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REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

Identifying And Eliminating Sources Of Dangerous Drugs: Efforts Being Made, But Not Enough B-175425

Drug Enforcement Administration
Department of Justice

**BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**

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094222

JUNE 7, 1974



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-175425

To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives

This is our report entitled "Identifying and
Eliminating Sources of Dangerous Drugs: Efforts Being Made,
But Not Enough." The Drug Enforcement Administration, De-
partment of Justice, administers the programs discussed.

We made our review pursuant to the Budget and Account-
ing Act, 1921 (31 U.S.C. 53), and the Accounting and Audit-
ing Act of 1950 (31 U.S.C. 67).

We are sending copies of this report to the Director,
Office of Management and Budget, and to the Attorney Gen-
eral.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James B. Axtell".

Comptroller General
of the United States

B-175425

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DIGEST

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ABBREVIATIONS

BNDD	Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
GAO	General Accounting Office

COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S
REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

IDENTIFYING AND ELIMINATING
SOURCES OF DANGEROUS DRUGS:
EFFORTS BEING MADE,
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Drug Enforcement Administration
Department of Justice B-175425

D I G E S T

WHY THE REVIEW WAS MADE

About 75 percent of dangerous drugs found on the illegal U.S. market today are being produced in illicit laboratories or are being smuggled in. (See pp. 6 and 7.)

Because of the increased availability of dangerous drugs illicitly produced--such as amphetamines and barbiturates and hallucinogens, such as LSD--GAO wanted to know what has been done to identify and eliminate illicit sources of these drugs.

GAO reported on Federal activities to control diversion of dangerous drugs from *legitimate* sources into the illicit U.S. market in April 1972 (B-175425). Though availability from these sources continues, the main problem today is from *illegitimate* U.S. sources and from smuggling.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Dangerous drugs

- are widely abused by children and adults,
- inflict physical harm,
- have physiological effects similar to those of heroin,

--cause more deaths than heroin, and

--are associated with more crimes of aggravated assault than heroin. (See p. 9.)

Use of dangerous drugs usually begins before an individual experiments with heroin. Along with marihuana, these drugs have become the prime drugs of youth, extending even to those of elementary school age. (See p. 10.)

Because of similar physiological effects, abusers often turn to dangerous drugs when heroin supplies are stopped. This hampers both heroin enforcement and rehabilitation. (See p. 12.)

The Drug Enforcement Administration established some programs for identifying and investigating illicit sources of dangerous drugs. These programs have brought about arrests of national and international drug traffickers and have closed illicit dangerous drug laboratories.

However, weaknesses in several areas of administration have limited the programs' effectiveness. (See p. 13.)

Enforcement

In the early 1960s the Congress

created the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control to enforce dangerous drug laws. By 1968 this agency's efforts were about equal with those of the Bureau of Narcotics. The two were combined into the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. The hearings leading to the merger indicated that the Congress expected dangerous drug enforcement to increase. (See pp. 15 and 16.)

However, the number of agents assigned to dangerous drug cases did not increase. Most of the Bureau's resources were directed toward combating heroin use. (See p. 13.)

As of July 1, 1973, this Bureau's functions and personnel were transferred to the new Drug Enforcement Administration. (See p. 5.)

By stressing dangerous drugs more in day-to-day work, the Drug Enforcement Administration had the opportunity to increase its intelligence on dangerous drugs without adding more agents.

The agency's policy was to interrogate informants thoroughly. However, many informants or arrested heroin traffickers were not questioned about sources of dangerous drugs, even though most heroin addicts also use dangerous drugs, especially if there is a shortage of heroin. (See pp. 9 and 23.)

In April 1973 marihuana enforcement was curtailed and the agents who became available were assigned to dangerous drug investigations. Putting this change into practice appeared difficult at first, because some regional officials believed that dangerous drug enforcement should be left to State and local authorities and some agents believed that

promotions come faster to those working narcotics cases. (See pp. 14 and 15.)

One of the best means to immobilize drug traffickers is to eliminate the source of the chemicals (precursors) used by illicit laboratories to produce dangerous drugs. Because precursors also usually have various legitimate uses, their sale is not restricted.

A precursor control program was started in 1968 to obtain leads on suspicious sales of precursors from chemical firms. However, some source firms, including some of the largest chemical firms in the United States and in other countries, were not contacted regularly. Some times when the firms were contacted, they were questioned only about one drug rather than several. (See pp. 26 to 30.)

At times, after tangible leads had been received from drug firms, no further action was taken because the enforcement agents were assigned to other activities. (See p. 31.)

Production and smuggling of dangerous drugs from and through Mexico

A Drug Enforcement Administration official estimated that about 80 percent of the illicit drugs seized in the United States originate in Mexico. The agency's dangerous drug efforts in Mexico were practically nonexistent, primarily due to lack of agents. (See p. 33.)

Only 16 agents were assigned to Mexico and the Central American countries (except Panama). Most of their time was directed toward heroin, cocaine, and marihuana. One agent was assigned to the Mexico City regional office to increase

dangerous drug efforts but was spending most of his time on other cases and duties. (See p. 33.)

An investigation to trace the shipment of bulk drugs and capsules to recipients in Mexico was delayed from November 1972 until June 1973 because of the reluctance of Mexican authorities to cooperate. During this period the agency made only limited efforts to follow up. (See p. 34.)

The agency also has encountered difficulties in obtaining pill samples from Mexican drug firms to help identify possible sources of drugs originating there. (See p. 34.)

Diplomatic actions

In Mexico and in three Central American countries, the U.S. Embassies had established drug control committees to evaluate the countries' actual or potential use as sources of drugs shipped to the United States.

These committees use diplomatic channels to encourage cooperation by the countries in suppressing drug traffic. In some countries, however, the Drug Enforcement Administration did not keep the committees advised of dangerous drug trafficking. (See p. 35.)

Well-informed committees can support passage of effective legislation in their countries, such as the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, a pending United Nations treaty on psychotropic substances which include dangerous drugs. If passed, this treaty,

similar to U.S. drug laws, could help restrict the easy availability of certain drugs.

As of April 1, 1974, the United States had not ratified this treaty. (See p. 37.) It is under consideration by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

GAO made several recommendations to the Attorney General to increase the Drug Enforcement Administration's effectiveness in identifying and eliminating sources of dangerous drugs. (See pp. 24, 31, and 38.)

AGENCY ACTIONS AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

The Department of Justice stated:

- Dangerous drug enforcement had received a lesser priority until early 1973 because the entire Federal community had emphasized heroin as the primary drug problem.
- With the establishment of the Drug Enforcement Administration, substantial steps have been and are being taken to further strengthen dangerous drug enforcement. The new agency has begun an active dangerous drug program in its Domestic Investigations Division that increases the priority in this area.
- Dangerous drug enforcement is a new and highly innovative endeavor and the Department is continually conducting studies which will result in revisions of concepts and approaches. Therefore, it could not provide definitive comments on

the acceptability of GAO's recommendations without further analysis. (See app. I.)

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION
BY THE CONGRESS

The primary purpose of this report is to keep the Congress informed of ac-

tions taken, as well as actions still needed, to identify and eliminate sources of dangerous drugs used in the United States.

The Senate can use the report in considering the Convention on Psychotropic Substances. (See pp. 36 and 37.)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The abuse of dangerous drugs--including barbiturates, amphetamines, and hallucinogens, such as LSD--has become a serious problem because of the demand for these drugs, their availability, and the lack of success of enforcement in eliminating their diversion from legitimate sources. In many cases these drugs are more destructive than heroin. Dangerous drugs are abused by every level of society and, along with marihuana, are the drugs most abused by youths. Children as young as elementary school age have abused dangerous drugs and marihuana. Since 1972 we have issued several reports dealing with drug enforcement. (See app. II.)

The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD), formerly a Department of Justice agency, was responsible for reducing the availability of drugs in the illicit market by enforcing Federal laws relating to (1) dangerous drugs, (2) narcotics, such as heroin and morphine, and (3) marihuana. During fiscal year 1973 BNDD had about 1,600 agents and compliance investigators and a \$74 million budget to identify and disrupt the sources of these drugs through various enforcement and regulatory activities. These activities were carried out in its central office in Washington, D.C.; 19 regional offices, and 88 district offices. Six regional offices and 36 district offices were in foreign countries.

Effective July 1, 1973, BNDD was abolished and responsibility for all Federal drug law enforcement was vested in the new Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1973 transferred to DEA (1) all the functions and personnel of BNDD, the Office for Drug Abuse Law Enforcement, and the Office of National Narcotics Intelligence and (2) the functions and personnel of the U.S. Customs Service relating to domestic and foreign narcotic law enforcement. DEA's fiscal year 1974 budget is about \$112 million.

USE AND ABUSE OF DANGEROUS DRUGS

Amphetamines and barbiturates are available with prescriptions. Some of the less potent varieties are

available without prescriptions in supermarkets, drug stores, and other retail outlets. Hallucinogens, however, do not have a legitimate medical use except for research and are not usually legally available for human consumption.

Amphetamines (called "pep pills") directly affect the central nervous system, producing increased activity, alertness, and excitation. Amphetamines are commonly prescribed to treat obesity and mild depression. When properly taken under medical direction, the drugs are not considered dangerous. Abusers, however, tend to be accident prone. They are especially dangerous on the highway because the drug masks fatigue and abusers exceed their physical endurance without realizing it. Criminals may also use amphetamines to bolster their courage before committing crimes.

