

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION
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SA Harry Felecos Lecture**

00:51:06;11 Q: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for taking time to be here this morning. My name is Shawn Ferns, part of the museum staff here at DEA headquarters. We are kicking off our Spring 2004 series of presentations. This is our third series, soon to be in syndication, I guess, if we keep this up.

00:51:24;05 Just a reminder that if you missed any of the previous series, on our web site we have copies of the transcripts from our previous eight speakers over the last two years. This Spring we're gonna have a series of four, one a month. Today we kick off with Special Agent Harry Felecos, talking about being undercover overseas in the Mediterranean.

00:51:44;11 After serving, just as a matter of introduction, after serving six years as a police officer in Indiana, Agent Felecos began his career with DEA in 1984. He was assigned to the Chicago Field Division, and in 1988 was re-assigned to the Athens, Greece, country office. Perry is a first generation Greek-American and speaks, reads,

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and writes Greek fluently.

00:52:12;08 After six years in Greece, Agent Felacos returned to the Chicago Field Division and was promoted to Group Supervisor. In 2000, Agent Felacos was re-assigned as Country Attache to the Nicosia Country Office, whose area of responsibility includes Cyprus, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria.

00:52:33;00 In 2001, Agent Felacos returned to DEA headquarters, and is currently assigned to the Office of International Operations as Staff Coordinator for Europe, Middle East, and Africa. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Perry Felecos.

00:52:56;21 A: Ladies and gentlemen, good morning. First of all I'd like to thank Shawn for that nice introduction, and second I'd like to thank all of you here for showing up this morning to listen to what I have to say. I want to take this opportunity today to share some of my experiences with you that I've had while assigned overseas and getting involved in some interesting

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investigations to include some of the undercover work that I was able to participate in.

00:53:25;20 I have to tell you that sometimes, looking back on my career, and where I've been with DEA, I truly feel blessed to have had such an opportunity to experience things in my life that I don't believe I ever would have had if it wasn't for this job. I always used to be the kind of person that always tried to plan things and set goals as to what I would like to do and accomplish in my life, whether it be personal or job-related.

00:53:55;26 And I don't think there is anything wrong in doing that, because it's always nice to have goals and strive for things to keep life interesting. But one thing that I found out for sure in my experiences is that you really, really never know exactly what life will bring you and where you're going to wind up, until it actually happens.

00:54:19;06 I found this to be very, very true with the various geographic locations I was able to visit and work at and experiences that I've been confronted with. Now, before

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I get into some of these escapades, I would first like to give you a short presentation on what I do in International Operations and what our unit is all about.

00:54:42;02 This will give you a little better understanding of how we operate internationally and how we assist our overseas offices abroad. These are our strategic objectives that we're confronted with and what we strive to achieve in the International Unit section. We identify and prioritize the most significant international drug trafficking organizations.

00:55:06;11 We attempt to disrupt the networks, the operations, and the resource bases of targeted international drug trafficking organizations. We dismantle those domestic organizations that are directly affiliated with international cartels, and we identify and target national regional organizations responsible for domestic manufacturing and distribution of drugs.

00:55:32;19 Now this chart here, this map, will actually show the international heroin trafficking flows. As you can see,

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we have the source countries here, mainly South America and Columbia, Guatemala, Mexico, Lebanon; Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan, which is known as the Golden Crescent; and then in the Far East, Burma, Laos, and Thailand, which we refer to as the Golden Triangle.

00:56:00;09

The flows of the arrows indicate and show how the drugs are trafficked through and transit via air or by sea to various regions around the world. Now, when I was in Europe, assigned to Athens, Greece, most of the heroin that I was confronted with or dealing in was based out of Southwest Asia. Again, Afghanistan being a main producer of opium and what have you.

00:56:29;23

The chart here shows how it transits through the various countries up and through the -stans, up through Russia, down up along the Arabian Sea, up through the Red Sea, to various countries, as Turkey, where it's brought to and manufactured in clandestine labs as heroin, and then following through to Western Europe and the rest of the world onward and upward.

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00:56:53;14 This map here shows basically where, or how cocaine gets trafficked and routed through source countries, primarily South America -- Columbia, Bolivia, Peru. Again, the red areas will depict and show the transiting routes of how they go across the ocean via container vessels or by air cargo into various countries through Western Europe, down into the continent of Africa, and back through up along Mexico and into the United States.

00:57:28;17 This map shows how MGMA, Ecstasy, amphetamines, those type of narcotics are transited and where they generate from. We find a big amount of them coming out of the regions of the Netherlands, up by the Hague, and again, the arrows show how they transit through to various countries, going all the way down to Southeast Asia and on the other side across the ocean, down into South America, upward through Mexico, and back into the United States and up through Canada.

00:58:01;05 In our unit in the International Operations office, this is the structure of how we operate. We have a Chief of the section, or unit, who is Mr. Martin Pracht, and under

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him is the Deputy Chief of International Operations, who is Mr. Jeffrey Stam. It's also broken down into various other units and sections. We have our Visitors' Program Office, OFV.

00:58:24;08 The ladies that work there are responsible for setting up briefings and meetings with foreign dignitaries and officials who happen to come to headquarters and visit with out administrator and get briefed on operations concerning their areas of the world. We also have our section with the Liaison Officers with other federal agencies such as US Customs, Internal Revenue Service, Department of Defense, State Department officials.

00:58:54;25 Then our sections are broken down geographically, as you can see, by units. One being the one I work in, the Europe, Africa, and Middle East section, otherwise known as OFE. We also have Mexico and Central America, which is known as OFC. The Far East, OFF. South America, OFL. The Caribbean islands, OFI.

00:59:18;18 And then we have our administrative support section, OFA,

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who assists and helps our overseas agents and personnel in administrative matters. Our OF functions are as such: We serve as the principle advisor to the Chief of Operations, the Deputy Administrator and Administrator in all matters pertaining to DEA's international mission and related functional areas.

00:59:46;15 We also work with DEA country offices to establish mission priorities and objectives, and we monitor and provide guidance for international enforcement programs.

We also direct the administration of all country offices, and we coordinate with DEA Headquarters. We coordinate DEA's international operations with domestic offices and other federal agencies, also.

01:00:12;02 We serve as a point of contact between DEA Headquarters and US agencies overseas. We also serve as the DEA point of contact for participation in various international organizations. Now, when our agents go abroad or overseas and are assigned to various country offices, they work under the direction of the ambassador and the mission of our US embassy.

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01:00:40;05 This is how it's actually structured. The ambassador is the Chief of Mission. We work under the auspices of him and his Deputy Chief of Mission, or the DCM. Then within the embassy, you have certain other various sections: other agencies such as us, DEA; you also have a consular section, and administrative section, State Department will have their economic and political sections there, and United States Information Systems and various other US agencies.

01:01:08;14 Now, the political section is important to us with the State Department, because usually they will task one of their officers to be a narcotics coordinator. We work very close with them in promoting programs or schools and seminars for host country officials. It's also one route that we pursue to obtain funding through INL or what have your for equipment and training for our counterparts.

01:01:39;14 This map here basically shows you how our offices are located geographically around the world. We have approximately 58 country offices and 21 resident offices.

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As you can see from this map here, the red dots signify country offices and the green dots are resident offices.

What I mean by that is, for example, the red dots are usually offices located in embassies or in the capitals of that country.

01:02:10;21 For example, in Ankara, we have our US Embassy there in Ankara, but yet we have another DEA office in Istanbul which is considered the resident office. It's out of the consulate building. Same goes for Rome. We have the Rome office out of the US Embassy in Rome, Italy, but they also have their satellite resident office in Milan.

01:02:37;22 These are some of our country office functions. Our agents there, in conjunction with the host government officials, we also work bilateral or multilateral investigative activities or investigations. We never work unilaterally abroad. We always share our intelligence information.

01:02:53;16 We try to work together with our counterparts, whether they be police, customs, coast guard authorities or what

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have you. I'm very proud to say, being overseas and having the opportunity to go to other country offices for various investigations or cases, that DEA has always had an outstanding relationship with our host counterparts.

01:03:17;06 We work very well together and we've been very successful in making very significant investigations worldwide. We also support our US domestic investigations. We do this by coordinating intelligence gathering. By the intelligence that we're able to obtain overseas, we make sure that we disseminate it to the very country offices, whether they're abroad or domestically, in furtherance of an investigation.

01:03:45;10 We make get a bit of information or a piece of information there, that somehow links together. By putting it out into the field and making sure that the appropriate offices are aware of this, we can come to a successful indictment of defendants or investigation. It all pieces together like a puzzle. So we're constantly putting out cables.

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01:04:05;16 We're constantly furnishing intelligence information and hoping that somebody can pick up on something that may help them significantly in another investigation that they're either working or working jointly with their counterparts. We also engage in foreign liaison functions. We also coordinate training for host police agencies out of the academy, DEA Academy.

01:04:31;22 We have out international training unit who works very closely with out offices overseas. They continuously sponsor and put on seminars or specialized training for host counterpart officials, narcotics officers. And that can be both here, domestically in the United States, and also in country, abroad.

