

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION
MUSEUM LECTURE SERIES: WHAT'S COOKING IN THE DESERT -
OPIUM AND HEROIN - 05-31-07
S/A RITCHIE FIANO AND S/A JIM SOLIS - 11-28-06

00:02:25:09 FS: Good afternoon and welcome to the DEA Museum Lecture Series. The DEA Museum is pleased to present this final section, DEA Around the World, Past and Present, Southwest Asia. Today we will hear about opium and heroin production in Afghanistan, Pakistan and other areas of Southwest Asia.

00:02:46:04 This joint presentation will be give by retired agent, special agent, excuse me, Ritchie Fiano and special agent Jim Solis, section chief, Office of Enforcement Europe, Asia, Africa, Middle East and Canada, that's a mouthful. Both of these agents began their careers with DEA in New York.

00:03:10:07 Special agent Fiano began his career with DEA in 1975. During his 35 year career he rose through the ranks to the highest levels of the DEA, attaining the position of DEA's Chief of Operations. Special agent Fiano retired from DEA in August of 2005 after serving as the regional director for Europe at the US Embassy in Rome, Italy.

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00:03:32:19 During his law enforcement career, Special agent Fiano in may overseas assignments to include Islamabad, Pakistan and the Persian Gulf. Please join me in welcoming Special agent Ritchie Fiano. [APPLAUSE]

RITCHIE FIANO

00:03:53:29 RF: I used to have a title as long as Jim's, now I'm just the retired. Anyway, they've asked me to come today to talk a little bit about... Pakistan and Afghanistan and the heroin issue that we saw back... 20, 25, 20 years ago. I served in Pakistan from June of '86 through June of '88.

00:04:18:02 When I was in Islamabad at that time, we had about 43 people in... in Pakistan and we had four offices there. We had the country office in Islamabad and we had regional offices in Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar cause at that time Pakistan was one of the major producers of Southwest Asian heroin and they produced about 93 metric tons of... of opium.

00:04:42:25 Afghanistan if you remember in the mid-'80s was actually occupied by the Soviets so... there wasn't as

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much opium grown as there... as there obviously is today and it was more on the Pakistani side. What I thought I'd do today is actually... I know those of you that know me know I have a great command of the English language.

00:05:10:05 But I thought what I would do is actually show more pictures then... then stand up here and talk because I always believe is worth 1000 words and I think you'll be able to see what the agents in '86 and '88, Chuck Carter, myself and Lee Phillips and a number of other guys, what we experienced back in '86 and '88 is probably very similar to what you're going to hear from... from Jim Solis in... in 2006.

00:05:38:27 So with that... with that... with that... okay. Good, that's what happens when you get... when you retire. This is a picture up in... up in Peshawar, Pakistan up on the... on the Pak/Afghan border. This is areas that the guys up in the Peshawar office are dealing with every... everyday.

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- 00:06:15:18 This is the... the local market and if you talk to back there, I saw him, Isaz Baloush (ph.) was in Pakistan about the same time, is from Lahore, Pakistan and... if you don't think these are... a fairly accurate, you can actually talk to Isaz who's been there and done that. This is... this is one of the main traffic streets in Peshawar, you've got cars, you've got bicycles and water buffalo.
- 00:06:45:28 This is a bus depot like you'd see over here, the slug line, this is the slug line up in... up in... outside of Peshawar up on the Afghan... Pak border. Here's one of the buses, you pay according to where you sit on a bus. So if you get a window seat you pay more. If you're up on the... up on the top and actually you don't see it from here, but there's actually guys hanging on a bumper in the front of the bus.
- 00:07:19:11 Okay, we all know... the heroin comes from parts of the... four parts of the world, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Southwest Asian, Burma, Laos and Thailand is the Golden... the Golden Triangle for Southeast Asian.

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Mexican is your brown heroin and Columbia is... is your white heroin.

00:07:38:07 This is what the fields in Afghanistan and Pakistan look like. They're all terraced. This is up in the... in the northern part of Pakistan, up in the Dere (ph.) District. Here's one of the terraces close up... and here's the poppy field. And if you remember the poppy, people say well what does a poppy field look like?

00:08:00:22 You always go back or I always go back to the "Wizard of Oz" when Dorothy falls asleep before she gets to the... to the Magic Kingdom, wherever she was going over there. And she falls asleep, well she's fallen asleep in the... in the poppy field. But it's actually, if you look a poppy field when it's in bloom, it's absolutely beautiful.

00:08:20:27 And the colors, you'll have reds, you'll have some violets and you'll have some... some white variations of poppy. But this gives you some idea of... of the amount of growth that there is. And this is in... this is only

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93 metric tons. Last year you had 61... hundred metric tons in Afghanistan.