Barbiturates (often called "downers") depress the central nervous system. They are prescribed as sedatives to induce sleep, or in small doses, to provide a calming effect. Barbiturate abusers are often involved in traffic accidents because their actions tend to be sluggish; however, persons intoxicated on barbiturates are aggressive or quarrelsome.

Hallucinogens are so named because they may produce hallucinations or illusions. There is no way to predict whether the experience, if any, will be exhilarating or terrifying. Abusers of LSD have been involved in many bizarre incidents, some resulting in death or great physical or mental harm to the abusers.

The centerfold chart, prepared by BNDD, shows the terms and symptoms of drug abuse and compares many of the effects of narcotics and dangerous drugs.

PROGRAMS TO ELIMINATE SOURCES OF DANGEROUS DRUGS

Dangerous drugs generally enter the illicit market from three sources--diversion, illicit manufacturing, and smuggling. BNDD estimated that 25 percent of all dangerous drugs on the illicit market are diverted from licit domestic drug distributors, such as pharmaceutical manufacturing firms, wholesalers, pharmacies, and doctors. BNDD believes that most of the diverted drugs are from the almost 450,000

retailers and practitioners rather than from the manufacturers or wholesalers.

Another 25 percent of the illicit drugs are produced by illicit domestic laboratories, which are really miniature legitimate production operations and usually have their own extensive distribution systems.

Smuggling accounts for about half the dangerous drugs on the illicit market. These drugs are produced by either legitimate or illicit laboratories outside the United States. BNDD estimated that the amount of amphetamines smuggled into the United States during 1972 from Mexico alone almost equaled the entire U.S. production for the same year. Because regulations and production quotas are more stringent for domestic firms than for foreign firms, DEA expects the amount from noncontrolled sources to increase.

Several programs have been initiated to reduce the flow of drugs from the above sources, including:

1. Encouraging stricter regulatory controls over domestic drug producers and retailers to reduce the level of diversion. This aspect has been covered in our report to the Congress entitled "Efforts to Prevent Dangerous Drugs From Illicitly Reaching the Public" (B-175425, Apr. 17, 1972).
2. Maintaining close liaison with domestic and foreign producers of the drugs or of the chemicals from which the drugs are made, to help identify illicit producers.
3. Cooperating with foreign countries to identify and eliminate illicit laboratories operating there and to interdict the drugs before they are smuggled into the United States.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

We reviewed DEA's efforts to locate and immobilize illicit sources of dangerous drugs abused in the United States. (Before July 1973 the cognizant agency was known as BNDD). Our review was conducted at DEA headquarters in Washington, D.C.; its field offices at Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco, and Mexico City; the U.S. Embassies in

Mexico City; Guatemala City, Guatemala; Managua, Nicaragua; and San Jose, Costa Rica. Our review involved:

- Visiting State and local enforcement agencies in California and two California drug supply houses.
- Examining Federal and State drug legislation and policies, procedures, correspondence, and documentation relating to dangerous drug activities.
- Interviewing Embassy, DEA, State, and local officials responsible for administering enforcement programs.
- Reviewing numerous reports and studies which dealt with various aspects of the dangerous drug problem. (See app. III.)

CHAPTER 2

DANGEROUS DRUGS--A MENACE EQUIVALENT TO HEROIN

Dangerous drug abuse prevades all levels of society in the United States, and many authorities believe it to be as severe a problem as heroin abuse. Essentially, this belief is based on:

- Wider use of dangerous drugs by children and adults. Society generally accepts dangerous drugs because of wide medical use and advertising. In many cases, however, these drugs, along with marihuana, represent the beginning of a lifetime of drug involvement.
- Greater physical harm from dangerous drugs. Many of the drugs are extremely addictive and cause more deaths than heroin.
- Physiological effects similar to those of heroin. Many heroin addicts turn to dangerous drugs when heroin supplies are cut off.
- Criminal association. Dangerous drugs are associated with aggravated assaults more often than heroin, and in some cities they are the drugs most used by criminals.

Nevertheless, dangerous drugs generally have not received the notoriety that heroin has. The National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse noted this in its March 1973 report "Drug Use in America: Problem in Perspective" (see app. III) and called barbiturates "America's hidden drug problem."

NUMBER OF USERS AND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

Millions of people abuse dangerous drugs; only marihuana is abused to a greater extent. The following chart--which was prepared by the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse on the results of a 1973 nationwide survey--shows the breakdown of nonmedical drug use.

	<u>Average percent of use</u>		<u>Average number of users</u>	
	<u>12 to 17 years old</u>	<u>18 and over</u>	<u>12 to 17 years old</u>	<u>18 and over</u>
(000 omitted)				
Dangerous drugs:				
All types, available without prescription	6.0	7.0	1,468	9,619
Sedatives requiring prescription	3.0	4.0	734	5,496
Tranquilizers requiring prescription	3.0	6.0	734	8,244
Stimulants requiring prescription	4.0	5.0	979	6,870
Marihuana	14.0	16.0	3,425	21,985
Hallucinogens	4.8	4.6	1,174	6,321
Inhalents (such as glue)	6.4	2.1	1,566	2,886
Cocaine	1.5	3.2	367	4,397
Heroin	.6	1.3	147	1,786

The Commission estimated that between 500,000 and 1 million of the users were addicted to barbiturates. By comparison, BNDD estimated that about 500,000 were addicted to heroin.

Dangerous drugs seem to affect a broader spectrum of society than does heroin. Children, for instance, if they are vulnerable to drug abuse of any sort, usually begin with the so-called soft drugs--amphetamines or barbiturates--and normally at a younger age than they would begin to use heroin. For example, in 1971 a California research team (see app. III) studied drug use in the fourth through ninth grades. It found that the most common age for children to begin using drugs was 12 or 13, about the age for entering junior high school. The study report noted that the drugs most commonly used by the youths were marihuana, barbiturates, and amphetamines; heroin was generally not used until after high school. Although only 9 percent of the total sample tried drugs (fourth through ninth grades), 29 percent of those entering high school had tried drugs.

About two-thirds of the students who tried drugs continued to use them.

As another example of the wide acceptance and use of dangerous drugs, a worldwide study by the U.S. Army in 1971 of 880,000 of its personnel found that 20,224 used drugs. Of these, almost 70 percent used dangerous drugs while 30 percent used narcotics. Other studies (see app. III) likewise concluded that susceptibility of children to dangerous drugs was growing and that the drugs most commonly used in schools were marihuana, barbiturates, and amphetamines.

PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Physically, dangerous drugs are more deadly than heroin; several are as addictive as heroin and withdrawal may cause death. Withdrawal from heroin addiction will not. As with heroin, barbiturate addiction can be passed from mother to newborn baby; one recorded death from barbiturate addiction was a 30-day-old infant. Although heroin overdose or related diseases, such as hepatitis, have been longtime killers, barbiturates account for the highest percentage of drug-related deaths in many States. Barbiturates are the leading suicide vehicle in the United States and their use for this purpose spans an age group ranging from 11 to 70 years. A BNDD study of barbiturate incidents in 32 States from January 1971 through April 1972, which we projected nationwide, indicates that there were 173 suicides or accidental deaths and 339 overdose injury cases monthly.

Barbiturates are often used with heroin. When heroin is not available, many heroin users often turn to barbiturates. BNDD, in an October 1972 report supporting tighter regulatory controls for barbiturates, pointed out, in part, that:

Barbiturate abuse in conjunction with heroin abuse is increasing rapidly as efforts to interdict heroin traffic increase. When narcotics are scarce the price of the available heroin goes up and the quality drops. Recent BNDD reports indicate that the purity of heroin available on the street is, in most cases, less than 5 percent,

due to the lack of availability and the needs of ever increasing numbers of addicts. Consequently heroin addicts supplement their habits with barbiturates both to augment the effects of heroin as well as to ease the withdrawal from heroin.

The same report stated that many heroin addicts participating in methadone maintenance programs also use barbiturates. Methadone blocks the feelings and sensations heroin produces and addicts thus seek satisfaction with barbiturates. In most cases this will not jeopardize their participation in the methadone program.

Because heroin addicts turn to barbiturates for relief rather than to rehabilitation, the ready availability of barbiturates negates much of the enforcement and rehabilitation efforts directed at heroin.

RELATIONSHIP TO CRIME

In a 1971 study of arrests in six major U.S. cities (see app. III), BNDD found that, of the 1,889 arrestees, 50 percent were using drugs at the time of arrest. In Chicago, New Orleans, and Los Angeles, barbiturates were the principal drug abused. The following chart shows that many arrestees were using dangerous drugs and, for one category of arrest (aggravated assault), dangerous drug users outnumbered narcotics users.

Drugs Used by Arrestees in
Six Major U.S. Cities

<u>Reason for arrest</u>	<u>Percent of arrests</u>			
	<u>Drug users</u>			<u>Total percent</u>
	<u>Narcotics</u>	<u>Dangerous drugs</u>	<u>Not drug users</u>	
Aggravated assault	5	11	84	100
Robbery	18	14	68	100
Burglary	23	10	67	100
Other	14	10	76	100

CHAPTER 3

NEED TO INCREASE DANGEROUS DRUG ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

The gravity of dangerous drug abuse indicates the need for effective law enforcement. Although several factors contribute to the problem, the easy availability of dangerous drugs is perhaps the most important and it is in this area--reducing availability by immobilizing the sources--that enforcement actions are basically directed.

BNDD established several programs for monitoring and investigating dangerous drug sources, which resulted in the arrest of national and international drug traffickers and the closing of illicit laboratories. However, considering the extent of the dangerous drug problem, greater effort is needed to identify and eliminate the sources of dangerous drugs. The Department of Justice generally agreed (see app. I) but pointed out that national interests have stressed the need to pursue heroin trafficking as the highest priority and dangerous drug enforcement received a lesser relative priority until early 1973.

