the U.S. in general and the FBN's undercover methods in particular. Anslinger pressed to get an FBN agent or, at minimum, a sympathetic consul stationed in Marseille as early as 1947, but to no avail.[26] During his own tenure, Siragusa carefully tried to cultivate a

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Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. See also Memo from Speer to Anslinger, dated June 29, 1930, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #8, April 1960 thru Aug. 1960," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[23] See "Overseas Orientation Report; Paris, France," dated May 24, 1966 in Folder "(0280-17, Overseas) Overseas Orientation, 1963-1967," Box 49, RG 170, NARA

[24] McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin*, 46-76.

[25] Tartaglino, report dated October 18, 1960, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #9, Sept. 1960 thru Sept. 1961," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA. "The French Surete have always discouraged the Bureau from opening a Paris Branch office," he noted. "They felt that a full time agent would know too much about the function of their office and . . . would eventually have the 12 man narcotic section working full time on our leads."

[26] See Anslinger to Morlock, April 4, 1947, and Cecil Gray to Secretary of State, October 3, 1947, in Folder "(0660) France #2, 1945-1950," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

Sûreté official named Edmond Bailleul, who supervised the country's Central Narcotics Office from 1952 to 1955. Bailleul professed great affection for George White, but he didn't trust Siragusa and (understandably) demanded close supervision of any Bureau activity in France. Siragusa thought him well-intentioned but suffering "illogical illusions of grandeur," a charge leveled at any foreign official who dared insist on oversight of FBN activity. Although the Bureau managed to work behind Bailleul's back (with generally poor results), it faced a broader problem in the clash of cultures between American and French law enforcement. The French, Siragusa noted, had a "peculiar aversion" to criminal informants and undercover work, and the Sûreté explicitly prohibited the Bureau from conducting any "exploratory undercover cases." Bailleul's own bureaucratic rivals accused him of associating with Corsican traffickers and forced him into retirement in 1955, but FBN operations remained sharply constrained by his replacement, Commissaire Charles Gillard, a former homicide investigator with the Vichy regime.[27]

In the mid-1950s, tensions between the FBN and French police increased as Bureau officials began to suspect the heroin trade was supplied partly by diversion from French pharmaceutical supplies. Noting that his agents had recently captured large quantities of high-quality heroin in the fall of 1955, New York District Supervisor James Ryan commented, "There is no question that a tremendous quantity of heroin is being smuggled into the United States directly from France. It is my opinion that clandestine factories could hardly be responsible for this output..." Siragusa was less convinced. "The root of the evil is excessive Turkish opium production," he countered, and "there are enough clandestine laboratories in France, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and maybe Italy too to feed heroin into the United States in large quantities and continuously." FBN inquiries and a check on French production figures at the UN, however, indicated that a considerable volume of narcotics (labeled as ethylmorphine or dionin), may have leaked into the illicit traffic. When the Bureau pressed, French police and regulatory officials stonewalled and reported that their own inquiries "revealed nothing abnormal." Dissatisfied with what

[27] See in particular, Siragusa to Anslinger, July 16, 1953; Knight to Siragusa, July 16, 1953; Siragusa to Bailleul, July 21, 1953; Siragusa to Anslinger, December 23, 1953; Bailleul to White, October 8, 1955; Siragusa to Anslinger, December 2, 1955; and Siragusa to Anslinger, April 24, 1958. Folder "(0660) France, French Police, Agent Siragusa," Box 156, RG 170, NARA. See also a memo from Cusack to Speer, dated December 12, 1960, that provides an overview of FBN efforts in France, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #9, Sept. 1960 thru Sept. 1961," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

they took as a "whitewash," in 1959 FBN officials sent an agent and informant to take an unsanctioned look at the suspected factories, a sensitive operation only elliptically referenced in FBN records.[28]

The Bureau enjoyed comparatively smoother relations with Interpol, which was headquartered in Paris and staffed primarily by Sûreté officials. From early on, both Siragusa and Anslinger found Interpol immensely helpful in monitoring suspected traffickers and collecting intelligence. Although tension between the Sûreté officers assigned to Interpol and those operating out of the Central Narcotics Office sometimes complicated liaison for the Bureau, Siragusa ensured his relations with Interpol remained "correct and never strained." In 1958, the Bureau was even designated the formal U.S. representative to the international police body, making official a de facto relationship in place since J. Edgar Hoover abruptly withdrew FBI membership in 1951.[29]

Siragusa contemplated opening a Paris office as early as 1957, but it took two years to overcome the resistance of the Sûreté. In June 1959, Gillard finally acquiesced to a branch office following negotiations with FBN brass in Washington. *Agreed* is too strong a word; as one agent put it, "I received a very definite impression that they were waiting for us to open the office . . . at no time did they ever express approval." Once again the FBN's entrance was tenuous, but it was a start. For Andrew Tartaglino, the agent chosen to run the Paris office, it was good enough; "In my opinion this is getting our foot in the door," he wrote. Further testimony to the deteriorating relationship between Washington and Rome, however, Cusack was not even informed of the development until an urgent telegram arrived, ordering him to immediately send Tartaglino to Paris before, Giordano explained, "our French collaborators had the opportunity . . . [to] possibly change their minds." Cusack's objections—that all of

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[28] See Ryan to Anslinger, November 17, 1955; Siragusa to Anslinger, December 3, 1955; Charles Vaille (Chief, Central Pharmacy Service, Ministry of Public Health) to Anslinger, January 6, 1956; and generally, Folder "(0660, France) Alleged French Diversion," Box 156. The operation was dubbed "Bluebird" and referenced in a State Dept. cable from Cusack to Anslinger dated October 15, 1959 in Folder "(0660) France, Heroin Diversion, January 1962 thru --," Box 156, and memos between Cusack, Speer and Anslinger, dated July 14 and August 16, 1960, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #8, April 1960 thru Aug. 1960," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[29] See Anslinger to E.H. Foley (Asst. Secretary of the Treasury), March 22, 1951, in Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164. In a letter to Anslinger dated December 21, 1954, Siragusa reports on tensions between Marcel Sicot (Secretary-General, Interpol) and Bailleul, in Folder "(0660) France, Sicot File #1, I.C.P.C. (M. Sicot), 1952 thru 1954," Box 156. See also Folders "(0145-23A) Interpol, Region 17, 1950-1956," and Folder "(0145-23a) Interpol, 1957-1957," Box 46, RG 170, NARA, and Michael Fooner, *Interpol: Issues in World Crime and International Criminal Justice* (Plenum Publishing Corporation: New York, 1989), 53-56.

his manpower was tied up a Middle Eastern investigation and that French police officials were about to go on summer holiday—fell on deaf ears. "It is imperative that we do not lose our foothold in France," Giordano countered.[30]

When news of the Paris office arrived, Cusack's attention was elsewhere. In an effort to pull the District from its doldrums, Cusack traveled to Ankara to renew the Bureau's request to allow joint investigations in Istanbul and the Turkish interior. The Anatolian peninsula remained the largest source of opiates (both licit and illicit) in the region, but Turkish officials had successfully kept the Bureau at arm's length for a decade and just recently thwarted Garland Williams's appointment as a State Department police advisor. To ensure the Turks retained control over the few token investigations that were allowed, the agents were required to work only with two specially designated detectives from the Directorate of Public Safety named Ali Eren and Galip Labernas.[31] After putting in a little personal diplomacy, however, Cusack received permission to send agents in for longer assignments. With several promising leads already lined up, Cusack was optimistic that following a period of six months, "the Turkish government would not object to our permanently stationing an agent in Istanbul or Ankara."[32]

Now with branch offices either newly opened or soon-to-open on both ends of the regional supply chain, the Bureau no longer had to content itself with straddling the opiate traffic from Rome or Beirut. The District's eastern flank, meanwhile, was shored up in 1955 when the Shah of Iran announced a comprehensive anti-opium campaign and cracked down on both poppy production and opium smoking.

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[30] See Siragusa to Anslinger, February 9, 1957, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2." Box 165. See also Tartaglino to Anslinger, June 10, 1959; a telegram dated June 10, 1959 from Giordano to Cusack; a more detailed memo also dated June 10, 1959 from Giordano to Cusack; and Cusack to Giordano, June 18, 1959, in Folder "(0620-13) Paris Branch Office," Box 150, RG 170, NARA.

[31] See a June 8, 1959 letter from Cusack to Cemal Goktan (Director General, Directorate of Public Security). An untitled memo prepared in Washington and dated March 16, 1960 described the Bureau's relationship with Turkey and noted, "During the past four years agents of [the Beirut] office have, in general, not spent extended periods of time in Turkey." For Williams's failed appointment, see a January 30, 1959 letter to Anslinger and generally Folder "(0660) Turkey File No. 10, Jan. 1960-1961," Box 164. It seems Anslinger's description of Williams "smacking of official Washington" was accurate, as the Turkish government allowed an FBN agent named Frank Sojat to serve as a police advisor in Ankara in from May 1951 to October 1952. His reports are available in Folder "(0660) Turkey, Special File (1950-1952)," Box 25, RG 170, NARA. See also Ryan Gingeras, "Istanbul Confidential: Heroin, Espionage, and Politics in Cold War Turkey, 1945-1960," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 4 (September 2013): 779–806.

[32] Developments reported in a letter to Anslinger dated June 30, 1959 in Folder "(0660) Turkey File No. 9, 1957-1959," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

Encouraged by State Department advisors like Williams, Iran even signed on to the 1953 Opium Protocol, an international treaty championed by Anslinger that featured stringent production control.[33] With outposts situated throughout the region by the summer of 1959, District 17 was finally able direct its efforts against the entirety of the Mediterranean and Atlantic drug traffic.

Back in Washington, however, Siragusa was showing the strain of his rivalry with Speer and effort to undermine Cusack. In the margins of Cusack's report on the prospective Istanbul office, Siragusa scribbled a note to Anslinger and complained that with so many agents manning branch offices, no one was left for undercover work. "Looks like too much empire building and no cases in immediate sight," he wrote. When the Turks rebuffed Williams's appointment four months earlier, however, Siragusa advised Anslinger that "District #17 could set up a branch office there quietly and without any fan-fare."[34] In other words, when the Istanbul office was Siragusa's idea, it was quiet diplomacy; when it was Cusack's idea, it was empire building.

Regardless of the backbiting going on at FBN headquarters, results in Turkey exceeded all expectations. A large part of the District's success was due to the choice of talented undercover agent Sal Vizzini to head the office. With a flair for operations and a gift for languages, Vizzini quickly picked up Turkish and achieved such effective collaboration from the Turkish police that he almost singlehandedly ended District 17's case slump. Between January and April 1960, he and fellow Agent Frederick Cornetta participated in the seizure of over 250 kilos (about 550 pounds) of raw opium. In Rome, Cusack estimated the Istanbul office would be ready to go on-line by mid-summer. In Washington, Speer and Siragusa continued to try to score points: Siragusa suggested partnering Vizzini with underperforming agents to coax more cases out of the District and Speer pointed out that two of Vizzini's cases featured "cold turkey" approaches.[35]

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[33] William B. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 196–7; Nathaniel Lee Smith, "'Cured of the Habit By Force': The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970" (Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2007), 216–223.

[34] See comments in the margin of Cusack's letter dated June 30, 1959 and a memo from Siragusa to Anslinger dated February 16, 1959 in Folder "(0660) Turkey File No. 9, 1957-1959," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[35] In a memo dated January 26, 1960, Vizzini reported that learning some Turkish dramatically improved his relationship with both the Turkish police and special employees. See also a report dated March 16, 1960 and a memo from Cusack to Anslinger dated April 14, 1960, in Folder "(0660) Turkey File

Plans for Istanbul were thrown into momentary disarray, however, when the administration of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was overthrown by a military coup in May 1960—an event that took both the Bureau and U.S. military observers by surprise. The FBN's designated collaborators Eren and Labernas were immediately sidelined and revealed, Cusack reported, as "counter-espionage or security agents operating as a special squad" for Kemal Aygun, an important figure in the Menderes regime and frequently identified as the Bureau's best patron in Turkey. It's unclear if Aygun was in cahoots with Turkish traffickers, as the new military authorities alleged (a charge seconded by historian Ryan Gingeras), but Eren and Labernas were clearly meant to keep the Bureau on a short leash.[36]

In any case, Vizzini was a resourceful agent and earned the new authorities' gratitude by capturing a wanted bank robber, thus ensuring the Istanbul office opened on schedule in July 1960. Soon afterwards, Vizzini oversaw the creation and training of a new dedicated narcotic squad. By the fall of 1960, FBN-Turkish relations were stronger than ever before and ushered in an unprecedented string of successful cases, most involving the traffic in raw opium. It's noteworthy, however, that Vizzini attributed much of his effectiveness to an informant network kept secret from the Istanbul police. "I had some of the most talented thieves in Istanbul on my payroll," he wrote, "and it gave me a better intelligence system than the Istanbul police ever had." The seizures made throughout 1960 represented a record haul and, soon after the new year, Cusack congratulated Vizzini on joining the "One Ton Club" and wrote, "So far as I know, you are the first narcotic agent . . . to have directly and personally participated in the seizure of over a ton of opium in the course of one year." In short, the future looked promising in Turkey, where the new authorities were staunchly pro-American and increasingly ready to implement the FBN model.[37]

No. 10, Jan. 1960-1961," Box 164. For Speer and Siragusa, see memos to Anslinger dated May 5 and May 20, 1960 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[36] The coup and subsequent turmoil were reported in correspondence variously dated between June and September 1960 in Folder "(0660) Turkey File No. 10, Jan. 1960-1961," Box 164. Confirmation that Eren and Labernas were security agents was reported in a letter from Cusack to Siragusa, dated July 5, 1962, in Folder "(0620-13) Istanbul Branch Office, 1960-1967," Box 150, RG 170, NARA. See also Ryan Gingeras, "In the Hunt for the 'Sultans of Smack:' Dope, Gangsters and the Construction of the Turkish Deep State," *The Middle East Journal* 65, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 426–441; and Gingeras, "Istanbul Confidential: Heroin, Espionage, and Politics in Cold War Turkey, 1945-1960." In Vizzini's memoir, he described Eren and Labernas as "my good friends. They saved my life more than once. But I didn't tell them about my informants." Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 96.

[37] See Cusack to Anslinger, June 23, 1960. Improved relations are reported in a September 22, 1960 letter from Cusack to Anslinger and discussed in a January 26, 1961 letter from Cusack to Colonel

The future, however, was not quite so bright on the other side of District 17, where the Bureau struggled to find its footing with the French. Agents like Knight, who took over the Paris office in 1961, must have experienced a sense of déjà vu as developments in France echoed the FBN's growing pains in Lebanon. Prohibited from exploratory investigations, the agents chafed under the tight supervision of the Sûreté and initially had to settle for a strategy of exploiting outside leads back into the country before the French would act. "The French Surete, in wanting to know all our movements, obviously . . . want to know everything we are doing," Tartaglino reported and cautioned against unsanctioned investigations.[38] Informants were scare and were certainly not going to be provided by French authorities, so the Bureau again had to beg, borrow or steal from other American intelligence services (primarily Army CID and Air Force OSI; no mention of the CIA). And, once again, internal bureaucratic rivalries complicated FBN efforts. Although approval for the Paris office came from Charles Gillard, supervisor of the Central Narcotics Office, tensions between him and his superiors in the Sûreté quickly became so apparent that the agents decided to cut him out in favor of a direct relationship with his boss Michel Hacq, the Director of the Sûreté's investigative wing.[39] The Bureau's relationship with Interpol, meanwhile, remained steady and Agents Tartaglino and Knight were on good personal terms with Michel Hugues, a mid-level official who ran the day-to-day operations of the Central Narcotics Office.[40]

Fevzi Arsin (Director General, Turkish National Police). Folder "(0660) Turkey File No. 10, Jan. 1960-1961," Box 164 and Folder "(0620-13) Istanbul Branch Office, 1960-1967," Box 150. See also Cusack to Anslinger, July 15, 1960; Cusack to Vizzini, January 5, 1961; Vizzini, report dated March 14, 1961; and Cusack to Anslinger, March 24, 1961 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. Vizzini's success Istanbul is also narrated in Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 185-202.

[38] Tartaglino to Cusack dated January 20, 1960, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #7, April 1959 thru March 1960," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[39] See Tartaglino memo dated June 23, 1959 in Folder "(0620-13) Paris Branch Office," Box 150, RG 170, NARA. For tensions within the Sûreté, see two memos, each dated December 19, 1960, prepared by Agent Anthony Pohl; a May 24, 1961 memo from Speer to Anslinger, indicating plans to cut out Gillard and his associates and "put the complete chill on these dead heads." Discord between the Sûreté's national leadership and the narcotics section is also reported in a June 25, 1961 memo by Pohl, in Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156; and in report dated November 4, 1963 by Agent Albert Garofalo, in Folder "(0660) France #5, July 1961 thru June 1965," Box 159, RG 170, NARA.

[40] In a letter to Cusack dated July 22, 1959, Tartaglino reports on Hugues's promotion and proudly wrote, "I foresaw the day when Mr. Hugues would one day be in command of the French Sûreté narcotic enforcement section. Mr. Hugues for the past seven years has been one of our most effective and closest collaborators." Cross-filed in Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156 and Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

Getting into Paris was an important development and the office took on added significance over the years. The Bureau quickly came to regard the French capital as "the focal point" for investigations of the Atlantic heroin trade and it eventually became the European headquarters for the FBN's successor, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs.[41] Paris certainly had a great deal of political importance, but, from an operational standpoint, Marseille was where the action was. In August 1960, Speer announced that he was sending veteran agent Martin Pera on a covert assignment and allowing him "free rein" to "develop cases in the Marseille area." Pera was an experienced agent, but Speer's motivations were also political and he wanted to use Pera to edge Cusack out of District 17. No dummy, Cusack knew that he was being frozen out of operations in France, particularly after Speer and Giordano designated Pera and Anthony Pohl, another French-speaking agent in the New York office, to liaise with French officials. Cusack bristled that, as District Supervisor, it was imperative for him to have "a voice in establishing policy in France as I do in the other countries of this district." Pera and Pohl, he further noted, stumbled directly into internal Sûreté rivalries that the Rome office had carefully avoided.[42]

Fortunately, another big case intervened at just the right moment. This time the action was in New York, where, in October 1960, Bureau agents arrested a Guatemalan diplomat named Mauricio Rosal and his French accomplice Etienne Tarditi in possession of fifty kilos (roughly equal to 110 pounds) of uncut heroin. Interrogation of the suspects quickly led to the discovery of another fifty kilos in a Long Island stash house, making the Rosal bust one of the largest heroin seizures in FBN history. The Ambassador case, as it was later called, began with a tip from one of Knight's criminal informants in Beirut, who reported that a rival trafficking organization used a diplomatic courier named "Maurice." Working with U.S. Customs and the French Sûreté, the Bureau identified the prime suspect as Mauricio Rosal Bron, the Guatemalan Ambassador to Belgium and Holland—a pedophile, they discovered,

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[41] The "focal point" remark is quoted in Speer to Gaffney, April, 12, 1961 in "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165. A note on the cover of Folder "(0620-13) Paris Branch Office," Box 150, indicates the Paris office became the new District 17 headquarters in August 1969. RG 170, NARA.

[42] Speer to Cusack, August 16, 1960; Speer to Anslinger, June 29, 1960; and Cusack to Speer, December 12, 1960, in Folders "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #8, April 1960 thru Aug. 1960," and "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #9, Sept. 1960 thru Sept. 1961," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

blackmailed into service by Tarditi.[43] The intended buyers, Trans World Airlines purser Charles Bourbonnais and longshoreman Nick Calamaris, had Mafia ties but Tarditi was the key figure. (Valentine speculates that he was a CIA asset.)[44] Tarditi intimated that he knew people in French intelligence while under interrogation but nevertheless gave up his suppliers in France and provided a detailed overview of the trafficking scene in Marseille. It looked like a great case on the surface, but the Rosal bust revealed that approximately 200 kilos of heroin were smuggled into the U.S. from France every month.[45]

In retrospect, the huge volume of drugs smuggled via the French Connection shows that the Bureau had a rather poor grasp on the Atlantic heroin trade. At the time, however, it was precisely what FBN officials needed to galvanize French counternarcotic efforts. In Paris, Tartaglino enthused, the case "could not have happened at a more opportune time" and "demonstrated to the Surete the need for a Paris Branch Office and of an agent working on a full time basis."[46] The case also lent additional urgency to the Bureau's effort to open a station in Marseille. "This investigation illustrates the spectacular results which may be obtained through cooperation of narcotic enforcement agencies," Anslinger wrote to the French Ambassador. But it also, he pointedly added, "creates concern by revealing that such enormous quantities of heroin are reaching the United States from France." As Speer and Siragusa spread out to canvas French officials, the Bureau increasingly identified France as the "principal source of supply of pure heroin" and compared it to Communist China or Italy during the Schiapparelli diversion. Back in New York, Agent Pera took a French consul on ride-alongs and introduced him to addicts who reported that everyone knew the good stuff came from Marseille.[47] Anslinger even pressed to have President

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[43] The arrests were front page news and received extensive media coverage. For a few examples, see "Arrest Envoy in Dope Ring," *The Chicago Tribune*, October 4, 1960, p. 1; "Guatemalan Envoy Held as Smuggler of Heroin into U.S.," *New York Times*, p. 1; "7 Indicted as Part of Narcotics Ring," *New York Times*, November 1, 1960, p. 80. See also Jill Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams: A History of America's Romance with Illegal Drugs* (New York: Scribner, 1996), 179–187.

[44] "Was Tarditi a CIA spy, reporting to the CIA about KGB agents within SDECE? Perhaps," Valentine writes in *The Strength of the Wolf*, 204. The Ambassador case is covered 202-205.

[45] See a memo dated January 11, 1961, titled "France, the Principal Source of Illicit Heroin in the United States," and an undated memo titled "Comments on the Illicit Narcotic Traffic between France and the United States," in Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156. See also Cusack, Progress Report for October 1960, in Folder "(1825-7) Reports Progress Dist #17, 1960," Box 83, RG 170, NARA.