01:04:52;16 We also assist in the development of host country drug-enforcement institutions. In some of our newer offices that we have abroad, we've implemented and have initiated sensitive investigation units, SIUs. This is in conjunction with funding from the State Department, INL, where we attempt to get trained officers in-country that are vetted, and train them and specialize them in

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narcotics investigations to start somewhat of what we would consider like a semi task force, where they work together jointly as a unit on major investigations.

01:05:35;08 This has worked out to be very successful for us. This pie chart here actually shows the breakdown of the personnel we have here in DEA. We have approximately, probably a little more than what's depicted here. This is maybe a couple years old. But we're probably close to 4800 people in our agency, 3200, approximately, being professional, administrative, and technical and clerical support.

01:06:05;11 We have approximately 4600 agents; 259 chemists, as you can see; 523 diversion investigators; and approximately 700 intelligence analysts. Now, this chart shows you overseas our breakdown. We have approximately close to 400 -- maybe a little over, right now -- agents overseas. Another 125 of professional, administrative, technical and clerical support. Approximately 70 intelligence analysts, and approximately a couple dozen to twelve diversion investigators worldwide.

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- 01:06:50;21 What we've begun to do overseas is we've started this regionalization of DEA overseas and enforcement efforts. And the concept is a transnational approach. What we do is we focus on priority trafficking organizations impacting respective regions, whether it be in Europe, the Middle East, or Far East.
- 01:07:11;03 The way we have it broken down is we have six Regional Directors and one SAC, the SAC being Mr. Martin Pracht, here in Headquarters. In my section of Europe, the Middle Eastern-Africa section, we have two regional directors, one being based out of Rome, which is Mr. Richard Fiano, and the other being Mr. James Clunin out of Ankara.
- 01:07:35;14 Now, as you can see, the green areas signify the regions that are under the Regional Director in Rome, which are mostly Western Europe, Canada, and part of the African continent. Mr. Clunin picks up the rest of part of the Middle East and Southwest Asia. These are country and resident offices in Europe, as you can see.

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01:08:02;15 Again, the red dots signifying where we have country offices out of embassies, and the resident offices, the green dots, signifying consulate offices of satellite offices within that country. Continuing in our areas of the Middle East and Africa, these are our offices that we have worldwide.

01:08:35;23 This is the number of personnel that we actually have in our Europe, Middle East, and Africa section or country offices. There's approximately 90 agents right now. That may have been enhanced to some degree, since that time, with new requests for personnel in various offices in the Middle East.

01:08:52;29 Probably another 10 to 15 intelligence analysts and a handful of diversion investigators and another approximately 30 administrative and support and clerical people. Okay, that's basically the breakdown of what we do in International Operations. I would like to discuss and show you now some slides of some investigations that I was involved with once I was overseas. (B roll)

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01:10:31;00 One thing I'd like to stress before I get into this. When I first got on in law enforcement in '78, I really enjoyed my job on the police department. I had a lot of excitement. It was fun to answer calls, be the first one at the scene regarding a hot call. Getting involved in a hot pursuit. It was just a pleasure every day, putting on that uniform and going to work.

01:10:54;22 There's days and times when I really miss that. But eventually, when I came to DEA, I wanted a little more responsibility. I felt I wanted a little more action, or the desire to get more involved in investigations. So I was fortunate to be having the opportunity to come to DEA. Like every other agent, I went to the Academy, graduated.

01:11:18;19 When you're down there, you have the experience of learning from other well-seasoned agents who are down there as instructors, who teach you the ropes as far as what needs to be done when you do this or you do that. A big part of an agent's responsibility at times is

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undercover work.

01:11:38;12 Now, I never had an opportunity or chance to do undercover work until I came to DEA. But I remember the things that were mentioned down at training. I remember the things of what my senior partners and agents have taught me when I got involved, going back to Chicago. And I always kept it in the back of my head.

01:11:59;05 I said, well, if I ever have that opportunity, I know I have to do this or I have to do that, or I should be aware of this or I should be aware of that. It's something that I always appreciated, because it was a growing experience for me to have good mentors and instructors and senior partners that showed me the ropes as to what needs to be done.

01:12:16;22 Not only for my own protection, but for the protection of other agents that would be on the scene when these things occurs. So when I came out of the Academy, I was assigned to an enforcement group in Chicago and this group was really rocking and rolling. They were all

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senior agents, the majority of them.

01:12:38;02 Chicago was basically a hub for Mexican heroin at the time, and we had a major family or organization known as the Herrera Organization, which was responsible for smuggling and transporting a lot of the heroin up to the Chicago region and then it would be disseminated or smuggled through to other cities within the United States -- Detroit, Los Angeles, whatever.

01:13:04;05 So I was teamed up with this partner. His name was Rolly Lopez. I never forget Rolly, God bless him, he since now has passed, but he taught me things that I always in time, whether it be a day or a month or a year later, something always comes up that I remember what he told me and what stuck in my head.

01:13:23;02 It was always one thing -- because he did a lot of extensive cover work, undercover work -- he said you always should have a good cover story. You never know when you're going to be put in a position or a situation where you may have to come up with some answers and try

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to sell that bad guy as to what you're all about or where you're coming from or what you're doing.

01:13:40;25 So in many cases, as you know, DEA employees here, we work a lot of buy/bust cases. What I mean by that, it might just be a quick deal on the street where an informant might introduce you to somebody. You don't really get into the extent of where you're from and what have you, that's just the way it is.

01:13:56;04 The main thing is, they're greedy, they want your money, they want to sell you a quick ounce or a kilo or whatever it is, and they're on their way. And most of our cases are quick like that. But, there's a good percentage and a good majority of cases which individuals and agents get involved in that are very complex, very time-consuming, and could go on for maybe even sometimes over a year, if it involves wire-taps, obtaining intelligence information through intercepts, following up on other countries or locations where other people may be involved or connected with these organizations that you're targeting.

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01:14:33;18 So, here I am, a fresh young agent out of DEA Academy. I get thrown into this group that's rocking and rolling. We get an informant that comes in one day and tells my partner, well, I know these two guys that are OC figures -- what he meant was traditional organized-crime individuals of Italian descent.

01:14:53;05 My partner knew most of them, the majority of the players in the Chicago region. He worked a lot of undercover extensively on a lot of these organizations, also, and members, so he knew who the players were. So he said, okay, this sounds pretty good, but we're really tied up with some other cases. So he's telling the rest of the guys in the group, what we'll do is we'll just knock this off real quick.

01:15:13;17 We'll bust this guy out, we'll arrest him. Then if they roll or whoever's involved, we'll go off on a spin-off investigation or see what it develops. So the informant comes in. We debrief him. We find out that he knows two individuals that are heavily connected with some heavy players in the Mob.

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01:15:34;01 We set it up where we meet with them at a restaurant. The same day, we're busy running around setting up an operation plan, making sure that pre-surveillance is set up at the restaurant where we were going to have the meet in the parking lot. I'm running around like a new agent, doing this, doing that, doing whatever I'm told to do.

01:15:54;08 I'm serializing a flash roll to make sure that we could have a good amount of cash to show in good faith that we're interested and we're righteous and we're ready to do this deal. So we get all this prepared, and I'm thinking, okay, I'm going to team up with somebody and I'll be out there running surveillance.

01:16:09;18 Well, my partner tells me, hey my man, come here, you're going to be the money man. I said, what? He said, you're going to be the money man. You're going to come with me, I'm going to be the buyer. You're going to be with me in the car, and all you have to do is show the money. Well, I'm nervous as hell.

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01:16:21;11 I'm thinking, Jesus, Rolly, what's my cover story, what's my cover story? What am I going to say? What if they ask me this, what if they ask me that? He's looking at me, he's saying, kid, just shut up! All you got to do is sit there and show the money if you're asked to do that. Okay. So we get to the meet location.

01:16:36;29 I'm sitting in the car. I've got about \$100,000 in the bag. I'm nervous as hell. I'm thinking, oh my god. Some guys like the Sopranos are going to show up. They're going to roll us, they're going to take our money. What am I going to do, this and that. And I was very, very nervous, very, very excited, because it was the first time that I ever got involved in doing anything like this.

01:16:56;14 To make a long story short, the informant shows up at the restaurant, my partner meets him at the restaurant, they go inside, he introduces them to two individuals, they sit down and talk. One of the individuals starts coming out of the restaurant with my partner, approaching the car where I'm sitting with the money.

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01:17:14;24 In the meantime, we had everything controlled. We had the parking lot covered. We had surveillance agents in vehicles. We had a van set up to jump out and make the bust and the arrest of it went down. So I'm sitting there all nervous and this and that, and I'm waiting for these guys to come. And I'm thinking, oh boy, they're going to want to see the money.

01:17:32;00 They might start talking to me. What's my cover story? What's my cover story? So they come, and as I see them approaching, I see my partner, I see the informant, and I seen this old man, about 90 years old -- now, it's a cold day in Chicago and he's got this surgical mask on to help him breathe. I'm looking at him and I'm going, wow, this must be the Don.

01:17:59;09 He must be the big cheese! He's coming here to do the deal himself! And I see this old man, and he's walking up to the car, and he knocks on the window, I roll the window down, he says, hey, how you doing. I said, fine. He goes, you got the money? I said, sure, I got the

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money. He says, let me take a peek.