To identify and eliminate the sources of dangerous drugs, DEA needs to:

- Increase enforcement efforts.
- Plan and manage continuing enforcement.
- Increase efforts to control production and smuggling from and through Mexico.
- Increase efforts to promote an awareness of enforcement in countries that have a high potential for illicit drug production.

These aspects are discussed in this and subsequent chapters.

DANGEROUS DRUGS WARRANT A HIGHER ENFORCEMENT PRIORITY

As indicated in chapter 2, the extent of dangerous drug abuse warrants a sizable enforcement effort and therefore

deserves a high priority. BNDD, however, gave a lesser priority to dangerous drugs than to heroin and other narcotics and the level of enforcement effort was not sufficient to effectively attack the problem. The following table shows how domestic agents spent their criminal investigation time from June through December 1972.

	<u>Total man- hours</u>	<u>Percent of total</u>
Heroin	370,253	59.2
Cocaine	140,103	22.4
Marihuana and Hashish	60,867	9.7
Dangerous drugs (note a)	54,352	8.6
Other	<u>621</u>	<u>.1</u>
	<u>626,196</u>	<u>100.0</u>

^a During this period compliance investigators spent an additional 150,920 man-hours monitoring licit dangerous drugs manufacturers.

During approximately the same period, the Mexico City regional office devoted less than 5 percent of its time to dangerous drugs, although Mexico is one of the most important sources of those drugs. (See ch. 5.)

BNDD has recognized that combating dangerous drug abuse would require greater emphasis. For example, a February 1973 report of regional offices' dangerous drug problems and efforts to solve them indicated that some regions were not interested in allocating manpower to dangerous drug investigations. The report reads, in part:

"The use and abuse of dangerous drugs continues to be a real problem in all regions. Some of the regions feel that the problem should be handled by state and local authorities. With this feeling toward the problem, there is limited information flowing to BNDD that would lead to the identification of important sources of supply * * *."

This lack of emphasis may also be related to the feelings expressed to us by some agents that promotions

come faster to those working heroin and cocaine cases. Although we could not verify these statements, the agents' feelings were partly endorsed by a BNDD internal investigation of one regional office's operations. The report stated that morale was significantly lower among agents assigned to dangerous drugs than those agents assigned to narcotics because of a feeling that one of the assistant regional directors downgraded such work.

In April 1973, noting the limited dangerous drug efforts the BNDD Director issued a memorandum instructing regional offices to reduce their efforts on marihuana and to use this time on dangerous drugs. Also in April, a plan was issued to set up a task force aimed at reducing the availability of amphetamines and barbiturates. This task force concentrated at the retailers and distributors to help combat domestic diversion. The plan also prescribes methods to locate foreign sources. However, except for the increased efforts directed at diversion from the retailer and distributor level, the task force operation is similar to previous operations. (See p. 22.) The Department of Justice informed us (see app. I) that two promising task force operations are in progress (one in the New England-New York area, targeted toward illicit amphetamines, and one in Southern California, involving suspects in a "minibennie" organization located in Mexico) and that at least two other task forces are planned.

NEED TO INCREASE AGENTS ASSIGNED TO DANGEROUS DRUG INVESTIGATIONS

Dangerous drug cases, especially those which involve locating illicit laboratories or diversion sources, require detailed and time-consuming investigations. Although, in many cases, BNDD made a concerted effort to locate sources and arrest traffickers, it generally did not assign sufficient manpower to effectively challenge dangerous drug traffickers.

Dangerous drug abuse has been a problem in the United States for a long time. In the early 1960s the Congress recognized that dangerous drugs would require

additional enforcement effort and established the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control. Its dangerous drug objectives were similar to the Bureau of Narcotics objectives for heroin and cocaine. When these bureaus merged in 1968 to form BNDD, each had about 300 agents. As indicated in the report of the House Committee on Government Operations (H. Rept. 1214, 90th Cong., 2d sess., Mar. 27, 1968), this balanced manpower was expected to continue after the merger. BNDD was to "preserve the experience and manpower of the Bureau of Narcotics and the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control"; both narcotics and dangerous drug programs were to "operate in tandem."

When the President proposed the merger, he also recommended that the number of agents enforcing narcotics and dangerous drug laws be increased by more than 30 percent. Since the merger the number of agents has increased; however, the increase has not been distributed proportionately among narcotics and dangerous drug cases. During the first half of fiscal year 1973, only the equivalent of about 300 agents were assigned to dangerous drug investigations, although the total number of agents had more than doubled to about 1,600. In the Los Angeles and New York regions, about 50 to 60 Bureau of Drug Abuse Control agents had been assigned to each region before the merger; during the first half of fiscal year 1973, the equivalent number of agents working on dangerous drug cases averaged only about 23 and 46, respectively. Since December 1972 the number of agents assigned to dangerous drugs has increased somewhat.

The following table compares arrests, seizures, and illicit laboratories immobilized by the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control with those by BNDD since the merger.

	Bureau of Drug Abuse Control		Bureau of Drug Abuse Control and BNDD (note a)	BNDD			
	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>
Dangerous drug ar- rests	374	666	658	509	554	956	816
Illicit lab- oratories immobilized	14	68	53	50	36	43	41
Dangerous drugs seized (in millions of dosage units)	12.2	38.4	^b 5.6	16.6	14.4	(c)	22.7

^aYear of merger--data obtained from both agencies.

^bData obtained from BNDD only.

^cComparable data not available.

Certain factors, such as the implementation of new drug laws and the merger during this period, make it difficult to compare the success of the two bureaus on the basis of these statistics. Nevertheless, even with substantial overall manpower increases, the level of dangerous drug arrests was lower until fiscal year 1972 and laboratory seizures have never reached the 1968 level.

Because of the lack of agents to investigate dangerous drug cases, many cases could not be completed and the traffickers may still be at large. For example, in February 1972, intelligence identified five operators of illicit laboratories. As of December 1972, because of a heavy workload, very little time had been spent investigating these individuals and they may still be manufacturing and "pushing" drugs. A BNDD

official said the heavy workload at the time was heroin and cocaine cases.

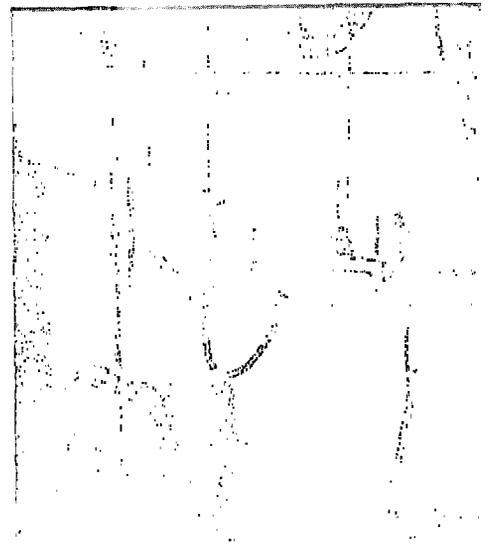
Difficulty in obtaining information on dangerous drug cases

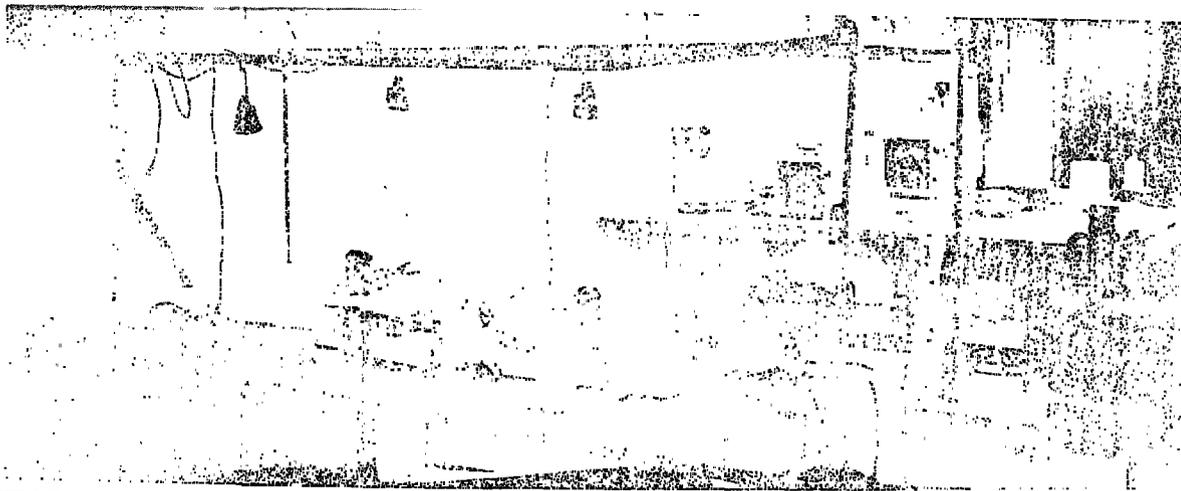
According to BNDD, successful immobilization of a dangerous drug source usually requires extensive manpower to develop the necessary detailed information. Information is needed on each step in the illicit production of dangerous drugs. Examples of the steps follow.

The illicit laboratory operator purchases chemicals and related paraphernalia, almost all of which are legally available to anyone; this usually takes place over a long period and from different sources. He then stores the material in different locations, but he can usually gather the equipment and begin producing drugs within a few hours. After he manufactures the drugs, he stores the equipment until he is ready to begin the cycle again, sometimes 6 months to a year later. The production equipment is simple and inexpensive, and the same laboratory can produce any one of several drugs. (See pp. 19 to 21 for pictures of illicit laboratories.)