[46] Tartaglino, report dated October 18, 1960, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #9, Sept. 1960 thru Sept. 1961," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[47] See Anslinger to Herve Alphand (Ambassador of France), October 21, 1960. In a memo dated January 19, 1961, Anslinger documents a meeting with Alphand in which he threatened "bad publicity" if

Kennedy address the problem with Charles de Gaulle during an imminent diplomatic mission to Paris. The issue was relegated to written exchanges, but both Treasury and State Department officials adopted Anslinger's position that France was "responsible for nearly all the illicit heroin" available east of the Mississippi river and bled an estimated $300 million from the American economy due to related drug abuse and crime.[48]

Once again, threatening a host nation's international reputation and enlisting officials from across the diplomatic, political and police spectrums was key to the Bureau's success. In May 1961, Speer warned French police officials that the Bureau had gone easy on them in public and at the UN, "but that another year would be different." Later that day, he reported to Anslinger, "Now the French not only agree to having our agent in Marseilles but are eager to have one there."[49] The Bureau chose a new recruit named Anthony Pohl to run operations in Marseille. Pohl grew up in France, fought with the Resistance during WWII and had nine years of investigative experience in Europe with Army CID. Although he was new to drug enforcement, Pohl was seen as an asset because of his "close working acquaintance with high echelon French enforcement officials," whose thinking he was expected to "direct . . . toward more productive narcotic enforcement." Pohl demonstrated his mettle while interrogating Etienne Tarditi but found an uphill struggle waiting for him in Marseille.[50]

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the Surete did not "clean up the situation." Explicit comparisons to Italy and China are made in undated memo "Comments on the Illicit Narcotic Traffic between France and the United States." See also Speer to Anslinger, January 10, 1961 and January 31, 1961; and Siragusa to Anslinger, February 6, 1961. In a memos dated January 31, 1961 and February 28, 1961, Speer informed Anslinger that Agent Pera had taken Raymond La Porte (a Minister Plenipotentiary stationed in New York) on drug raids and to visit female addicts at a local detention center. In Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

[48] Anslinger provided this information to Asst Treasury Secretary A. Gilmore Flues and requested that Pres. Kennedy take action in a letter dated April 4, 1961. Anslinger's language and information was used in a letter from Treasury Secretary Douglas Dillon to Secretary of State Dean Rusk dated April 21, 1961. The American Embassy in Paris then reported presenting this information in a telegram dated May 1, 1961. See also Siragusa to Anslinger, May 23, 1961. In Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

[49] See two memos from Speer to Anslinger, each dated May 24, 1961. In the first he reports his conversation with Sûreté officials and in the second he credits Pera and Pohl for convincing the French to permit an office in Marseille. In Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

[50] See Speer to Cusack, February 28, 1961; and Cusack to Anslinger, March 20, 1961, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. See also Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 275–6.

Taking up residence over the summer, Pohl had the new Marseille branch office up and running out of the American consulate by September 1961. Pohl had ample opportunity to observe French counternarcotic efforts in the city and encountered few surprises. Years earlier, the Bureau had some success working with Sûreté detective Robert Pasquier. But when Siragusa paid a social call on Pasquier back in 1951, he found the officer living with his pregnant wife and six year old son in "squalid" conditions "reminiscent of the filthy New York City tenements." It was little wonder, the agents concluded, that Marseille police forces were so easily bought or intimidated. Ten years later, Pohl reported that the Sûreté's local narcotic squad remained "paralyzed by their fear of the Marseilles underworld." Cusack suspected that Pasquier was probably "protecting some violators" but might move against low-ranking traffickers, who could lead to bigger fish. Contributing to the "appalling" lack of enforcement in Marseille, Pohl continued, was a growing addict population swollen by the "return of the 'colons'" from Indochina and Algeria. The FBN's presence in the city also placed new strains on the Sûreté's command structure, as the national leadership of the Services de Police Judiciaire assigned additional officers and resources to Marseille but removed the local squad from the supervision of Gillard's Central Narcotics Office. On the American side, Bureau headquarters had to check Cusack's impulse to issue ultimatums and demand changes in French police administration in accordance with American expectations.[51]

It was slow going, but within a few years the Marseille office established an effective liaison with local police forces and began developing productive investigations. The famous NYPD "French Connection" case, immortalized by the book and movie of the same name and carried out between October 1961 and February 1962, broke soon afterward and indicated there was still a long way to go toward effective control of the Atlantic heroin trade. The case resulted in the seizure of about 50 kilos of heroin, smuggled into the U.S. via an automobile belonging to a minor French celebrity, but, like the

[51] Siragusa is quoted in Progress Report No. 41-A, dated May 3, 1951, Folder "(0660) France #3, 1951-1953," Box 156. For conditions in Marseille and the FBN office, see Speer to Anslinger, May 16, 1961; Cusack to Giordano, July 21, 1961; Pera, report dated October 17, 1961, in Folders "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," and "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, July 1961 thru December 1962, Book #4," Box 165. See also Cusack to Anslinger, March 21, 1961; Speer to Cusack, July 12, 1961; and Pohl, reports dated June 10, 1961; June 25, 1961; July 2, 1961 and July 4, 1961, in Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170. Cusack's comments on Pasquier were reported in a memo to Anslinger dated July 27, 1960, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #8, April 1960 thru Aug. 1960," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

Rosal bust a year before it, confirmed that enormous volumes of heroin continued to reach New York. Even worse, the main suspect, supplier Jean Jehan, escaped and most of the seized heroin later disappeared from the NYPD's evidence locker, a fact that was glossed over in the Hollywood version and demonstrated the corrupting influence of the drug trade.[52]

Putting aside the efficacy of the Bureau's actual counternarcotic efforts, however, it's clear the establishment of an FBN outpost in Marseille—the last of District 17's branch offices—was a bureaucratic achievement of the highest order. The FBN had not only secured the cooperation of the recalcitrant French but institutionalized its influence with police agencies across Europe and the Middle East. By 1961, the District even began to turn its gaze southward, toward Africa, which had previously been an afterthought but was formally added to District 17's domain.[53]

Bangkok and the Birth of the Global Drug War

With the consolidation of District 17 in 1961, the Bureau was ready for more and proven (depending upon the measurement) that it was the most effective tool with which to expand the reach of American drug control. As Bureau officials looked to extend their influence to new areas, however, they risked aggravating the long-running feud with Customs. Since the original 1951 decision to give the Bureau jurisdiction for Europe and the Middle East, FBN and Customs agents alternated between working cooperatively and sniping at one another. By the early 1960s, the in-fighting was intractable. Siragusa chalked much of the tension up to institutional jealousy, particularly over the Rosal case. In the summer of 1962, Philip Nichols, Jr., the Commissioner of Customs, complained that very little intelligence

[52] Robin Moore, *The French Connection: A True Account of Cops, Narcotics, and International Conspiracy* (Guilford, Connecticut: The Lyons Press, 1969, revised 2003). The case is also covered in Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 263–279.

[53] See a letter dated December 22, 1960 from Cusack to Anslinger, noting that Africa had always been included under District 17's purview but requested it be officially added "as a matter of record." Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. Perhaps it was no coincidence that in 1961, Garland Williams was reassigned from the Middle East to Sub-Saharan Africa, where he served out the remainder of his government service as police advisor until 1963. See United States Civil Service Commission, Personnel Form, "Garland Williams." In Folder "Williams, Garland," Box 8, Valentine Collection.

reached his agency and that FBN agents were actively withholding information about suspected shipments to the U.S. in order to bust the recipients.[54]

Better known as a "controlled delivery," the strategy was high-risk/high-reward and its use was somewhat ambiguous in FBN policy. Controlled deliveries presented a chance to wrap up multiple wings of an organization but were damaging if the operation failed and the agents lost track of a drug shipment they had allowed into the country. Nevertheless, the strategy was not uncommon. The Rosal bust was a particular case in point, and the Bureau had to convince the French to allow Rosal to leave the country unmolested in order to arrest him in New York, along with Tarditi and the buyers.[55] This, however, irritated Customs officials who thought the "primary purpose" of foreign enforcement was "to feed information to the Customs officers at the ports" and protested that many FBN busts were made "so soon" after the shipment arrived in the U.S. "as to give to rise to a strong suspicion that narcotics agents knew by whom, where, and at what time the narcotics were to be smuggled, yet Customs was not informed."[56]

Bureau officials responded with their own list of grievances and complained that Customs agents in Europe were trying to edge back into European drug enforcement, adding confusion to a number of already delicate liaison relationships with foreign police. The FBN, headquarters officials protested, was a model of interagency cooperation and continued to exchange information and assist with Customs investigations even as that agency infringed on FBN jurisdiction and disdained undercover work. In the

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[54] Philip Nichols, Jr. (Commissioner of Customs) to James A. Reed (Ass. Sec Treasury), August 6, 1962, Folder "(0280-18) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, June 1962 thru December 1963," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

[55] The Bureau's official Field Manual (circa 1967) stated, "Persons making efforts in foreign countries to transport contraband narcotic drugs or marihuana to the United States are considered sources of supply to peddlers in the United States. The Bureau of Narcotics shall devote its efforts to suppression of such activity." Folder "(1325) Field Manual (1967)," Box 66. A September 18, 1961 memo by Pera (Acting DS in Rome) on operational policy further stipulated, "No agent shall . . . permit narcotic drugs which come under his control to pass back into the narcotic traffic" or "to pass outside the borders of the country where he assumed control of these drugs." This, however, seems to refer to drugs that have already been seized. Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, July 1961 thru December 1962, Book #4," Box 165. In reference to the Rosal case, in a memo dated October 18, 1960, Tartaglino wrote, "The assurance of the Bureau that Customs would not molest ROSAL at the point of entry also served to convince the French that in the best interest of law enforcement it would be better to let them go without any search." Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #9, Sept. 1960 thru Sept. 1961," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[56] Philip Nichols (Commissioner of Customs) to James Reed (Ass. Sec Treasury), August 6, 1962; in Folder "(0280-18) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, June 1962 thru December 1963," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

end, Siragusa and others pointed out, drug enforcement was "highly specialized" and Customs agents, with their myriad of other duties, were simply not up to the task.[57]

The specific catalyst for this most recent skirmish was a set of dueling proposals to open an office in Bangkok.[58] Given the region's history of opium production and China's alleged role in the global drug trade, the Bureau was eager for access to Southeast Asia but was constrained by resistance from both Customs and the U.S. State Department, as well as local governments. Toward the end of WWII, George White toured the region and reported on extensive poppy cultivation in the Shan states of Burma, but he pointed out that corruption was rampant and the chances for prohibition slim.[59]

Following Mao Tse-tung's victory in the Chinese Civil War, it became apparent that the real problem was the poppy-rich area known as the Golden Triangle, a relatively lawless region encompassing China's Yunnan province, the Shan states of Burma and northern Laos and Thailand. The area was also home to remnants of General Chiang Kai-shek's routed Nationalist Kuomintang Army (KMT), who went to ground amongst the natives rather than retreat to Taiwan and immediately became major players in the local opium trade. The Bureau, however, was convinced that Communist China was the ultimate source for much of the opium trafficked throughout the region. Over the course of the 1950s, FBN officials received numerous updates from U.S. diplomats in Burma, Thailand and Hong Kong, all of whom reported a wide-open trafficking scene in which nearly every regional player was complicit. As one American consul in Rangoon dryly summarized, "The question of whether opium is coming in to Burma from Communist China has been answered with yes, no and maybe."[60]

For most of the 1950s, the Bureau had to rely on indirect representation. One of Anslinger's favorite sources was a Japan-based American labor organizer named Richard Deverall, an eccentric red-

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[57] See Cusack to Giordano, August 28, 1962; and Siragusa to Giordano, Gaffney and DeBaggio, September 7, 1962, in Folder "(0280-18) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, June 1962 thru December 1963," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

[58] In a letter to A. Gilmore Flues (Asst. Sec. Treasury) dated December 13, 1961, Anslinger asked for a Treasury Department ruling after he reported on "the serious narcotic situation in Thailand" and noted that both the FBN and Customs were interested in opening a station in Bangkok. Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #10, Oct. 1961 thru Dec. 1963," Entry 10, Box 12, RG 170, NARA.

[59] White, reports to Anslinger dated August 28 and September 1, 1944, Folder "(0660) Burma, 1937-1954," Box 152, RG 170, NARA.

[60] Don T. Christensen (Consul), State Dept. report dated December 14, 1963, in Folder "(0660) Burma, 1960-1967," Box 152, RG 170, NARA.

baiter of dubious reliability and a likely CIA asset.[61] Occasionally, however, the Bureau was able to send its own people on tours of the region. From the 1953 to 1955, Anslinger received frequent updates from Wayland Speer, then serving as the chief narcotic control officer for American forces in Japan. Speer was particularly eager to uncover ChiCom machinations and reported that narcotics were used to target and "lower the fighting strength of colored soldiers in Japan and Korea." In the summer of 1954, he traveled to Burma and Thailand where he discussed the narcotic situation with local police authorities and met with American intelligence officials, including former OSS Director "Wild Bill" Donovan (then serving as Ambassador to Thailand) and Willis Bird, who, many observers contend, was a CIA officer working with the KMT armies and active in the drug trade. Nearly everyone Speer met reported that involvement in the drug trade was universal. One former OSS man told Speer that Thailand was "the most corrupt place on the earth . . . everyone is in the opium traffic from the top to the bottom." Speer, however, came away from his trip convinced that Red China was behind it all and "having a field day pouring opium out of Yunnan into the Shan State for Thailand, Burma and the ends of the earth." Though he received numerous indications of KMT drug-running, he dismissed each as a "ruse to confuse the issue" and took the relative paucity of evidence implicating the Communists as an "attempt to 'cloak and dagger' the investigation in order to cover for those involved."[62]

The reality is that everyone was involved and there was little state control over the inhabitants of the Golden Triangle on either side of the Bamboo Curtain. The Bureau even received an Army intelligence report that depicted the KMTs, Shan, Communists, Hmong and Thais all getting along swimmingly, with Communists in Yunnan directly handing off shipments of opium to the KMTs, despite

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[61] Anslinger frequently cited Deverall's pamphlet "Mao: Tze-Tung: Stop this Dirty Opium Business" as "a good piece of work" and sent copies to officials at Radio Free Europe (letter to Philip Gould dated June 30, 1954), influential journalists like Victor Reisel (see letter from Reisel dated March 11, 1955), and concerned citizens (see letters to John J. Iago and Eugene Doorman, dated August 31 and November 30, 1954). Folders "(0660) Communist China, 1952-1954," and "(0660) Communist China, 1955-1958," Box 153, RG 170, NARA.

[62] Generally, see Folder "(0660-A-3) Wayland Speer's Foreign Assignment, Correspondence and General File," Box 165. See also reports to Anslinger, dated July 17 to July 24, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1949-1956," Box 163; reports dated July 27 and 28, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Burma, 1937-1954," Box 152; and reports dated April 16, 1952 and July 4, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1952-1954," Box 153, RG 170, NARA.

their ostensible enmity.[63] Most of the region's opium traffic moved south through Chiang Mai and Bangkok and then on to Hong Kong. As a result, by 1960, Thailand assumed the greatest importance for regional control efforts, much like Rome and Beirut once had in District 17.

The lucrative opium trade had an unquestionably pernicious influence on Thailand and fueled rampant corruption within both the police and military. Both groups often functioned as traffickers themselves and frequently competed to hijack or capture rival shipments, which were then sold to government-licensed opium dens. American observers told Speer that General Phao Sriyanond, the director of Thailand's national police force and an important CIA client, had a direct hand in the traffic. This, obviously, complicated the enforcement situation. As Speer pondered in one report, "...how does one go about knocking off an army[?]" Ambassador Donovan assured Speer that the Thai services were getting better about extricating themselves from the drug traffic, and Bureau officials did what they could to pressure the Thai government from afar.[64]

In 1955, Anslinger began a UN campaign to end the legal consumption of opium in Thailand, but was rebuked by Foreign Service officers on the ground, who pointed out that "frontal attacks" on the opium issue were "likely to implicate officials of the very government the United States is supporting," and would expose them to criticism from political opponents. Nevertheless, the U.S.-backed military dictator, Prime Minister Plaek Phibun, agreed to criminalize opium consumption and announced that government-sanctioned opium dens would be closed starting in 1956, but then pushed the date back another year to honor current licenses. The opium ban did not actually go into effect until June 30, 1959, under the rule of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat, another military dictator but one of modest inclinations toward reform. In the interim, however, American diplomats warned that if Thailand banned opium consumption without offering some kind of rehabilitation, then prohibition would "only force those addicts to smoke elsewhere than in Government-licensed dens" and Thailand would "lose what control over opium smoking it has now." In keeping with the American drug war framework, however, FBN officials and allies dismissed the utility of treatment programs. Garland Williams told one Embassy official in Bangkok that "expensive

[63] U.S. Army intelligence report dated February 17, 1957, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, Safe, Book #1, Thru Dec. 1963," Box 10, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[64] The participation of Thai military and police is described in a report by Treasury Representative Paul Lawrence to the Commissioner of Customs dated May 18, 1955. See also Speer to Anslinger, July 18 and July 24, 1954, Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1949-1956," Box 163, RG 170, NARA.

treatment facilities are not needed for the great bulk of opium users" and that it would be "more productive if available funds are spent on eliminating the sources of supply of drugs." As predicted, however, cracking down on opium use without addressing demand pushed both drug use and the drug traffic further underground and actually led a noticeable increase in the use and production of heroin.[65]

In retrospect, the creation of a Thai heroin market and infrastructure where there had previously been none is an incredibly damning development, and one that can be laid partly at the feet of the FBN. But here again, the Sisyphean policy of drug control worked in the Bureau's favor and lent additional impetus to the FBN's presence abroad. In the case of Thailand, the FBN was part of both the problem and the solution.

In the fall of 1961, Cusack traveled to Southeast Asia to rally opposition to the UN's Single Convention and gather proof of Customs' failure to crack the regional drug traffic or implicate Communist China. Like Speer before him, Cusack met with various local police authorities, diplomats and American intelligence officials, including Harold Young, an American missionary and zookeeper who, along with sons Gordon and William, worked for the CIA and helped organize local anticommunist forces. Harold and Gordon confirmed what FBN officials had previously been told: both Communist and KMT forces participated in the regional drug trade, often in cooperation, but the vast majority of the region's opium came from Burma and not Yunnan. Neither man was an avowed CIA officer, but Cusack did not turn a blind eye on their connection to U.S. intelligence and remarked that Gordon was designated an agricultural attaché but was likely "employed by another agency connected with our national security." The Young family's later involvement in the Nugan Hand banking scandal, which exposed CIA money laundering and connections to the drug trade, indicates they may have been insiders rather than observers. As usual, the situation was murky and the various clandestine relationships difficult to sort from the outside—and FBN records strongly suggest the agents were on the outside looking in.

[65] See State Department reports by Vice-Consul Eric V. Youngquist dated June 29 and July 25, 1955, and by Economic Officer Harry Conover, dated April 23, 1956. For the opium ban, see Anslinger to Vaille, September 14, 1955, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1949-1956," Box 163. See also State Dept. cable dated December 15, 1958, announcing implementation of ban; Williams to Leonard Unger (American Embassy, Bangkok, September 23, 1959, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1957-1963," Box 163; and a report prepared by Thai police, titled "The Narcotic Aspect in Thailand," forwarded to Giordano by Treasury Department official Arnold Sagalyn on February 18, 1964, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1964-1965," Box 163, RG 170, NARA.

Regardless of whether or not Cusack was aware of their possible involvement and left it out of his reports, he concluded that the narcotic situation in Thailand was "extremely dangerous" and in need of FBN representation.[66]

By the summer of 1962, Thailand's role as a new frontline in the foreign drug war was a foregone conclusion. The real question was which Treasury Department agency would open an office in Bangkok, FBN or Customs? At stake, however, was the much larger question of American jurisdiction for global drug control and America's worldwide counternarcotic posture. In order to demonstrate the superiority of FBN techniques, Cusack sent Agent Vizzini to Bangkok to, as he later put it, be "the instrument to euchre Customs out of the Far East and add that to the Bureau's command." Treasury Department officials helped arrange military cover and resurrected "Air Force Major Mike Cerra" (the persona Vizzini used to investigate Luciano), then promoted him up to a full-bird Colonel and assigned him to Thailand. Vizzini arrived in late July for a three month tour that included working with U.S. military authorities to ensure that American servicemen avoided the local drug scene and providing liaison and instruction to members of the Thai Central Narcotics Bureau. Though his trip was cut short by a bout with malaria, Vizzini reported excellent cooperation from the Thai police and quickly led them to a number of drug busts accompanied by massive seizures of morphine base and heroin. Finally, just for good measure, Vizzini traveled up to the border town of Chiang Rai, secretly crossed into Laos and blew up a large heroin lab with explosives provided by the CIA.[67]

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[66] In a report to Anslinger dated October 28, 1961, Cusack wrote, "It is obvious that Customs pro forma has missed the best sources here in Taiwan to indict the CHICOMS. Then too maybe they just weren't interested in getting such an indictment." Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1959-1961," Box 153. See also additional reports on his trip dated February 23, 1962, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1957-1963," Box 163 and March 2, 1962, Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1962-1963," Box 153, and November 30, 1961, in Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #10, Oct. 1961 thru Dec. 1963," Entry 10, Box 12, RG 170, NARA. For the Youngs, see Jonathan Kwitny, *The Crimes of Patriots: A True Tale of Dope, Dirty Money, and the CIA* (New York and London: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 211–213; Thomas Fuller, "William Young, Who Helped U.S. Organize Secret War in Laos, is Dead at 76," *New York Times*, April 3, 2011.