00:08:43:17 Here's a little closer view, the petals are starting to fall which means they'll be getting ready to lance the... lance the poppy and they'll use... the scraper and you'll have whole families, they're like migrant farm workers, like we have here, the people that pick up... pick fruit and what have you, they'll do the same thing for... for opium poppy.

00:09:08:16 They'll bring whole families up there to lance the poppy. They'll lance it usually later in the day when it's cool, it'll ooze out during the night and they'll come back in the morning and scrape it off. Here's a guy scraping it. If you notice, he'll do an up and down, they'll do a vertical in Southwest Asia, that'll go up and down with the score.

00:09:29:01 In Southeast Asia they'll actually go around the poppy, around the bulb of the poppy. That's what it looks like in... in Southwest Asia and you can see the different maturity levels of the... of the bulb. Some

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of the are big, thick, juicy and it'll ooze out a lot of opium gum.

00:09:46:12 Others are smaller, they may let it stay another day, two days, three days, to let it mature a little bit more. These are the types of compounds... that we saw where labs were located and some of the major violators were located. It's the same thing today. This is up in the northwest frontier province which is basically like... like the Badlands.

00:10:13:06 And you'll have whole communities living in these... living in these compounds. And you know people say, well why can't you do a surveillance on these major organizations like the Euphrates (ph.) or the Norzides (ph.) or what have you. And until you experience this, you can't realize why you can't do a surveillance or a wiretap on... on a compound like this.

00:10:39:26 Here's the front of it... and this is some areas where... where heroin laboratories were operating on the Pak/Afghan border. This is going... this is going towards Hellman and Khandihar (ph.), Hellman being the

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province where most of the poppy is grown, most of opium is... is grown.

00:11:04:02 Hellman and Khandihar is where a lot of the... the labs were located back in the... in the mid-'80s. This is the... the local indigenous force that we used back in... from '86 to '88 in targeting and hitting these heroin laboratories. And these guys at the time, they spent six months doing this and six months they'd be out fighting the... the Russians.

00:11:30:13 They're not police, there were no police in... in Afghanistan during that time so they were local mujahadim (ph.) type people. If you notice I'm there with the... with the Army jacket and those of you and to my... to my right, to your left, is actually Chuck Carter who was the country attaché at that time.

00:11:54:03 And here we are... in the desert. At night it was freezing and during the daytime it's... it's pretty hot which is great for growing, growing opium. We would go out for two weeks at a time and live in tents and then have an idea where the heroin lab was which was...

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which was really reconed a month or so earlier by... by some CI's that we had.

00:12:27:19 And here's guys just kind of milling around and we're waiting to... to set out and decide when we're going to... when we're actually going to... stage a raid on a lab. Here we are piling into our modes of transportation there, these are all... these were jeeps from 1979, they were actually brought over from Iran.

00:12:50:07 They were actually... US... they were given by the US to the old Shah and then they were kept going in Afghanistan. Here we are again at night, they're getting ready to... actually cross the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Moving along, you move from rough terrain to... to desert terrain in a matter of minutes.

00:13:15:18 How they would... how you'd survive out there and how you eat and logistically, what they would do is, they would bring out some... some deuce and a half trucks, they were old... Soviet C's and then they would bring

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live animals like this... you know you'd have a sheep or a goat or a lamb or something like that.

00:13:34:19 And what they would do is, as they would kill the animal and you'd start eating the... the insides first, the heart, the lung, the liver and... and then you would move... you would move on throughout the days and use the different parts of the meat. Now there's no refrigeration and there's no... they didn't salt it or anything like this.

00:13:56:03 So this is... they're very self-sustaining units as well. So you have butchers, you have bakers... logistically they... they have it pretty well... pretty well set out. So this guy's the butcher and he's cutting up a... I think it was a goat. This is the goat after... about a week in the sun and we're still eating it... to give you some idea.

00:14:24:19 It got to the point where it was so bad... that being the guest, they always gave Chuck and myself the... the mutton and they would go without. And I told them no, look, you guys need your strength cause you're the

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guys, you're the guys hitting the labs, we're just standing back. So... let me have the onion and you have the meat, you need the protein.

00:14:48:23 And... I mean it was... it really got to be pretty bad. This guy's the baker and there's two types of bread they use here and it's amazing, you can see the terrain here. Here he's making like a foccacia... and what he does is, after he does the dough, he opens up a hole and he burns some... some shrubs and... and he heats the... with the ashes, he spreads the ashes and he lays the flat bread, the foccacia, into the hole, as you see here.