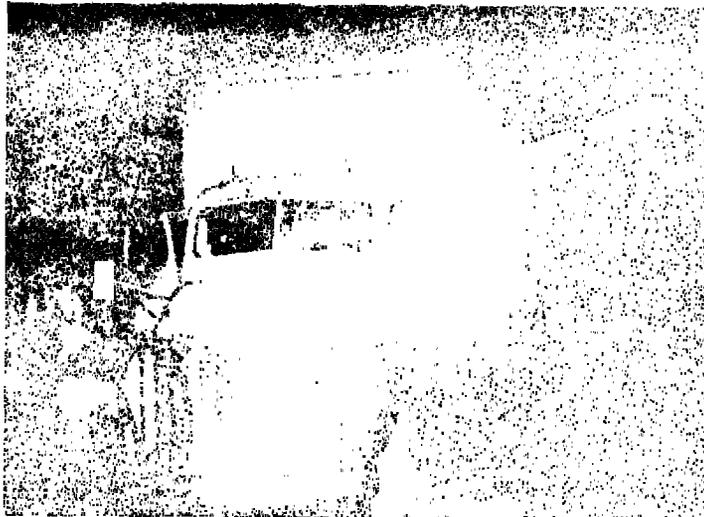
A BNDD attorney said accurate information was absolutely necessary to obtain a search warrant. He stated that possession of a complete laboratory and all chemicals necessary to produce a restricted drug are not legal grounds for obtaining a search warrant; BNDD must have evidence which demonstrates that the suspect was actually producing an illicit drug. Gathering this evidence often necessitates extended 24-hour surveillance. The timing of the search warrant is also crucial because huge amounts of drugs can be manufactured quickly. As an example, BNDD estimated that one immobilized LSD laboratory could produce 5 million dosage units in 72 hours.

ILLICIT LABORATORY. Seeing how dry the grass was, the landlord stopped to tell his tenant that he must water the lawn. When he knocked at the door he got no answer but smelled a pungent odor which he thought to be a dead body. Upon investigation, the Denver Police discovered the house contained an illicit STP and LSD laboratory. The entire water supply had been diverted to the laboratory.

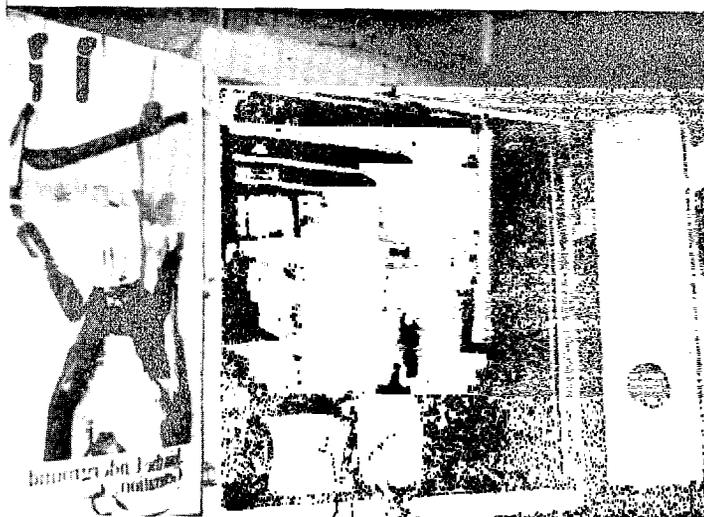




In January 1974 DEA seized more than \$25 million worth of the hallucinogen phencyclidine chloral hydrate from a warehouse in Rockville, Maryland, concealing the pictured illicit laboratory. The seizure was believed to be the largest of its kind. The operator had been disguising the laboratory as an electronics circuit company. He obtained the chemicals needed to manufacture the drugs through regular orders needed in his business. The operation was selling an estimated \$4 million worth of this drug nationwide each week. A DEA official stated that the seizure would cause a nationwide panic for users of this drug, lasting several months.



Illicit mobile laboratory.



Inside view of mobile laboratory.



Illicit bathtub laboratory.

Previous dangerous drug efforts

BNDD has solved dangerous drug cases when the cases have been worked on full time. For example, using a task force, a regional office made a concerted effort over a 20-month period ended December 1971 to compile detailed intelligence on dangerous drug traffickers, particularly those having illicit laboratories as sources of supply. The task force consisted of 12 full-time agents. Six illicit laboratories were seized, and substantial leads on others were developed. Subsequently, no laboratories were seized in this region until January 1973.

One of the cases solved during this 20-month period illustrates the importance of obtaining detailed intelligence. Although considerable intelligence had been developed about the operators of an LSD laboratory and its associates, the agents could not develop any leads on the location of the laboratory, even though they had evidence that the laboratory had been in operation for about 2 years. One day the agents received a call from a warehouse owner concerning individuals moving two large boxes in and out of storage in a suspicious manner.

The agents traced the names (aliases) of the individuals to BNDD intelligence files and found that members of the suspected LSD distribution system had used the aliases in the past. On the basis of evidence accumulated from informants and other sources, a search warrant was obtained. The agents opened the boxes during the night, without the suspects' knowledge, and found a portable LSD laboratory. As a result, the agents established around-the-clock surveillance of the boxes. When the suspects assembled the laboratory and started operation, the operator was arrested. This case illustrates two important points:

1. Without the detailed information connecting the individuals to a suspected dangerous drug system, the "tip" supplied by the warehouse owner would have had no meaning and probably would not have been followed up.



the
terms and
symptoms of

drug abuse

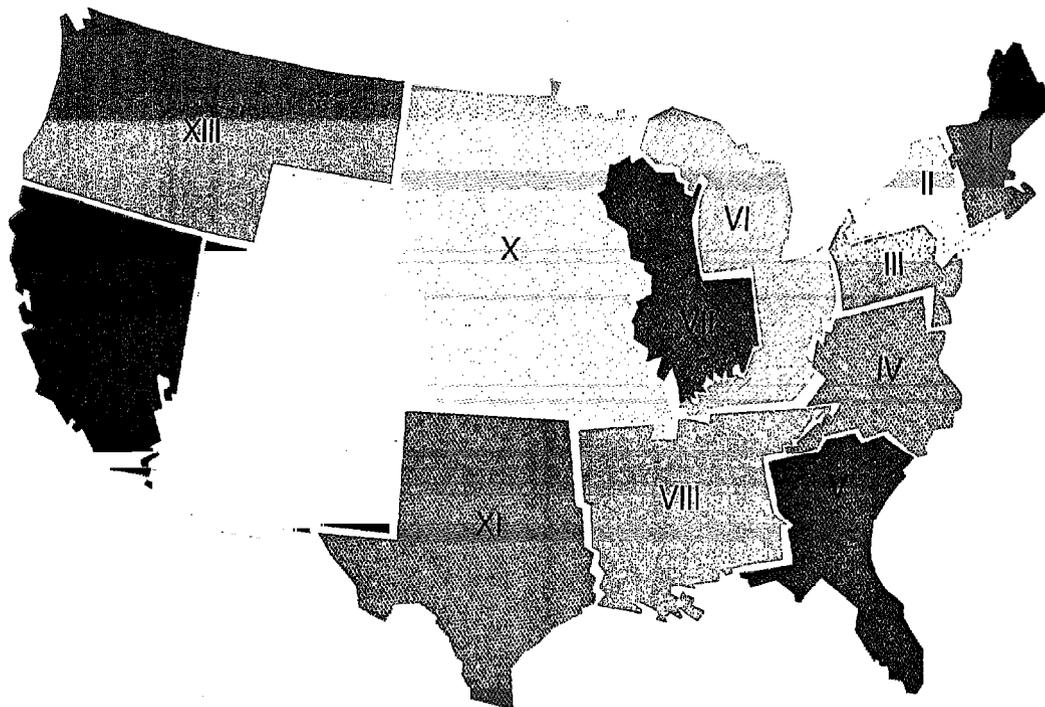


Terms & Symptoms of Drug Abuse

The...
the ori...
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and hov...
he abuse...
drug.