[67] The destruction of the heroin lab, unsurprisingly, is not mentioned in FBN files and is a curious detail, particularly given the CIA role. The lab almost certainly belonged to the KMT, who were among the regional traffickers under the alleged protection of the CIA. The Company's apparent approval of Vizzini's actions suggests the local officers were not quite as complacent about the drug-running of their assets in Southeast Asia as has sometimes been thought. Vizzini was coy about his border-hopping adventure and called the nation "Mongo." He also, however, mentions crossing the Mekong, which indicates Laos. See, primarily, Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 220-239. For military cover and invitation, see Adam Yarmolinsky (Office of Secretary of Defense) to Arnold Sagalyn (Treasury Department), July 10, 1962, in

Even before the dramatic conclusion of Vizzini's trip, Treasury Department officials had seen enough and, in September 1962, decreed that the FBN would henceforth have primary jurisdiction for all international drug control. In a cover letter transmitting the official order, Assistant Treasury Secretary James A. Reed specified that the decision was a reflection on Customs but that the "dual jurisdiction" system in place since 1951 had proven inefficient and the FBN would now take the lead on all overseas drug control efforts. The Bureau's argument about the unique challenges of drug enforcement carried the day; as Reed noted, "The principal work of the Bureau of Narcotics is concentrated in the narcotics field. Customs on the other hand has many other types of enforcement activity..." The jurisdictional change was announced to the public in the midst of a high-profile White House Conference on Narcotic Drugs, where President Kennedy personally described drugs as a "national problem" of "national concern" and remarked that District 17's efforts to "strike at the foreign sources of illicit narcotics traffic . . . have been so successful that the activity of the Bureau of Narcotics is being expanded to other parts of the world..." Back in Rome, Cusack immediately forwarded Kennedy's remarks to the rest of the District and added, "It is a great honor for all of us to have the President of the United States mention our district and on the basis of our success to have the Treasury Department expand the activity of the Bureau to other parts of the world."[68] By the start of the new year, Districts 16 and 18, covering East Asia and Latin America respectively, were added to the Bureau's overseas holdings, and agents were quickly dispatched to new offices in Bangkok, Mexico City and Monterrey, followed by Lima, Hong Kong, Seoul and Singapore.[69]

Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1957-1963," Box 163, and a Bureau memo dated July 25, 1962, which indicated he would be "working under supervision American military authorities but will not be part of military structure," in Folder "(0660-A) 1949-1965," Box 164. Additional details of Vizzini's tour are available in Folder "Dist 16, Confidential #1," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[68] James Reed to Commissioner of Narcotics, October 22, 1962, in Folder "(0280-18) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, June 1962 thru December 1963," Box 49, RG 170, NARA. Kennedy is quoted in "Remarks to White House Conference on Narcotics and Drug Abuse, 27 September 1962," Papers of John F. Kennedy, Kennedy Presidential Library (http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-040-022.aspx, accessed June 30, 2013). Kennedy's remarks are also quoted in a State Department Airgram dated November 22, 1962 and forwarded in a memo from Cusack to all of District 17, dated November 27, 1962, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, July 1961 thru December 1962," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[69] See Memo dated May 6, 1963 from Siragusa (as Acting Commissioner of Narcotics") to the Deputy Director of Plans, CIA, titled "Distribution of reports to our overseas offices," which lists existing offices and encloses a map delineating the various FBN districts overseas. In Folder "(0280-18) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, June 1962 thru December 1963."

The FBN's expansion into Southeast Asia raises several important issues, the most pertinent being the question of Communist China's drug trafficking and the related matter of Anslinger's relationship with the influential "China Lobby," a group of politicians and activists who worked to prevent diplomatic recognition of Communist China. Douglas Valentine depicts Anslinger as wholly a creature of this group, while Jonathan Marshall suggests that at minimum Anslinger was manipulated by partisans in the Republic of China, if not a willing participant in a disinformation campaign.[70] Anslinger had a well-documented relationship with the Committee of One Million, a special interest group that approached the Commissioner in 1955 and sought to use his "evidence" of Red China drug trafficking to prevent UN recognition. Rather than a passive accomplice, however, Anslinger used the diplomatic issue to further his own agenda and recognized that the anticommunist rhetoric directed at Communist China complemented the Bureau's effort to shape the narrative of the dope menace. A close reading of FBN records suggests that China Lobby outlets were simply one more way of getting the Bureau's message across. Anslinger was ready to denounce the "ChiComs" to anyone who would listen. Only one year earlier, for example, he gave regular FBN collaborator Ed Reid the inside track on the release of an FBN report that Reid wanted to use to connect Mafia traffickers like Luciano to the Communists.[71] If the China Lobby wanted to use FBN allegations to further its own objectives, so much the better.

The Bureau thus had high hopes for the Bangkok office. The agents certainly found lots of opium but failed to conclusively implicate China. In 1963, almost exactly one year after the establishment of District 16, Bureau officials ventured a "conservative estimate" that roughly 1,000 tons of opium were produced in the Golden Triangle region every year. Working together with the Thai Central Narcotics

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Generally, see also Folder "(0280-17, Overseas) Overseas Orientation, 1963-1967," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

[70] In *The Strength of the Wolf*, Valentine writes that Anslinger swore "undying loyalty" to the China Lobby and helped cover up evidence of CIA involvement with the Mafia and other organized crime elements, 68-70, 76-79. In "Cooking the Books: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the China Lobby and Cold War Propaganda, 1950-1962," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 11, no. 37 (September 2013), Jonathan Marshall offers a more detailed and nuanced look at Anslinger's uncritical use of sources from within the Republic of China.

[71] See correspondence between Reid and Anslinger, dated January 22, and 26, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1952-1954," Box 153. Anslinger was first approached by Committee member Marvin Liebman in a letter dated May 18, 1955 and there is a significant volume of correspondence between Anslinger and the Committee of One Million in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1955-1958," Box 153, RG 170, NARA.

Bureau, two FBN agents had succeeded in making "some of the largest seizures ever . . . effected in this area," but, officials were forced to admit, "We do not have any true idea of the amount now being produced in China…" After the explosive conclusion of Vizzini's trip, the FBN also had to overcome the concerns of Embassy officials who feared the "probable personal danger to American agent and possible involvement in border matters if operations carried out in cloak and dagger style."[72] Once the dust and excitement of the Bureau's global expansion settled, it became clear that Southeast Asia was neither the bonanza nor the silver bullet Bureau officials had hoped. In January 1967, one FBN official reported that most of the opium produced in area was consumed locally, limiting its contribution to the American heroin market. "At the present time," he wrote, "the Far East is not considered to be the major source of illicit narcotics being smuggled into the United States. We have estimated that 80% of the heroin reaching our shores is produced in France from opium diverted from legitimate cultivation in Turkey."[73]

District 16 may have disappointed in terms of its actual value to American and global counternarcotic operations, but the Bureau's triumph over Customs and expansion into East Asia and Latin America were nevertheless of enormous importance and marked a profound shift from a conflicted and relatively passive counternarcotic strategy based primarily on intercepting drugs at the borders to one in which federal agents went out into the world to conduct aggressive undercover investigations in order to disrupt the global drug trade. This left an indelible imprint on the future of America's drug wars and confirmed that source control, foreign intervention and a hegemonic American police presence remained first principles.

The expansion of the Bureau's foreign enforcement program also helped to compensate for faltering diplomatic endeavors. In *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, William McAllister observes that control efforts at the UN "began to splinter between 1953 and 1961," precisely the years during which District 17 strengthened the FBN's hold on Europe and the Middle East. Anslinger and other source control hard-liners entrusted their hope for stern source control and limits on agricultural production to the 1953 Opium Protocol, but its strictures were too severe to win the number of signatories required to go

[72] Patrick O'Carroll to Giordano, December 10, 1963, in Folder "(0660) Thailand, 1957-1963," Box 163 and State Dept cable dated December 29, 1962, in Folder "Dist 16, Confidential #1," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[73] Gaffney (Deputy Commissioner) to Michal F. Cross (Treasury), January 26, 1967, in Folder "(0660) Communist China, 1964-1967," Box 153, RG 170, NARA.

into effect. There was also great pressure to simplify the welter of international treaties and regulatory bodies, which ultimately led to the 1961 UN Single Convention.[74]

The triumph of the Single Convention over the 1953 Opium Protocol was but one of the signs that Anslinger had lost his once-formidable sway over the international process, a change visibly symbolized in the UN's 1955 transfer of drug control operations from New York to Geneva.[75] Starting in 1960, Anslinger was frequently absent from both the Bureau and the diplomatic scene as his wife took ill and he moved home to Pennsylvania to care for her in her final days. By 1962, Anslinger was on his way out and American drug control policy drifted in his absence.

The expansion of the Bureau's foreign enforcement program from Europe and the Middle-East to the rest of the world was thus a critical lifeline and helped ensure that even if diplomatic attention had wandered, police forces all over the world remained focused on source control. The ultimate irony, of course, was that even at the FBN successfully took the drug war global in 1962, its own demise loomed, and the illicit drug traffic continued to evolve, providing drugs for American addicts and tempting unwary enforcement officers with nearly infinite opportunities for corruption. Only six years later, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics was finally swallowed by the ever-present threat of federal consolidation. Yet the foreign enforcement program—and the global drug war—survived largely intact and remain an important part of the history of American drug control, law enforcement and foreign policy. The crucial historical questions we are left with is how did the foreign drug war continue even while the consensus supporting it began to splinter? What, ultimately, were the keys to District 17's success and what is its legacy?

Assessing District 17 and its Legacy

Making cases was the most visible—but not necessarily the most accurate—way to measure the success of the FBN. The poorly documented nature of the drug trade makes certain elements of its

[74] McAllister notes, "The 1961 Single Convention appeared to represent the culmination of fifty years' progress in the field of international drug control," and was successful in consolidating international regulations within "one general document that states could accept." In many respects, however, the Single Convention was a defeat for the Bureau. Not only were the tough agricultural and production controls championed by Anslinger stripped from the treaty, but the treaty also did away with 1931 Narcotics Limitation Convention that included provisions requiring an independent drug control agency and proved so useful in shielding the FBN from various bureaucratic challenges. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 185–211.

[75] "I urge you to keep it under your watchful eye as they have a tendency to relax," Anslinger wrote to French official Charles Vaille in a letter dated July 11, 1955. Folder "(0660) France #4, 1954-June 1961," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

history unknowable. Certainly, we can say that District 17 failed to curb the Atlantic drug trade during the FBN's tenure, but, beyond that, we can only speculate as to how close the agents came or how distant they remained from their larger counternarcotic objectives. From a contemporary standpoint, it is ultimately far more revealing to gauge the Bureau's success in terms of its bureaucratic relationships and ideological influence—trends that, unlike the illicit drug trade, can be measured in the historical record. The Bureau's institutional success overseas depended, in nearly equal measure, on its relationships to both foreign governments and other U.S. agencies. Without the approval or tolerance of host nations, there would have been no foreign enforcement program to speak of, but without the support of the rest of the U.S. government, the Bureau would have lacked the foundation necessary to go abroad.

Perhaps the biggest open question hanging over the history of the Bureau's foreign enforcement program concerns the relationship between the FBN and the CIA. A number of authors—particularly those interested in the "deep politics" of the American national security state—claim that the Bureau countenanced or even protected the drug running activities of certain assets. Scholars like Jonathan Marshall, for example, believe the Lebanese drug lord Samil Khoury worked for both the CIA and Mossad and therefore earned a pass from the Bureau. In Turkey, Ryan Gingeras contends, "it is clear that the FBN tolerated and DPS [Turkey's Directorate of Public Security] enabled the Istanbul heroin trade as much as the two bodies sought to hinder it." As the previous chapter suggests, questions also remain about Siragusa's ties to the Company.[76] In any case, given the clandestine nature of the Bureau's work and the murky criminal milieu in which the agents were submerged, it's easy to see how the worlds of drug trafficking and espionage would converge. As former FBN Agent George Belk later admitted, the Bureau sometimes acted as a "stalking horse" for intelligence operations. Ostensibly apolitical, Belk

[76] See, variously: McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin*; Marshall, *The Lebanese Connection*; Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*; Douglas Valentine, *The Strength of the Pack: The Personalities, Politics and Espionage Intrigues That Shaped the DEA* (Waltersville, OR: Trine Day LLC, 2008); H.P. Albarelli, Jr., *A Terrible Mistake: The Murder of Frank Olson and the CIA's Secret Cold War Experiments* (Waltersville, OR: Trine Day LLC, 2009); Ryan Gingeras, "Istanbul Confidential: Heroin, Espionage, and Politics in Cold War Turkey, 1945-1960."; Alan Block and John C. McWilliams, "On the Origins of American Counterintelligence: Building a Clandestine Network," *Journal of Policy History* 1, no. 4 (1989): 353–372; John C. McWilliams and Alan Block, "All the Commissioner's Men: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics and the Dewey-Luciano Affair, 1947-1954," *Intelligence and National Security* 5, no. 1 (January 1990): 171–192.

explained, "We can walk in and identify ourselves and exchange information and get some useful dialogue between our service and theirs."[77]

It comes as no real surprise that there is little direct evidence to support these claims in FBN records. That does not mean these charges, conspiratorial though they may be, are untrue—a number of them undoubtedly are and breadcrumbs scattered throughout the Bureau's foreign case files offer intriguing hints. A folder randomly located amidst reports from overseas, for example, holds a September 1961 chemical analysis of a wrapper from a package of heroin—conducted not by the Bureau, but by Sidney Gottlieb of the CIA.[78] There are also a number of the kind of examples expected of two agencies that presumably should exchange information on a regular basis, like an offhand remark Anslinger made about trying to "help out CIA" with an agent in Beirut or a May 1963 memo from Siragusa to the Deputy Director of Plans indicating which FBN offices received CIA reports.[79] Reading between the lines of FBN reports reveals countless elliptical references to the CIA, suggesting that it some point it may have become FBN policy to avoid explicitly naming the Central Intelligence Agency.[80]

There is, however, ample evidence that a number of FBN agents pulled double-duty for both the Bureau and the CIA. The FBN's emphasis on undercover work meant the agents' field craft remained second to none and those who were able to succeed in the challenging overseas environment became particularly effective operators. Some agents, like Sal Vizzini, performed missions for the CIA while remaining with the Bureau. Other agents, like Tom Tripodi (who worked mostly in domestic counterintelligence), formally transferred back and forth between the two agencies.[81] Paul Knight was

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[77] John C. McWilliams, interview transcript with George Belk, January 7, 1987, in Folder "Belk, George," Box 1, Valentine Collection.

[78] See Sidney Gottlieb to Anslinger, September 7, 1961 in Folder "(4004-A) Confidential," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

[79] Anslinger to Assistant Treasury Secretary Rose, October 29, 1953 in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, 1945-1953," Box 160; Siragusa to Deputy Director of Plans (CIA), May 6, 1963 in Folder "(0280-18) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, June 1962 thru December 1963," Box 49. In a report to Anslinger dated May 20, 1960, Siragusa describes "2 long talks" with Manfredi and a CIA official in Rome, in which they apparently discussed a "diplomat who wishes to defect" and information furnished by Siragusa to the CIA. Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[80] In one classified report dated December 12, 1960, Cusack makes several references to "Another U.S. Agency" or "One U.S. Security Agency." Folder "Foreign Reports, Dist #17, Secret File, Book #9, Sept. 1960 thru Sept. 1961," Box 12, Entry 10, RG 170, NARA.

[81] Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade*; Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*.

definitely approached and may have been recruited by the CIA during his time in Beirut and France.[82] The best documented example of a Bureau agent working for the CIA, however, is Hank Manfredi. A series of memos between Siragusa and Anslinger in the spring of 1957 indicate that Manfredi worked on several highly-classified CIA projects while attached to the Rome office. During one of Manfredi's semi-frequent absences, Siragusa rather sheepishly wrote, "My ignorance of Manfredi's future plans is rather embarrassing to me, more so since I am ostensibly his Supervisor."[83] Douglas Valentine claims that Manfredi was, in fact, Lucky Luciano's CIA case officer.[84] A number of authors have argued, as Bruce Bullington and Alan Block do, that cooperation between the Bureau and the CIA—or the infiltration of the Bureau by the CIA—indicates the drug war served primarily "to mask the U.S. counter-intelligence and paramilitary presence abroad."[85] This is true to a degree, but the drug war is no charade and is not merely an elaborate front for American intelligence. The charge risks dismissing a mission the Bureau and the agents took very seriously. Which begs the question: did the Bureau's relationship with the CIA help or hinder the foreign drug war? Most of these authors would argue, as Valentine does, "As ever, national security trumped drug law enforcement," and the agents of District 17 were complicit.[86]

The records and history of District 17, however, strongly suggest a more complicated story. Because most of the Bureau's case files were destroyed, it's hard to say with any certainty whether or not the CIA influenced or directed any given narcotic investigation. Nevertheless, two conclusions are inescapable: one, the FBN was absolutely sincere in its efforts to investigate and disrupt the Atlantic

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[82] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 190–205. In a letter to George White dated March 31, 1958, Arthur Giuliani (who became a polygraph expert for the Air Force) mentions approaching Knight on behalf of the CIA. In Folder 16, Box 3, White Papers.

[83] See correspondence throughout Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. For specific examples see Siragusa to Anslinger, June 29, 1956; February 15, 1957; May 29, 1957; and Cunningham to Siragusa, June 7, 1957. A July 15, 1960 memo from Cusack to Anslinger similarly reports that "Agent Manfredi will continue to do Mafia research as well as concentrate on several highly classified special investigations." In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[84] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 113. Vizzini identified Manfredi as a CIA officer who investigated but did not run Luciano. Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 145.

[85] Bruce Bullington and Alan Block, "A Trojan Horse: Anti-communism and the War on Drugs," *Contemporary Crises* 14, no. 1 (March 1990): 39–55; Jonathan Marshall, *Drug Wars: Corruption, Counterinsurgency and Covert Operations in the Third World* (Forestville, CA: Cohan & Cohen Publishers, 1991).

[86] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 113.

heroin trade, which it perceived as a genuine threat to American security, and, two, the agents spent far, far more time on drug control than they did on extracurricular intelligence operations.

Returning to the idea of drug control as a "devil's bargain" helps explain many of the apparent tensions, hypocrisies and contradictions of the American foreign drug war. Because drug use (like many vices) is a consensual crime, it requires a proactive style of enforcement and a burdensome dependence on informants. Working on foreign soil, FBN agents were denied the kind of low-level round ups that, combined with harsh prison sentences, routinely generated informants in domestic law enforcement. As a result, the agents had to resort to financial incentives to encourage their special employees or count on even more specious motivations like revenge. The Bureau also had to rely on the cooperation and assistance of local police officials who were often similarly compromised by the regional drug trade. This was not necessarily an indication of foreign treacherousness; it was a political reality in places where the drug traffic had powerful patrons, including in the U.S. And, just as the Bureau had to tolerate informants or foreign police collaborators who might be participants in the very traffic they sought to police, these same foreign police services were asked to tolerate the presence of American law enforcement officers that represented both foreign intervention and a compromise of their own sovereignty.

Needless to say, this required a delicate balancing act. Some agents, at least, were sensitive to the dilemma in which they placed their foreign collaborators. "If, for example, Scotland Yard had sent men over to District #2," Paul Knight once mused, "and these men had had successes which outshone the work of the District, I feel that perhaps our own attitude would be unfairly but understandably cool…" Upon encountering resistance from Lebanese officials, Knight reasoned that he might behave in precisely the same manner if the roles were reversed. "I should be friendly to the boss, and show that I am most cooperative and socially am a good fellow," Knight remarked. "I should give the boss and his service a few examples demonstrating that I am willing to cooperate . . . BUT I would see to it that the man here got no real help, and accomplished as little as possible . . . Then I could say, in effect: you see, they sent one of their hot-shots to do a job (thereby implying that my outfit could not do it), and look what the hot-shot accomplished—nothing."[87]

[87] In a memo dated July 16, 1953, Knight reported resistance from French police but thought it was a reflection of nationalist sentiment and rather than French perfidy. See also Knight to Siragusa,

It's worth pointing out, of course, that the U.S. would never actually permit such a role reversal. If a foreign police agent arrested an American citizen on American soil, it would be labeled kidnapping. Yet another of the ironies of drug control was that the expansion of U.S. law enforcement and assertion of a supranational jurisdiction for drug control was accompanied by vociferous opposition to the introduction of international law into American jurisprudence.[88] In American hands, the authority vested in drug control flowed in one direction only. Officials like DPS chief Kemal Aygun paid lip service to the idea that the Turks were somehow culpable for American addition and told one U.S. diplomat that he "felt responsible when he read of the addiction of New York school children."[89] But it's unlikely anyone in the U.S. government would have accepted responsibility for something like Turkish teens smoking Camels.

The confluence of international law enforcement, politics and corruption meant the agents in District 17 had to live by a bastardized version of the "Serenity Prayer" made famous by Alcoholics Anonymous and accept the things they could not change—like local drug use or police complicity—and have the wisdom to engage in compromises that would allow them to meaningfully impact the drug traffic. No wonder Siragusa complained so frequently of ulcers. As one Bureau official cautioned after Agent Attie's beating at the hands of Lebanese Sûreté officials protecting Samil Khoury, "if we made too much of an issue of this matter, we might be told to leave the country."[90] If the Bureau wanted to make cases, it had to roll with the punches, sometimes literally. Khoury, in fact, is a perfect example; because he was protected by local politicians (and possibly Western intelligence services) and seemingly beyond the FBN's reach, agents like Knight reasoned that they might as well use him as an informant and take out his competitors, which would still reduce the overall number of traffickers operating in the region and might therefore reduce the amount of heroin reaching the U.S. Granted, this was a flawed strategy (for

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November 29, 1955, in Folders "(0660) France, French Police, Agent Siragusa," Box 156 and "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

[88] For example of how notions of national sovereignty are often fluid and subject to constant negotiation, see Douglas Howland and Luise White, eds., *The State of Sovereignty: Territories, Laws, Populations* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009). The essay, "The Ambiguities of Sovereignty: The United States and the Global Human Rights Cases of the 1940s and 1950s," by Mark Philip Bradley is particularly germane.

[89] Frederick T. Merrill, Foreign Service Despatch dated September 15, 1952, in State Department CDF, 1950-1954, 882.53 (Box 5433), RG 59, NARA.

[90] B.T. Mitchell to Siragusa, June 2, 1955, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon, Book #3 (1955-1960)," Box 160, RG 170, NARA.

any number of reasons), but as Americans operating on foreign soil, the agents had to be prepared to take what they could get. As Joe Arpaio, a veteran of the Istanbul office, later put it, "You either dealt with the powers that be or you didn't, and if you chose the latter path, then you might as well have packed up and gone home."[91]

District 17's primary concern was to retain access to areas of strategic importance to global counternarcotic efforts. The agents were willing to push the limits of foreign tolerance and occasionally carried out unilateral investigations behind their hosts' back, but they were on diplomatically tenuous ground and knew that getting caught violating the terms of their presence or participating in unsanctioned intelligence operations was a sure way to be declared *persona non grata*. When Cusack proposed allowing the CIA to infiltrate Interpol under FBN cover, for example, he was harshly admonished for jeopardizing the entire foreign program.[92]

The larger question is how did the agents of District 17 overcome these dilemmas and how did their ties to the U.S. intelligence community promote the agenda of the FBN? The answer is not simply that they bought into the CIA's program (though the agents were typically ardent anti-communists) and then sublimated their goals to the CIA's broader geopolitical agenda in order to protect their comparatively tiny fiefdom, but that they were effective cops, agile bureaucrats and, when the occasion demanded it, they actually did put on the spats and play diplomat. The CIA was simply one in a constellation of critical, often determinative, bureaucratic relationships.