00:15:25:22 And he covers it with the ashes and that's what you get in about... 15 minutes. And it's delicious, they put a little bit of salt on it and... and that's one type of bread that they... that they make and it's a field bread and there it is over there. The second kind of bread is... is where they... they heat... what they do is they put...

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00:15:51:17 They heat some rocks up and they put the dough around the rock and then they put the dough and the rock around the campfire as you see... as you see here. And the campfire cooks the dough from the outside in and the heated rock cooks it from the inside out. And this is what it comes out... comes out like.

00:16:15:07 And they break it open and... and it's a harder Syrian bread but very, very... very good, much better than the mutton I can tell you that. Okay here's the... here's the opium, the next couple of pictures will be on actually one of the heroin laboratories or two of the heroin laboratories that were raided.

00:16:34:00 Here's the way the opium will come out when you... when... when they're getting ready to process it into heroin. There are about seven kilos in a bag and it's opium... opium gum. This is... this is one of the areas going towards Tatchikastan (ph.) and... and Central Asia that will use to... to bring the... the finished product... and sometimes the opium gum to different laboratories located outside of Afghanistan.

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00:17:09:24 This is one of the... this one of the... vehicles used, you notice the... it's a Russian machinegun on the top and they'll use this to transport the opium to the laboratories and then heroin base or the heroin outside... for further distribution onward. Here's another way they... they use all means of transportation possible.

00:17:33:20 They use... trucks, they'll use camel caravans, they'll use donkey caravans... they'll use... buses and trucks. Here's the... here's the actual heroin laboratories. You talk about bathtub operations, that's what these are. These are 55 gallon drums, everything is brought in by either like, you saw the camel train or... or jeep or... or truck.

00:18:07:24 And you'll see over here on the left is... is the press and here you've got five 55-gallon drums. Here they are cooking it in... when I was there they usually operate about 30 days at a time. So if you hit when they were fat... you got a good load. If you hit them when they were just beginning, you didn't get as... you got more precursor chemicals and maybe opium.

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00:18:30:24 But if you hit them when they were fat, you usually got a pretty good... shot at getting a good load of... of heroin base at that time. This is the inside... this is where they're cooking it, they're trying to bring out the morphine... the morphine sulfate. Here it is after it's cooled down, it's a little bit gummier and they're going to get ready to pour this out and strain it.

00:18:55:05 Here's some of the... the precursor chemicals. This is... this is a bleaching... a bleaching agent that they would... that they would use to make it... to take some of the impurities out and bring out the morphine... the morphine content. Here's soda ash... all this stuff is either from China, Korea or India.

00:19:17:23 The... the jerry can, you see the plastic jerry can, that contains water. So they would bring water in and... and every other essential that they needed. The larger jerry can contained the acidic and hydride... which they would use to process the... from heroin... heroin base to heroin hydrochloride.

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00:19:43:00 This is the press, they use a... they put the stuff in a press, they put a big rock on it and they use a carjack to... to squeeze all the... the stems and... and the other impurities outside and just leave the solution which comes into a big cast iron... pan. Here's a better shot of it over here with a different... with a different jack.

00:20:12:13 Here's... this is a... a heroin, this is morphine base here. This is our... our group of deputized... people... holding people at... at bay getting ready to... to raid the place. And you'll see later the guy with the RPG what his... what his job is. The problem here is there's very little fire discipline because the actual raiding team is actually in front of these guys.

00:20:47:18 So it's... you got to be careful, you get more of a chance of getting hit by friendly fire than you do... of... of you know the defendant's doing it. And here you see the guys go in and you notice they're all, most of the guys are covered up and that's usually because these guys are all cousins.

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00:21:06:18 They're all from the same tribe so very few of them want to... show that they're working for the Americans or that they're doing something for money... so they would never take any of the seized assets... the cars, the money, anything like that, they would never take and they would try to hide their faces best they could.

00:21:27:07 Here are the... are the defendants in this one lab over here. Here they are again... and this is... they're cuffed and getting ready for processing. And again, the guys we were working with actually put the hoods on these guys cause they didn't want, when we started taking pictures, they didn't want them being identified.

00:21:53:12 This is from a second lab, these five guys and... and they had them up there and let us take some pictures of them. This was... we hit them at the right time because we had about... we had over 500 kilos in one lab and almost 500 in the... in the second lab. And like

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all good DEA guys, we want to take our picture with the... with the evidence.

00:22:19:23 And this is... the one lab with over 500 kilos, so we actually hit this lab really... it was really fat. Now as far as destroying, what we would do is take samples and we were going to bring them back to Islamabad, patch them back to SDRL... so what we would do is destroy the rest.