01:18:14;12 I open the bag, he sees the money. He goes, okay, I'll be right back. He shuffles along again, goes back to the restaurant, makes a phone call -- apparently he was calling his source to bring the kilo of coke that we were after. As we're waiting around, we see another car drive up eventually. The two old men are talking together with the informant and my partner.

01:18:36;28 The car rolls up. The old man that came to my car goes up to this other car goes up to this other vehicle. There's a little discussion that ensues, and a package is taken from the vehicle and given to the old man. Well, my partner then approaches them and says, listen, before I give you the money, I gotta take a peak.

01:18:54;04 I want to check out the package, the cocaine. So they said, okay. So right then and there they show him the cocaine. He looks at it. Through his experience he was able to determine that it was cocaine. A field test was conducted later. But, what happened was, he gives the

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arrest signal, all the agents jump out, the arrest goes down, hands up, you're under arrest, lay down, blah blah blah.

01:19:15;04 The poor old man is sitting there and he's ready to have a heart attack. I'm feeling so bad, I'm thinking, my god, we're going to kill this guy. He's just an old man, he's 90 years old, what are we going to do with him. It would be a shame to put him in jail, if he lived that long.

01:19:31;14 Anyway, thank god, Ernie Rizzo, which was his name, makes it through, composes himself. He goes through the booking process. I'm real excited and happy in the beginning of that day to go home and tell my parents, wow, you know I did my first undercover role and it was organized crime and this and that. And they were aware of me being involved in something, but they obviously were excited to hear the outcome of it, too.

01:19:57;21 So when I went home that night, my dad goes, hey, what happened with that case? I go, oh, well, we arrested

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some Mob guys, two, three guys total, and this and that.

One guy, he almost died! He goes, no kidding! He goes, what happened? You guys have a shootout or what? I go, no, I think he was going to have a heart attack.

01:20:15;04 My dad goes, what do you mean? Did you guys beat him up or what? I said, no, I said he was 90 years old, he was shocked that we arrested him! I thought he was going to die. So obviously, my dad got a kick out of that. I started laughing, I said, hey, what are you going to do, you know? It was my first experience.

01:20:32;13 Eventually there were several others down the line, and each time you do one, you become a little more confident, you become a little more braver. You learn through your mistakes and you build your confidence. There's more things that you build on to -- not only for safety factors, but to prepare yourself for the next time.

01:20:48;25 So 1988 comes around and I have an opportunity to go overseas to Greece. I'm tickled pick. I said, my god, what an honor. What a rewarding experience for me to be

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able to go back to a country that my parents were immigrants from, and to go back there and not only work, but to live and be together with my relatives, which I had 90% of them living there.

01:21:08;29 So it was like a second home. It was great! I get to the office. I meet the new country attaché, who also had arrived there a couple months prior to me. And eventually we go and we make our contacts with the Greek National Police, the customs, the coast guard, and we build a very strong working relationship.

01:21:29;13 They were not only friends, but real good co-workers that we could count on each other and share information and try and do cases. So my first experience overseas was this. We have an informant who comes to the office and he says -- he was Lebanese -- he said, I know these Lebanese individuals who are living on the Island of Icaria.

01:21:51;16 Now the Island of Icaria is off the coast of Greece in the Ionian side of the sea. It's not a very large

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island, but yet it's inhabited. Many people live there year around. So I said, okay, how are we going to do this? What do you know about the guy? He says, will, I might him in Athens and he was looking for people to sell hashish to.

01:22:14;10 I understand he has a good quantity of hashish which is very high quality. I told him I have a buyer who's interested and I could introduce you to him. I said, okay, we'll do this. Now, the problem was how were we going to get to the island without being recognized or compromised.

01:22:34;28 None of us were really that familiar with the island, but when you go to these islands, everybody knows everybody there. There are usually small fishing villages along the island there, or people or businesses who know most of the residents there. So we came up with a game plan and we said, okay, we'll have a handful of officers from the narcotics unit go out there two-three days beforehand and act as hunter, that they were going there on a hunting excursion.

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01:22:57;28 So they went there with their shotguns, all their gear packed. They went to a local hotel. They spent a couple nights there. They put their van on a ferry boat so they could have transportation. The thing was, that I would then appear on the island with the informant to be introduced to this individual a couple days later.

01:23:17;26 So I eventually get there with the informant. He has a phone number. He calls the person and they tell him that he lives on the other side of the island over these big mountainous areas and what have you. So we said, okay, we'll get there. What we'll do is we'll hire some local for transportation with a truck. Excuse me, let me take that back, this happened later.

01:23:39;20 We eventually hired somebody to drive us over to the location. What happened was, as he was driving us to the location, the other officers in the van followed in pursuit a distance back, just keeping us within sight, to cover me and the informant in case anything went wrong or bad. So we eventually get to this house.

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01:24:04;10 The informant knocks on the door. An individual comes out who happens to be of Lebanese ethnicity, and he's talking to him in their language. The guy knew very little English, but I was introduced to him as a friend of the informant's from the States that was looking to make a connection and get some high-quality hashish.

01:24:20;12 A little discussion ensues between us. I tell him I have the money, I'm ready to go, but the problem is, how much do you have that I could buy? He said, well, I have 500 kilos. I said, oh wow, that sounds great, but I've got to check it out, I'd like to see it. He takes me in the back of the house.

01:24:41;05 There's this little chicken coop. He opens up these plastic barrel drums, and as soon as he opened it, the scent, or the strong odor of the hashish just hit me. You could smell that high-quality resin. So I said, whoa, it smells good, it looks good. I felt it, it was very pliable, like a plaque of clay.

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01:24:57;22 I said, okay, here's what I'll do. I need to go back down to the post and hire a truck, because what we're going to do is we're going to transport this on a truck and we'll be back to pick it up and I'll bring you the money. In the meantime, he's waiting and he walks me out to the front of the house.

01:25:15;23 We had a pre-arranged signal among the police officers where if they saw me in sight and I was to do a certain action like take off my sunglasses or something, that would indicate that I saw the narcotics and that we were ready to make the appropriate arrest. So that's what happened. I walked out, I saw the van down the block.

01:25:33;02 I take off my glasses. They zoom up. They pop out of the van with machine guns and hand guns. One of the officers runs up to the defendant real quick and gets him in a headlock and takes him down. In the meantime, this guy's screaming left and right. What happened was, they first took control of the defendant. They busted into the house, secured the residence.

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01:25:55;25 This individual that they tackled down thought that he was actually being ripped off, or that we were going to either kill him or take him for the hashish, and he didn't realize that we were police officers. But eventually down the line, somebody finally said, Policia, which triggered in his mind that, oh, it's the police.

01:26:13;13 It was kind of comical to see him so relieved, thinking that, oh, you're police, okay. He didn't mind getting arrested or going to jail. He actually feared that we were going to kill him. So, as we secure the residence and go inside, we find a grandmother sitting on the couch. We find a houseful of other Lebanese individuals sitting around.

01:26:36;22 We later find out that the grandmother who lived at the residence was actually the main kingpin of this little group of traffickers. Now, eventually she's arrested. In Greece -- that's another thing that I can get into, but I'll make it short -- when you're in another country, you play by their rules and their laws

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01:27:00;06 We have a lot of investigative tools at our hands here. Through the court system we're authorized to do wiretaps and what have you. But over there it's a different game. As much as we have our hands tied to some extent, working in another country overseas and not being able to do the things we would like to do, they sometimes have more difficulties.

01:27:20;10 But on the other hand, sometimes they have an easier method of doing things which is to our benefit. So they go in, they arrest everybody. They're transporting them all now to the other side of the village where there's a local prosecutor that had them come over on ferryboat from a neighboring larger village that had that jurisdiction.

01:27:38;20 It was a rainy night. It was thundering. We're going back up through the hills on this truck and this van, transporting everybody. This lady who was arrested, the grandmother that I referred to, had a son who was a boat captain. He had a vessel that was called the Dombasco, it was a fishing trawler.

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01:28:00;03 He was the one that was responsible that she would make go to Lebanon, load up with hashish, bring back to the island. They would store it under the planks of the their floors in the residence, and then find prospective buyers such as I supposedly was to buy their hash and take it onward out.

01:28:20;10 This lady eventually gets arrested, and this is her. You can actually see she doesn't seem too happy in this picture. This is an article from a Greek newspaper, and on the bottom is actually says (GREEK LANGUAGE), which literally translates into, Female Don Corleone, Age 75, Arrested.

01:28:42;18 Now you gotta love the Greek news, press, because they love to play up on these matters and things. But anyway, it was a good investigation, because we wound up arresting these Lebanese traffickers who she was harboring at her residence. Down the line, her son was actually reported as a fugitive.

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01:29:06;07 Interpol had a red notice, or he was wanted in connection for this crime, for transporting and bringing in hashish to the island there, to Greece. So he was on the lam. He was out on his trawler. He was in international waters. We never really found him, till later on down the line, we have another informant who comes to me one day.