Agents like Knight sometimes posed as travel agents, but the Bureau also played the role in all seriousness, arranging travel accommodations and serving as tour guides for both American and foreign officials. As Siragusa reminded one supervisor back in the U.S., "remember, we will always try to roll out the red carpet for our friends." When foreign officials visited America, particularly New York City, the Bureau made sure an agent was waiting at the airport and ready to show them around—a gesture that

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[91] Joe Arpaio and Len Sherman, *Joe's Law: America's Toughest Sheriff Takes on Illegal Immigration, Drugs, and Everything Else That Threatens America* (New York: AMACOM, 2008), 189.

[92] In a report to Anslinger dated March 27, 1959, Agent Cusack suggested this would provide the FBN with "a permanent listening post in Paris which could prove invaluable," and offer the CIA "unlimited possibilities." In a draft reply, Giordano sputtered, "your suggestions and thought are without merit, fraught with danger, would probably lead to disastrous repercussions…" The language in his actual reply, dated April 2, 1959, was toned down, but he admonished Cusack for his "extremely dangerous" suggestion. Folder "(0145-23a) Interpol, 1957-1957," Box 46, RG 170, NARA.

helped build and maintain goodwill. Over in Europe, the agents did the same for visiting U.S. officials both high and low, including U.S. Attorneys, judges, Senators and Congressmen. Entertaining potential patrons gave the agents a chance to press the FBN's virtues upon their visitors, who would then support Bureau efforts back home.[93] With his excellent connections among European police, Manfredi provided assistance to Secret Service advance teams whenever Kennedy, Johnson or Nixon visited Europe.[94]

In their dealings with foreign police officers, the agents had one final card to play: an appeal to the fraternal nature of police work. "The only difference between two policemen," Siragusa wrote, "is the language, and this barrier is easily broken down with brandy and sincerity." His account of the Abou Sayia investigation (and a few others) ended with a rowdy international celebration. "We were plastered, but happy. The historic enmities were forgotten. We were friends and policemen who had just done a good job."[95]

It was this connection to foreign police services that was the real strength and ultimate legacy of District 17. In the early years, the agents were disheartened by what they perceived as backward, inefficient police organizations with little regard for the threat posed by drugs. Siragusa, in particular, frequently complained (this time in France), "I have given up trying to reform these policemen and convert them to our modern efficiency." In Rome, he wrote, "It is useless to try to educate them to establish separate narcotic law enforcement squads."[96] Faced with the absolute necessity of cooperating with foreign police services, however, the Bureau stifled its exasperation and reversed course. Financial incentives helped: one year later, Siragusa relayed that the Italian Questura was amazed by the Bureau's generosity when a reward for one kilo of heroin seized in New York net them about 600,000 Lire, nearly equal to the legitimate wholesale price. "I believe that this offer will spur the police to no end," he happily

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[93] Siragusa is quoted in an October 5, 1955 letter to Ross Ellis (District Supervisor, Detroit), in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA. Countless other examples can be found throughout the General Correspondence files for District 17.

[94] "Henry L. Manfredi Dies at 54; Aide to Narcotics Bureau Head," *New York Times*, January 8, 1970.

[95] Charles Siragusa and Robert Wiedrich, *The Trial of the Poppy: Behind the Mask of the Mafia* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), 5, 32.

[96] Siragusa to Anslinger, Progress Report No. 43, dated May 5, 1951, in Folder "(0660) France #3, 1951-1953," Box 156. A few days later, continued, "you just cant get foreign policeman to act expeditiously." See also, Siragusa, Progress Report No. 45, dated October 16, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

reported.[97] A more lasting reward, however, was specialized training and, over time, District 17 launched extensive and hands-on training programs in Italy, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon and (via Garland Williams) Iran. France was the only notable exception. Another very successful tactic, particularly in developing countries, was to pick out promising foreign police officials for special attention on the assumption that they would continue to rise through the ranks—and take favorable impressions of the Bureau with them.[98]

In *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (2012), Jeremy Kuzmarov argues that police training has historically served as something of an "unobserved constant" in advancing American geopolitical interests. Taking note of modern nation-building initiatives in Iraq and Afghanistan, Kuzmarov contends, "American strategy in the Middle East and Central Asia today is consistent with practices honed over more than a century . . . Presented to the public as humanitarian initiatives designed to strengthen democratic development and public security," he continues, "police training programs achieved neither, but were critical to securing the power base of local elites amenable to U.S. economic and political interests." Kuzmarov focuses much of his attention on State Department and CIA initiatives in developing countries and ultimately concludes these programs had the tragic effect of "modernizing repression."[99]

That's not quite the story in District 17, though the Bureau did play an important role in projecting American power and influence. As the example of Lebanon most clearly demonstrates, the goal was to enhance the ability of foreign police services to cooperate in international drug enforcement, not necessarily to empower pro-American governments. In both Lebanon and Turkey, the Bureau had to play nice with governments that were so enmeshed in the local drug trade that, to paraphrase Agent

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[97] Siragusa to Anslinger, October 4, 1951, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[98] One of Siragusa's reasons for cultivating Greek police official Gerasimos Liarommatis, for example, was his belief that "within the next two years, may become the Commandant of all Security Services in Greece." Siragusa to Holland, November 2, 1954, in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1951 thru 1955. Book #1," Box 165. Similarly, in a memo to Giordano dated January 24, 1962, Manfredi explained that the Bureau's cooperation with the State Department's Office of Public Safety was paying dividends in developing nations and could be complemented by picking out talented police officers in Western countries for training at Bureau expense. Such a candidate, Manfredi explained, would help "insure our position abroad." Folder "(0280-17, Overseas) Overseas Orientation, 1963-1967," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

[99] Jeremy Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), 1.

Knight, "one might as well state they are in the narcotic business."[100] Although these countries remained squarely in the Western camp in terms of the larger geopolitical struggle of the Cold War, they were clearly exasperated at the foreign intrusion and were caught between domestic opinion and nationalist sentiment on one side and mitigating the influence of the Bureau and international political pressure on the other.

One of the interesting things about District 17 is that it had one foot squarely in the so-called First World (Italy and France) and one in the Third World (Turkey and Lebanon). This meant the Bureau dealt with both *developing* and ostensibly *developed* powers, yet it tended to judge both equally by the seriousness with which they approached the dope menace. The level of any given country's commitment to drug control was taken as a direct metric of that country's standing in the civilized world, and, in that regard, the French were seen as little better than the Lebanese. The United States, Anslinger claimed, had achieved a "high pinnacle . . . in the family of nations" because of its leadership in the realm of drug control.[101] Countries that did not share the American commitment were judged less civilized and less modern. Once District 17 was up and running, the agents tried to avoid overtly judgmental language, but in the early years countries like Turkey were frequently condemned for their backwardness and lax attitude toward drugs. As Garland Williams reported in 1949, "I have waved the flag of world opinion and talked teamwork in the community of law-abiding nations." A year later, Siragusa had a harrowing experience touring Istanbul's only addict ward. Haunted by the squalor and lack of medical attention, he wrote, "I was left with the thought that civilization in this part of the world is a very slow process."[102]

Much has been written in recent years about the obligations of sovereignty and the "responsibility to protect" an idea sometimes abbreviated "R2P." The theory argues that states have a basic

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[100] Knight's full quote reads, "certain highly placed officials [are] so deeply involved in the narcotic traffic, that one might well state that the Lebanese Government is in the narcotic business." Knight to Anslinger, April 12, 1954, in Folder "(0660) Lebanon (1954 thru 1955) #2," Box 160, RG 170, NARA. But as Ryan Gingeras points out in "Istanbul Confidential: Heroin, Espionage, and Politics in Cold War Turkey, 1945-1960," the same could be said of the Menderes regime in Turkey.

[101] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 191.

[102] Williams is quoted in a report to Anslinger dated February 18, 1949, in Folder "(0660) Turkey Folder 4, 1949-June 1950," Box 25 and Siragusa is quoted in Progress Report No. 14, dated August 17, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

responsibility to protect their populations from crimes like genocide and ethnic cleansing.[103] The Bureau, however, had long argued that protecting people from drugs and the ravages of addiction was a basic requirement of sovereignty, a duty owed not only to a state's citizens but to all humanity. With so much attention on the interplay between drugs, security and sovereignty, the Bureau even anticipated some of the logic of the Bush Doctrine, which posits that the U.S. has the right to intervene in nations that harbor terrorists or lack the resources to prevent terrorists from establishing havens. Anslinger frequently argued the same was true of countries that could not or would not move against the dope menace. As he explained one French police official, "if treatment in any one of the countries concerned is lenient, that territory serves as a convenient base from which criminals may scheme and set their nefarious plans in operation." But "no country," he warned, "wishes to be in the position of having its territory used as a base for sending narcotic drugs along to contaminate the population of a friendly neighbor."[104] For Anslinger, that might not have been grounds for a military invasion, but it was cause for international approbation, American intervention and an FBN office.

The Bureau's effort to contain addiction thus has two important implications for American foreign policy. On the one hand, the FBN's focus on source control led it first to claim and then actually achieve a kind of universal jurisdiction. As Anslinger claimed in 1948, "There are no national boundaries in our work. You can't afford national sovereignty when you're trying to break up the narcotics racket."[105] By 1962, Anslinger's dream was close to a reality, as the Bureau established a truly global presence. On the other hand, the Bureau knew that it couldn't do the job alone and that put it in the forefront of American nation-building and modernization efforts.[106] As with Communism, the Bureau identified "bad economic

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[103] Richard N. Haas, *Foreign Policy Begins at Home: The Case for Putting America's House in Order* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 58–9. For more, see the website: "International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect," http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/ (accessed July 11, 2013).

[104] Anslinger to Jacques Boudoin, May 29, 1951, in Folder "(0660) France #3, 1951-1953," Box 156, RG 170, NARA.

[105] Jay Richard Kennedy, "One World—Against Dope," *The Sunday Star: This Week Magazine*, March 7, 1948. Also printed in *The Baltimore Sun*, same date, page 108, both in Folder 13, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[106] Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2011).

and social conditions" as "seed-beds for addiction."[107] Modernization and a high standard of living were seen as ways to inoculate against both radicalism and drug abuse. The Bureau lacked the resources to conduct large-scale nation-building, but it could help foreign police services get up to speed and build effective international partners.

In addition to training foreign police services, the Bureau also assisted host nations in acquiring the latest in modern police equipment, from two-way mirrors, filing systems, surveillance and radio equipment, navigational devices, to handcuffs, blackjacks and firearms. As Kuzmarov notes, in many developing nations this kind of assistance was used to suppress political dissent. In most of the countries District 17 worked, however, the agents tended to partner with specialized departments, like the Italian Guardia di Finanza, which investigated smuggling and financial crimes and was ill-suited to widespread political oppression. Although the Bureau did work with militarized gendarme-style police forces, Turkey was the only country in which agents were directly partnered with security forces or political police. (There is, however, evidence that the Bureau helped facilitate the transfer of technology that could be used in crowd control; Garland Williams worked with agents in Rome to acquire water cannons and riot control equipment for the Iranian government.)[108]

A number of scholars have pointed out that police training was a two-way street and that the recipients of this training ultimately dictated how it was put to use.[109] It was no different for the Bureau. Although Siragusa was able to convince the Guardia di Finanza to establish a specialized narcotic squad under the Italian police captain Guiliano Oliva—and, with great difficulty, even acquired specialized navigational equipment for them—he couldn't direct their day to day activities and complained that instead of hunting Mafia drug traffickers, Oliva was "up in the air, literally – in a helicopter looking for

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[107] See the editorial, "International Control of Narcotic Drugs by the Information Service of the European Office of the United Nations," *The Union Signal*, June 25, 1960, File 20, Box 12, Anslinger Papers. *The Union Signal* was a publication of the Women's Christian Temperance Movement. This particular issue was dedicated to drug control and featured a number of articles by Bureau personnel.

[108] See a letter from Siragusa to Garland Williams, dated July 14, 1958, enclosing a brochure for riot control equipment used by the Italian police, and a June 27, 1958 letter from Siragusa to Italian police official Carmelo Marzano, thanking him for showing the equipment to Bureau agents. In Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District #17, 1956 thru 1958, Book #2." Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[109] For a number of examples, see Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco A. Scarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

cigarette smugglers almost every day."[110] The equipment and training provided to foreign police agencies helped make host nations more tolerant of the FBN presence and built a foundation for better international enforcement, but the FBN's foreign expansion also reveals some of the limits of American power. No matter how far the foreign drug war reached or how many foreign police services were coaxed into the fight, the drug trade remained.

The Game Remains the Same

In 1966, the Bureau's foreign drug war was stretching into its fifteenth year and showing signs of institutional malaise. Now serving in a headquarters role as an Inspector, it was Jack Cusack's turn to complain about District 17's flagging case production. Noting that Districts 16 and 18 were closing out cases, Cusack warned that, as of June, District 17 had only three cases on the books and was "headed for its poorest annual performance to date." The Mediterranean remained a central front of the foreign drug war, but it produced a mindset where failure seemed to demand greater levels of effort and foreign intervention rather than a reevaluation of basic strategy.[111]

Cusack also had to deal with Treasury Department officials who feared an international incident and were increasingly fidgety over the lack of formal guidelines governing the FBN's presence in several countries. But as Cusack pointed out, "our effectiveness in the foreign countries is only as good as our liaison with the people we work with," and questions like whether the agents could participate in arrests, testify in court or carry guns were typically "left to the discretion of the foreign officials." It was the Treasury Department's prerogative to try negotiating formal terms, Cusack acknowledged, but he warned "we would not come out very well." Ultimately, he argued, "we must risk undesirable consequences for the sake of carrying out our work in foreign countries." In other words, it was actually the informal nature

[110] In a letter to Anslinger dated February 28, 1954, Siragusa reports the creation of a Guardia di Finanza narcotic squad, writing, "My efforts for the past three years have been successful." The "in the air" remark is quoted in a letter to Anslinger dated July 28, 1955 in Folder "(0660) Italy, Folder 5 (January 1952 – December 1956)," Box 159. Siragusa's efforts to acquire navigational equipment for Oliva's squad is detailed in memos to other FBN personnel dated October 4, 1955 and January 23, 1956 in District 17's general correspondence folders held in Box 165, RG 170, NARA.

[111] "In an area which is affecting us the most it should be doing the most," Cusack wrote in a report to John Enright (Assistant to the Commissioner), dated June 30, 1966 in Folder "(0280-18 #2) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, January 1964 thru December 31, 1967," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

of the program that allowed the agents to lean on their cop-to-cop diplomacy and create the leeway necessary to carry out their mission—a strange hybrid of soft and hard power.[112]

This was a noteworthy evolution from the early years, when the lack of formal arrangements made the FBN presence feel so precarious. A briefing prepared by Manfredi that same year reinforced the importance of personal relationships in foreign liaison. At least in Western Europe, Manfredi warned, "the halycon [sic] days are fast disappearing." The Bureau could no longer count on modernization to secure its influence and Manfredi cautioned "our equipment does not carry the 'magic' connotation as in the past." Above all, he counseled incoming agents, "you must be liked."[113]

While effective liaison took on greater importance in Europe, police training and modernization programs remained a viable and effective way to secure the Bureau's influence in the developing world. In Rome, District Supervisor Mike Picini reported that as decolonization took hold throughout the Middle East and Africa, in particular, the Bureau must be prepared to capitalize on the reorganization of local police forces and offer lectures and training "to induce or stimulate cooperation." Bringing select officers to the U.S. at FBN expense remained a successful method of "indoctrination." But the bottom line, as Picini saw it, was that the Bureau had to "participate in the education of the various police organizations throughout this district, since all these countries having a narcotic problem can become a potential source of supply for U.S. addicts..."[114] Just as NSC-68 described a "defeat of free institutions anywhere" as a "defeat everywhere" and charted an essentially global American security perimeter, the Bureau saw the drug war as a global one, requiring a global response. The only solution, as the FBN saw it, was to ensure that foreign nations shared both the commitment and the resources to fight the foreign drug war. This was a style of thought and policy that continued more or less uninterrupted into what is more

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[112] See an unsigned memo (from Cusack) to Giordano, dated July 19, 1966, detailing these conversations, in Folder "(0280-18 #2) Bureau Overseas Operation, Consolidation of Treasury Enforcement Program, January 1964 thru December 31, 1967," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

[113] Manfredi's memo, a report dated May 6, 1966 and titled "Liaison Training Paper," is a fascinating primer on working overseas, with several observations on European administrative culture. Manfredi recommended a combination of caution, personal interest, small favors and an effective and professional exchange of information as the foundation of a successful liaison relationship. Folder "(0280-17, Overseas) Overseas Orientation, 1963-1967," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

[114] Picini to Giordano, March 16, 1966, in Folder "(0280-17, Overseas) Overseas Orientation, 1963-1967," Box 49, RG 170, NARA.

commonly identified as the start of the modern war on drugs in the early 1970s.[115] Yet, as the history of District 17's founding and expansion reveals, source control, modernization and foreign intervention were the handmaidens of drug control long before Nixon took up the mantle of the drug war.

By the end of the 1960s, there were important changes taking place but also remarkable continuities. As the narcos, dealers and stick-up boys of David Simon's *The Wire* liked to remark, with a wry acknowledgement for the tiny roles they all played in a much larger historical cycle, "The game remains the same." In District 17, personnel shifted, tactics were tweaked, cases came and went and even the FBN itself was eventually replaced, first by the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and later by the Drug Enforcement Administration. But the drug traffic, the drug war and the ideology of American hegemony remained.

[115] Daniel Weimer, *Seeing Drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and U.S. Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969-1976* (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2011).

CONCLUSION. FROM GIORDANO TO G. GORDON LIDDY, WAGING AMERICAN DRUG WARS

One of Henry Giordano's first duties as the new Commissioner of Narcotics was to prepare a toast. Anslinger reached the age for federal mandatory retirement on his 70th birthday in May 1962, but it was July before President Kennedy got around to accepting his resignation. Giordano was confirmed as his replacement in August, but the entire FBN hierarchy was preoccupied that summer with the expansion of the foreign enforcement program and preparations for a White House conference on drugs planned for the fall, so it was December before Anslinger's colleagues got around to organizing a real retirement dinner. That gave Giordano roughly six months to collect the anecdotes and accolades expected of such an occasion and prepare a proper send-off for his influential predecessor. The stories Giordano chose to tell about Anslinger were revealing. He admitted that, as a young agent, he had once been sent to fetch the Commissioner's laundry. Giordano also shared a story about the time Anslinger squeezed in a hunting trip during a visit to the Denver office and told the staff, "in his inimitably menacing way," that he would like to "get himself a deer." No fools, the agents dutifully staked out a young buck and turned it loose for the unsuspecting Old Man. A happy Commissioner, Giordano pointed out, generally made for a happy Bureau.[1]

Giordano played all of this for laughs but he spoke to a larger truth that evening: for thirty-two critical years, Anslinger imposed his indomitable will upon an often fractious and controversial organization. But, in hindsight, perhaps that's overstating it; maybe agents like Siragusa and Speer staked out prize bucks of their own over the years, targets they knew Anslinger wanted to hit, like Lucky Luciano or Red China—examples of where the Bureau's commitment to narrative overrode the complexities of the drug trade. One thing is certain; Giordano was no Anslinger. One of his colleagues described him to reporters as "tough without being rough," but it was clear that Giordano possessed neither the forceful personality nor the political acumen necessary to corral the rambunctious agency and guide it through its recurrent crises.[2] It's also entirely possible that not even Anslinger, with all of his

[1] Henry L. Giordano, "Harry Anslinger, the First United States Narcotic Commissioner," address before the 1962 Remington Medal Dinner, December 4, 1962, in Folder 14, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

[2] "Tough Narcotics Chief, Henry Luke Giordano," *New York Times*, July 9, 1962, p. 21.

formidable bureaucratic skill, could have withstood the challenges of the 1960s. As Bob Dylan warned only a few short years later, "The times, they are a-changing."

Much of Giordano's tenure was spent fighting a futile rearguard action against changing American norms and an increasingly lenient attitude toward drugs. Over the course of the 1960s, the American people entered a down slope of the cycle David Musto observes in *The American Disease* (1999), as the intolerant attitudes of the 1950s softened into more a generally more permissive outlook. As drug use proliferated, however, the federal government was compelled to grapple with problems associated with new recreational drugs like LSD and the abuse of pharmaceutical drugs like barbiturates and amphetamines. With its narrow focus on the more visceral dangers of heroin, the Bureau was slow to react to the changing American drug scene and resistant to additional enforcement duties, which led to the creation of new control agencies. Together with endemic corruption, the fracturing of American drug control efforts hastened the demise of the FBN in 1968.

Richard Nixon's drug war emerged from ashes. Most observers mark this as the start of America's "war on drugs" but few note the extent to which Nixon simply escalated policies that were already in place and relied on images created by the FBN. Nixon's drug war was a clear turning point, but one of its dirty little secrets is that it marks the country's only attempt at a national treatment system. The Watergate scandal also tends to overshadow the degree to which Nixon manipulated the drug issue for political gain. Nixon saw the drug war, to some extent, as a laboratory of executive power; it provided both an appealing campaign issue and a way to consolidate his influence within the federal bureaucracy. In 1973, after only five years, Nixon dismantled the FBN's successor agency, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) and, by executive fiat, created the modern Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). But in the intervening years, Nixon's White House also took an unprecedented direct hand in law enforcement operations under the auspices of the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement (ODALE). Many of the central players in Nixon's drug war, aides like Egil Krogh, Jr. and G. Gordon Liddy, became directly involved in the Watergate scandal.