00:22:40:19 This... this was one of the... one of the name brands. This was the Rooster brand and this was the Camel brand, those were the two... on this operation, these were the two labs that were... that were raided. This is actually a stash house that's not too far from the lab.

00:22:56:08 And from a helicopter or a satellite, you wouldn't be able to tell the difference between this and a small mountain. And what they did was actually have it inside of... inside of this place where you can see it here, they not only had the dope but they had some other utensils that they... that they stored in there.

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00:23:17:07 And here's some of the... the finished product that they were storing in there. And here's how these guys would... would destroy the evidence, there was no seven or seven A, they'd just light it up and... and then they would burn it. And this is what happens to the seized vehicles.

00:23:38:12 You get the guy with the RPG and when it comes time for him, for us to say okay, you know, do whatever you want with the seized vehicles, they put a round right through the... right through the jeep and set it on fire and that way nobody can identify that raiding party by virtue of them driving the jeep with... with this particular, this particular raid.

00:24:02:01 The same thing with the... with the press, we just... you just light it up and try and get it hot enough to where... where it'll melt. This is a TEAR truck, this is similar back in the mid-'80s what they would use to transport the heroin base, the heroin hydrochloride... through Europe, usually to eastern Turkey for maybe further processing or into Europe.

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00:24:31:19 And those of you who know about TEARs... once they seal the doors on a TEAR and they put the... the tag on it, every other country that is in agreement with the TEAR policy lets it go through, there's no customs check until the final destination. So and here's, I don't know, there's 180 kilos here or something... or 80 kilos over here.

00:24:56:05 But this is very typical, false bottom... of a TEAR truck was one of the major ways they would get it... out of Pakistan and... into eastern Turkey and then into Europe through Iran. Now... it wasn't all bad while I was in Pakistan, I mean there were some good times as well.

00:25:15:07 And... Pakistan's got some beautiful areas and this is one of them, it's an area up in the north, up near the Chinese border called Noran (ph.) and we used to go up there in July after the snow melted and actually do some... they got great... trout fishing up there for German speckled trout.

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00:25:36:23 And this is what it looks like and it takes awhile to get up there and it's pretty dangerous cause you got to over a number of glaciers, but once you get up there, it's a phenomenal... area of the country with the streams, it's got, as I said great... great fish, beautiful environment and really, really nice people.

00:26:00:14 And here I am with fishing and somewhere down on the other side of the stream was... was Chuck Carter and a few other... guys. And here we are with... you actually have a fish guide and here's the German speckled trout and eat that... we eat that for lunch and for dinner, but absolutely fantastic.

00:26:22:07 And... you know when you stereotype people and you say well yeah, this guy looks like a Pakistani, this guy looks like an Italian, this guy looks like he's Irish, these are actually Afghan refugee girls and they're actually... they're beautiful, beautiful... kids. And this was up in the northwest frontier province and they were living in a refugee camp up there.

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00:26:42:11 But... really, really nice people and... and very, very... I mean a beautiful... beautiful kids. And here they are... here they are again. And I didn't want to take up all the time cause I know Jim's up here, so Katie I went these through pretty quick but I think my act is... my act is done. So I'll turn it over... to Jim Solis. Oh okay, I'll turn it over to Diane. [APPLAUSE]

00:27:27:06 DIANE: Thank you again. It is now my honor to introduce Special agent Jim Solis. He began his career with DEA in 1982, he served in many positions overseas and stateside to include Paris, France and Athens, Greece. He is currently the section chief, Office of Enforcement, Europe, Asia, Africa, Middle East and Canada.

00:27:50:29 Please give a warm welcome to Special agent Jim Solis.

JIM SOLIS

00:28:43:10 JS: While we're waiting for that just... just briefly, I'm just going to go briefly what the presentation's about. You know historically you've got a pretty good picture of what... what things were like back in the

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'80s, the mid to late '80s. Of course at that time Southwest Asian heroin was our primary heroin source in the United States.

00:28:59:14 In fact when I was in New York we were working Pak/Afghan cases and I see a few people out in the crowd there that were also working them with us. My presentation's basically going to talk about post 9/11 because between Afghan and Pakistan loosing its pre-eminence as being our heroin source, we downsized for a lot of reasons when we needed to put resources other places but also because of the security situation in the region, we had to draw down.

00:29:26:07 In fact right now we only have the two offices, Islamabad and... and Lahore, excuse me, Peshawar. We closed Karachi and we closed Lahore during that period of time. And even those offices, Islamabad and Peshawar, are not the offices that they once were. Again, my presentation will talk about the... the buildup post 9/11 cause we had to go back into and I'll explain why.