DROWSINESS
EXCITATION & HYPERACTIVITY
IRRITABILITY & RESTLESSNESS
BELLIGERENT
ANXIETY
EUPHORIA
DEPRESSION
HALLUCINATION
PANIC
IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR
CONFUSION
TALKATIVENESS
RAMBLING SPEECH
SLURRED SPEECH
TREMOR

Drug Class	Drug Name	Drowsiness	Excitation & Hyperactivity	Irritability & Restlessness	Belligerent	Anxiety	Euphoria	Depression	Hallucination	Panic	Irrational Behavior	Confusion	Talkativeness	Rambling Speech	Slurred Speech	Tremor
OPIOIDS	M, dreamer, white stuff, hard stuff, morpho, unkie, Miss Emma, monkey, cube, morf, tab, emsel, hocus, morphie, melter	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Snow, stuff, H, junk, big Harry, caballo, Doojee, boy, horse, white stuff, Harry, hairy, joy powder, salt, dope, Duige, hard stuff, schmeek, shit, skag, thing,	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Schoolboy	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
OPIUMS	Dilaudid, Lords	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Demerol, Isonipicaine, Dolantol, Pethidine	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Dolophine, Dollies, dolls, amidone	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
PREPARATIONS	P.G., P.O., blue velvet (Paregoric with antihistamine), red water, bitter, licorice	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	The leaf, snow, C, cecil, coke, dynamite, flake, speedball (when mixed with Heroin), girl, happy dust, joy powder, white girl, gold dust, Corine, Bernies, Burese, gin, Bernice, Star dust, Carrie, Cholly, heaven dust, paradise	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
CANNABIS	Smoke, straw, Texas tea, jive, pod, mutah, splim, Acapulco Gold, Bhang, boo, bush, butter flower, Ganja, weed, grass, pot, muggles, tea, has, hemp, griffo, Indian hay, loco weed, hay, herb, J, mu, giggles-smoke, love weed, Mary Warner, Mohasky, Mary Jane, joint sticks, reefers, sativa, roach,	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Pep pills, bennies, wake-ups, eye-openers, lid poppers, co-pilots, truck drivers, peaches, roses, hearts, cart-wheels, whites, coast to coast, LA turnabouts, browns, footballs, greenies, bombido, oranges, dexies, jolly-beans, A's, jellie babies, sweets, beans, uppers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
STIMULANTS	Speed, meth, splash, crystal, bombita, Methedrine, Doe	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Pep pills, uppers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
BARBITURATES	Yellows, yellow jackets, nimby, nimbles, reds, pinks, red birds, red devils, seggy, seccy, pink ladies, blues, blue birds, blue devils, blue heavens, red & blues, double trouble, tooies, Christmas trees, phennies, barbs	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Candy, goofballs, sleeping pills, peanuts	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
AMPHETAMINE (LSD)	Acid, cubes, pearly gates, heavenly blue, royal blue, wedding bells, sugar, Big D, Blue Acid, the Chief, the Hawk, instant Zen, 25, Zen, sugar lump	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Serenity, tranquility, peace, DOM, syndicate acid	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
PCP	PCP, peace pill, synthetic marihuana	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Mescal button, mescal beans, hikori, hikuli, huatari, seni, wokowi, cactus, the button, tops, a moon, half moon, P, the bad seed, Big Chief, Mesc.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
MUSHROOMS	Sacred mushrooms, mushrooms	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	DMT, 45-minute psychosis, businessman's special	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●



BNDD Regional Offices

Region I—Boston

JFK Federal Bldg., Rm. G-64
Boston, Mass. 02203
617-223-2170
(Connecticut, Maine,
Massachusetts, New Hampshire,
Rhode Island, Vermont)

Region II—New York

Suite 605
90 Church Street
New York, New York 10007
212-264-7187
(New York, Northern New Jersey)

Region III—Philadelphia

605 U.S. Custom House
2nd & Chestnut Streets
Philadelphia, Pa. 19106
215-597-4310
(Delaware, Southern
New Jersey, Pennsylvania)

Region IV—Baltimore

31 Hopkins Place, Rm. 955
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
301-962-4800
(District of Columbia, Maryland,
North Carolina, Virginia,
West Virginia)

Region V—Miami

1200 Biscayne Blvd.
Suite 201
Miami, Florida 33132
305-350-4241
(Florida, Georgia, South
Carolina, Puerto Rico)

Region VI—Detroit

602 Federal Bldg. & U.S.
Courthouse
231 W. Lafayette
Detroit, Michigan 48226
313-226-6110
(Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio)

Region VII—Chicago

Suite 1700, Engineering Bldg.
205 W. Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606
312-353-7875
(Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin)

Region VIII—New Orleans

546 Carondelet Street
Fourth Floor
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130
504-527-2317
(Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana,
Mississippi, Tennessee)

Region X—Kansas City

U.S. Courthouse, Suite 115
811 Grand Avenue
Kansas City, Mo. 64106
816-374-2631
(Minnesota, North Dakota,
South Dakota, Iowa, Kansas,
Missouri, Nebraska)

Region XI—Dallas

1114 Commerce Street
Room 723
Dallas, Texas 75202
214-749-3631
(Oklahoma, Texas)

Region XII—Denver

New Customs House
1950 Stout Street
Denver, Colorado 80202
303-297-4291
(Arizona, Colorado, New
Mexico, Utah, Wyoming)

Region XIII—Seattle

U.S. Courthouse
1010 5th Avenue, Rm. 311
Seattle, Washington 98104
206-583-5443
(Alaska, Idaho, Montana,
Oregon, Washington)

Region XIV—Los Angeles

1340 West 6th Street
Los Angeles, Calif. 90017
213-688-2650
(California, Hawaii, Nevada)

Region XV—Mexico

American Embassy
Nar Apartado Postal 88 Bis.
Mexico D.F., Mexico

Region XVI—Bangkok

American Embassy
APO San Francisco 96346

Region XVII—Paris

American Embassy, Room 511
APO New York 09777

BNDD Laboratories

New York Regional Laboratory

New York, New York 10007
(Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont,
Rhode Island, New York,
Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey,
Pennsylvania, Delaware)

Washington Regional Laboratory

Washington, D.C. 20537
(Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia,
North Carolina, South Carolina,
Georgia, Florida, Puerto Rico)

Chicago Regional Laboratory

Chicago, Illinois 60607
(North Dakota, South Dakota,
Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa,
Missouri, Wisconsin, Michigan,
Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky)

San Francisco Regional Laboratory

San Francisco, California 94102
(Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho,
California, Nevada,
Hawaii, Alaska)

Dallas Regional Laboratory

Dallas, Texas 75202
(Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas,
Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee,
Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico,
Wyoming, Alabama)

Special Testing And Research Laboratory

Washington, D.C. 20537

Bureau of Narcotics & Dangerous Drugs / U.S. Department of Justice / Washington, D.C. 20537

2. Without the information connecting the "owners" of these boxes to the system and information showing that the system was operating an illicit laboratory, BNDD could not have shown reasonable cause for a search warrant.

NEED TO STRESS DANGEROUS DRUGS IN ROUTINE INVESTIGATIONS

Routine investigative techniques are the keystone of any enforcement effort, whether it involves homicides burglaries, or drugs. In addition, these techniques provide an opportunity to develop intelligence about other areas which would require more manpower. One such technique is interrogation. Although BNDD routinely questioned informers and arrestees about heroin trafficking, it did not effectively use interrogations to also develop information about dangerous drug cases. Greater use of this approach would partially alleviate the need for additional agents for dangerous drug cases and would enhance the arrest potential of many traffickers.

BNDD's responsibilities were worldwide and there were thousands of legitimate and criminal sources and traffickers with which BNDD agents had to deal. To be effective BNDD had to use its limited number of agents efficiently. We believe one approach to increase efficiency is to more fully debrief informers about dangerous drug activities.

As pointed out in chapter 2, many heroin addicts are multidrug users. For example, two studies of selected heroin addicts showed that 86 percent and 60 percent of the addicts, respectively, also used barbiturates. Informants who give DEA information about heroin sources might be able to identify dangerous drug sources, and dangerous drug informants might be able to identify heroin sources.

Although BNDD's policy was to completely debrief informants, we could not determine, from the interrogation records, whether narcotic informants were also questioned about dangerous drugs. However, BNDD

agents and officials said the informants were not usually questioned about dangerous drugs because BNDD did not emphasize dangerous drugs in its day-to-day activities.

CONCLUSIONS

The lack of emphasis on dangerous drugs has seriously affected BNDD's overall efforts at curtailing drug abuse. Past actions demonstrate that agents can be assigned to work dangerous drug cases full time with significant results, and the Director's April 1973 memorandum recognized this. However, actions must also be taken to emphasize dangerous drugs in routine investigative activities--such as debriefing informants.

The main emphasis must come from regional supervisors who are largely responsible for daily activities. Although the Director's memorandum stressed the need to work on dangerous drugs, regional agents' attitudes toward dangerous drugs do not appear commensurate with the efforts required to initiate and maintain adequate investigations. The agents' beliefs that promotions are slower for those who work on dangerous drugs are just one consequence of this attitude.

In view of the magnitude of the problem and past successes in this area, DEA should challenge dangerous drug abuse more vigorously.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

We recommend that DEA increase the priority given to dangerous drug enforcement by:

- Determining if additional agents can be assigned to domestic dangerous drug investigations without detriment to DEA's overall objectives.
- Insuring that agents follow procedures concerning complete debriefing of informants and stress dangerous drugs in all routine investigations.

--Aggressively promoting dangerous drug enforcement among regional officials and alleviate any misconceptions about the promotion potential of agents working on dangerous drugs.

The Department of Justice (see app. I) stated:

--Dangerous drug enforcement had received a lesser priority until February 1973 because the entire Federal community had emphasized heroin as the primary drug problem.

--With the establishment of DEA, substantial steps have been and are being taken to further strengthen enforcement against dangerous drugs. The new agency has begun an active dangerous drug program in its Domestic Investigations Division that increases the priority in this area.

--Dangerous drug enforcement is a new and highly innovative endeavor and the Department is continually conducting studies which will result in revisions of concepts and approaches. Therefore, it could not provide definitive comments on the acceptability of our recommendations without further analysis.

CHAPTER 4

NEED FOR BETTER MANAGEMENT

OF DANGEROUS DRUG ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

One problem in eliminating sources of dangerous drugs is that most of the ingredients (precursors) necessary to produce the drugs are readily available, generally from legitimate chemical supply firms. Well-established relationships between BNDD and these firms were often the only way persons suspected of making illicit drugs could be identified before their product was available on the street.

However, BNDD's contact with them through its precursor control program was often nonexistent or sporadic. In some instances BNDD did not follow up on leads supplied by these firms. Because illicit laboratories can produce tremendous amounts of drugs in a short time, any steps BNDD can take to contribute to their quick immobilization are important.