Rather than the start of an entirely new conflict, Nixon's drug war marked the turn of a page or the start of a new chapter in America's on-going drug war. This chapter examines that transition and

concludes the story of the FBN with a broader look at the history of American drug wars and the ideological legacy of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics.

The End of a Beginning

To many observers, Henry Giordano seemed a strange pick for the nation's new top drug cop. A pharmacist by training, he lacked Anslinger's unique charisma or the firm background in undercover work that dictated an agent's reputation among the rank and file—though he did break an important postwar case against the Mallock brothers, a pair of Canadian traffickers who functioned as middlemen between Corsican suppliers in France and Mafia distributors in New York. In keeping with the romanticism of true-crime adventures, press coverage of his appointment overplayed his status as "an ace undercover operative" and said he came up "the hard way." In fact, most of Giordano's career was spent in administrative positions as the District Supervisor in Minneapolis and Kansas City and a headquarters official in Washington. Giordano enjoyed strong political ties and helped draft the 1956 Narcotic Control Act, but his chief virtue seems to have been a willingness to, as he announced upon his appointment, "continue the general policies of Mr. Anslinger," particularly the Bureau's commitment to a punitive police approach over public health alternatives.[3]

It's possible that Anslinger had more cynical reasons and chose Giordano in order to maintain his own control over the Bureau. Even at the age of 70, the Old Man was reluctant to leave his post and told reporters, "I'm not anxious to retire. I would not know what to do." Both Kennedy and Nixon kept Anslinger on as the American delegate to the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs and allowed him to continue shaping diplomatic control efforts. Douglas Valentine argues that Anslinger knew Giordano "was incapable of making decisions without his advice" and backed his appointment as a way to "keep his hand in the game." If true, there are signs that Anslinger quickly came to rue the decision as Giordano's indecisive leadership lent support to the recurrent executive-level calls to shift responsibility for drug

[3] Morton Mintz, "Anslinger Resigns as Narcotics Chief," *Washington Post*, July 6, 1962, p. A7; "Tough Narcotics Chief, Henry Luke Giordano," *New York Times*, July 9, 1962, p. 21. See also Wolfgang Saxon, "Henry Giordano, 89, Head of Narcotics Bureau in 60's," *New York Times*, October 10, 2003, p. A29. In a letter to Douglas Valentine, dated January 22, 1994, Howard Chappell speculated that Giordano must have had excellent political support because his "progress in the Bureau . . . is otherwise unexplainable." Folder "Chappell, Howard," Box 2, Valentine Collection. Giordano's pharmaceutical background may have played a role, and Anslinger's relationship to the drug industry was an important one. In a letter dated April 29, 1962, he tipped James G. Flanagan (President of S.B. Penick & Co.) to Giordano's impending appointment. In Folder 5, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

control from Treasury to the Justice Department. "Privately, I am told he can't stand up to the pressure and runs away from all decisions," Anslinger confided to George White.[4]

Giordano's ascension ushered in another round of shuffling at FBN HQ, but it was preceded by the abrupt departure of Wayland Speer the previous year. Speer also had designs on the Commissioner's office and tried to use the corruption issue to improve his position. During the summer of 1961, Speer traveled up to the New York office to investigate the apparent overdose death of an agent. Rumor had it that he was on the take and planning an overly ambitious graft, when his equally corrupt but more cautious confederates slipped a lethal dose of narcotics into his drink one night. Speer launched an integrity probe and was clearly on to something, but he made the mistake of questioning agents in his hotel room instead of the office. One of his targets, an African-American agent named Charles McDonnell (later indicted on 14 counts of corruption), complained to Senator Jacob Javits (D-NY) that Speer had exposed himself during questioning and made racist remarks. The rest of the agents closed ranks and when Speer failed to produce any evidence of corruption, he was brought back to Washington, reprimanded by Treasury officials for the McDonnell allegations and bounced back out to the Districts.[5] Following Speer's departure, Charles Siragusa moved up to Deputy Commissioner and George Gaffney, the District Supervisor in New York during the early French Connection cases, was brought in to round out the headquarters staff as the Assistant Commissioner. Siragusa and Gaffney then apparently began to battle it out for influence, but Gaffney was friends with Attorney General Robert Kennedy (dating back to their collaboration on the Senate McClellan Committee to investigate organized crime) and, seeing the writing on the wall, Siragusa left the following year for a position with the Illinois State Crime Commission.[6]

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[4] Mintz, "Anslinger Resigns as Narcotics Chief."; "Anslinger, Narcotics Chief, Resigns; Giordano Succession," *Baltimore Sun*, July 6, 1962, p. 5. In a letter from Richard Nixon dated January 12, 1970, thanking Anslinger for his service upon his resignation from the UN position, in Folder 1, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. See also Anslinger to White, December 17, 1963, in Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers; Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 281.

[5] Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 216–218; Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams*, 193–194. See also Theodore W. Hendricks, "Former U.S. Narcotics Official Here Faces 14-Count Indictment," *The Baltimore Sun*, July 11, 1968, p. C20 .

[6] For HQ moves, see Anslinger, Field Information Circular No. 103 dated January 16, 1962, and Giordano, Field Information Circular No. 112 dated September 13, 1962 in Folder "(0370-3) Field Information Circulars, 1-170," Box 56, RG 170, NARA. In a letter dated December 17, [1963], Anslinger told George White that Siragusa "was feuding with Gaffney and Giordano and was, in fact, driven out of

Despite his reputation as a weak in-fighter, Giordano won some important early bureaucratic victories, prevailed over former rivals and helped win the critical jurisdictional battle with Customs in the fall of 1962. These were noteworthy achievements, but Giordano faced two intractable problems: corruption within the ranks and proliferating drug use and abuse. New classes of drugs like barbiturates, amphetamines and hallucinogens received a great deal of public attention but fell outside of the Bureau's traditional focus on heroin.

The corruption issue was kept relatively quiet until the end of the decade as FBN and IRS inspectors cautiously closed in on the suspected dirty cops. Between 1968 and 1970, however, the issue of general police corruption in New York exploded following the revelations of NYPD cops like Frank Serpico and the Knapp Commission, which revealed narcotics as but one in a array of official abuses of power. A report by FBN Inspector Ike Wurms indicated similar institutionalized corruption on the federal side, and the high-profile nature of these revelations has left the impression that it was corruption and crooked agents that killed the Bureau. In *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams* (1996), historian Jill Jonnes contends that by the end of the decade, the situation was so bad that rogue agents actually murdered some forty to fifty informants to prevent them from talking. The Wurms Report, which remains sealed, Jonnes continues, indicated that about 60 bad agents were "colluding with major traffickers and making major heroin sales personally."[7] Most of the integrity probes, however, concluded after the Bureau's reorganization, though the suspicion that many narcotics agents were dirty did little to help the FBN's cause within the federal government.[8] Certainly it can be said that the Bureau was born and died in the midst of corruption scandals, but the wheels of the Bureau's demise were already turning.

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the bureau." In Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers. On Gaffney's relationship with RFK, see Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 281.

[7] Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams*, 197.

[8] For corruption probes, see Folder "(1515-13) Officers, Complaints Against, Thru May 31, 1967," Box 11, Entry 10 (Classified Subject Files), RG 170, NARA. See also Theodore W. Hendricks, "Former U.S. Narcotics Official Here Faces 14-Count Indictment," *Baltimore Sun*, July 11, 1968, p. C20 (the official was Charles McDonnell, the same agent who caused Speer's demotion); "Probe of U.S. Narcotics Unite Near End; Arrests Expected," *Baltimore Sun*, December 14, 1968, p. A3; "32 U.S. Narcotics Agents Resign In Corruption Investigation Here," *New York Times*, December 14, 1968, p. 1; David Burnham, "Graft Study Finds Inaction By Police in 72 Drug Cases," *New York Times*, August 14, 1972, p. 1. See also Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs, and Pipe Dreams*, 191-201; T. J. English, *The Savage City: Race, Murder, and a Generation on the Edge* (New York: Harper Collins, 2011).

The real cause of the FBN's downfall had more to do with the changing American drug scene and, in retrospect, it's apparent the seeds of the FBN's demise were planted during the White House Conference on Narcotic Drugs held in September 1962. On the surface, the conference appeared to go rather well. Both of the Kennedy brothers were "highly complementary" of the Bureau, one agent noted in a summary report, and cited the excellent work of District 17 as a justification to extend FBN operations throughout the globe. The conference featured some discussion of alternative approaches to the drug problem, but FBN observers felt they had ably represented the police position. During his own statement, Giordano complained that there was "too much misinformation" about the Bureau and many people believed it was "interested only in putting the addict in the penitentiary for long periods of time," but, he protested, "Nothing could be further from the truth." The Bureau's highest priority was protecting the American people and containing the spread of addiction. FBN Chief Counsel Carl DeBaggio picked up this line of argument and pointed out the Bureau's long held position that nearly every addict was a potential peddler and should be treated as such. "Our true position," DeBaggio declared, "is that a peddler who is an addict should be not be given a license to peddle just because he is an addict." In essence, FBN officials used the addict-peddler connection to dismiss any arguments in favor of lenient treatment for drug users and Agent Patrick O'Carroll privately wrote, "We should attack this concept with all the vigor and force at our command." On that count, the Bureau felt it had prevailed.[9]

Another topic of major concern, however, was the rising use of what the Bureau often called "dangerous drugs" like barbiturates and amphetamines and it's there that Giordano dropped the ball. In his opening remarks, Giordano noted that the FBN's purview was limited to heroin and other opiate derivatives, as well as cocaine and marijuana. "We, therefore," he continued, "do not have responsibilities with regard to the so-called dangerous drugs; i.e., barbiturates and amphetamines . . . our primary concern is with the illicit traffic which caters to the abusive use of narcotics."[10]

Compared to opiates, both barbiturates and amphetamines were a relatively new class of drug and, under Anslinger, the Bureau avoided the issue as one best managed by the medical community

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[9] See Giordano, Field Information Circular No. 123, dated December 17, 1962, which included O'Carroll's summary and statements by Giordano and DeBaggio, in Folder "(0370-3) Field Information Circulars, 1-170," Box 56, RG 170, NARA.

[10] Giordano, Field Information Circular No. 123, dated December 17, 1962, in Folder "(0370-3) Field Information Circulars, 1-170," Box 56, RG 170, NARA.

through the use of prescriptions. As George White and Malachi Harney watched from the sidelines, White observed, "The advent of weed, speed and acid present an entirely new set of problems many of which lack the prima-facie physiological evils of the opiates and which can not be glibly resolved." At UN meetings throughout the 1950s, Anslinger professed little concern about the abuse of such drugs, though he admitted "if you take a so-called massive dose of anything, you probably can become addicted to almost anything, particularly to the barbiturates." The Bureau saw the advent of these new pill-form drugs as genuinely less threatening than heroin, but Anslinger's resistance to federal control was likely due in equal part to his reluctance to accept new enforcement obligations and his cozy relationship with the pharmaceutical companies.[11] By the 1960s, however, the dangers associated with both uppers and downers were becoming more widely acknowledged, particularly following the deaths of celebrities like Marilyn Monroe, who overdosed on sleeping pills.

Following the conference, President Kennedy appointed an Advisory Commission to study the drug problem. Known as the Prettyman Commission for its chairman, retired federal judge E. Barret Prettyman, this group of experts took an expansive approach and quickly began to argue for a more measured response to the problems caused by drugs, somewhere between the licentiousness of the clinic era and the overreaction of the Anslinger years. "We've gone through an era of hysteria on both sides," one member commented, "we surely need a middle-road approach." The Commission released its findings throughout 1963 and 1964 and generally recommended a new emphasis on rehabilitation and changes in law enforcement, including the transfer of most of the FBN's functions to the Department of Justice and the establishment of new control over the illicit traffic in pharmaceutical drugs. By this time, Lyndon Baines Johnson was President and, for the time being, preferred to let Congress to take the lead in carrying out the Commission's suggestions.[12]

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[11] White to Harney, February 24, 1971, Folder 18, Box 3, White Papers. See also Anslinger, remarks at Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotics, May 29, 1957, in Folder 8, Box 1; and a letter to Austin Smith, MD (Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association) dated May 31, 1962, in which James G. Flanagan (S.B. Penick & Co.) credits Anslinger with the defeat of a measure to place barbiturates under diplomatic control, in Folder 6, Box 2, Anslinger Papers.

[12] "Narcotics Study Unit Named by President," *Washington Post*, January 17, 1963, p. 2; Dr. Roger O. Egeberg is quoted in Gene Sherman, "New U.S. Narcotics Policy Heralded in Panel's Findings," *Los Angeles Times*, February 10, 1963, p. H1; "Narcotics Law Report Stresses Rehabilitation," *Washington Post*, January 20, 1964, p. A5; William Knighton, "Anti-Dope Drive Begun," *Baltimore Sun*,

The FBN still had its supporters, but Giordano remained locked in the worldview inherited from Anslinger and refused to consider expanding the FBN's purview. Agent Jack Kelly, among the agents witness to the turbulent era of the late 1960s, later wrote, "Congress asked the Bureau to take over the whole problem of hallucinogenic drugs. Giordano refused." That, Kelly recalled, was Giordano's "fatal error."[13] Based on the recommendations of the Prettyman Commission and the FBN's subsequent refusal to police barbiturates, amphetamines or hallucinogens, in 1965 Congress passed the Drug Abuse Control Amendments (part of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act), which gave new police authority to the Food and Drug Administration and created the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control (BDAC). As BDAC Director John Finlater observed, critics of the Bureau's hard-line stance saw the new agency "as an excellent opportunity to initiate a fresh approach to the national drug problem." Where the FBN's focus on the contagion of addiction led it to assume that every addict was a peddler and therefore subject to prosecution, the Drug Abuse Control Amendments specified that BDAC's mission was to police the manufacture and illicit distribution of pharmaceutical drugs but not their actual use.[14]

It quickly became apparent that the two organizations had, as Finlator put it, "diametrically opposed" philosophies and the new agency emphasized education and research in equal parts to law enforcement as a component of its new "total approach" to the drug problem. "BDAC," he later wrote, "was somewhat unique . . . [and] attempted an enforcement-medical-statistical-psychological-educational approach. Consequently, it was staffed with psychologists, pharmacologists, pharmacists and mathematicians, as well as with investigative agents." Finlator previously held a high-level position with the General Services Administration and brought an effective management style to the job of Director, which helped BDAC establish an effective rapport with both the FBI and Customs.[15]

July 16, 1964, p. 6; Louis Cassels, "Estimate 60,000 Americans Are Narcotics Habit Victims," *Chicago Daily Defender*, April 8, 1965, p. 10.

[13] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 203.

[14] John Finlator, *The Drugged Nation: A "Narc's" Story* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), 22–23. See also "Act of July 15, 1965 (Drug Abuse Control Amendments of 1965), Public Law 89-74, 79 STAT 226, which protected the public health and safety by amending the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish special controls for depressant and stimulant drugs and counterfeit drugs," July 15, 1965, (http://research.archives.gov/description/299906, accessed February 9, 2014).

[15] Finlator, *The Drugged Nation*, 22-55.

The relationship between BDAC and the FBN, however, was troubled from the start. As drug dealers and trafficking networks began to diversify and sell a variety of drugs, the two agencies quickly came into open conflict. Finlator and Giordano put on a show of cooperation and issued a joint memo to both agencies that noted, "While our two agencies have separate and distinct enforcement responsibilities, a close spirit of cooperation between us can only serve to enhance each agency's enforcement capability and thus benefit the public."[16] Behind the scenes, however, the association was a thorny one. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare lacked any significant criminal investigative experience and naturally looked to dissatisfied FBN agents to fill BDAC's ranks. It recruited about 70 former FBN agents in all and created a conflict that ultimately had to be resolved by Treasury Department officials. The remaining narcotics agents derided their BDAC counterparts as "chicken pluckers," since many had previously served as poultry inspectors and resented the "jumpers" who left the FBN for the new agency—many of them dirty agents in flight from the on-going integrity probes.[17]

Perhaps even worse, the new agency began to steal some of the FBN's thunder after making cases against amphetamine and other "pill" rings. One of BDAC's biggest cases was against Augustus Owsley Stanley III, the "Acid King" of California. In 1966, the pharmaceutical company Sandoz was the only licensed manufacturer of LSD and, deciding this was a pernicious position to be in, turned over its entire stock to the National Institute of Mental Health, which left Owsley as perhaps the world's largest single producer of LSD. His arrest in 1967, however, gave BDAC new publicity and its efforts to track shipments of lysergic acid, LSD's main precursor, even led BDAC agents overseas, further encroaching on the FBN's prestige if not its actual jurisdiction.[18]

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[16] Pointing to their own cooperation, Giordano and Finlator closed, "Each of you is expected to make a specific effort to match ours." Memo dated October 10, 1966, Folder "(1685-4 #1) Public Health – Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Bureau of Drug Abuse Control, May 1966 thru July 31, 1967," Box 69, RG 170, NARA.

[17] Kelly and Mathison, *On the Street*, 203; Finlator, *The Drugged Nation*, 22-55; Valentine, *The Strength of the Wolf*, 380-384; Tripodi and DeSario, *Crusade: Undercover Against the Mafia and KGB*, 155.

[18] Fred Black, "New Federal Agency Aided in Pep Pill Raid," *Washington Post*, January 27, 1967, A3; "Reported 'Mr. LSD,' and Four Others Seized," *Los Angeles Times*, December 22, 1967, p. A2; Robert Wiedrich, "2 Million in Drugs Seized in U.S. Raid," *Chicago Tribune*, January 28, 1968, p. 3; Finlator, *The Drugged Nation*, 22-55.

In another sign of events coming full circle, the marijuana issue—always controversial and always peripheral to the Bureau's focus on heroin—brought the conflict between the FBN and BDAC into the open and finally sealed the FBN's fate. By the late 1960s, the merits of marijuana prohibition were under often heated debate. The Bureau's old nemesis Alfred Lindesmith resurfaced to comment, "Nobody worried very much when police sent thousands of ghetto dwellers to languish in prison for years for puffing on one joint, but now that the doctor, the lawyer, the teacher and the business executive and their children are facing the same fate, marijuana has become a cause célèbre."[19] (In retirement, former Agents like George White groused about rising marijuana use and invited friends to come "watch the wandering weed-heads strolling up and down the beach." Only half joking, White proposed posting a sign that read: "HEY MAN. ABSOLUTELY NO POT SMOKING WITHIN ONE HUNDRED YARDS OF THIS WINDOW. THIS MEANS YOU. WOW!"[20])

As the FBN's views on marijuana came under public attack, Giordano dug in deeper and clung to Anslinger's increasingly antiquated positions. The Bureau continued to circulate its well-worn pamphlet "Living Death: The Truth About Drug Addiction," which claimed that marijuana was "a dangerous first step on the road . . . to enslavement by heroin." In Congressional testimony, Giordano repeated his complaint that a vocal minority of marijuana advocates had distorted public perceptions and insisted that "a large enough dose of any kind of marihuana can cause a temporary psychosis in anybody." BDAC, on the other hand, took a very different view. Finlator dismissed the gateway-drug argument, contending, "One cannot place the blame on the drug; it is the personality itself that allows for any progression to a more debilitating drug." In an offhand remark, FDA Commissioner James Goddard also commented that marijuana was probably less dangerous than alcohol (prompting calls for his resignation from FBN supporters in Congress). The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, meanwhile, commissioned a secret high-level study that concluded marijuana was far less dangerous than frequently depicted and should be reclassified as a mild hallucinogen rather than a narcotic. Going one step further, the report recommended decriminalizing individual possession and transferring enforcement responsibilities from

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[19] Lindesmith is quoted in Lee Berton, "Marijuana At Issue, Harsh Laws Challenged in Courts, Criticized Within the Government," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 20, 1967, p. 1.

[20] White, letters to Paul Newey (former FBN Agent) and Matthew O'Connor (California Bureau Narcotic Enforcement) and Paul Newey, dated July 8 and 31, 1970, Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

the FBN to BDAC. After leaving public office a few years later, Finlator even came out for the total legalization of marijuana.[21]

When the HEW paper leaked to the media in the fall of 1967, it further exacerbated the growing schism between the FBN and BDAC and exposed federal dysfunction to the American people. Controversy over the drug problem was at an all time high, but, with enforcement functions spread between a multitude of agencies and departments, it looked like the government was falling down on the job and, by the start of the new year, it quickly became apparent to everyone within the bureaucracy that an amalgamation was in the works. The only question was where the new agency would reside. Despite taking a controversial stand on the marijuana issue, HEW had no appetite for the fight or much experience with law enforcement, which left the Treasury and Justice Departments to battle it out. In his final year in office, President Johnson decided to circumvent Congress (which had contributed to this fracture in the first place) and act via executive order. Calling the present organization of police agencies and control laws "a crazy quilt of inconsistent approaches and widely disparate criminal sanctions," Johnson called for comprehensive new drug laws and announced in early February that the FBN and BDAC would be combined into a new agency called the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) and moved to the Justice Department, following a course previously suggested by the Prettyman Commission and other studies on federal organization.[22]

The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs

The formal transfer took place in April 1968. Giordano initially welcomed the change, at least in public. On the eve of the Bureau's dissolution, he told Senators, "This plan will have a great impact on the enforcement of the Nation's drug laws. It will combine the talents and efforts of both agencies in a unified attack on the traffic." Privately, however, inside observers like Joe Arpaio recalled that the

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[21] For FBN, see Folder "Living Death," Box 72, and Giordano, statement before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, March 5, 1968, in Folder "(1690-5) Giordano # 8, Speeches, Mr. Giordano, January 1968 thru January 1969, Box 69, RG 170, NARA. For HEW and BDAC, see "Probe of Pot in Progress, HEW Admits," *Chicago Tribune*, October 15, 1967, p. C30; Lee Berton, "Marijuana At Issue, Harsh Laws Challenged in Courts, Criticized Within the Government," *Wall Street Journal*, November 20, 1967, p. 1; Finaltor, *The Drugged Nation*, 53-55, 179-221.