01:29:25;28 This is about eight months later. And says, you know, I know a lot of people in the fishing industry and in merchant vessels and what have you, and there's an individual who has approximately two tons of cocaine that he wants to offload or sell. So obviously two tons of cocaine, wow, this is a pretty good grab. Let's see what we could do with this.

01:29:48;27 We later find out that the two tons being transported back to Greece was her son, George (unint.). So her son George now, we're trying to see how we can fit this in. The informant was very solid. He was very well trusted among these traffickers because he was involved prior to some of these ventures before he got arrested.

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01:30:12;14 So he still had a good name with them. He apparently met George through another source who vouched for him. So we set it up where, through the informant, we tell him you have to make contact with this guy and tell him that we're ready to accept his offload in open waters off the southern coast of Greece.

01:30:33;21 So we had the coast guard involved. We had them come out with their boats staged within coves around the designated area. We had the coordinates set up where they were in communication by radio, when to appear and when to meet with us to get his offloaded and then make the appropriate arrests and seizures.

01:30:52;07 So we spent a good two weeks on this, organizing it, sending the people down, monitoring his locations until he was able to come to us off the coast of Greece. But again, to make a long story short, what happened was we waited out there for two days and apparently there was no communication. There was no contact. We figured, well, for whatever reason, the guy just didn't show up.

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01:31:17;05 We never saw the boat. We later find out that the following day the Turkish authorities seized his vessel as he was in international waters and close to their coast, and he had the Greek flag that he was flying under. So the Turkish authorities approached the vessel, they found him, they found the cocaine.

01:31:35;10 They pulled him in, they seized it. It was reported by the Ankara country office. But thank god for documentation, because we were smart enough to document these on cables, this information, send the appropriate intelligence information to the states, coordinate with the Department of Defense, I think it was at the time, who helped monitor the vessel at some point.

01:31:54;19 But we eventually said, hey, okay, you guys got the grab, but we knew about this, we initiated it. So we got credit for it, too, so it all worked out well. But getting back to Grandma Corleone here. This was an article that was in the papers after interviewing some of the defendants, and, if I can make this out here, they

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state: "She arranged everything, he said. She organized the shipments of the drugs, all the comings and goings."

01:32:25;25 So she eventually was prosecuted and charged. I can't remember what her sentence was, but she did go to jail. Another kick I got out of the Greek press was one paper always likes to outdo the other. So now here we have Mama Corleone. In this one they refer to her as the 'Mama Dalton of Narcotics.'

01:32:45;27 Here in this picture they have her being interviewed by the prosecutor who does the actual interviews of the defendants. It looks like she's doing her best to deny any wrongdoing. This was another case where I was fortunate to have a pretty good informant who introduced me to another Lebanese trafficker who had a -- he operated a Lebanese cafe out of the city of Athens in another suburb.

01:33:21;16 So I met with this individual. The informant vouched for me as a prospective buyer. He had two kilos of heroin he wanted to sell. So we met one evening in this district.

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We discussed how we were going to do this and feeling each other out. But again, I somewhat felt cursed because the guy was like 69-70 years old and I just couldn't get away from this Geritol organization!

01:33:47;14 It was always an old individual, a senior citizen that I wound up arresting. I said, my luck's got to change here somewhere. I was feeling bad! So he comes to me, the evening, we meet. I utilized what we had. The narcotics unit in Greece had a cab driver, it was a police officer under cover as a cab driver. We utilized his cab, like a Yellow Cab, but it was whatever cab of Athens.

01:34:15;24 He drives me to this location, and I said, okay, here's the game plan. You guys will conduct surveillance when I meet with this individual because we don't know who else is going to be involved. I was sitting in the cab and I got out. I had him park it about a half a block away from the location.

01:34:31;14 When I met this individual at night, he again approached me and he said, well, do you have the money. I said yes

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we do. We had, again, a flash roll. I said, I have it nearby, but before I show it to you I want to make sure you have the narcotics and I want to see the heroin. So he goes okay, I'll be right back.

01:34:46;14 Well, surveillance agents observe him meeting with another individual somewhere down the block, around the corner of a building. He is handed a bag, a brown bag. He comes walking back to me and in the meantime, as I'm ready to meet with him again, the Greek National Police observe other individuals walking around the area that they could pick up on that were counter-surveillance or either with this guy or working for him.

01:35:13;14 That's another thing, where we're proud of the fact that we train a lot of the counterparts of these various countries where they're aware of how we want investigations, how narcotics cases come about, the importance of being sharp enough to pick up on something that just doesn't look right in an area when you're doing a deal.

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01:35:34;28 They were sharp enough to pick up on these individuals that were kind of looking around and checking us out. We didn't know to what extent they were involved until we made the arrests. So what happened is the gentleman comes back to me, the defendant, with the bag of heroin. I walk him over to the cab. We get inside.

01:35:52;11 I said, okay, I'm going to take a look at this real good, and then I've got the money in the trunk of the cab. I'll get it and you can count it in the back seat here. So he goes, what about this guy here? I said don't worry about him, meaning the cab driver. I said, I paid him good money. He's sitting here until we're done and we're through.

01:36:08;03 So the arrest signal again was if I were to get out of the car and approach the trunk, that I had the heroin and it was checked out and what have you. And that's what happened. When the arrest came down, the officers approached us, they apprehended the individual, and they were able to catch these four other cronies that you see sitting here in the picture.

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- 01:36:32;03 Actually, when they were apprehended, two of them were armed with handguns. So at the time, we don't really know if their intentions were to either to protect their interests or possibly lure me to an area where either I could get killed or shot or what have you, or abducted, and rip us off for the money. But those things happen. That was what happened in that case.
- 01:36:54;15 This is just another quick case. I'm just running through, I'm not going to tie up too much of your time. But they were kind of interesting to see how we work and how we were able to piece it together with domestic offices. These two individuals were arrested for 8-1/2 kilos of heroin.
- 01:37:09;23 The individual on the right was a fireman in an area of a village up by the northern part of Greece that bordered Turkey. There was a river, the Ebro River, which runs across that area, and as much as the Greeks and the Turks are at odds at each other because of various political reasons, it always amazed me that how they were best of

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friends when it came down to making money.

01:37:31;00 This fireman would take his rowboat and meet halfway out into the river, and meet a Turkish contact that he had that would come over and provide him with heroin. So they were doing this consistently, and then they would utilize it, excuse me, then they would transport it -- the gentleman on the right, George, I think his name was George, he would bring it to this individual here, who's name was Dimitri.

01:37:57;04 Dimitri, now, had two sons that lived in New York. The Greek police knew somewhat of him, but they didn't know his extent in any involvement specifically with narcotics. We later find out that the Greeks are analyzing his toll records and what have you and that he's making several calls to New York.

01:38:14;15 We send the information to New York, the New York office verifies the numbers and gets us subscriber information and finds out that he's calling two individuals who we believed at the time were his sons, with the same last

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name. The New York Police Department is aware of his sons being involved as traffickers of narcotics in New York, but they never knew who their source was and where he was getting it.

01:38:36;03

So slowly we pieced all the pieces of the puzzle together. We found out who was who, who was contacting who, who was getting the heroin, where it was going, and what Mr. Caparonis here, Demetrios, as he's called, what he was doing. He had a connection with a merchant marine, a sailor on merchant vessels that would leave the port of Piraus in Greece, and be bound with cargo from time to time, to New York.

01:39:02;14

So what he would do is he would provide it to this individual. He would stash it or smuggle it on the vessel, and once it got to New York, they would transport it and make arrangements for his sons to pick up. Well, the interesting thing about this as this case was going on, is that we kept in communication with the New York authorities and our DEA people.

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01:39:21;12 They were up on wires. Mr. Caparonis in Greece, every time he made a delivery or knew that the stuff had arrived in the United States, he would call his sons at a specific time every other day. When he would do this, he would go to a specific location at a local kiosk and use that phone. He would never talk narcotics from his residence.

01:39:45;04 You'd always hear him say, because the Greeks monitored his residence also, I'll call you back and I'll give you some information, hang on. And he would go to this local kiosk and make his calls. Well, here's where the benefit of working in another country with different rules applies. They don't have to go the extent of getting court orders and authorize the wire taps.

01:40:03;07 They pretty much did what they wanted to, but with special permission from a prosecutor on a case-by-case basis. So their hands were not tied by legal affidavits and warrants and what have you to get and authorize a thirty-day wire or intercept or whatever. So what they did was, basically, what their wire tap was, was a little

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recorder that they would tap into the main box of where that line ran through.

01:40:31;03 It was voice activated. It wasn't even anything like they would sit there and monitor these calls as they would go on. They would go there daily or every half-hour or whatever they deemed necessary, take out the recorder, listen to it, and then pass the information along.

01:40:45;09 So it was through this method that we were able to find out what vessel it was coming on, what day, what time the shipment was coming to. Surveillance was set up on the New York end domestically, where they monitored and kept surveillance on the sons. They put the connection together as to when they met with this merchant marine, sailor.

01:41:03;19 And they eventually arrested the individuals at a hotel where they were going to meet and split up the narcotics and pay the amount for the transportation. So it's just a prime example of how well things can be put together

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based on information you obtain here and put it together at the right place there. That was the interesting thing about this case.