PRECURSOR CONTROL PROGRAM

The precursor control program, established in 1968, was designed to reduce the easy availability of precursors to illicit traffickers. Under this program, BNDD was to (1) establish and continue liaison with all chemical firms which sell precursors and (2) give them a list of precursors used in producing illicit dangerous drugs. These firms were encouraged to notify BNDD of requests for controlled precursors and suspicious requests for uncontrolled precursors. Suspicion might be aroused by the buyer's mode of dress or by an order for an inordinate amount of chemically inert substances used as fillers in making drugs. BNDD then had the opportunity to verify the legitimacy of the purchase, or, if the conditions appeared suspicious, to monitor the sale.

Foreign aspects of the program involved contacting chemical or drug firms in foreign countries to identify suspicious shipments to customers in the United States or to customers in other nations who were suspected of transforming the chemicals to drugs and smuggling them into the United States.

The following example illustrates the program's benefits. BNDD agents told us that, without the leads supplied by the chemical firm, the illicit laboratory operator would probably have marketed his product.

A local chemical supply firm notified BNDD that a suspect had ordered three chemicals needed to make LSD. A check of other chemical firms in the State indicated that the suspect purchased other ingredients necessary to produce LSD, but he never purchased more than three ingredients from one company. When arrested he had all the necessary chemicals and was within one step of completing production. Until shortly before the arrest, BNDD's investigation focused on the wrong person--the youth's father. Instead, his son, a 16-year old high school student, was arrested and accused of manufacturing LSD with a street value of over \$100,000. The laboratory had been set up in the family garage.

NEED TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRECURSOR CONTROL PROGRAM

Because most precursors are legitimately available to almost anyone, liaison with chemical supply firms was a focal point of BNDD's efforts to immobilize illicit laboratories. In fiscal year 1972 alone, leads resulting from such liaison led to the seizure of nine laboratories and to the arrest of several individuals in the United States.

These results are only minimal when compared to the program's potential benefits. In some regions the program either had not begun, had just started, or had been in operation only intermittently. In many instances lack of followup on leads from the firms further limited the program's effect. The program, if effectively managed, would enable DEA to significantly reduce the availability of illicit dangerous drugs. For the program to achieve its full potential, however, DEA must (1) expand the liaison with chemical firms and (2) follow up on leads.

Need for more contact with domestic firms

We visited three domestic BNDD offices. One office did not have a list of all chemical firms in the area, and BNDD personnel did not know whether a list of precursors had been provided to the firms. Although each firm was supposed to have been mailed a letter requesting its cooperation and later telephoned by regional officials, officials of one of the larger firms told us they had not been contacted and did not have such a list. They indicated this information would be of great assistance in identifying suspicious sales. One official stated that his firm had about 60 people who took sales orders and that these people did not know which chemicals could be used to produce illicit drugs.

At another BNDD office the precursor control program was being revived after a period of dormancy. During January and February 1973, BNDD contacted 11 of the 45 chemical firms who handle precursors in the area. Many leads were received, including two indicating a possible methadone and a possible LSD laboratory. In March 1973 two full-time agents were assigned to this program.

In the third office one agent was working part time on the program. However, because of additional duties, such as investigating other drug cases, he could not personally contact many of the firms or do much of the followup he deemed necessary. Since August 1972 about half of the approximately 200 firms in the area had been mailed letters listing precursors and requesting their cooperation. As of May 1973 leads had been received from seven firms.

Agents we spoke with believed that liaison with all supply firms would result in the identification and elimination of many more illicit laboratories. They further stated that the contacts, to be of real value, should be personal rather than by telephone or letter.

Need for more contact with foreign firms

Because foreign countries are ready sources of precursors for illicit dangerous drugs found in the United States, BNDD contacted foreign chemical firms as

part of its precursor control program. More foreign firms need to be contacted.

In 1971 attempts were made to identify sources of ergot alkaloids, used to make LSD. In April of that year two agents contacted 66 chemical firms in Europe to identify customers who might be converting the alkaloids into LSD for sale in the United States. This was the first time that foreign firms had been contacted under the program. Most were cooperative, but some refused to give any data at all. For example, one company official said he may have sold quantities of ergotamine tartrate, used in making LSD, to a questionable firm in Mexico, but he refused to identify the firm, the quantity sold, or even the date of sale.

Officials of several firms believed that a recent large increase in the price of ergots (from which the ergot alkaloids are made) resulted because the ergot was being diverted into the illicit market for conversion into LSD.

From its contact with the European firms, BNDD concluded that definite areas of diversion can be pinpointed only when the entire pattern of legitimate traffic is known. To do this it is necessary to contact firms in several other countries, including those in Eastern Europe, where many of the world's largest chemical companies are located. Eastern European firms were not contacted. BNDD attempted to obtain information from firms not visited by written correspondence with the various governments. The governments were to contact firms in their countries and the firms were to forward the information to BNDD. This proved ineffective. For example, BNDD requested the firms in Eastern Europe through their governments to report suspicious orders of ergot alkaloids and their derivatives. BNDD, however, received information from firms in only one country.

In May 1973 regulatory officials and drug manufacturers of seven European countries were contacted. These contacts were directed at determining the legitimate distribution of bulk amphetamine powder and updating information on short-acting barbiturates that had been identified as coming from

Mexico. Methaqualone, because of its rapidly increasing popularity among the drug culture and the possibility of its becoming a controlled substance, was also included in these contacts.

As a result of these contacts (1) leads were developed on the identity of recipients of bulk amphetamine powder and barbiturates in Mexico, (2) two shipments of methamphetamine to the United States in apparent violation of the Controlled Substances Act (84 Stat. 1242) were discovered, and (3) a possible change in trafficking patterns was noted with Africa becoming a major transshipment point. DEA concluded that effective controls over international trade of stimulant and depressant drugs would greatly decrease their availability to the illicit U.S. market.

Need for better planning when contacting firms

Although BNDD had some success, particularly with certain types of barbiturates, efforts were not sufficiently planned or organized to gain information on all precursors known to be abused. As a result, several foreign countries continue to be sources of precursors.

The need for better planning is demonstrated by a comparison of BNDD efforts to reduce the availability of two common illicit drugs--"minibennies" (amphetamines) and "Mexican Reds" (barbiturates). Both originate in foreign countries. "Minibennies" appeared on the illicit market in 1969, about 1 year earlier than "Mexican Reds." "Minibennies" seizures accounted for 35 million dosage units, or nearly four times the dosage unit seizures of "Mexican Reds." BNDD, however, contacted foreign firms only regarding shipments of bulk substances for "Mexican Reds" and did not contact them about "minibennies" until May 1973.

BNDD would have realized greater success from contacts with foreign firms had it sought information on all drugs and chemicals known to have their origin in these countries. During the original contacts, BNDD did not ask about amphetamine powder used in making "minibennies."

Need to follow through on leads

In general, when investigating illicit laboratories, BNDD has two sources of leads: information supplied by chemical firms and information developed during an investigation. Leads from both sources have led to laboratory seizures by BNDD.

Our analysis of 54 sales at one domestic chemical firm showed that in 21 sales an employee of the firm noted the suspects' automobile license plate numbers which BNDD could have investigated further. However, BNDD did not follow up on these leads.

CONCLUSIONS

BNDD's program to contact chemical companies proved to be an effective means to help curtail the availability of dangerous drugs in the United States. However, BNDD's use of this program has been sporadic, and as a result the program has had limited success.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

We recommend that DEA

- Develop lists of all chemical firms within the various regions and establish and continue liaison with them.
- Implement procedures to insure that the investigations are planned and leads are followed through.

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As noted on page 25, the Department of Justice said that it could not provide definitive comments on the acceptability of our recommendations without further analysis.

CHAPTER 5

NEED TO INCREASE EFFORTS TO
CONTROL PRODUCTION AND SMUGGLING OF
DANGEROUS DRUGS FROM MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Because of more stringent domestic regulatory controls and greater BNDD efforts in the United States, Mexico, according to BNDD officials, has become a major source of dangerous drugs in this country. Many drugs finding their way into the United States either originate or pass through Mexico. Also BNDD has identified Central America, because of its proximity to Mexico and the United States, as a potential major source of dangerous drugs. BNDD devoted little effort to dangerous drugs in Mexico and three Central American countries. DEA must increase its efforts in Mexico and Central America to significantly reduce the availability of illicit dangerous drugs in the United States.

INCREASED EFFORTS NECESSARY TO STOP THE
FLOW OF DANGEROUS DRUGS FROM MEXICO

Seizures of amphetamines and barbiturates in the United States and in Mexico during fiscal years 1972 and 1973 show that dangerous drug trafficking from Mexico is significant.

Seizures of Amphetamines and Barbiturates
Produced in Mexico

	<u>Seizures in dosage units</u>	
	<u>Fy 1972</u>	<u>Fy 1973</u>
	(000 omitted)	
BNDD seizures in the United States	49,397	5,624
U.S. Customs Service seizures along U.S.-Mexican border	16,240	15,802
Seizures by Mexican law enforce- ment units	<u>40,429</u>	(a)
Total	<u>106,066</u>	

a

Not available.

Customs officials told us their seizures represented only 5 to 10 percent of the total number of "pills" being smuggled into the United States. One BNDD official said about 80 percent of the illicitly produced dangerous drugs seized in the United States originate in Mexico.