[22] "Johnson Widens Narcotics Fight," *New York Times*, February 8, 1968, p. 1; "Drug Unit Is Approved by House," *Washington Post*, April 3, 1968, p. A3. See also Finlator, *The Drugged Nation*, 52-55.

reorganization "set the stage for intrigue on a scale that would do a Greek tragedy proud." Given the FBN's larger size and depth of experience, Giordano likely assumed that his staff and personnel would dominate the new organization and was disappointed when he and Finlator were named to co-equal positions as Associate Directors. Attorney General Ramsey Clark then went outside of the hierarchy to select John Ingersoll, a Justice Department official and the former police chief of Charlotte, NC, as the Director of the new agency.[23]

Ingersoll represented a clean break with the past as the Justice Department worked to purge the BNDD of corrupt former FBN agents. This was perhaps the single most important issue during the transition and likely forestalled any serious consideration that Giordano would be chosen to lead the new agency. By December 1968, 32 of the agents who had worked in the New York office had resigned. Attorney General Clark told reporters that although only a few faced criminal charges, internal investigations indicated that agents were "illegally selling and buying drugs, retaining contraband for personal use or sale, taking money allocated for informants and failing to enforce laws." Corruption remained enough of a concern that in December 1970, Ingersoll actually asked the CIA to vet certain agents and infiltrate BNDD field offices in order to "monitor any illegal activities."[24]

With a background in modern criminological and public administration techniques, Ingersoll brought a fresh approach to the job and strived to be non-political. In occasional correspondence with Anslinger, he indicated this was easier said than done, and wrote, "Sometimes I find it to be a disadvantage not to be political since many of my adversaries are so motivated." Ingersoll may have avoided overtly political positions, but he was not reluctant to criticize the past direction of American

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[23] "Notification of Transfer," April 8, 1968, in Folder "Manfredi, Hank," Box 5, Valentine Collection; Giordano, statement before Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, March 5, 1968, in Folder "(1690-5) Giordano # 8, Speeches, Mr. Giordano, January 1968 thru January 1969, Box 69, RG 170, NARA. See also "Former Police Chief to Head U.S. Dope Unit," *Chicago Tribune*, July 13, 1968, p. N12; "Ex-Police Chief Heads New U.S. Drug Bureau," *New York Times*, July 13, 1968, p. 52; Joe Arpaio and Len Sherman, *Joe's Law: America's Toughest Sheriff Takes on Illegal Immigration, Drugs, and Everything Else That Threatens America* (New York: AMACOM, 2008), 179.

[24] "32 U.S. Narcotics Agents Resign In Corruption Investigation Here," *New York Times*, December 14, 1968, p. 1; James Markham, "Narcotics Corruption Appears Easy and Common," *New York Times*, December 23, 1972, p. 26; Central Intelligence Agency, "Family Jewels," May 16, 1973, p. 29, 56, 62, available at the Central Intelligence Agency, Freedom of Information Electronic Reading Room (http://www.foia.cia.gov/collection/family-jewels, accessed, March 20, 2014).

counternarcotic efforts, which, he said, had "failed miserably," particularly with regard to prevention and rehabilitation. The FBN, he noted in public remarks, claimed to be focused on high-level traffickers and cutting off the foreign sources of the domestic drug market, but, Ingersoll commented, "What they said they were doing and what they were actually doing were often two very different things." The pressure to snare informants and work up the supply chain, he argued, too often led to agents "chasing addict-pushers down the streets . . . [and] too many low-level arrests were being made." The emphasis on retail-level drug dealing and creation of a quota system reinforced the structural dependence on informants and further opened the door to corruption as the agents cut corners in order to keep their informants on the street. In contrast, Ingersoll promised the BNDD would only focus on "major traffickers" and "the operators of clandestine laboratories and the major distributors." He further claimed that the BNDD was "going to make a greater effort overseas to reduce or eliminate the source of these narcotics."[25]

None of this represented the profound break with past practices that either Ingersoll or contemporary observers took it to be. The strategy was essentially the same as that of the FBN; the real difference was that Ingersoll was determined not to let the BNDD get distracted by small-time dealers and individual users. The agency called this ostensibly new strategy "the systems approach," which meant, according to Finlater, that the BNDD would "refrain from tracking down the individual entrepreneur" and would instead "group him with other associates all of whom made up a loose system or organization."[26] In other words, the systems approach represented a shift to a more deliberate, comprehensive and analytical style of investigation that promised greater rewards in the long run, but required a level of patience that is often absent from the American political system—particularly on emotionally charged issues like drugs.

Nixon's Drug War

While Ingersoll plotted the future course of U.S. counternarcotic operations, the American people were headed to the voting booth. 1968 was one of the most tumultuous years in U.S. history and it was

[25] Letter from Ingersoll to Anslinger, dated July 11, 1969, in Folder 1, Box 2, Anslinger Papers. "Narcotics Chief Says U.S. 'Failed Miserably' in Curbs," *New York Times*, February 12, 1969, p. 23; "U.S. to Switch Drug Tactics, Director Says," *Los Angeles Times*, March 26, 1969, p. A18. See also David Burnham, "Police Setup on Vice Deplored as Making Corruption Easy," *New York Times*, November 11, 1968, p. 32.

[26] Finlator, *The Drugged Nation*, 85.

capped by a pivotal Presidential election. In Vietnam, the Tet Offensive hinted that the country was losing its first foreign military engagement; back home, cities all over the country burned during riots touched off by the assassination Martin Luther King Jr.; college students rose up to occupy university buildings and the hopes of many progressives died as Robert Kennedy bled out on the kitchen floor of a hotel in California. On the Democratic side, a surging antiwar movement nearly toppled the party establishment before it was violently turned back at the convention in Chicago. On the Republican side, the forces of reaction coalesced behind Richard Nixon and the suspicion that drugs and crime were somehow implicated in all of this mess. Indeed, from the very start of the campaign, it was clear that "law and order" would be a central issue and an oblique way of pushing back against the social turmoil.

Drugs helped to explain how heroin-and-marijuana-addled GIs were outwitted and outfought by the primitive Vietcong, why violent crime had taken over America's inner cities and were emblematic of all that was wrong with the country's wayward youth. In a policy paper released in May, Nixon described a country overwhelmed by crime and violence. "Crime creates crime," he charged, and enablers on the Supreme Court and within the Johnson White House had allowed the balance of power to shift to the criminal element and turn America into a "lawless society." Calling organized crime a "tapeworm" and "secret society," Nixon usurped the words of Franklin Roosevelt to promise Americans "Freedom from Fear" and pledged "to wage an effective national war against this enemy within." Three months later, as he accepted the nomination of his party, Nixon swore to "open a new front against the filth peddlers and the narcotics peddlers who are corrupting the lives of the children of this country."[27]

Nixon, of course, won the election, partly on the strength of his overtures to Southern racism and the frustrations of a "silent majority" that yearned for an end to years of social conflict. The focus on crime and drug control was a central component of Nixon's appeal to both of those constituencies and an important part of his administration going forward.[28] Drugs, however, crowded a full plate. As President,

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[27] "Nixon: 'Toward Freedom from Fear,'" *Washington Post*, May 12, 1968, p. B1; Nixon, Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention, August 8, 1968, available at "The American Presidency Project" (http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25968, accessed February 22, 2014).

[28] Analyzing Nixon's 1968 victory in an internal memo dated August 24, 1970, campaign aide Patrick Buchanan argued, "Presidential elections in the coming decade will turn on the 'Social Issue,' . . . drugs, demonstrations, pornography, disruptions, 'kidlash,' permissiveness, violence, riots, crime. The voters will not tolerate a 'liberal,' on these issues," Buchanan concluded. Campaign of 1970; Box 6;

Nixon's first priorities were détente with the USSR and China and finding a political or military solution to the war in Vietnam. But drug control remained high on the agenda and, in a July 1969 address to Congress, Nixon claimed that drug abuse and addiction had "grown from essentially a local police problem into a serious national threat." The following day, Attorney General John Mitchell submitted draft legislation that toughened prison sentences and expanded police powers, including the controversial use of wiretaps and "no-knock" warrants.[29]

Perhaps reluctant to lose any bureaucratic momentum, Nixon retained Ingersoll as the Director of the BNDD, despite the fact that he was a Johnson appointee. Giordano, realizing he would never regain the top office, resigned shortly thereafter.[30] Giordano could never be a serious contender as long the stink of corruption lingered over the old FBN, but he probably would have given Nixon a more pliable partner. Ingersoll was convinced that street arrests and mass round-ups explained much of the FBN's failures and preferred to focus on the high-level international traffic, but the Nixon team needed splashy arrests to compliment its political strategy. This fundamental conflict of interests set the stage for prolonged bureaucratic in-fighting and a power struggle that typified Nixon's approach to both the Presidency and the drug war.

The tension between the need to apply new strategies and tactics to the drug war and demonstrate political results directly influenced the kind of operations that were carried out. One of the first examples of how that tension affected policy was Operation Intercept. Eager to follow up on Nixon's militant campaign rhetoric and overcome the apparent ennui of the BNDD, in September 1969, the White House team enacted a plan to dramatically step up Customs inspections at the U.S.-Mexico border. Ground operations were supervised by BNDD Agent Joe Arpaio, a veteran of FBN operations in Turkey, and G. Gordon Liddy, a gung-ho Treasury Department official and zealous drug warrior. The project was, in Arpaio's words, "a full-out assault on the drug traffic right on the border," in which every vehicle or

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President's Personal File; Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives at College Park, Maryland. Special thanks to Sarah Thelen for providing this document.

[29] Stuart Loory, "President Urges Tough New Laws on Illicit Drugs," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1969, p. 1; William Robbins, "Congress Gets Nixon's Bill to Curb Drug Abuses," *New York Times*, July 16, 1969, p.51. See also Drug Enforcement Administration, "1970-1975" (http://www.justice.gov/dea/about/history.shtml, accessed February 22, 2014).

[30] "Head of Narcotics Bureau Will Stay On Under Nixon," *New York Times*, February 27, 1969, p. 15; "Giordano Retires As Aide of U.S. Narcotics Bureau," *New York Times*, March 1, 1969, p. 18.

person crossing the border was subjected to "100 percent inspection" in an effort to prevent smuggled drugs—specifically marijuana—from reaching American consumers. Arpaio later insisted that "Operation Intercept had a real impact" and caused a spike in drug prices, but it's actual efficacy is doubtful. As one Mexican tourism official remarked at the time, "It's like trying to cure cancer with an aspirin." Despite thorough inspections, very few drugs were found. The true purpose of Operation Intercept was political; it demonstrated Nixon's commitment to the drug war and, as Deputy Attorney General Richard Kleindienst hinted to reporters, coerced the Mexico government's cooperation on cross-border and source control measures by targeting its economy. Ultimately, the operation proved so damaging to the local economy on both sides of the border that it was halted after only twenty-three days. But the Nixon Administration made its point and received immediate assurances of future cooperation from Mexican officials, their clear irritation notwithstanding.[31]

While the BNDD focused on breaking up the collection of trafficking groups associated with the French Connection, Nixon kept up the domestic momentum by pushing for the consolidation of existing drug laws and ever more police power. One of the resulting pieces of legislation was the 1970 Comprehensive Drug Abuse and Prevention Act, which, an in-house DEA history notes, "established a single system of control for both narcotic and psychotropic drugs for the first time in U.S. history" and remained the basis of American jurisprudence on drug control for the next thirty years.[32] Soon after the new law was enacted, Nixon again called on Congress for additional resources to meet the challenges posed by drug abuse, which, he claimed, had "assumed the dimensions of a national emergency" and required emergency powers to confront. In an oft-quoted statement made in June 1971, Nixon identified drug abuse as "America's public enemy number one" and claimed, "In order to fight and defeat this

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[31] Dial Torgerson, "Border Narcotics Check Backs Autos 3$^{1/2}$ Miles Into Tijuana," *Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 1963, p. 1; A.D. Horne, "U.S. Halts Operation Intercept," *Washington Post*, October 11, 1969, p. 1. See also Arpaio and Sherman*, Joe's Law*, 45-47; Edward Jay Epstein, *Agency of Fear: Opiates and Political Power in America* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977), 46-53, 81-85.

[32] Drug Enforcement Administration, "1970-1975." See also U.S. Congress, Public Law 91-513, October 27, 1970. See also, Radely Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police Forces* (New York: Public Affairs, 2013), 81-137.

enemy, it is necessary to wage a new, all-out offensive." Though he never actually used the term, this is often cited as the official start of America's war on drugs.[33]

What most observers overlook, however, is that the occasion actually marked a sharp break from the uniformly punitive approach that had characterized the drug war to that point. The immediate concern was drug use in Vietnam and the fear that soldiers exposed to heroin would return home and swell the ranks of American addicts. Unlike inner-city drug users, these were not people whose purported addiction could justify blanket incarceration. To escape this political quandary, Nixon created the Special Action Office of Drug Abuse Prevention (SAODAP) under the leadership of psychiatrist Dr. Jerome Jaffe, and asked legislators for an additional $155 million to fund the new office. In his message to Congress, Nixon continued to describe addiction as a subversive threat that creeps "quietly into homes and destroys children" and used militant rhetoric to describe his response. But he also introduced important changes into the discourse and noted that addiction "demands compassion, and not simply condemnation." There were both practical and humane reasons to emphasize rehabilitation and treatment. "As long as there is demand," Nixon explained, "there will be those willing to take the risks of meeting the demand, so we must also act to destroy the market for drugs."[34]

SAODAP essentially functioned as a federal coordinating body that attempted to harmonize and fund disparate treatment systems across the country, including neighborhood outreach programs, live-in therapeutic communities and, most controversially, methadone maintenance. Part of the administration's unorthodox approach stemmed from the realization that, despite Nixon's campaign promises, there was little the federal government could do to directly alleviate street crime. After meeting with Robert DuPont, a psychiatrist in charge of a treatment center in Washington, DC, Nixon aides Egil Krogh, Jr. and Jeffrey Donfeld convinced the rest of the administration to support methadone treatment as a way to break the link between addict and peddler and, hopefully, reduce crime by alleviating the need for addicts to commit

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[33] Richard Nixon, "Remarks About an Intensified Program for Drug Abuse Prevention and Control," and "Special Message to the Congress on Drug Abuse Prevention and Control," June 17, 1971, available at *The American Presidency Project* (http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3047, accessed February 23, 2014); Robert Young, "Nixon Declares War on Narcotics Use in U.S.," *Chicago Tribune*, June 18, 1971, p. 19.

[34] Dana Adams Schmidt, "Addiction n Vietnam Spurs Nixon and Congress to Take Drastic New Steps," *New York Times*, June 16, 1971, p. 21; Nixon, "Special Message to the Congress on Drug Abuse Prevention and Control," June 17, 1971.

petty larcenies in order to support their habit. This, in turn, led to Nixon's appointment of Jerome Jaffe, who, as the director of the Illinois State Rehabilitation Program, successfully used a "mixed-modality" approach that included methadone among a range of treatment options. "For the first time," journalist Michael Massing observes in *The Fix* (1998), top U.S. officials were "thinking of the drug problem in terms of both supply and demand." Indeed, SAODAP remains noteworthy as the nation's first and only attempt at a federal-level national treatment system and, despite its shortcomings, remains a potential template for modern public health initiatives. It's hard to draw too direct of a correlation, but the Nixon White House attributed a dramatic drop in national crime rates during the first quarter of 1972 to a reduced demand for drugs—particularly in cities like Chicago, New York and DC that had served as pilot projects for SAODAP's approach and also saw a decline in the number of deaths attributed to heroin overdoses.[35]

It's telling, however, that SAODAP's first priority and most successful initiative dealt not with American addicts but with American GIs. In announcing the creation of SAODAP, Nixon qualified that drug use by U.S. military personnel in Vietnam was "by no means a major part of the American narcotics problem," but it did threaten to increase domestic drug abuse as he withdrew American troops from overseas. As a result, SAODAP's first order of business was a program the military nicknamed Operation Golden Flow because it required all soldiers returning from duty in Vietnam to first submit to urinalysis screening. Those who tested positive for drugs were kept in-country to detox for an additional two weeks before they were allowed to return home and seek treatment from the Veterans Administration. In *The Myth of the Addicted Army* (2009), Jeremy Kuzmarov contends the problem of GI addiction was largely overstated, but even if the issue was misperceived or manufactured, the practical effect of Nixon's solution was to decriminalize drug use in the military and shift the government response from punishment to treatment.[36]

Nixon's other solutions were less progressive. One major initiative focused on Turkey, suspected as the primary source of the Atlantic heroin trade since the 1940s and 1950s. Although police

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[35] Mathea Falco and John Pekkanen, "The Abuse of Drug Abuse," *Washington Post*, September 8, 1974, p. B1. See also Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 72-78, 123-132; Michael Massing, *The Fix* (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1998), 102, 128-129.

[36] Nixon, "Special Message to the Congress on Drug Abuse Prevention and Control," June 17, 1971. Jeremy Kuzmarov, *The Myth of the Addicted Army: Vietnam and the Modern War on Drugs* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

cooperation had improved since the days when George White and Charlie Siragusa prowled Istanbul and the Turks gradually narrowed the areas where poppy could be legally cultivated, the Anatolian peninsula remained one of the region's major sources of opium. Between 1969 and 1971, the Nixon team approached the Turkish government with a number of proposals, including preemptively purchasing the entire opium crop and offering economic aid in exchange for a ban on poppy cultivation. Each was categorically refused by Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel on the grounds that opium was an important crop with a rich cultural legacy and because Turkish officials believed that regulation was more effective than prohibition. When friendly overtures failed, hard-liners in the administration threatened economic sanctions. G. Gordon Liddy, now working with the White House Domestic Council, suggested sending the corpses of overdose victims to Turkish diplomats. These maneuvers only increased the tension with Turkish officials, who actually had much bigger problems on their hands. In March 1971, the Demirel regime was overthrown in a bloodless coup, bringing to power a new military government that proved more amenable to U.S. demands. In June, the new authorities announced a total ban on poppy agriculture would take effect in the fall of 1972. In a quid pro quo, the Nixon White House immediately offered a $35 million aid package that compensated farmers and provided funds for alternative crop development. The Turkish people, however, interpreted the ban as a direct blow to Turkey's honor and sovereignty, and it proved so unpopular (and ineffective) that it was repealed only two years later.[37]

The effects of the ban as a counternarcotic measure are dubious at best (and inadvertently contributed to an American codeine shortage in 1974). Poppy was unique as an autumn-to-spring crop and Turkish farmers were unable to find a suitable replacement. Many also kept large stockpiles and there was undoubtedly some illicit production. In *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003* (2003), Nasuh Uslu argues the issue might have inflicted real damage on the U.S.-Turkish relationship had the Cyprus crisis of 1974 not driven the two parties back together. Nixon's drug war, however, was as much about electoral politics as it was about containing addiction, and the Turkish opium ban provided an visible metric of Nixon's commitment to law and order as he geared up for

[37] Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 86-92; Joseph L. Zentner, "The 1972 Turkish Opium Ban: Needle in the Haystack Diplomacy?," *World Affairs* 136, no. 1 (Summer 1973): 36–47; Nasuh Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2003), 219–251. Uslu contends the military government was persuaded to enact the ban in order to retain strong ties to the U.S. and as a gesture of international good will.

reelection in 1972. Throughout that election season, the Nixon campaign pointed to a jump in street prices (which, counter to their objectives, actually risked increasing street crime) as proof that the ban, along with stepped-up law enforcement in the U.S. and France, had disrupted the Atlantic heroin trade. In hindsight, however, there's evidence to suggest that Turkey's role as a source country for the American drug market was already in decline as production increased in Mexico, the Golden Triangle and central Asia. As Myles Ambrose, the Commissioner of Customs, reportedly commented, "The basic fact that eluded these great geniuses was that it takes only ten square miles of poppy to feed the entire American heroin market, and they grow everywhere."[38]

That fact was actually not totally lost on the Nixon White House. Seeing the Turkish poppy ban as merely a first step, Nixon went even further than Anslinger in deciding that poppies everywhere must be destroyed. In yet another indication of how Nixon was willing to entertain unorthodox tactics to support his electoral strategy, he and his aides ordered the development of a bio-engineered weevil that would devour poppy crops and then die after intercourse. The group, which included Krogh, Jaffe, Nixon and Secretary of Agriculture Clifford Hardin, immediately dubbed this mythical creature the "screw worm," and less than a week later, Nixon secured additional Congressional appropriations and private investors to fund the project. The Department of Agriculture actually did create a voracious poppy weevil, but shelved the initiative when it could not guarantee that the weevil would not mutate or limit itself to poppy.[39]

Most observers are aware that Nixon's 1972 reelection campaign produced one of the most famous scandals in all of American history, but few realize how closely Watergate was tied to the drug war. In *Agency of Fear* (1977), journalist Edward Jay Epstein chronicles Nixon's power struggle with the semi-autonomous agencies associated with law enforcement and national security. As Epstein notes, "presidential power is severely mitigated, if not entirely counterbalanced, by the ability of officials in these key agencies to disclose secrets . . . that could severely damage the image of the president." Indeed, it was Mark Felt, the Associate Director of the FBI (better known by his *nom de guerre* of "Deep Throat"), who provided much of the information that ultimately brought Nixon down. Leaks also threatened to

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[38] Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003*, 241-243; Ambrose is quoted in Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 88. For codeine shortage, see 242-245.

[39] Epstein wryly observes, "The specter of an American screw worm eradicating the wheat and rice crops as well as the poppies of Asia was sufficient to dampen the enthusiasm of the president for the crash weevil-development program." *Agency of Fear*, 147-151.

upend Nixon's carefully planned political maneuvers; the first excerpts of the Pentagon Papers, for example, were published on June 13 and overshadowed Nixon's eagerly anticipated announcement about the creation of SAODAP and the start of a "new, all-out offensive" on drugs. "In order to actually rule over government, rather than merely reigning as a figurehead for the independent fiefdoms in the executive branch," Epstein observes, "Nixon needed to control at least one federal agency with investigative powers." With such resources at his disposal, Nixon would be able to hunt down leaks within the bureaucracy, target his many political enemies and further disguise the numerous "dirty tricks" for which he became famous.[40]

These power struggles were carried out primarily between the years 1970 and 1971, as Nixon strategists like John Ehrlichman proposed a variety of schemes designed to bring law enforcement under direct White House control. A June 1970 effort to extend Presidential control over domestic counterintelligence operations was thwarted by J. Edgar Hoover. Eugene Rossides, the Treasury Department coordinator for law enforcement, similarly resisted White House efforts to commandeer the investigative resources of the IRS and Customs or to have G. Gordon Liddy appointed as the Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Stymied in their efforts to subvert an existing law enforcement agency, in July 1971, Ehrlichman and his staff instead created a new executive office called the Special Investigations Unit, better known as the "Plumbers" since their job was to stop the leaks. The Plumbers were supervised by Ehrlichman's aide—and Nixon's point man for the war on drugs—Egil Krogh, with Liddy and H. Howard Hunt serving as his deputies; each became directly implicated and served time for their part in the Watergate scandal. The Plumbers, however, were always seen as a temporary expedient and, literally at that very same time, Liddy was busily drawing up plans for a new police agency that would provide Nixon with his long-sought investigative resources under the auspices of the drug war. It was called the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement (ODALE).[41]

ODALE killed two birds with one stone: it gave the White House unprecedented direct influence over law enforcement (allowing Nixon to flank his bureaucratic adversaries) and reestablished control over the direction of the drug war. During the Nixon White House's effort to seize control of federal law

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[40] Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 1, 194.