01:41:25;08 This last case I'm going to talk to you about was something that I was very proud of being involved in because of the extent of the undercover and the, how can I put it, the way I was able to present myself to this defendant in making him believe what I wanted him to believe.

01:41:43;22 We had an informant who came to us and said, look, I'm a mutual friend of an American who comes to Greece periodically. They're kind of a fast crowd, they like to go out and party and this and that. They hang around with some cronies in Greece, one of them being this individual here. His name was Simos Aladzaz.

01:42:02;03 Simos was known, not really known but from we learned from the informant, was involved in carrying, or being able to provide, multi kilos of heroin for sale. The Greek police knew of the name but they didn't know that

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much about this guy, other than he was an associate of some other thugs in town.

01:42:24;01 So we set up a meet with this guy through the informant.

I knew it would be a long, kind of a long-term case. It wasn't just going to be a buy/bust thing. From I understand, this guy was pretty shrewd. He was very careful on the moves he made, who he would meet with. Again, that's one thing were we really count on our informants as our bread and butter.

01:42:47;11 Because unless you have a solid informant who can get you into an organization or vouch for you as being a buyer of heroin or narcotics or whatever, it's very difficult sometimes to get into these organizations or individuals.

So we used the ruse that the informant knew me as an American Greek, residing in the states, who comes to Athens occasionally during the summers for vacation and was part of this fast crowd of associates that this guy knew some of the players.

01:43:14;00 We discussed the issues. I told him, I said look, Simos,

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I'm in town here, I'm looking to score for something big.

I said, I'd like to talk to you some time if you have the opportunity and I understand through the informant that you can help me out on some matters. He said, okay, let's do that.

01:43:34;22 So, again, going back to what you learn at the Academy about having a good cover story, I always utilize the story that, taking advantage of my Greek ethnicity and being able to speak the language fluently. Even though I spoke it fluently, a real true Greek could actually tell that I'm from the States because of the words, the way that I pronunciation [sic] them as far as the dialect.

01:43:56;02 So I never would really try to pawn myself off as a true Greek. I also say I'm a Greek-American. But I would tell them that I was born in Greece and that I left the country and came to the States at a young age and was basically raised in the United States. But that I still had my contacts, my relatives, and what have you.

01:44:15;05 Now when I met this guy, you always try and think I don't

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want this case to be compromised in anyway, but one of the first initial meets we had was at this location here.

Now this is in front of the Greek Parliament and it's just a famous tourist location, where it's the changing of the guard in front of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

01:44:37;12 Well, across the street -- you really can't tell from this shot, because this is just a close-up shot of the memorial itself -- across the street there's a Constitution Square which is a big tourist hangout, a lot of outdoor cafes. The Grand Britannia Hotel is across the street. A local MacDonald's, what have you.

01:44:56;16 So I figured it would be a good location to first meet with this guy in an open area so he doesn't feel uncomfortable or like he's getting set up. And I'm sitting there across the street from this location and we're on the corner. And as I'm talking to this defendant, a bus goes by, a local bus.

01:45:14;17 And all of a sudden I see this guy hanging out of the window and he's yelling and calling to me in Greek

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(GREEK), say hello, how are you, in Greek. And he's pulling out this little hanky and he's waving it. Now I'm looking at the guy and my jaw is about to fall down and I'm thinking what in the world?

01:45:32;09 I'm looking at him, I'm looking at him, I finally realize it happened to be the cook at the US Embassy in the cafeteria. So he obviously knew who I was, but he didn't really know what I did, as being involved in narcotics. Many of these foreign state nationals that get hired on at embassies, they don't really care, they just mind their own business because they know that sometimes people are in sensitive situations or positions.

01:45:53;07 But he didn't put two and two together and he didn't know that I was a narcotics officer, so he was trying to be polite. He obviously had ended his shift and he was on his way home and he's pulling one of these numbers! So I'm talking to the defendant and he's looking at me and he's, you know this guy? He's telling me in Greek. I said, how am I supposed to know him? I'm a tourist here, I don't know this guy.

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01:46:14;17 And I'm looking around. Thank god it was a crowded place
and there were people around

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

01:45:38;11 ...because he must have been talking to one of these
guys. So finally, thank god he didn't stop and get off
the bus. But he continued on. So I'm thinking whoa,
that was a close one, you know? So it's very important
to control the situation or the place where you're going
to be making these meetings.

01:46:37;06 In any event, Simos gets a little more comfortable with
me. I used the ruse and told him you know I work in the
United States, I live there. Since I got there I was
always brought up in the Greek community. Several
immigrants who have come from Greece have established
businesses there -- bars, restaurants, what have you.

01:46:55;09 And one thing unfortunately Greeks are known for in
Chicago is having or running gambling houses and some

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prostitution. So I said, you know, some of these people that I am involved with have their bars, they have these gambling houses and what have you, but we're trying to pursue a new avenue here. We know that there's a big market for money with narcotics.

01:47:16;12 If we could establish a good connection in obtaining heroin from Greece, we have our method of getting it out of the country and ensure that everything will be safe, and this is what we want to do. If you can help me out, there's a lot of money to be made here. So he kind of took a liking to me. We were about the same age at the time, back then it was maybe around 37, something like that.

01:47:34;29 We meet again. He says okay, here's my number, could you leave me a contact number I could get a hold of you? Well, again, at the US Embassy in our office, we have a UC phone, a undercover phone, and we were provided with a number that we were told through the Greek police we could utilize it and give it and there's no connection as to where it belongs, or a subscriber wouldn't come up.

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01:47:59;26 So I told him, well listen, right now I'm bouncing around between hotels. In that two-week period, I was bouncing from one hotel to another, because I would take him to one hotel when we had a meeting, I'd wine and dine him, expensive places, dressed nice, putting the jewelry on, trying to play the roll.

01:48:17;20 And this guy, he took a bite. He was really, wow, you know, there's some money here to be made. And I would throw things at him like, you know, I like you. Things go well, we could become good friends, and I'd like to have you come to the States with me sometime and show you, maybe introduce you to some of these people.

01:48:33;23 So, obviously in his mind he's thinking, wow, trip to the States, maybe making more money, getting to know this bigwigs, who these Greek people are and all that. So he took it hook, line and sinker. What I had to do, though, was convince him that I did have the actual amount of money and that we were really serious in buying, I think he had like 12 or 13 kilos available at the time.

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01:48:58;28 So I told him I was staying at another hotel the following week. I called him, I said, look I need you to come over here, I'd like to further discuss the negotiations and how we can do this deal. So he comes. We had another room set up with officers that was monitored and what have you.

01:49:17;11 We had pulled out a \$100,000 flash roll from the embassy and we had the money ready there. Now he didn't know he was coming to see the money, but I just wanted to hit him cold with it, let him know that hey, I mean business. I'm in here, I'm in town, I want to take care of business, I want to make a connection, let's do it and continue with further business down the line.

01:49:33;13 So he comes into the room. We start talking, I told him, you know, Simos, I just want you to know, when can you put this together? Because I've got people back in the States that are calling me constantly. They want to know what I'm doing, I can't be out here vacationing the whole time. Either we're gonna do it or we're not.

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01:49:48;09 I opened up the closet. I said, in fact, I want to show you what I'm all about. Take a look! Well, when this guy opened the bag and saw this money, he had the biggest grin on him. He actually picked up a stack. He's thumbing through it, and he starts smelling it. That's how enticed he was. He wanted that money so bad.

01:50:08;22 So I said look, put it back, it's here. When can we do this deal? He goes, well, maybe in two days. He goes, in two days I'll call you and I'll be ready. I said okay, sounds good. So we give him his rope, let him do what he has to do, surveillance is on him constantly to see where he's going, what have you.

01:50:29;03 But, at one point, the following day, I'm at another hotel, because I would constantly be on the move. I didn't want him to pin me down where he might take the opportunity to put counter-surveillance on me with other individuals, with friends of his, to see where I'm actually going or who I'm with.

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01:50:48;02 So for a while there, I was keeping distance from the hotel, from the embassy. I would only talk to the boss via telephone. The cops would sometimes meet me at certain locations just to pass on information back and forth. Well, what we learned the following day is, the Greeks come to my boss and say, the Greek authorities, and say, Lou, the case is down the tubes.

01:51:10;26 Forget it. We've got all this time invested and all that. It's shot. He says, well what do you mean? They said, well, we were monitoring his calls that he was making from his residence, and he called somebody which came back to the Greek Hellenic Police Department. And the conversation went something like this: What do you know about this number?

01:51:29;14 He gives the individual on the other end the number that I had provided him with at the embassy to contact me in case he needed to touch base with me. The person on the other end says, hey, be careful, this comes back over to the US Embassy. So what are you gonna do now? I'm thinking, my boss is thinking, forget it.

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01:51:50;14 He knows the game. This guy's shrewd, he knows what's going on, he's gonna realize he's set up. Now here's where I was very proud of this case. I said, Lou, have faith in me. I said, I think I could save this. I've given this guy so much BS, baloney and stuff, that he likes me as a friend.

01:52:08;25 He wants to go for this, I can tell. I know, I feel it in my heart. I said, we have the advantage here of knowing what he knows, that he doesn't know that we know. And that's that he knows that this number comes back to the embassy. So I said let's wait it out. I said I'm going to call him tonight from the hotel. Just give me an opportunity to see where it goes.