Limited efforts aimed at dangerous drugs

BNDD had long recognized the importance of drug trafficking from Mexico; however, its enforcement efforts in controlling the flow of dangerous drugs from Mexico were limited. It was not until March 1973 that the Mexico City regional office included the location of illicit dangerous drug laboratories and seizures of shipments of dangerous drugs as enforcement priorities. For the first 8 months of fiscal year 1973, only 5 percent of the total regional man-hours were allocated to dangerous drug investigations. The other 95 percent were aimed at heroin, cocaine, and marihuana.

Both the regional director of BNDD's Mexico City Office and Embassy officials there said the U.S. Government's emphasis on narcotics and cocaine and the Mexican Government's emphasis on eradicating marihuana have necessitated that all available personnel be used on these types of investigations. As a result, BNDD did not have enough agents for dangerous drugs. In October 1972 one agent was assigned to the Mexico City regional office to work primarily on dangerous drug cases; however, he was assigned to other cases and duties that took up most of his time. As of January 3, 1974, the regional office had 16 agents, including the regional and deputy regional directors; the duties of the latter two are largely administrative. The region includes all of Mexico and all Central America north of Panama with a combined population of about 60 million.

On occasion the Mexico City regional office did concentrate on dangerous drugs in coordination with domestic BNDD regional offices. These efforts have demonstrated the value of and the need for greater work in Mexico with dangerous drugs. In several instances BNDD, working with Mexican authorities, successfully apprehended the source of supply. One successful investigation, conducted in 12 States and Mexico, involved "Black Beauties," which are

black gelatin capsules containing amphetamine powder. As a result, 85 persons, including 23 in Mexico, were arrested; an illicit laboratory in Mexico City was seized; two legitimate laboratories, involved in illegal activities in Mexico City were closed; and a major U.S. drug firm had its license to export amphetamines revoked. The investigation involved determining the manufacturer of the capsules and obtaining from the manufacturer a list of Mexican recipients and working with Mexican drug enforcement personnel to locate and arrest individuals supplying the illicit market. The street value of the pills was over \$6 million.

The "Mexican Reds" discussed in chapter 4 were the target of a similar investigation. It involved identifying the U.S. manufacturer of the capsules, the European sources of bulk drugs, and their recipients in Mexico City. BNDD estimated that, from January 1971 through June 1972, enough bulk drugs were shipped to Mexico to produce 60 million dosage units--more than legitimate use would indicate. In November 1972 the Mexican Government's cooperation was requested to determine the legitimacy of the recipients; however, no action was taken until June 1973 and BNDD made only limited effort to follow up. In March 1974 a DEA official informed us that, since June 1973, when the Mexican Government began investigating the drug firms, two had been closed down.

In addition, BNDD could have taken other steps to enhance its dangerous drug efforts in Mexico. For example, BNDD did not persistently attempt to obtain authenticics. Authenticics are pill samples from legitimate manufacturers which BNDD's central testing laboratory in Washington, D.C., kept on file. Seizures are compared with the authenticics through pillistics (similar to ballistics used with firearms) to determine whether the seizures were produced by a legitimate firm and then diverted. Of the hundreds of different pills made by legitimate concerns in Mexico, BNDD obtained only a few samples; BNDD laboratory personnel said these were of little use because they were improperly identified when sent to the laboratory. In response to the recommendations in our April 1972 report, the Department of Justice indicated that it would attempt to obtain additional authenticics from Mexico. In March 1973 plans were underway to complete or update the collection. However as of September 1973, additional authenticics had not been obtained.

BNDD efforts in Mexico, as in any foreign country, were necessarily affected by the willingness and capability of the host government to cooperate. For example, until January 1972, Mexico did not have legislation regarding dangerous drugs and the new legislation did not become fully effective until April 1973. DEA regional and Embassy officials believe that the new law will improve the Mexican Government's capability to investigate dangerous drug trafficking.

NEED TO INCREASE EFFORTS TO PROMOTE
AN AWARENESS OF DANGEROUS DRUGS
IN MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Although the production of dangerous drugs outside the United States is increasing, the United States is limited as to what it can do to reduce such production through the activities of DEA. These limitations point out that it is important for the United States to be fully aware of the problem; the efforts, if any, being taken to solve it; and its potential as a source for drugs abused in the United States. The U.S. Government recognized this responsibility and created drug control committees in certain embassies.

BNDD, with agents in most free countries of the world, was the main source of information for the drug control committees. However, we were told that, in Mexico and in the three Central American countries, due to the emphasis given heroin, cocaine, and marihuana enforcement, the committees had not been informed of the seriousness of the dangerous drug problem. As a result, these committees were not aware that their countries were current or potential sources of dangerous drugs for the United States.

For example, the committee member who prepared the Embassy narcotic plan for Mexico told us that, due to his limited knowledge of the importance of Mexico as a source of dangerous drugs, the plan did not provide for any actions directed specifically at dangerous drug traffic. He said the plan would be amended. Also, officials in the three Central American countries we visited told us they were not aware of their countries' laws relating to dangerous drug control.

The flow of information is important in worldwide efforts to control the abuse of dangerous drugs. Countries, as they learn more about dangerous drugs, can take corrective actions which will ultimately benefit the United States. Increased awareness of drug problems by drug control committees may affect drug enforcement efforts in two ways:

- With an awareness of a specific drug problem, an embassy, acting through diplomatic channels, may be able to secure results which may have been impossible for BNDD to achieve acting through regular enforcement channels. For example, the instances cited in chapter 3, in which certain foreign chemical firms refused agents data on shipments of precursors, may have been rectified through such action.
- With an awareness of drug problems in general, the embassy can promote more effectively the passage of the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances. This treaty is similar to an existing narcotics treaty in that it places dangerous drugs under international control. Also, embassies can encourage the passage of effective local laws.

BNDD underscored the importance of drug control committees in a report describing planned efforts with barbiturates and amphetamines. The report concluded that the only way to benefit from controlling dangerous drugs in the United States is to attack drugs coming from foreign sources. According to BNDD, smuggling of dangerous drugs from foreign countries, mainly Mexico, accounts for a significant amount of illicit drugs in the United States. To stop the smuggling of dangerous drugs from Mexico, DEA must take corrective action using State Department assistance.

THE TREATY ON PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES

One way for the United States to promote interest in dangerous drug enforcement is to encourage other nations to enact and to enforce laws similar to ours. One such law is the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 801). This act, accredited as a major

weapon in drug enforcement, restricts manufacturing and distribution of certain drugs and imposes detailed recordkeeping requirements on distributors.

In 1971 the United Nations devised a treaty similar to this act. The treaty covered psychotropic substances, which include dangerous drugs. Narcotics are excluded because they are controlled under another United Nations treaty. Basically, the treaty divides drugs into four schedules, depending on their potential for abuse and their therapeutic usefulness, and then provides gradations of controls for each schedule. The controls cover licensing, manufacturing, distribution, trade, dispensation to a customer, and recordkeeping and are similar to the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970. As of April 1, 1974, 16 countries had ratified the treaty; 24 more must ratify it to bring it into force. At that time neither the United States nor Mexico had ratified it. The Mexican Senate has, however, approved the treaty and final ratification is expected. Only two Central American countries, Nicaragua and Panama, had ratified it.

The need for such a treaty was highlighted by the contacts with foreign countries under DEA's precursor control program. Many European countries had regulations not as strict as ours, thereby increasing the availability of drugs. For example, the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 restricts the manufacturing and sale of secobarbital in the United States. In contrast, in five of the foreign countries BNDD visited, sodium secobarbital was not a controlled substance and the only restriction concerned the need for a prescription. If ratified, the treaty would impose about the same restrictions in other countries as here.

BNDD recognized the need for some type of international controls on certain chemicals and drugs. From their contacts in Europe concerning ergot alkaloids, BNDD officials found that government and chemical firm officials in various countries did not know these ingredients were used to produce LSD. In a report about this visit, BNDD officials said, in part: "Quite possibly the only solution to this problem would be the placing of the ergot alkaloids under control in these countries."

CONCLUSIONS

Although Mexico is a major source of illicit dangerous drugs consumed in the United States and although Central America represents a future threat, BNDD's effort in those countries was limited.

DEA action to stop the flow of dangerous drugs from foreign sources will ultimately aid DEA's domestic efforts. Drug control committees offer DEA the opportunity to take such action. If the committees are well informed on the drug problems, they can be a potent force in drug enforcement in their countries and can aid DEA's domestic efforts. Their efficiency, however, depends on the amount and quality of information available to them.

The Treaty on Psychotropic Substances could aid DEA's worldwide efforts. A well-informed drug control committee can help gain the host nation's agreement to this treaty and can encourage passage of effective local laws where needed.