[41] Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 193-207.

enforcement, Krogh repeatedly pressured Ingersoll to increase the number of arrests made by the BNDD in order to demonstrate progress in the drug war. Believing he had adequate support for his more deliberate approach from Attorney General John Mitchell and in Congress, Ingersoll refused but thereafter believed that Nixon aides like Ehrlichman and H.R. Haldeman were, he told reporters, "out to get me." The Nixon team was also losing its patience with SAODAP. Jaffe's management style left much to be desired and methadone was turning out to be problematic. Many treatment centers were poorly run, supplies leaked into the illicit traffic and community members complained that the program simply replaced one addiction with another.[42]

ODALE represented a return to Nixon's "tough on crime" stance. The office basically utilized the task force approach on a grand scale and brought federal agents from the BNDD, Customs, IRS, ATF and INS together with federal prosecutors and local police forces to escalate the drug war at the street level. (Assistant AG Kleindienst and CIA Director Richard Helms managed to kill a proposal to add CIA agents to the mix.) Myles Ambrose, formerly the Commissioner of Customs, was transferred to the Justice Department as an Special Assistant Attorney General and given control of the new agency. In effect, he became the new drug czar and matched Nixon's commitment to a tough police response to drugs. Unlike his rival Ingersoll, Ambrose was fully prepared to target the drug traffic at the retail level and told reporters, "Our task is to get as many pushers as possible off the streets . . . and to stimulate state and local police and prosecutors to attack the problem." To get around the Congressional appropriations process, ODALE was financed by siphoning grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, an office intended to distribute federal funds to local law enforcement.[43]

One of ODALE's most prominent ventures was a national "heroin hotline," and, with the help of a national advertising campaign, the administration encouraged the American public to call in and report any signs of illicit drug use or peddling. In a bizarre turn, the only site the White House could find with the

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[42] "Drug Official Quits, Hits Ex-Nixon Aides," *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1973, p. A8; "Drug Agency Head Quits, Assails White House," *The Baltimore Sun*, June 30, 1973, p. A1; Mathea Falco and John Pekkanen, "The Abuse of Drug Abuse," *Washington Post*, September 8, 1974, p. B1. See also Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 246-250.

[43] Felix Belair, Jr., "President Opens Narcotics Drive," *New York Times*, January 29, 1972, p. 1; "Drug Law Enforcer: Myles Joseph Ambrose," *New York Times*, January 29, 1972, p. 8; Dana Adams Schmidt, "Ambrose Sets Up Drug Drive Bases," *New York Times*, February 19, 1972, p. 28. See also, Drug Enforcement Administration, "1970-1975," and Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 208-220.

infrastructure to support the new call center was in an emergency bunker buried deep in a Virginia mine shaft, where agents and operators were literally kept standing by on a 24-hour basis. Of the 33,313 calls the hotline received in the first three months, Epstein reports, about 28,000 were prank calls. The other 5,000 were considered sincere, but of no investigative value. Only 113 calls provided legitimate leads, but produced only four arrests and the seizure of two grams of heroin. From start to finish, the whole thing was little more, Ingersoll observed, than "a White House publicity stunt."[44]

ODALE's effort to galvanize local law enforcement and escalate the drug war ultimately had far more serious implications. By grouping a diverse array of federal agencies together with local police, ODALE acquired unique and wide-ranging authority. It was able to conduct wire-taps, initiate tax audits, make warrantless search and seizures and, most controversially, it had the legal authority to kick in any door in the country it suspected hid drugs or drug use. In *Rise of the Warrior Cop* (2013), Radley Balko traces the militarization of U.S. law enforcement and the emergence of a style of policing that seems more characteristic of warzones than middle-America. The drug war is not the sole cause of this trend, but it has been a major impetus and the disastrous trend of military-style police raids began primarily with ODALE. In its five-year history, Balko observes, the BNDD executed only four no-knock search warrants; ODALE, in its first six months, carried out over 100, and between April 1972 and May 1973, led 1,439 military-style raids on America homes. It's unknown how many of these raids terrorized American citizens who were totally innocent, but the most infamous were a series of April 1972 raids in Collinsville, IN, in which the wrong houses were raided and several families were terrorized and held at gunpoint as their homes were ransacked. Ambrose was unapologetic, and, in widely-quoted language that would have done Anslinger proud, argued, "Drug people are the very vermin of the humanity. They are dangerous. Occasionally we must adopt their dress and tactics."[45]

Like the Plumbers, ODALE was designed as an election-year expedient and, in helping Nixon reassert his law and order bona fides, contributed to the President's 1972 landslide reelection victory.

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[44] Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 221-224.

[45] Tom Wicker, "Gooks, Slopes and Vermin," *New York Times*, May 4, 1973, p. 37; "Wrong Number, Wrong Tactics," *Chicago Tribune*, May 7, 1973, p. 18; Andrew H. Malcolm, "Violent Raids Against the Innocent Found Widespread," *New York Times*, June 25, 1973, p. 1; Curt Matthews, "Indicted U.S. Drug Agents Blame 'Vacuum of Leadership,'" *Washington Post*, September 1, 1973, p. A4. See also Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop*, 105-122.

Early in the start of his new term, Nixon moved to consolidate the federal drug control apparatus with a proposal called Reorganization Plan No. 2. Four months later, on July 1, 1973, the Drug Enforcement Administration opened its doors. The new agency combined ODALE, the BNDD, the drug investigations wing of the U.S. Customs service and the Department of Justice's Office of National Narcotics Intelligence. As with ODALE, however, Nixon intended to use the reorganization to consolidate his control over the drug war and U.S. law enforcement. Ingersoll was obviously out and quit soon after the merger was announced. Despite his apparent loyalty to the President and his policies, Ambrose was also untenable because of his association with the botched ODALE raids. In the end, Nixon appointed Ambrose's deputy, former federal prosecutor John Bartels, Jr., as the DEA's first Administrator. In *Agency of Fear*, Epstein contends that only the scandal of Watergate saved the country from what would have amounted to an American palace coup. "In short," he writes, "all of the key loyalists whom the White House strategists had counted on for the takeover of the new investigative agency had been driven from the government..." We can only speculate what the DEA would have looked like under the leadership of someone like G. Gordon Liddy.[46]

Perhaps due to the nature of its birth, the few years of the DEA's history were tumultuous ones. Joe Arpaio worked a headquarters job for the first year and recalled "blood was in the water." Bartels was unable to corral the institutional rivalries dividing the new organization and President Ford asked him to resign after less than two years. His replacement, a Justice Department lawyer named Henry Dogin, never settled in and moved on after only six months. Peter Bensinger, a Chicago lawyer and the Director of the Illinois Department of Correction, restored some measure of order as the DEA's second official Administrator, but the agency remained troubled and torn by rival factions. All of the turnover, one unnamed DEA official told Epstein, "was nothing more than a power play—the bureaucrats in the drug agency simply destroy anyone who tries to control them." The turmoil, of course, did little to alleviate the drug problem. "The heroin problem remains more or less constant," Epstein's anonymous official remarked, "there are no fewer addicts [in 1973] than there were in 1969—all that changes is the way the

[46] "Drug Official Quits, Hits Ex-Nixon Aides," *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1973, p. A8; "Drug Agency Chief Quits and Charges White House Interference," *New York Times*, June 30, 1973, p. 26; Drug Enforcement Administration, "1970-1975." See also: Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 2, 229-232, 235-241; Finlator, *The Drugged Nation*, 295-323; Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop*, 122-126.

information about them is manipulated." Arpaio, too, later reflected that after enduring three reorganizations, he learned "one thing for sure: Every time the government reorganizes or restructures or rearranges, you lose two to three years, guaranteed."[47] As ever, U.S. drug policy was two steps forward and one step back.

(Dating the) American Drug Wars

The "war on drugs" is a slippery thing to define and that makes it a challenge to periodize and sort cause from effect. There are compelling reasons to credit Nixon with its start. Nixon assigned more attention and resources to the drug problem than any President before him. With the military-style police raids of ODALE, the drug war even took on the trappings of an actual war. The terrifying night raids, directed from within an annex of the White House and described in Epstein's *Agency of Fear*, Balko's *Rise of the Warrior Cop* and first-hand news reports, sound more like modern Afghanistan that middle America in the 1970s. Nixon also created the Drug Enforcement Administration, the federal agency most closely associated with the drug war today.

Certainly, a look at budget and staffing figures indicates that—at minimum—Nixon dramatically escalated the drug war. At the time of its dissolution, the FBN had approximately 330 agents and a budget of around $3 million. When the DEA absorbed all of its predecessor agencies in 1973, it had an initial staff of 1,470 agents and a budget of nearly $75 million. By 1974, Nixon's last year in office, the DEA had 2,231 agents and a budget of $116 million. The urgency of the drug war receded following Nixon's resignation, and the DEA's expansion slowed during the presidencies of Ford and Carter. But by Reagan's last year in office, it was up to 2,969 agents and a budget of nearly $600 million. Those numbers climbed steadily thereafter, part of what Balko identifies as a potential "police industrial complex." Even now, during a period of seeming de-escalation, the DEA employs over 5,000 special agents and has a budget of over $2.5 billion.[48]

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[47] Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 255-256; Arpaio and Sherman, *Joe's Law*, 93, 67. See also Douglas Valentine, *The Strength of the Pack: The Personalities, Politics and Espionage Intrigues That Shaped the DEA* (Waltersville, OR: Trine Day LLC, 2008).

[48] FBN agent and budget figures for 1968 are quoted by Ingersoll in Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 104. For DEA's annual budget and staffing figures, see DEA.gov, Staffing and Budget (available at: http://www.justice.gov/dea/about/history/staffing.shtml, accessed March 1, 2014). See also Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop*, 336.

Nixon clearly presided over a critical and unprecedented expansion, but escalating is not the same as initiating. Johnson, for example, escalated the war in Vietnam, but he didn't really start it. Whether the increase in size and resources has made an impact on the drug traffic is also an open question. Joe Arpaio, for one, is skeptical, writing:

> The Bureau of Narcotics that I had known was a virtually intimate group of a handful of agents operating semi-independently, relying on their own wits and skills. Now it had grown into the DEA, a mammoth bureaucracy divided into layers upon layers of divisions and offices, with over 5,000 special agents [and] an even greater number of support staff . . . In so many ways, the modern DEA is eminently more capable, more sophisticated, and more powerful than the old BN, and its agents better trained, equipped, and supported—though, even so, the success rate of the DEA is no better, and perhaps significantly less than what we achieved in the old days.[49]

Both agencies, he notes, have an estimated success rate of only 10 percent, which is to say that both then and now, the federal government intercepts what it approximates to be only one-tenth of the drugs smuggled into the country every year. If true, this fact indicates that an increase in scale has failed to profoundly alter the overall shape of the drug problem. During his own time, Anslinger was sensitive to the American anxiety about national police forces and steadfastly maintained that a small elite service was the best way to confront the illicit traffic.

The other major reason for attributing the drug war to Nixon is the level of personal attention he paid to the issue. Focusing solely on Presidential attention, however, can be misleading and risks overlooking the historical agency of the federal bureaucracy itself. As Epstein argues in his chronicle of Nixon's power struggles, the president "reigns rather than rules" over the U.S. government and the history of the FBN demonstrates that the agencies associated with law enforcement and national security are more than capable of taking independent action and leaving lasting consequences.[50] Nixon's drug war also raises the issue of motivation; for him, the drug war seems to have been primarily about electoral politics and consolidating an independent power base within the bureaucracy. Actual drugs and addiction were almost a secondary issue. Nixon's willingness to consider treatment options also complicates the conventional drug war narrative. Even though he dropped the approach when it became a political liability, Nixon's significant but temporary support for federal methadone programs (previously a third rail in the discourse of drug control) and other public health solutions marked a notable departure from drug

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[49] Arpaio and Sherman, *Joe's Law*, 199-200.

[50] Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 1-2, 9-13.

war orthodoxy. Just as it took Nixon the Cold Warrior to recognize China, it took Nixon the Drug Warrior to admit that reducing the demand for drugs was just as important, if not more so, than restricting supply.

Nixon, however, was not the first President to address the drug problem or even the first to describe it with militant rhetoric or said to be waging a war against drugs. Even a cursory look at the issue throughout the twentieth century reveals it was actually the rare president who didn't address the scourge of drugs at some point in his administration.

Theodore Roosevelt, together with William Howard Taft, presided over the first American drug control apparatus in the Philippines and supported the first attempts at international and diplomatic controls, which the *Chicago Daily Tribune* called a "War on Opium" led by Roosevelt. Woodrow Wilson similarly supported both domestic legislation (the 1914 Harrison Narcotic Act) and new diplomatic accords that were incorporated into the Treaty of Versailles.[51]

Herbert Hoover and both of his Republican predecessors opted to participate in the drug control conferences organized by the League of Nations and provided direct financial support for the endeavor even as they continued to reject full American membership. Despite Hoover's well-known belief in the limiting the role of the federal government, he, too, advocated for the expansion of federal law enforcement, including the creation of the FBN, and lent his support to both diplomatic and private efforts to "destroy [the] illicit traffic in narcotics."[52]

As Governor of New York, Franklin Roosevelt deplored the "moral, physical and economic devastation" caused by "the narcotic drug evil" and proposed toughening state-level controls. As President, Roosevelt called the 1931 Limitation Convention a "wonderful achievement." In the mid-1930s, he cited drug control as an "imperative duty" of government and urged the passage of the Uniform State Narcotic Law as an important step in protecting the American people from "the ravages of the narcotic drug evil." It's worth noting that Roosevelt viewed addiction itself as a "lamentable disease,

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[51] "Stop Sale of Opium," *Washington Post*, March 13, 1906, p. 1; John Callan O'Laughlin, "Nations to Join in War on Opium," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 11, 1907, p. 1; "Special Message on Opium Legislation," *the Wall Street Journal*, April 22, 1913, p. 6; "Wilson for Narcotic Bill," *The Baltimore Sun*, June 20, 1913, p. 2; "Money Needed in Opium War," *Washington Post*, July 12, 1913, p. 3; Treaty of Versailles, Article 23, June 28, 1919, available at The Avalon Project, Yale Law School (http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/versailles_menu.asp, accessed March 20, 2014).

[52] Herbert Hoover, "Text of President's Message," *Washington Post*, January 14, 1930, p. 4; "Would Cut Output of Narcotic Drugs," *New York Times*, February 21, 1931, p. 5.

rather than as a crime," but he also described drug dealing as worse than murder, a familiar FBN line. In 1940, he remarked, "In the case of murder, you take away the life of a fellow human being. In the case of distributing narcotics, you take away the mind of the individual and make his life intolerable..."[53]

Following the revelations of the Kefauver Hearings, President Harry Truman declared, "It is vitally important that this nation remain strong morally, as well as economically and militarily." Truman professed to be "deeply disturbed" by an apparent increase in American drug use, which he, like the FBN, believed was "a result of narcotic drugs brought in illegally from abroad." Truman emphasized that the "eradication of crime is a job for everyone" and not just the federal government, but he also endorsed the view that drug addiction was "a direct cause of crime" and supported tough prison sentences for traffickers as "of primary importance in drying up this foul traffic."[54]

In 1954, President Eisenhower called drugs a "scourge" and commissioned a Cabinet-level study of the drug problem as he ordered the government to "omit no practical step to minimize and stamp out narcotic addiction." The *New York Times* called this a "War on Narcotics." Although the report, delivered two years later, found that the problem of American addiction was greatly exaggerated and called for better treatment options, Eisenhower ignored it and signed off on the 1956 Narcotic Control Act, a draconian piece of legislation that increased mandatory minimum sentencing rules and authorized the death penalty for the sale of heroin to a minor.[55]

In September 1962, President Kennedy said of American addiction: "This national problem merits national attention." The occasion was the White House Conference on Narcotics Drugs, one of the most

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[53] "Roosevelt Moves for Drug Control," *New York Times*, March 19, 1930, p. 1; "Narcotics Treaty Goes Into Effect," *New York Times*, July 10, 1933, p. 15; "Roosevelt Asks Narcotic War Aid," *New York Times*, March 22, 1935, p. 7; Bill to Deport Aliens Vetoed by Roosevelt," *Washington Post*, April 9, 1940, p. 2. Roosevelt's 1940 remarks are quoted in Christopher Wren, "New Museum Traces History of Drugs in the U.S.," *New York Times*, May 9, 1999, p. 19.

[54] Robert W. Ruth, "Truman Tells American People Control of Vice is the Job of Everyone," *Baltimore Sun*, March 30, 1951, p. 1; "Truman Asks Senate to Speed Crackdown on Dope Peddlers," *Washington Post*, August 25, 1951, p. 1; "Truman Bids Senate Push Narcotics Bill," *New York Times*, August 25, 1951, p. 17. See also Letter from Truman to Senator Walter F. George (D-GA) dated August 24, 1951, in Folder "Narcotic Bureau, 1945—" Box 191, Entry 193 (Central Files of the Office of the Secretary of the Treasury), RG 56, NARA.

[55] W.H. Lawrence, "President Launches Drive on Narcotics," *New York Times*, November 28, 1954, p. 1; Editorial, "The War on Narcotics," *New York Times*, November 29, 1954, p. 24; "U.S. Report Spurs Drive on Narcotics," *New York Times*, February 6, 1956, p. 1; "President Signs Narcotics Law," *Chicago Daily Defender*, July 19, 1956, p. 4.

visible discussions of the issue up to that point. In his opening remarks, Kennedy called for a "unified approach" that marshaled the resources of both law enforcement and government public health offices, but, like the FBN, he also framed the problem as one in that transcended national borders and sovereignty. As he lauded the work of District 17, Kennedy commented, "Our focus on national issues must not obscure the international aspects of our drug abuse problem. Criminals responsible for [this] international traffic in narcotics have no respect for national boundaries."[56] Lyndon Johnson preferred to delegate the drug issue, but he, too, was unable to avoid it, and upon the creation of the BNDD remarked, "These powders and pills threaten our nation's health, vitality and self-respect."[57]

With the possible exception of Ronald Reagan, no American president replicated the FBN's views as thoroughly—whether intentionally or not—as Nixon. While defending the drug war on the campaign trail, Nixon claimed that drug traffickers were "a menace not just to Americans alone but to all mankind," and continued, "These people are literally the slave traders of our time. They are traffickers in living death. They must be hunted to the end of the earth."[58] With this one statement, Nixon invoked three distinct FBN arguments and spoke in a shorthand with which the American people had become familiar. Clearly, Nixon's drug war was built on the ideological foundation left by the Bureau.

Though the drug issue receded under Gerald Ford, he, too, exploited drugs as a campaign issue. When seeking reelection in 1976, he promised, "I will spare no effort to crush the menace of drug abuse" and declared that his administration was "launching a new and more aggressive attack against this insidious enemy." While stumping in Texas (and trying to hold off a primary challenge from Reagan), Ford even backed still more punitive prison sentences as central component of the government response, despite his own wife's on-going struggle with addiction.[59]

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[56] Kennedy, "Remarks to White House Conference on Narcotics and Drug Abuse," September 27, 1962, Papers of John F. Kennedy, Kennedy Presidential Library (available at: http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKPOF-040-022.aspx, accessed June 30, 2013).

[57] Finlator, *The Drugged Nation*, 297-299; "Johnson Widens Narcotics Fight," *New York Times*, February 8, 1968, p. 1.

[58] Robert Semple, Jr., "Nixon Defends His Record In Combating Drug Trade," *New York Times*, September 19, 1972, p. 38; also quoted in Epstein, *Agency of Fear*, 174.

[59] Rudy Abramson, "Ford Says He'll Seek Mandatory Prison Terms for Traffickers in Hard Drugs," *Los Angeles Times*, April 10, 1976, p. A24; Gilbert A. Lewthwaite, "Ford Keys Texas Campaign Speech to War on Drugs, Courts' 'Laxity,'" *Baltimore Sun*, April 10, 1976, p. A1; "Betty Ford's 'Overmedication' Problem Ascribed to Taking Combination of Drugs," *Baltimore Sun*, April 12, 1978, A9.

Jimmy Carter was generally more sensitive to the complexities of the drug issue and, in a 1977 message to Congress, grouped narcotics with alcohol and tobacco as substances that all ran the risk of abuse. Although he described drug abuse as "a serious social problem in America," and lamented the lives and communities "blighted" by addiction, he also recognized the essential delusion of the drug war framework. "No government can completely protect its citizens from all harm," he argued. "Drugs cannot be forced out of existence; they will be with us for as long as people find in them the relief or satisfaction they desire. But the harm caused by drug abuse can be reduced." In Carter's vision, diplomacy, education and treatment were just as important as law enforcement. He even briefly considered decriminalizing marijuana and argued, "Penalties against possession of a drug should not be more damaging to an individual than the use of the drug itself." Over the course of his troubled presidency, Carter lost the political capital necessary to truly reorient the nation's drug policies and completely dropped the issue after his own drug czar was caught doing cocaine at a party.[60]

Ronald Reagan, of course, lent full-throated support to the drug war and returned the issue to center stage as part of his appeal to a growing conservative movement. Seemingly taking a page from any number of Anslinger's speeches, Reagan claimed, "Drug abuse is a repudiation of everything America is," and compared the control movement to such turning points in American history as the Civil War or the storming of Normandy beach. Whereas Nixon was willing to involve the public health community and promote the comparatively progressive politics associated with SAODAP, Reagan expanded the drug war almost exclusively on the right by involving the military and relying on the "Just Say No" abstinence campaign as the only real policy intended to reduce demand. Over the course of his presidency, Reagan added another thousand agents to the DEA and nearly $300 million to its annual budget.[61] For this reason, Reagan is also sometimes credited with the start of America's war on drugs.