01:52:29;25 He goes, man, I don't like it, it sounds dangerous. He could set you up, blah blah blah. I said I know, I realize that, I appreciate it, but I'm not going to go out and meet him anywhere where I'm not going to be covered by police officers or somebody from my own security. So I call him in the early afternoon.

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01:52:47;00 I said, Simos, this is Perry, you got the stuff ready? He goes, yeah, I'll have it, I'll give you a call maybe sometime tonight. I said okay. He goes, where are you staying? I said, well, I'm at the Strip Palas Hotel right now. First-class place, showing money, having a good time, enjoying it. So he calls me, three o'clock in the morning, he calls me at the hotel.

01:53:08;05 He says, I need to talk to you right away, I want to meet you now within a half hour. I said, what are you talking about? It's three o'clock in the morning. Where do you expect to go? What do you want to do? I said, you want to come by the hotel here? He says, no, I want to meet you outside. Wait for me in front of the hotel.

01:53:24;20 Okay. So I'm panicking now, I'm thinking oh man. I know he's going to hit me with this about this number, or he's going to try and feel me out now, to try and find out what's this all about. So I'm waiting downstairs. In the meantime, I'm trying to call out to my boss. It was a weekend, he was on island village home, having a good

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time.

01:53:43;14 The police officers I couldn't get a hold of except for one guy. I told him, I said, look, whatever you do, get a couple guys together, see if you can cover this meet with me that I'm gonna have with this guy. So he takes me to this outdoor cafe. He always rode a motorcycle, too. He loved motorcycles. He had this expensive Italian Ducati or whatever it was.

01:54:03;27 And he goes, get on. I always knew if there was ever a point in time where I would have to meet him or go somewhere with him, that he'd want me to get on this motorcycle. And it would be very difficult for surveillance agents following us to keep up in traffic if I as on a motorcycle, 'cause I wouldn't know where I'm going, he would be driving, and he would lose us.

01:54:21;07 So I said, no, listen, I told you how I feel about motorcycles. I don't like them, they're dangerous, I get nervous. I said, I'll follow you in a cab. He goes, just get on, we're only going a couple doors down the

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street to an outdoor cafe. It's 3:30, 3 o'clock in the morning. I said, okay. So I get on, we go there.

01:54:37;13 He says, you know, he goes, during our meeting you, this and that, I really like you as a friend and all that, but you're hiding something from me. And I knew what he was getting at. But I didn't know how he was going to approach it or what he was going to say. So I kind of rolled the dice on this one and I thought it would be in my best interest to do this.

01:54:56;02 So I told him, I said look, Simo, I've talked to you in detail about what I'm all about, what we do in the United States, how I'm connected with these Greek people, what we want to do with the narcotics. I said, there's certain things that I just can't tell you at this point. I said, you just have to have faith in me.

01:55:14;13 We have it all planned out where we can get the stuff out of the country. Nothing's going to be compromised. I said, the people I know are very, very connected with government officials here. So, obviously, that triggered

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something in his mind. Okay, US Embassy, government officials, maybe there was a little sign of corruption here.

01:55:31;05 At least, that's what I was trying to portray to him to believe. So he goes, well you know, he goes, I really don't know that much about you. I said, well, what's there to know? What do you want to know? He goes, where you from? Again, utilizing what I knew about my surroundings and in Greece, my parents were from two villages in the southern part of Greece.

01:55:49;06 So I told him, I said well, I come from this, I was born and raised in this city called Tripoli which is on the southern part of Greece, which everybody knows, in Greece. He says, well, where did you live? Did you live in the city, or in the outskirts, among villages? I said, no, one of my uncles lived in a village that was outside of the outskirts of the city. Which I knew, because I knew the area.

01:56:11;29 So I named it to him. And I told him, I said but I

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actually was born, from what I remember, because I left when I was like three or four years old, but we had an apartment inside the city, just as you cross over to the main road that leads you to Sparta. Now, I'm giving him details of specific locations that, if he knew anything about the area, he would know that I was right and I wasn't making it up.

01:56:31;26 He throws a question back at me and says, well did you live inside the lines or outside the lines? Now, I'm saying 'lines' literally, because that's what the interpretation is from Greek, but what he meant was the railroad tracks. Because there's a railroad track which separates the city of Tripoli with the outskirts of the villages as you go on this national road.

01:56:54;07 I said, no, in fact I lived right on the inside, because I remember as a kid I remember that train. But I said, god, it's been so long ago, I haven't been there for years. Well, this guy's eating it up! I answered his questions, I had the right answers. He figures, fine. Then he pulls one of these numbers.

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01:57:12;13 He pulls out his ID and he says, here's my ID. Each Greek national is required to carry an ID on him at all times. Well, I was one step ahead of him. Because when I got into this, I went over to Immigration, I talked to my buddy, and I said, you know what, I need some fictitious identification. Could you set me up with a passport or something with a Greek name?

01:57:29;08 We'll take care of it. So I had it. I carried it on me. I said well, I said here, I never lied to you about anything. Here I am. The name on the passport was the one I had furnished to him and what have you. So he obviously couldn't say anything. And then I figured I'd do one more step better. I said, Simo, look.

01:57:49;02 I don't mind, I don't blame you for being careful. And I don't blame you for asking me all these questions and whatever, because this is a very serious matter here, and there's a lot of high stakes involved here and a lot of money to be made, and we have to be careful. But I'm going to tell you something to maybe ease your mind.

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01:58:06;21 I said the people that I'm involved with have ties to an agency here in Greece called the DEA. I said, I don't know if you know anything about this, but the DEA is a narcotics agency that investigates organizations, criminals involved in trafficking, what have you. So his eyes start to open up now. It gets even better.

01:58:31;01 I told him, I said, you know -- because I knew he was going to come back to that number -- I said, this number that I gave you with [sic], is actually the contact number of a guy that my associate knows and he gave us this number to contact him in emergencies, and he said only call it when you need to get a hold of me or if you want somebody to leave a message for you.

01:58:51;11 So I'm covering it now, because I know he's interested in about this number and how I obtained it. So he tells me, he goes, well, where's this place located? I said, I gotta be honest with you, I only went there once and I was terrified when I went. I didn't know where this guy was taking me! And then I had to go through the embassy

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and there were these Marine guards there and they had all this security, I'm thinking what the the hell's going on.

01:59:13;26 But I said, I told you, our people are connected, and they have contacts with officials here in the government, with either customs or something, and they've got a way of getting this heroin out of the country. Well, that's all he wanted to know. He probably figured I'm in heaven, I'm the source, I could get the heroin, these people can get it out. There's nothing at risk here.

01:59:33;27 This idiot went along with this, and I was proud of myself that I was able to convince him and turn the tables on him where he was so gullible and so greedy in making money that he went for it. Now, here's where it gets better. I eventually go back to the hotel. I get a hold of my boss.

01:59:50;22 I call the cops, they come down. I say, guys, you're not gonna believe what happened. He called me, and I actually finished up with him about seven o'clock in the morning. We were there for four hours. Drilling me left

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and right, blah blah blah. I finally call my boss, they come to the hotel, I talk to them. I say look, this is what happened.

02:00:09;08 This is what happened. He approached me. He was starting to fish around about that number, and this is the story I laid on him. Well, my boss was gonna have a fit. What do you mean, you told him DEA and this and that? He's not gonna go for it, it's done! I said it's not. He told me he would call me. The deal's set up for tomorrow. I told him I would let him know where I'm staying.

02:00:23;23 He's gonna come by, pick me up and take me to the source, we'll get the heroin, and then it's a done deal. So nobody seemed to believe it. But we were on standby, we were waiting. I go back to another hotel where he had initially met me. I called him up, I said Simo -- where I showed him the flash roll initially -- I said I'm back here. I said could you come back and can we take care of business?

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02:00:46;02 He says I'll be there in a little bit. So, again, an operational put together, an operational plan. We get the Greek police officer driving the yellow cab, standing by outside the hotel, so if I were to go out of the hotel with this individual and needed to take a trip somewhere to where he wanted to bring me, all I had to do was 'Cab', and have the guy pull up.

02:01:09;04 We would be in the cab driven by a police officer, under surveillance, being followed, secure the situation, and then if anything were to go wrong, the police officer would be right there in a cab. Well, let me tell you how slick this guy Simos was. As we left the hotel, and he says I'm gonna take you to go get the stuff and we'll be back, I said, okay, great.

02:01:28;10 Soon as we walked out and I'm looking -- it's a crowded street, crowd of people, and I'm just about to go like this for the cab, he goes, don't take that guy over there, that cab. I looked and I go what do you mean? He goes, he's been here since I've gotten here. I just don't like that guy. Don't take him.

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02:01:45;21 Now I'm really getting a little nervous. I'm thinking, my god, how would he pick up like that, there's a million cabs around. But, obviously, that guy just stood there too long. Because people were coming in and going, and he just kept sitting there until he saw me walk out with a guy and slowly attempted, start [sic] rolling up.