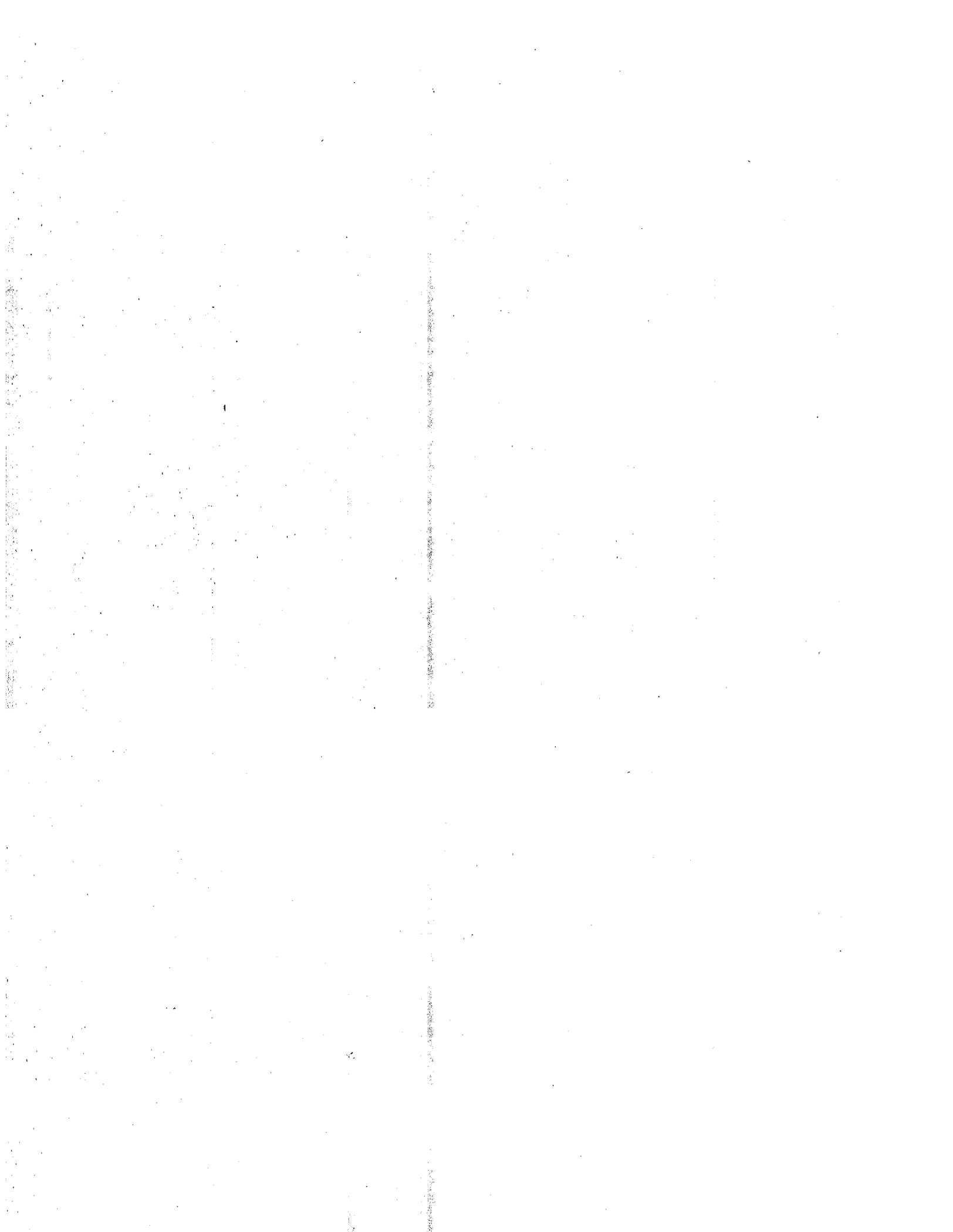
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

We recommend that DEA:

- Determine if additional agents can be assigned to foreign dangerous drug cases without detriment to DEA's overall objectives and on an interim basis insure that agents' efforts are directed at dangerous drug cases, as planned.
- Pursue efforts to obtain authenticics from Mexican firms to help identify the source of illicit pills originating in Mexico.
- Insure that drug control committees are kept abreast of drug problems affecting their countries, emphasizing those which significantly affect overall U.S. drug enforcement efforts.
- Encourage the committees to aggressively promote ratification of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances in respective countries and to work toward effective local drug control legislation.

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As noted on page 25, the Department of Justice said it could not provide definitive comments on the acceptability of our recommendations without further analysis.





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20530

January 15, 1974

Address Reply to the
Division Indicated
and Refer to Initials and Number

Mr. Daniel F. Stanton
Assistant Director
General Government Division
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Stanton:

This letter is in response to your request for comments on the draft report titled, "Identifying and Eliminating Sources of Dangerous Drugs: Efforts Being Made, But Not Enough."

We find generally that the report is a balanced, deliberative and sound reflection of several aspects of the dangerous drug enforcement problem. The report signifies accomplishment of a difficult task by focusing on the dangerous drug problem despite its complexity and discloses shortcomings worthy of our critical review.

To place the dangerous drug enforcement problem in proper perspective, however, it is important to understand that the report basically refers to enforcement operations under the former Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD). The prevailing climate in the entire Federal community, and indeed in the nation, over the past several years has emphasized heroin as the primary drug problem. As a consequence, the thrust of BNDD's program was directed primarily to enforcement actions against heroin traffickers. Because of this effort, the enforcement of dangerous drug laws received a lesser relative priority until February 1973.

When it became evident that enforcement actions against heroin traffickers were resulting in heroin shortages, an evaluation was undertaken to determine the necessary level of effort needed to continue the pressure on

heroin traffickers and at the same time shift attention and manpower to other areas of drug traffic. For example, because illicit methadone and amphetamine became drugs of choice in some regions, BNDD investigative targets were shifted accordingly.

With the reorganization of the Federal narcotics enforcement effort and the establishment of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), substantial steps have been and are being taken to further strengthen Federal enforcement efforts against dangerous drugs. DEA has implemented an active dangerous drugs program in its Domestic Investigations Division that increases the relative priority of effort to be expended on dangerous drug law enforcement. The new program establishes higher enforcement goals, stresses the need to develop intelligence and investigative leads, provides for closer monitoring of the national effort, and expands our Federal/State cooperative efforts against dangerous drug trafficking. Two promising task force operations are now in progress: one in the New England - New York area targeted toward clandestine methamphetamine; and one in Southern California involving suspects in the Mexican minibennie organization. At least two other task forces are planned.

While we recognize the significance of the matters brought to our attention in the report, we must be candid in pointing out that the dangerous drug enforcement program is a relatively new and highly innovative endeavor. We are continually conducting studies which result in revisions of the concepts and approaches needed to strengthen enforcement. As we gain experience our philosophy regarding the most effective enforcement approach changes. For this reason the report findings have been extremely helpful to us in the development of our enforcement approach. On the other hand, we are not able to provide definitive comments on the acceptability of the recommendations of the report without further analysis of the problems.

[See GAO note, p. 43.]

[See GAO note, p. 43.]

Based on experience, it is our contention that all drugs are part of a polydrug traffic and abuse pattern that constantly changes, and that our problem is

one of continuing to evaluate our priorities and programs and adjusting and improving our enforcement priorities and techniques to meet these changes. We believe DEA has taken positive and appropriate steps to recognize the current dangerous drug problem and is taking effective measures to improve its program.

We appreciate the opportunity afforded us to provide comments on the draft report.

Sincerely,



Glen E. Pommerening
Acting Assistant Attorney General
for Administration

GAO note: Deleted comments pertain to material presented in the draft report but deleted from the final report.

GAO REPORTS ON DRUG ENFORCEMENT

<u>Title</u>	<u>B-number</u>	<u>Date</u>
Efforts To Prevent Dangerous Drugs From Illicitly Reaching the Public	B-175425	4-17-72
Efforts To Prevent Heroin from Illicitly Reaching the United States	B-164031(2)	10-20-72
Heroin Being Smuggled Into New York City Successfully	B-164031(2)	12- 7-72
Difficulties in Immobilizing Major Narcotics Traffickers	B-175425	12-21-73

APPENDIX III

SOME REPORTS AND STUDIES CONSIDERED

IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

"Amphetamines: Fourth Report by the Select Committee on Crime." (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1971).

"Barbiturate Abuse in the United States; Report of the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary." (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, December 1972).

"A Comparative Analysis of Drug Use and Its Relationship to Certain Attitudes, Values, and Cognitive Knowledge on Drugs Between Eighth and Eleventh Grade Students in the Coronado Unified School District, Coronado, California." A Staff Report, June 1970.

"Drug Usage and Arrest Charges - A Study of Drug Usage and Arrest Charges Among Arrestees in Six Metropolitan Areas of the United States, December 1971." Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office).

"Drug Use in America: Problem in Perspective; Second Report of the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse." (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1973).

"Preliminary Evaluation, UCLA/Venice Drug Abuse Treatment and Research Project." By the Program Analysis and Development Unit, Department of Urban Affairs, University Extension, University of California, Los Angeles.

"Project Culver: Final Report of First Year Research and Community Activities (October 1970 - September 1971)." Sponsored by the Culver City Police Department, Culver City, California, and the Special Service for Groups, Inc.

"Stability and Change in Drug Use Patterns Among High School Students." by Michael Brown, California State University, Fullerton, 1970.

"A Study of Current Abuse and Abuse Potential of the Sedative-Hypnotic Derivatives of Barbiturate Acid with Control Recommendations." Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, October 24, 1972.

APPENDIX IV

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING

ACTIVITIES DISCUSSED IN THIS REPORT

	Tenure of office	
	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES:		
William B. Saxbe	Jan. 1974	Present
Robert H. Bork, Jr. (acting)	Oct. 1973	Jan. 1974
Elliot L. Richardson	May 1973	Oct. 1973
Richard G. Kleindienst	June 1972	Apr. 1973
Richard G. Kleindienst (acting)	Feb. 1972	June 1972
John N. Mitchell	Jan. 1969	Feb. 1972
Ramsey Clark	Oct. 1966	Jan. 1969
ADMINISTRATOR, DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION:		
John R. Bartels, Jr.	Oct. 1973	Present
John R. Bartels, Jr. (acting)	July 1973	Oct. 1973
DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS (note a):		
John E. Ingersoll	Aug. 1968	July 1973

^aThe activities discussed in the report were previously BNDD's responsibility. Effective July 1, 1973, BNDD was merged, along with several other Federal drug enforcement agencies, into the new DEA. All BNDD functions were transferred to DEA.

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