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[60] Jimmy Carter, "Drug Abuse Message to the Congress," August 2, 1977 (available at The American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7908, accessed March 3, 2014); Clayton Fritchey, "Carter Keeps His Cool Over Drugs," *Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1978, p. B5. See also Massing, *The Fix*, 143-154.

[61] Ronald and Nancy Reagan, "Just Say No, Words to the Nation," September 14, 1986 (available at: Ibiblio, http://www.ibiblio.org/sullivan/CNN/RWR/album/speechmats/nancy.html, accessed May 12, 2012); DEA, Staffing and Budget, (http://www.justice.gov/dea/about/history/staffing.shtml, accessed March 1, 2014).

What this brief survey and cursory look at budget figures indicates is that drug control has waxed and waned as a prominent issue in American national life. It also strongly suggests that there have been multiple wars on drugs, or at perhaps multiple campaigns within a prolonged conflict. Looking to presidential interest and the allocation of resources is one way to measure these periods of engagement. In *The Drug Wars in America, 1940-1973* (2013), Kathleen J. Frydl analyzes the evolution of the drug war by examining the legal basis of control policies and notes that, between 1940 and 1973, the federal government shifted from a scheme predicated on taxes, tariffs and regulation to one based primarily on prohibition and punishment.[62] It is equally revealing and in many ways complimentary, I argue, to look at the ideology and foreign policy stance of American drug control.

Blending all of these considerations together reveals at least four phases or campaigns in the war on drugs over the course of the twentieth century, if not four distinct American drug wars. Roughly delineated, the first ran from the turn of the century to the end of World War II. This era is best described as a pre-war period. Prohibition of drugs like heroin and marijuana was the goal, but it was accomplished through back-door revenue measures rather than outright criminalization as in later periods. September 1951 marked a true turning point; as agents carried the fight overseas with the establishment of District 17, drug control policy began to match drug war rhetoric. The FBN and its views clearly dominated this period, but, following the departure of Anslinger and profound shifts in American public opinion, the Bureau's influence waned over the course of the 1960s. Nixon's drug war, beginning between 1969 and 1971, increased the size and scope of the U.S. response and ushered in a more aggressive and expansive phase before it, too, lost impetus during the Ford and Carter years. Regan's drug war, meanwhile, featured an almost wholly punitive approach, and further escalated the government response as drugs became formally designated a threat to national security.[63]

Throughout the various phases of the American drug wars, two factors have been more or less constant: militarized rhetoric and the belief that drug addiction was primarily caused by exposure to

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[62] Kathleen Frydl, *The Drug Wars in America, 1940-1973* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[63] National Security Decision Directive Number 221, April 8, 1986, available at Federation of American Scientists, Intelligence Resource Program (http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/, accessed March 3, 2014); Keith B. Richburg, "Reagan Order Defines Drug Trade as Security Threat, Widens Military Role," *Washington Post*, June 8, 1986, p. A28.

narcotics smuggled into the country from abroad, which necessitated a foreign policy and law enforcement response based largely on source control. Even in the "prewar" period, the press tended to cast drug control as a military conflict and described American efforts to organize the 1909 Shanghai Opium Convention, the first attempt to establish international controls, as a "War on Opium."[64] The FBN and it's true-crime affiliates frequently employed the same rhetoric. In 1938, Anslinger's occasional co-author Courtney Ryley Cooper wrote, "The American battle against narcotics is not confined to the shores and boundaries of the United States. It spreads to the entire world..." By 1941, the government had formally adopted the same language and a Treasury Department memo providing official talking points described the FBN as "waging a constant war against the illicit dealers in smoking opium, heroin, cocaine and morphine and the marihuana cigarette peddler." That was definitely how Anslinger tended to think about his work. In *The Protectors*, Anslinger's homage to the men of the FBN, he wrote, "They fought the hot war. No level of our society escapes it. It jumps on all fronts—espionage, narcotics, murder, white slavery, gambling, prostitution, extortion—they've fought in all phases."[65] The ubiquity of military rhetoric on the subject speaks to the longevity and apparent appeal of the drug war framework, but it also risks confusing description with action.

From at least 1930 onward, U.S. authorities viewed the drug problem as one that essentially boiled down to exposure. As Anslinger and others consistently argued, a citizen who lacked access to drugs like heroin could never fall victim to addiction. Yet it was impossible, they recognized, to prevent drugs from being smuggled into the country. And because the problem was not confined by national borders, the FBN quickly concluded, neither should its response. The FBN, however, and the country more broadly, lacked the bureaucratic and geopolitical standing to station federal agents on foreign soil in order to stem the tide of illegal drugs—until September 1951. With the establishment of District 17, the United States officially, to paraphrase John Quincy Adams, went abroad in search of monsters to destroy—and to fight a war on drugs.

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[64] John Callan O'Laughlin, "Nations to Join in War on Opium," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 11, 1907, p. 1.

[65] Courtney Ryley Cooper, "Double Dealers in Dope," *The American Magazine*, May 1938, Folder 13, and Treasury Department Office of Chief Coordinator, "Suggestion for Speakers," May 29, 1941, in Folder 10, Box 1, Anslinger Papers. See also Anslinger and Gregory, *The Protectors*, vii.

The Ideology of the American Drug War

Even if the establishment of District 17 didn't start *the* war on drugs, it was certainly the beginning of *a* war on drugs. Pushing the conceptual framework of the drug war further into the past brings new aspects of its history into focus and helps tease out the relationship between culture, security, law enforcement, hegemony and interventionism. Most immediately, it signals that "America's Longest War," as the drug war is sometimes identified, is even longer than generally appreciated.[66] It also becomes clear that the drug war emerged out of trends that were much larger than the electoral strategies or domestic politics of Nixon and Reagan. The drug war was and is, in the broadest sense, a reflection of the way America sees itself and its place in the world. More specifically, the drug war was a reaction to the way forces like globalization—as represented by organized crime and foreign drugs like opium and heroin—seemed to exacerbate social and class conflicts and undermine American society from within.

Given District 17's humble origins and the informal nature of its creation, September 1951 seems an almost arbitrary date with which to mark the start of an American drug war. But if we step back and consider the big picture, it's obvious that the drug war began at a time when America was renegotiating and reconsidering its role in the world. The fundamental problem of the early drug war, as U.S. officials saw it, was that flow of illicit drugs to American shores exceeded their ability to police illicit commerce or affect solutions abroad. But following WWII, and with the onset of the Cold War, U.S. policymakers came to believe that it was in America's interest—and a historic responsibility—to assume the mantle of global leadership. The world had to be made safe for America and drug control became one of those special obligations. As Anslinger argued in a 1946 issue of *True Detective*, "the United States will always have to lead—if for no other reason than self-protection."[67]

The belief that drugs posed a foreign threat reinforced the impulse toward hegemony. American military expansion also drove the expansion of American drug control; the world had to be made safe not only for Americans at home, but also for American troops protecting Americans at home. The fear that U.S. military personnel would be exposed to addictive narcotics drove efforts to improve regional and

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[66] *America's Longest War*, dir Paul Feine (2013, Reason Foundation). See also Steven B. Duke and Albert C. Gross, eds., *America's Longest War: Rethinking Our Tragic Crusade Against Drugs* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1993).

[67] Harry J. Anslinger, "Narcotics in the Post-War World," *True Detective*, February 1946. Folder 18, Box 12, Anslinger Papers.

international drug control during WWII, the occupation of Germany and Japan, the Korean War and Vietnam. Each of these military conflicts further locked the country into a classic security dilemma. The more America engaged with the world, the more exposed it became and the more exposed it became, the more it relied on foreign intervention and hegemony to protect itself. This same dilemma drove the expansion of the American national security state, the FBN and the global drug war.

For the Bureau, drug control was primarily about security. In *The Traffic in Narcotics*, Anslinger proclaimed, "Before all else is the safeguarding of the government and its laws and its people."[68] Nixon and Reagan cited security imperatives, too, but unlike them, Anslinger never had to win an election. Politics certainly influenced the way the FBN resisted public health solutions, perceived and shaped the threat of drugs, and targeted specific classes of drug users. But in the mind of the Bureau, drug control was preventative; it was about reaching out and neutralizing a threat before it developed. In Frederic Sondern's 1950 article "Our Global War on Narcotics," FBN official Malachi Harney explained, "When you break a narcotics case, you not only nab some of the nastiest specimens in existence but you save a lot of people from a lot of misery. An ounce of cocaine sold in New York may account for a hop-headed holdup man who kills a peaceful citizen in Dallas or a doped-up driver who rams a school bus in Ohio."[69] The FBN was among the first federal agencies to recognize how this "butterfly effect" aspect of globalization fundamentally changed the nature of the threats facing America and it was a logic that quickly led the Bureau to focus its most strenuous efforts overseas in order to prevent drugs from reaching America in the first place. By 1951, the FBN had acquired the institutional clout to begin implementing that strategy. The politics of international law enforcement required the Bureau to keep a small footprint and the foreign drug war, first introduced in District 17 and later in Districts 16 and 18, was always a comparatively small part of the Bureau's actual operations, but it was a central part of the FBN's global counternarcotic strategy. The agents stationed overseas were small in number, Anslinger told Senators in 1955, but they were "worth 100 men here."[70]

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[68] Anslinger and Tompkins, *The Traffic in Narcotics*, 293.

[69] Frederic Sondern, Jr., "Our Global War on Narcotics," *Reader's Digest*, April 1950.

[70] Anslinger is quoted in "Doubt U.S. Can Halt Flow of Narcotics; Reveal 40% of Dope Blocked at Source," *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 4, 1955, p. 11.

As a narrative framework, the war on drugs served important ideological functions. Americans, though loathe to admit it, thrive on war. Throughout U.S. history, opposition to foreign threats and the construction of war narratives have served as a primary expression of national identity.[71] The drug war is, in that sense, written into America's cultural DNA and it makes sense that it would acquire its specific shape and form of expression during a time of intense geopolitical and ideological conflict. The drug war simultaneously asserted America's identity as an international champion of morality and freedom as it reduced complexity and justified extraordinary new powers and authority. It is an iteration of a story that America has been told, told itself and will surely be told again.

A drug war is absolute. Fought to protect Americans from the slavery of addiction, the FBN's drug war was cast as essentially defensive in nature, even though source control and the foreign drug war were offensive and intrusive in practice. Framed as a battle between good and evil, however, the drug war eliminated ambiguity—in the minds of both the public and America's drug warriors. As Hank Manfredi, an agent who split time between the Bureau and the CIA, observed of the moral uncertainties in espionage and the Cold War: "Today you work against a Czech and tomorrow he's your friend. Then you work on a Finn, and later he's your buddy, too. But who likes a dope peddler?"[72]

Wars require enemies. This, ultimately, is where the inadequacy of the drug war framework has caused the most damage. Drugs don't make very good enemies by themselves; even illicit drugs are, after all, simply commodities and—despite the FBN's alarmist portrayals—lack agency. To have an effect, they have to be used. This need for an enemy to confront creates a focus on criminal kingpins and foreign villains, on the one hand, and drug users, on the other. In establishing the basic parameters of the drug war and insisting that the user and peddler were indistinguishable, the FBN did more than other institution to create that dichotomy. The consequences have been disastrous. In *The New Jim Crow* (2012), Michelle Alexander argues that the drug war has become a new form of racialized social control, tantamount to legal segregation. David Simon, the author of *The Corner* (1997) and creator of *The Wire*

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[71] Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987); Tom Englehardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995); Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008).

[72] Quoted in Tripodi and Desario, *Crusade: Undercover Against the Mafia and KGB*, 154.

(2002-2008), describes the war on drugs as "a genocide in slow motion," a war waged on America's poor.[73] Though it was never the purpose or design of the drug war, this has become an undeniable effect—and one that was apparent from the beginning. Anslinger's "evil effects on U.S. society are incalculable," one of George White's colleagues lamented during their uneasy retirement. "The futility of incarcerating fellow human beings," he wrote in exasperation. "Kill 'em or cure 'em, I say."[74]

The tendency to focus on kingpins is another unfortunate product of framing drug control as a drug war. Like the war narrative itself, kingpins reduce complexity and provide a comparatively few high-profile targets to attack. To paraphrase former Director of Central Intelligence James Woolsey, it's the difference between fighting a dragon or a jungle full of poisonous snakes.[75] The recurrent appearance of various kingpins suggests the American people (and government) would rather fight dragons. But the world of the illicit drug traffic is the quintessential jungle and populated by an array of criminal actors and networks, many of them violent and many of them dangerous, but very few of whom approach the all-powerful criminal mastermind status invoked by the term kingpin. Describing law enforcement targets as drug lords and kingpins—even those who exert genuine organizational control over aspects of the illicit traffic—provides an illusory measure of progress; it offers a sense of accomplishment in a war that has no end and no victors. "Lucky" Luciano and Pablo Escobar are but two examples. The most recent, captured as this chapter was written, is Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, the leader of the Sinaloa Cartel. All of the familiar tropes were again on display following his arrest, from statements of his incredible power to rosy assertions that we are finally turning a corner in the drug war. Guzman was a powerful and dangerous criminal and his capture should be applauded, but his downfall will do little to profoundly alter

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[73] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012); Simon is quoted in *The House I Live In*, dir Eugene Jarecki (2012, Al Jeezra Documentary Channel, British Broadcasting Corporation). See also David Simon and Edward Burns, *The Corner: A Year in the Life of An Inner-City Neighborhood* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997). In *Drug Warriors and Their Prey: From Police Power to Police State* (Westport and London: Praeger, 1996), Richard Lawrence Miller also equates the drug war with a form of genocide.

[74] Letter from Arthur Giuliani to George White, dated July 7, 19[70], in Folder 1, Box 4, White Papers.

[75] Woolsey was describing the challenges facing the intelligence community following the end of the Cold War and is quoted in Douglas F. Garthoff, *Directors of Central Intelligence as Leaders of the U.S. Intelligence Community, 1946-2005* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 2005), 221.

the Mexican or American drug problems or halt the flow of drugs moving across the border. In fact, competition to fill the vacuum left by his departure will increase internecine violence in the short term.[76]

The kingpins and villains who have historically dominated popular understandings of the drug war help set up a dialectic that becomes critical as the U.S. goes abroad to neutralize them. As Anslinger claimed in *The Murderers*, "Evil is of one cloth" wherever it is found and must be checked.[77] During the FBN's drug war, the imperative to stop drugs and drug traffickers justified American intervention in the affairs of foreign countries across the globe and at a range of levels. The FBN never sent an army of federal agents to occupy source countries, but it did develop arguments that undercut the sovereignty of other nations. "If you want to control this traffic," Anslinger warned in 1957, "you have got to surrender some sovereign rights."[78] In addition to the establishment of FBN outposts, this argument lead the Bureau to demand changes in the legal structure and the political, economic and cultural practices of other countries.

The most visible manifestation of the way the drug war extended American dominion while eroding the sovereignty of other nations, however, was the actual presence of American police agents. Nearly every country in which the agents operated resisted the FBN's intrusion into what local police saw as an entirely domestic concern. And the agents, naturally, carried their own assumptions about what it meant to work in foreign lands, many of them markedly less developed than the U.S. In Turkey, for example, Agents Sal Vizzini and Joe Arpaio thought of themselves like nineteenth century lawmen. Vizzini described Turkey as "virgin territory" where "life was cheap" and "you walked with your gun in your hand." Arpaio similarly portrayed himself as "a sort of 'proto-posseman'" who worked in "a land of mystery and intrigue," armed only with his "trusty Smith & Wesson and a pathetically small roll of flash

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[76] William Booth and Nick Miroff, "'El Chapo,' wanted drug lord, grows stronger in Mexico's Sierra Madre," *Washington Post*, October 27, 2011; Brian Palmer, "How Important Is a Good Kingpin to a Drug Cartel?," *Slate*, October 10, 2012; Carl Meacham, "Capturing 'Public Enemy No. 1," *CNN.com*, February 23, 2014; Associated Press, "El Chapo's Rise: From Poor, Abused to Drug Cartel Kingpin," March 2, 2014. See also Associated Press, "Capture of Top Leader of Mexico's Brutal Zetas Drug Cartel Unlikely to Quell Violence," *Washington Post*, July 16, 2013; Richard Fausset and Tracy Wilkinson, "With 'El Chapo' Gone, Mexicans Brace for Drug Cartel Turf War," *Los Angeles Times*, February 24, 2014; Ioan Grillo, " 'El Chapo' and the Limits of the Kingpin Arrest Strategy," *Al Jazeera America*, March 4, 2014.

[77] Anslinger and Oursler, *The Murderers*, 201.

[78] Anslinger, remarks made at the Non-governmental Organization Briefing on the Work of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, May 29, 1957, Folder 8, Box 1, Anslinger Papers.

money."[79] It's no surprise to find the memoirs of American agents who operated in developing nations at mid-century colored with a touch of Orientalism, but this had a very real practical effect. Depicting source countries like Turkey as an extension of the American frontier, or "virgin territory," reinforced a worldview that made intervention seem easy and natural.

Anslinger and other FBN officials contributed to this bleed-over effect by insisting that there was no meaningful distinction between working at home and abroad. The Bureau's claims on authority and influence were tied to the imperative of drug control and the efficacy of its undercover approach, and, as Garland Williams consoled Agent Siragusa during his frustrating sojourn in Istanbul, "The principle is the same whether it is in Turkey or New York." This was a persistent belief at FBN headquarters, where supervisors continued to insist that "making cases in Europe is no different from making cases in the States." In point of fact, however, it was very different. "I dont [sic] want to glamorize the work here," a wide-eyed Siragusa wrote, "but it is definitely dissimilar to narcotic law enforcement in the U.S."[80] In every country they visited, the agents had to negotiate critical and often determinative differences in local laws, customs, languages and power structures.

The drug war turns the American gaze outward and, in many respects, is symptomatic of the persistent belief in American exceptionalism. By portraying drug control as a drug war, a battle between good and evil, and themselves as warriors defending freedom, the Bureau developed a way of thinking about drug control that was firmly in line with the long history of American exceptionalism and exported a domestic policy they intended to serve as an example for all the world. FBN officials portrayed the U.S. as a victim of the global drug traffic rather than a consumer of drugs. This essentially reversed black market forces and elided responsibility for the country's role in actually underwriting much of the global drug trade. Rather than address the domestic forces that led to drug addiction and created the world's largest drug market, American officials preferred to look abroad for solutions. Driven by the assumption that America had perfected the balance between liberty, democracy and state power, they convinced

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[79] Vizzini et al., *Vizzini*, 87–107; Arpaio and Sherman, *Joe's Law*, 113, 152–3.

[80] Williams is quoted in an informal letter to Siragusa dated August 11, 1950 in Folder "(0660) Turkey Folder #5, July 1950 thru Dec 1950," Box 25. See also a memo from Wayland Speer to Anslinger dated February 4, 1960 in Folder "(0660-A-1C) General File for Correspondence Relating to District # 17, 1959 thru June 1961, Book #3," Box 165. See also Siragusa, Progress Report No. 8, August 2, 1950, in Folder "Progress Reports of Charles Siragusa," Box 164, RG 170, NARA.

themselves it was more appropriate or effective to attempt to restructure the economies, cultures and politics of source countries instead of pursuing the domestic reforms necessary to reduce the American demand for drugs. In other words, globalization acted upon the United States by introducing foreign drugs that increased existing social problems and created new ones while threatening to undermine belief in America's world-historic standing. In response, the U.S. punished its own drug users and sought to "Americanize" the rest of the world under the auspices of a war on drugs. Yet the persistence of both the drug traffic and drug war provides a clear warning on the conflict between the scope of America's ambition and the limits of American power.

Ending the Drug War

The most fundamental error of the war on drugs is right there in the name; it is impossible to wage war on a commodity, particularly one that remains in demand. The drug war represents such a failure of policy that is difficult not to be harshly critical or to take its fundamental objectives seriously. As a result, critics often look to ulterior motives to explain the persistence of this policy, be it a form of social control, a war on the poor or as a component of covert operations. Both the fault and the solutions, however, lie inward and supersede the responsibility of any one individual or institution. One of the greatest challenges presented by the history of American drug control is that the aim is undeniably worthy. Drugs like heroin, methamphetamines, cocaine and even marijuana—a list to which we could add alcohol and tobacco—are all subject to abuse and absolutely require some form of control. The drug war, however, has failed to provide that control. As long as the U.S. continues to focus on reducing the supply of drugs instead of reducing demand, the country will remain at war with drugs and with itself.

The good news is that we may be on the precipice of change as the marijuana legalization movement gains traction. Legalization won't solve America's drug problem and is likely to increase drug use. It does, however, have the benefit of offering some form of state control, whereas prohibition has demonstrably offered little and given rise to a whole new set of problems associated with the illicit drug trade. Just as the Obama Administration dropped the "Global War on Terror" to focus on individuals and groups instead of a tactic, it has also shifted the stance of the American drug war. Both President Barack Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder have spoken of the racial and economic disparities in the punishments meted out to drug users and retreated from the mandatory minimum sentencing rules that

underwrite much of the domestic drug war. They have also quietly allowed Colorado and Washington to proceed with state-level legalization and even loosened federal rules to allow the new industry to participate in national banking systems. Even as the country experiences an apparent uptick in heroin abuse and overdoses, Attorney General Holder has described the problem as a "public health crisis" rather than an epidemic or foreign conspiracy.

On the other hand, the legal marijuana industry may unleash the forces of reaction, much like rising drug use and debates over decriminalization during the 1970s prompted the conservative backlash that drove Reagan's drug war. The drug war's end has yet to be written. It might look like the war on terror, where the only thing that really changes is the name. But the conclusion of the drug war will probably look more like the end of the Cold War, another conflict that seemed so pressing at the time and so perplexing—even insane—in hindsight. The marijuana issue helped put an end to the FBN and it may serve as the perestroika and glasnost of the drug war, where incremental reforms unleash sudden and wholesale change. Whatever new forms American drug control efforts take, we can only hope they will improve upon the clear failures of the past.

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