02:02:05;14 So whether he either was suspicious or knew anything about that, or maybe whoever this friend was that gave him that number, or told him it came back to the US Embassy, may have at some point in time told him a little more of how the narcotics units operate, I don't know. We never got that clarified.

02:02:19;21 So he says hop on the bike, I'm going to take you to go get the heroin. I said, ohhh. There was no way I was going to get on that motorcycle, because the police would never have been able to follow me, wherever we would go. They would lose me in traffic. I wouldn't have any coverage, and I needed somebody coming and make the arrest, if he was to bring it to me.

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02:02:36;21 So he says, get on the bike. I says, ah, come on, look, I'm not gonna go. I said, are we going far? Are we going -- he says, it's not too far. I said, no, you know, I'm not gonna get killed on this bike. You want to ride the bike, go ahead. I'm gonna get another cab, if you're uncomfortable with that one, and I'll follow you to wherever you want to go.

02:02:53;00 He says, okay. He gets on his motorcycle, he's driving slow, traffic is very heavy in Athens, I'm behind him in a cab, he's zooming in and out. I told the cab, just make sure you stay on him, I need to go wherever that guy goes. Unfortunately, the Greek police lose me. About 15-20 minutes later, he stops, I get out of the cab. I said, well? He goes, well, we're close by.

02:03:19;07 I'm kind of looking around, trying to see if there's any police officers that I know that are still on me or are covering me. Nobody in sight. So he says get on the bike. I said, ah, come on, are we going to go through this again? I told you I'm afraid of motorcycles, I'm

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not going to get on. He goes, look, you want the deal to go, get on the bike.

02:03:37;08 I had no other choice at that point. What was I going to do? So, I get on the motorcycle. He drives me about two blocks up. As I'm on the motorcycle, I had my gun in an ankle holster. Now, when I was sitting on the motorcycle, unfortunately, your pant leg raises up, so it was about like that, and the gun was showing.

02:03:57;20 So as I caught it, as I'm sitting behind him, I'm thinking oh boy, that's all I need is for him to shift down, downshift and look down and catch my gun on my ankle. So I did whatever I could to conceal it. I'm moving around and I'm grabbing him closer and I'm hugging him from the back to he doesn't have an opportunity to look down.

02:04:14;19 Well, he's slowly looking at me and he's smiling, and I'm thinking, I think I'm in big trouble now, you know? So anyway, he eventually takes me about two blocks down. He says, okay, get off. I say, what kind of games are you

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playing? I said, get on here, get off there, what is this stuff? Are you gonna do the deal or not?

02:04:33;16 He goes, just stay here, I'll be right back. So I'm waiting around, waiting around. I'm looking for police officers, I'm checking everybody out. Nobody. He eventually comes back and he had a blue windbreaker on as a blazer. He goes, get back on. I get back on the motorcycle. As I hug him again, I could feel a big package that he had tucked in his sweatshirt, underneath his sweatshirt.

02:04:56;29 So I'm assuming he brought a couple kilos of heroin or something. He then drives about a half a mile down toward the hotel, and he goes, get off. I said, what do you mean, get off? He goes, get off and walk back to the hotel. Once you check the stuff out and you're happy, you give me a call. We'll sit down and you can pay me.

02:05:19;02 Now this was a shock to me, because never in my life did anybody front me two kilos of heroin without getting any money. I'm thinking, Jesus, this guy either really

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trusts me or he's just crazy. Well, the truth of the matter was, he was just afraid. He was so careful that he did not want to get anywhere near the narcotics once he gave it to me.

02:05:35;24 Reason being, in Greece they have these old laws that go back to Napoleonic law, called agent provocateur. Even with that, I technically, by law, am guilty and can be arrested for being in the vicinity or an area of a drug transaction even though I was a police officer. But the Greek police realize that I'm DEA, I work with them, and they kind of shy away or look the other way or they have a mutual understanding or agreement that we work together and these are situations that we will be in.

02:06:05;19 So they always told me, if an arrest goes down, all you have to do is just play dumb and walk away. We don't arrest you, we don't know anything about you. Fine and dandy. I said, okay, those are the rules of their law. So, he gives me this heroin, and tells me, walk back to the hotel, do what you want, you give me a call later.

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02:06:24;08 I'm going, Simo, what are you doing to me? You dumped two kilos of heroin on me and expect me to walk through the streets of Athens with heroin to the hotel? I said, don't do this to me! He yells, you'll be all right, just go. So I'm walking. He leaves, I'm walking. I'm looking around, praying to god that one of the surveillance agents finally locates me or covers me.

02:06:46;17 Then I have another fear that maybe I might get stopped by some other police officer who has nothing to do with the situation as a control, stop and find me walking with two kilos of heroin. So, I continue to walk. About five minutes later, as I'm looking for a cab to go back to the hotel, he buzzes around the corner again on his motorcycle and he stops in front of me.

02:07:06;07 I said, what are you doing? Well, this guy was slick! What he was doing was dropping me off, giving me the opportunity to walk around. He may have had other counter surveillance in the area that I don't know of, just to watch what my actions would be and where I would go. So, he finally maybe in his own mind realized that,

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you know, this is wrong, I can't just let the guy walk back like that.

02:07:29;06 Apparently he didn't meet with anybody, nobody approached him, so he must be safe. So he goes, okay, get back on the bike. So I'm back on the bike, hugging him again, trying to hide my ankle holster. He takes me back to the hotel. As we're approaching the hotel, I could see the police officers, the cab, the other narcotics guys still there. Well, they used their head.

02:07:49;17 Rather than scrambling around trying to find me since I was lost, they did the best thing and waited back at the hotel, figuring that I'm gonna eventually show up there. So as we did, again, we had a pre-arranged arrest signal. As soon as he dropped me off, the signal was given, they moved in and they grabbed him.

02:08:09;17 So, again, it wasn't a very lengthy investigation, but it was a case that needed a lot of imagination. It was an investigation which called upon a lot of luck on our part to be able to play the game the way we thought would be

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to our benefit and it worked out well. Now, the bad thing about it was, as I was negotiating with this guy during the investigation, he had a girlfriend that lived with him, this lady here.

02:08:36;06 And he used her to -- every time I went to a hotel, he would have her call the hotel with a female voice, and ask and see if I was checked in or if I was still at the hotel. Why? Obviously, just to try and find out more about me or who I was or where I was or was I at the hotel that I was telling him I was staying at or whatever.

02:08:55;25 So she was basically a co-conspirator that we found out that he was using for various things. But we never arrested her. We didn't have enough charges to do that. Eight months down the line, Simos is in jail and we get a call from the informant who set this up through the unwitting informant that was the associate of these people that I used to party with, supposedly.

02:09:24;01 Turns out that the informant, our documented informant,

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was -- I don't really know how to translate it -- in Greek, we call it 'cumbaro' (ph.), it's somebody who either baptizes your kid or stands up at your wedding. In Mexican or Spanish, it might be compadre or something like that, in Italian, guma -- I don't know.

02:09:45;09 There was some sort of connection there were they were close friends and utilized for that purpose. Well, the informant had this unwitting informant as his cumbaro. He calls us, he says, I'm very mad, upset with you guys. My cumbaro, whose name was Chris, is dead. So what do you mean he's dead, what happened?

02:10:02;28 They poisoned him, you guys are responsible, you jeopardized the case. Simos, the defendant, he found out about it, he put two and two together, he knows that the guy was the one responsible for introducing you to him. Now how do I explain this to his wife? And this guy is dead.

02:10:21;17 Well, how did he die? Was he shot, was he killed, was he murdered, was he stabbed? He says no, they poisoned him.

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I said, oh come on, the Greek police, they didn't seem to believe it. They never did an autopsy on the guy. But the guy did die, and he was fairly young, he was maybe in his forties. So, questionable. Was he really poisoned by this guy in some way or not?

02:10:44;22

Now, Simos, the guy that we arrested, had a brother who was on the outside who was a real bad apple. He was involved in an armed robbery apprehension, and later on down the line he was shot in a shootout. The Greek police killed him, end of story. But during that time, the word was out that he apparently -- Simos, who was in jail -- was so mad, so angered that he fell for this ruse of being arrested and started to blame people, that he wanted revenge on me, he wanted revenge on the informant.

02:11:11;20

And the word was that supposedly he did pay his brother to somehow either follow the guy to a restaurant or put something in his food and they feel that he was poisoned. We don't believe that, but that's what the informant thought. So the informant started to cause us some very big problems and issues. He was threatening to go to the

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newspapers and all this and that.

02:11:33;29 We actually had to de-activate him at the time and practically blackball him that he wasn't trustworthy any more to utilize. Three weeks later, I get a call from the Greek National Police. The general says, Perry, I need you to come up to the police headquarters, there's a very serious issue.

02:11:53;17 I say okay, I'll be right there. I get there, he shows me a letter handwritten in Greek. He goes, we have an informant, or, what of my officers from the homicide unit has an informant and he provided him with this information. And it basically stated that there's a contract out on you.

02:12:14;09 It's an American, Greek-American agent who works for DEA. They described me basically, knew that I rode a motorcycle, which I had one in Greece, and that I carry a gun on my ankle. I'm thinking whoa, what's this all about. They said do you know of an individual named Mimo? I said, Mimo! I said I never heard the name. I

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said, where's this from?