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00:29:55:09 The strategy that we're using in Afghanistan and why... and really it's a strategy that we use all over the world and we just took it into Afghanistan and it's... and it's given us some good results. And then... the current operations, some of the current operations we're working, the drug teranexis (ph.).

00:30:11:01 Everybody wants to know about that, everywhere I go I'm asked that question and we'll deal with that. And then quite honestly, where are we going because you know... in fact yesterday I was with a bunch of retired generals, the special think tank group, and they were asking well how do you define success?

00:30:29:12 And my... and I responded to that question with a question, well how do you define success? You're asking us to define, tell us what you think's a success in Afghanistan is and we'll tell you if we're doing what you think we need to do to be successful in Afghanistan.

00:30:45:24 So I'll try to get through all those, I'll hopefully... I will, as soon as we get the computer on... I will say

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that a lot of the situations that Mr. Fiano experienced when he was running through Afghanistan and Pakistan, like he said, they haven't really changed with the exception of... it's probably a lot more violent now, I hate to say.

00:31:11:11 The situation, the security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated phenomenally... the Taliban's... trying to take over the southern half of... of Afghanistan which is on the Pak border... the... the narcotics... if you believe what's being said in the press and... and we tend to believe what some of the... what's being said publicly, I don't think it relates policy-wise.

00:31:41:02 But... that the narcotics fueled the insurgency and fuel the corruption which... which is... is disabling the democratization of the country. Well everybody knows that, let me see if I can do this without... okay. Again let me give you a little history, post 9/11. Instinctively, DEA knew that in order to... create a stable and secure Afghanistan, we needed to deal with the narcotics problem.

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00:32:14:02 And I'm talking February of... of 2002, shortly after the invasion, shortly after we... we took control of the country, the military control of the country, DEA was ready to go into Afghanistan and... and work with its international partners to try to stop the flow of... of narcotic coming out of Afghanistan.

00:32:33:02 And simply put, the way we looked at it, if we could stop the flow coming out of Afghanistan, then we will stop the money from going back into Afghanistan that fuels the insurgency, fuels the instability and creates the security issues in Afghanistan. We knew that in February of 2002.

00:32:51:26 So what we did was at the time, the regional director was Jim Kleunan (ph.), he... we convened a conference, we're great for conferences I know, in... in Ankara, Turkey, 19 countries participated in that conference to include Afghanistan at the time, the fledgling democracy had a... a supposed attorney general at the time and he came to the conference.

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00:33:14:14 And at that point what we did was, we put together a strategy on what we needed to do to try to stem that flow of narcotics coming out of Afghanistan. Again, the feeling was if we can stop the narcotics from coming out, money can't go back into Afghanistan, it can't... the militias can't buy weapons, they can't create the instability.

00:33:37:08 But we also knew that if we didn't secure Afghanistan, that we were going to have problems throughout the region. It did not only affect Afghanistan, it affected the entire region and when I mean the entire region, not only the Stans countries but the countries in the Balkans and that was the area that I covered.

00:33:54:25 I could see that the narcotics were fueling the organized criminal element in the... in Eastern Europe and that the Eastern Europeans who never had a consumer population, never had a drug problem before, were having a drug problem. So there was huge affect there.

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00:34:14:08 Now remember, Afghanistan, the best statistics we have... okay, the best statistics we have is it's about eight to ten percent of the consumption in the United States, that about eight to ten percent of the heroin sold in the United States is Southwest Asian heroin. Back in the '80s, back in the '80s, it was... probably up about 50, 60 percent, okay?

00:34:38:12 So for two reasons we needed to get give them, one, we didn't want Southwest Asian heroin becoming... a huge problem in our country and two, we saw it as a national security threat to our country. We saw it and although it didn't have the drug impact, it had the security impact to our country.

00:34:55:09 We wanted to make sure that Afghanistan became a democratic state and joined the... the league of countries, nations throughout the world. And... so what we did was, initially we knew we had to standup, we had to expand in the region, we had to open certain offices, we had to enhance certain offices, we had to get back into Afghanistan, okay?

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00:35:21:12 In... in September of 2004 we convened another conference. What we did was, we did a series between... February 2002 and... and September of 2004, we did a series of interdiction blitzes to gather intelligence, to find out how they were functioning, to see if we could get back into, into Afghanistan and find out who the major targets were and how they were operating.

00:35:44:17 They were pretty much successful. Now you understand, the 19 countries that were at the first conference, many of them had never... many of them had problems with each other. The Greeks and the Turks, for instance, the Greeks and the Macedonians, the Azabishanis (ph.) and Armenians.