02:12:34;29 He said apparently this is a guy who's putting this contract or hit on you. I said, well, it's news to me. In the meantime, I'm thinking this is a bunch of baloney. You know, how did this come about? I couldn't put any connection together with anybody named Mimo. Checked our case files, our past cases with Lebanese traffickers, everybody.

02:12:55;18 Couldn't really put anything together. So it was reported to the American embassy, the regional security officer, my boss. It went up to the Ambassador. They said, hey, you know, we have to take some action here. There's a legitimate threat against you. They demanded DEA, our office there and the US Embassy personnel, demanded that the Greek authorities turn over this informant so they could further brief him, or debrief him, brief him rather -- debrief him, on what is this all about and where did this information come from.

02:13:30;02 Well, the Greek police, as any other agency, were adamant

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about protecting their informant. The officer who had this informant did not want to give him up. Finally it came down from the general, he said, you bring him in, we need to discuss these issues. They bring this guy in and turns out to be our de-activated informant.

02:13:47;18 Now what happened was, this guy Mimo that he was talking about, we did some further checking through the intelligence community and find out that he's a documented, or known to be a documented terrorist with ties with the PLO. The organization that he was tied in with was responsible for blowing up a Pan Am flight in Athens, I think it was in the mid 80s, some time.

02:14:13;23 So we knew that we were up against some serious players here. It was nothing to just laugh about. So they call in the informant and they start drilling him in, and they say, what's this all about, why is Mimo so interested in hurting or causing harm to me or what have you. Well, we kind of put two and two together.

02:14:33;21 The guy obviously, the informant, was very hurt and mad

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about the loss of his cumbaro, who died, but later on I guess he called down and basically figured there was no real truth to it, and he used this is as a ruse to get back into the graces of law enforcement to be utilized as an informant again.

02:14:51;19

Not knowing that this would come back to haunt him and that we would find out that he was the one behind this. So, before we actually knew that, the investigation was going on, they were interviewing him. They asked him to take a polygraph examination, he refused. So the more and more we found out about it, we found out that it was basically just made up.

02:15:11;03

But again, nobody wanted to take the chance. So what happens to me? I gotta pay the price. The Ambassador says, Perry, he calls us in and he says, look, you know we have terrorist organizations here. We have November 17th, who is responsible for assassinating several American officials, other diplomats, government, Greek officials.

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02:15:28;25 We cannot take the chance of anything happening. So we want you, it was decided upon with OF Headquarters, that they would get me out of the area for a while until they found out what was actually behind this. Now, the other thing that they supposedly knew, or had made mention of, was that they knew the area I lived in.

02:15:48;06 Not specifically the house, but the area. So there were some good concerns here. So they said, well -- I said, what's gonna happen to me? What happens with the rest of my career here with DEA and my position here with the Athens office? They said, well, we'll have to decide about that as we go along. In the meantime, we're gonna send you to Vienna for a little bit.

02:16:07;12 They said a week, initially. I said, okay. So I packed up my bags, RSO, they put me on a plane, I got to the Vienna office. One week turns into two, two weeks turns into three, three weeks turns into a month. I'm starting to climb the walls. I'm thinking I gotta get out of here, what's going on, I'm not getting any feedback. Where do we stand with the investigation?

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02:16:29;05 I finally said, okay, time out, I think I'll take my time and just go home to the United States, spend some time with my family. When you decide what is gonna come out of this investigation or what gets cleared up, I'd be more than willing and happy to go back to Greece. So they finally got to the bottom of it.

02:16:45;19 They eventually said come on back, everything's okay, it's not as bad as we thought. And I, again, was blessed, having the opportunity to return back to Greece and finish my tour. So, again, that's the extent of some of the undercover rolls or investigations that I participated in.

02:17:03;01 For me it was really a rewarding experience. I hope some day that I could maybe get back into the field and get involved in some of these investigations. It's really in my heart. I really enjoyed it. I don't think there's any other agency as great as DEA when it comes to things like that and the opportunity to go overseas and experience these things in life.

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02:17:21;05 Before I go, very quick, this really doesn't have anything to do with the Mediterranean but I thought it'd be a little interesting. I'll show you some slides of a trip I took to Afghanistan and what I saw there. And again, it goes back to saying, you never know where your life will take you or where you're gonna wind up.

02:17:37;15 Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think that I would wind up in Kabul, Afghanistan, of all places, but it was interesting. It's always an experience to see different places, see how different governments operate and what's going on in the world at these difficult times. This is Afghanistan. This is the airport at Afghanistan when we first landed.

02:18:00;09 Now, I had an opportunity to go there with two State Department officials who needed to take a first-hand look of [sic] our operations and what's actually going on there, with the institution-building and reconstruction of the government there. This is in front of the American Embassy in Kabul and the two gentlemen that I

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was with for this assessment.

02:18:21;28 This is just a picture of President Karzai's palace, where he resides and works out of. We had an opportunity to go there and meet with some government officials on police training issues and what have you. This was a visit to a drug rehabilitation center that was recently built. I forgot the doctor's name, but what amazed me was how proud he was of this facility that he was in charge of operating.

02:18:48;14 They just built this structure, and it only housed maybe ten people. But yet, they were building from scratch. They were just trying to get their government together with a lot of coalition forces and other international community people putting money into their country, trying to start and establish some sort of government.

02:19:13;00 He was very proud of the fact that he was doing what he felt in his heart was for the good of humanity to help drug addicts. This was in the drug rehabilitation itself facility. These were drug addicts here in this room. I

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kind of felt bad taking their picture, but he said, no, go ahead, I encourage you, I want you to have this on file and show it back home.

02:19:42;23 The other picture here just shows some of the drug paraphernalia that he kind of collected and would show. This was at the Police Training Academy in Kabul, Afghanistan. This here was the commander of the police training. This is the new facility that was built, on the left. This is where they would have their classrooms and we also participated in part of the training.

02:20:13;18 We had some -- there was an individual there I'd met that was a captain from the Los Angeles Police Department who was part of the isotap (ph.) training and what have you that was there. This, again, is part of the constructed classrooms that were constructed based on funding from the international community and on the grounds of the training academy.

02:20:38;21 Here are some Afghani police officers that were attending the training classes and the picture on the right was

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just another picture taken of them from up above, during their break. This is a picture here, it was actually kind of like, if you want to call it, a tourist -- there was a mosque up there where one of their officials was buried or what have you.

02:21:01;16 People would go up there, visitors, and view it. But I basically want to show you this picture just so you could see how the terrain is in the back. It's very dusty. Up above, on the top of the picture if you can see from there, it's very mountainous. But it's always dusty there and at night it gets very cold.

02:21:18;15 But you can see how the houses are on the outskirts of the city. They're just mud-compressed buildings that people live in. The conditions are really very poor there. It's very sad to see how other people live in other countries at times, based on their economy and the problems they're having and just how blessed we are to be here in the United States.

02:21:38;18 This was a picture taken from a car as we were driving

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through the city. These are just the women dressed in their traditional garb, with the gurkas [sic], I think that's what they call them, burkas or gurkas, I forget. But anyway, they don't show their faces. They have their own strict religious beliefs. This was just in the city there. They were just walking, shopping, whatever.

02:22:02;06 Now this is an interesting picture I'm pretty proud of. It shows us sitting in a dining room area eating lunch and to my amazement, I was told later something about this location which I found pretty surprising. It wasn't a very, it wasn't a palace or anything, it was just a very upscale residence compared to Kabul standards, to what you previously saw in the other pictures.

02:22:26;14 The location of this residence was taken over by some of the coalition forces where they provide training and are basically based out of. They later invited us that night for a little barbecue, roof-top barbecue that they had on top of this residence. You can see the sandbags and the anti-aircraft gun under the canopy there. It's heavily guarded and armed and it somewhat sits above the city of

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Kabul where you could look down.

02:22:55;09 Anybody want to take a stab or guess at whose residence this was? Anyway, I was very amazed to find out that it belonged to this gentleman here and that I was sitting at his residence having lunch and a barbecue. That's whose residence it was. Unbelievable! But again, these are the things that being an agent in international operations sometime come across in your career or path.

02:23:22;05 It's just mind-boggling at times, where you'll wind up and the things that you can get involved in. I know I took up a lot of your time, and I really do apologize, but I kind of got on a roll here and I wanted to just give as much information as I could on this. Again, I want to thank all of you for your time and I appreciate your coming here today.

02:23:41;12 If you do have any questions, I'd be more than happy to answer them. If not, I wish you all a good day.

02:24:00;17 Q: (inaud.)

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02:24:20;11 A: Well, the one specifically in that case was Simos, is that the one you're talking about? Well, again, when he first comes in, we find out what he knows about these individuals. We try and get as much information as possible. The one that was documented with us was documented prior with the Athens country office and then some significant boat cases.

02:24:41;01 So he did establish his credibility with us at one point. It was at this point when he lost, when the other individual wound up dead, that he kind of turned the tables on us. So it wasn't that we just went in cold with him. We trusted him to the point where we knew he did other cases for us and was successful. That's why we worked with him.

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