00:36:02:19 Several of the central Asian states, the Russians, no one wanted to talk to the Russians but yet they came and because... and the reason why they came is cause it was one issue, one common issue that brought them all together and that was the drug problem. They all knew that if they didn't do something about the issue, they were going to have... they were going to have problems.

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00:36:21:09 And they all cooperated. In September 2004 after two years of gathering information, now you say two years is a long time, it is a long time, but it took that long to get everybody motivated, to get everybody to understand the issue, to get everybody to think globally as well as locally, think globally, act locally... you know that old... green piece thing, well that's what we had to do.

00:36:46:13 In 2004 we convened another conference, Miss Candy came down, she focused us on targeting organizations. Out of the... out of that... out of that conference force we were looking at attacking not only the drugs coming out of Afghanistan but the chemicals going on and of course the money.

00:37:03:11 So she... she mandated that all of us look at that, assess our threat, look at the organizations who were functioning and five major trafficking organizations came out of that conference. Okay, some of the operations that we used to gather this is intelligence.

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00:37:27:07 Of course Operation Red Wine, there were several... there were several enforcement operations that were used to... to further our... what we thought was happening, our interdiction and our target (unint.), but there were also several intell gathering operations like Operations (Unint.) Three.

00:37:44:10 Basically what that was was an operation to gather all the central Asian... states under one roof, it was in Bishkek (ph.) to use, use it as a secure platform. That secure platform was linked up with another one in the Balkans that they could fly her back and forth, information, time sensitive information, securely.

00:38:05:21 That they... they could pass leads, they can pass information, that they could work investigations amongst all these 19 countries. Operation Gatekeeper was looking at the transportation organizations that were functioning. And the idea was look at the transportation organizations and that would lead us up and down the chain.

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00:38:21:27 It would lead back into Afghanistan cause they had to get the stuff out of Afghanistan and then it would lead us down the chain into the Western European consumer countries because we needed to go after them because they were the source of money. So a lot of these various operations were up... were being utilized one to gather the intelligence that we need to support our operations and our targeting strategies.

00:38:44:10 What else did we do? We knew quite well... we knew right away that we needed to reestablish Kabul, so in 2003 we TYDed agents to Kabul to start looking and... and trying to assess what... how we were going to go back in full force into Kabul. We began looking... we open an office in Tashka (ph.) and we started to study and do buys.

00:39:05:24 We realized from the information that we were gathering during this period of time that Dubai played a very key role, especially in the money flow. We needed to have a presence in Dubai. We looked at Dushanbe (ph.) in Dagestan (ph.), Dushanbe and the Tagistaics, one not only were they good partners, but

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they were right on that Afghan border, the Afghan northern border.

00:39:27:07 And in order for the traffickers to get up through the north and Mr. Fiano talked about it, they had to go through the central Asian straits to get to the huge consumer market that the Russians had. And we established a foreign deployed advisory and support teams, our Fashim (ph.), you'll see a lot, we've got a lot of pictures of their training in here.

00:39:45:22 This is one of the early pictures of them after they first... the first class. In fact, shortly after this period of time they... that in fact in April of 2005, we deployed our first FAST teams into Afghanistan and they were there to augment the country office. They were there to work cases, they were there to... with all the intell that we had on the various organizations, to... go after their labs, go after their depots, their storage depots and basically disrupt as much as we possibly can.

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00:40:15:29 At the same time, to gather intelligence and gather evidence to go after them... the primary sources of supply. Again, nothing different that we do all over the world but remember, this is a war zone. It's not Columbia... it's not Los Angeles, it's a war zone. Bombs are going off everywhere, in fact, spoke with Ed Falls today, our guys were out in Iraq, a mile from where they were, a suicide bomber went off, killing a couple of cops.

00:40:49:15 This is their training done in Fort Bliss, this is the second class. In fact they started this... this year, the FAST teams, there's five fast teams, there's five guys to each FAST team, there's a supervisor, an intell analyst and... there are two year rotations, they go in there for four months, they come out and then... but they're in for four... for two years for those of you don't know the FAST (unint.).

00:41:15:13 Again here they are in their training... FAST deployments. The... one of the... the critical issues we have in Afghanistan, I'll be honest, is air mobility, being able to get around the country because it is a

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war zone, because of the deterioration of the security in the country.

00:41:35:04 We really need military support, we need the military to get us from point A to point... B to get... to get out there to do our operations. They have gone out on operations, I'll show you some of the raids... some of the lab sites that they've hit. They're not any different from the pictures that Mr. Fiano showed you.

00:41:58:00 Here's one of the labs that we hit, it was a morphine/heroin based laboratory and what we found was, when we hit, we hit valleys and as you go up from one structure to the other, they're just a series of labs and they all support each other and... and as you can see they're pretty primitive and they're pretty isolated.

00:42:14:17 And you wonder how they even get water up there. Talking to John O'Rourke when he was up there originally, they used to follow the... the... the waterholes and you could follow right to the lab.

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They'd bring it down, there'd be a mile long... hose bringing water in... just so they can support the lab.

00:42:35:15 Here they are again, they're getting ready to go out on a lab, you can see we're using helicopter. In fact in the center you'll probably see O'Rourke, O'Rourke's in there and so was many of his teams. Now this is a combination, these are our guys, these are the Kabul guys and the FAST guys, but they're also what we... what we stood out was... a semi-vetted unit called the national interdiction units.

00:42:54:28 It's an Afghan unit, it's trained by us... vetted but not vetted like our regular SIU's. We are going through that process and that is in that piece that I tell you, the way forward. Again, hitting labs, this... this was again a series of labs, you can see the pill presses, you can see the (unint.) 55 gallon drums.

00:43:17:20 Again there's a water source there that they were drawing from. Again we... we took what we could take and we blew up the rest and that's what usually what we do. We are working very closely with the... with our

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British colleagues, of course the UK has the lead in Afghanistan on counter narcotics.

00:43:33:29 They have... they also have a... a vetted team, called the Afghan secure... national security force. They were very well trained... they have helo support... and we do a lot of work with them. Of course... it's a big country, but the air space is not that big, especially with the military flying around.

00:43:55:05 So everything as to be coordinated, operations have... we have to discuss with our partners, our international partners and our Afghan partners in the country. Again, another lab, this is Operation Gentic (ph.), this was a... a joint lab, it was one of the biggest labs that we hit in the country.

00:44:13:12 At the time there were like... 4000 kilos of opium, not opium, morphine base that was... was seized. It was a series of structures, storage facilities... this was probably one of the more advanced ones and it took... it literally as they were going up the valley to go after

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these various... you know it was about a nine day operation in total.

00:44:37:10 Here's a... here's our MI-17's, our FAST teams going out to deploy. Again, more labs, you see... I mean you go from... the lab before was a fairly sophisticated lab to... as we said, a kind of a... bucket lab here, so... And... wherever we go we find weapons, we find explosives.

00:45:04:12 Now... is that the terror drug nexus, no. But it just shows the danger. This is one, they hit a lab and this is the weaponry that they found, the traffickers are trying to protect their interests and they will with various... weaponry. Remember I talked about the five targets, well six targets, okay?

00:45:29:07 Of the six targets... four are in prison right now. One's indicted and one's been fairly disrupted I think. So... in 2004, September 2004, DEA and its 19 international... partners, country partners, targeted these six individuals and were successful to disrupt

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and dismantle four of the organizations and one organization is disrupted and... is on the run.

00:46:04:27 And the sixth one, well we're still working on him, but that's not bad when you're talking about getting a bunch of people together that have different rules, different languages, different cultures and trying to get them all to work on one goal. These are significant targets and the significance of them is, initially we targeted them because they were dope dealers.

00:46:24:17 We didn't... know that they had any other interests. But just about everyone of them has some link to insurgent support. The first guy, Hasha Bishur... Hasabab Mohammad, he openly stated that... by selling drugs to the United States... he was... it was jihad. He was taking our money and killing us at the same time.

00:46:50:20 He is... he was... the first extradition to the United States. He was tried, he was convicted and soon to be sentenced. Hasha Bishur Norzi, the largest, one of the largest drug trafficking families in Afghanistan,

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was a member of... of the Taliban Shura. He was a close personal associate of Mullah Omah (ph.) the Taliban leader, the supreme leader of the Taliban.

00:47:19:07 He... had a clan of 10,000 people, he was lured to the United States, he was... debriefed and he's arrested and he's pending trial. Shabaz Khan is in prison in a joint investigation that we did with our UK colleagues, our Dutch colleagues, our Belgian colleagues and our... our UAE and the UAE authorities, he's in... Dubai, in prison.

00:47:53:27 He's pending extradition to the United States and he will probably be charged with material support. Murphy Sentetir (ph.) major, major Turkish broker, trafficker is in prison in a joint operation with the Turks. He was the source... of 7,500 kilograms of morphine base that they hit out there.

00:48:17:16 Kurmir Yahquod (ph.) he's a... Turkish Kurd supporter of the PKK, the Turkish freedom fighters, he is on the run, we're tracking him, hopefully we'll be picking him up soon and he'll be... he was extra... he was

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indicted in the... here in Washington in 9/59, NDDS
indicted him. And then Haji Jumakhan is still
pending.

00:48:44:20 This is a case that our... you see the guy with the
cowboy hat, well he's a DEA agent, he's a negotiator
for Misri Khan. Misri Khan, the reason why we brought
this up, Misri Khan was indicted in the Southern
District of New York for sending heroin to the United
States.

00:48:57:01 But he was also indicted in... in Afghanistan and
working with DOJ colleagues who were there to mentor
and advise the Afghan judicial system, Misri Khan and
his cohorts were... were tried in Afghanistan, they were
convicted and sentenced to 15 years in prison. Major,
major, major trafficker for them.

00:49:29:20 There's Mr. Norzi where I told you that we... we lured
him to the United States. In Dubai he changed from
his (unint.) I think that's what they call them right,
to his plain clothes here and he's walking through JFK
Airport. And the only reason I bring this up is... he

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was a high value target for the military, they went after him three times and failed.

00:49:54:28 And DEA was able to get him on plane to come to the United States. Also the significance of having a Norzi, the military had to kill-capture mentality, they said, you know, their high value targets either we kill them or we capture them and we send them the get-mo (ph.).

00:50:12:09 After Norzi they realized well maybe there's a third option, maybe there's a law enforcement option and DEA became an option for them. We worked very, very close... oops, how I do that? Okay, thank you, sorry I'm not very good at this. It gave, it gave the military and the US Government another option.

00:50:32:27 And why is that significant? It's significant in that if we're trying to build a democracy in Afghanistan, if we're trying to build a rule of law in Afghanistan, we got to show that we abide by the rule of law and that we're a democracy and if you have a trial, an open trial, a transparent trial, no one can say that

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you made up the case, that you know, that... that you live by the rules that you're trying to teach the rest of the world by.

00:50:59:12 So that's why it's significant and that's why the military sees it as an option. That's why our policy makers see it as an option, that's why we're there. The outcome, what is the... when I first started, when I met with some policy people the other day, they said how do you define success?

00:51:15:12 Well what is success in Afghanistan, tell us what is success. And you know what their success was, that you have a system... that eradication of course, that the cultivation goes down, that we can go after high valued targets and use the rule of law to go after them.

00:51:31:24 That we have a judicial system that functions, those are success for our... the policy makers in the US Government, okay? Well here's a perfect example that we show that this is what we need to do and that's why

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DEA is playing a significant role. At any give time, there are 35... 30 to 35 DEA personnel in country.

00:51:54:09 That's a huge, when you look at the size of DEA, that's a huge, huge amount of people. Here's... Hajabad Mohammad after he was extradited, of course, those are the New York agents taking him off the plane and.. and bringing him down to MCC in Manhattan. This was.. okay, the quote, "Selling heroin in the United States was a jihad because they were taking the American's money at the same time the heroin, they were paying for was killing them."

00:52:29:28 This is a quote from the guy, this was used during his indictment, this is not classified information, it was in the indictment, it was in the press. In fact I actually took it out of a... a news article, okay? Where are we going? The way ahead, we, the interagency community, the US Government along with our British colleagues and our Afghan colleagues have put together a five year strategy to.. increase the capabilities and capacities of our Afghan counterparts.

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00:53:03:10 We are building and we are helping build a DEA/Afghanistan. And the reason for that is that someday we're going to have pull up stakes and are going to have to come home. The 35 people that are there are going to have to downsize to a regular country office.

00:53:19:07 We can't be there forever so what we need to do is we need to be able to train, mentor, equip our Afghan colleagues to be able to take on the... the problem themselves with our help but at a less amount. So the goal for us, for DEA there now, is to create a self-sustained organization that can function throughout the country by itself, not with us pushing them.

00:53:57:22 The National Interdiction Unit was our first attempt to get a Afghan ability in the country. We are expanding that by developing... SIU's, vetted units that can... investigative units and... and technical vetted units that can go after the highest valued targets. We are using the Afghan law that was passed in December of 2005, that law mirrors our law.

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00:54:24:18 In fact it was drafted by DOJ attorneys so that why it mirrors our law which is good for us. It gives them... intercept capabilities, it gives them real strong laws just like ours, to go after their problem. The National Interdiction Unit right now is 125 men, we're building it to 250 men.

00:54:49:26 There are 11 females in the National Interdiction Unit as of the last class which graduated in August, I'm pretty sure, 11 females and they're good officers (unint.). What gives us... what gives us the authorities that we to function there and bring them out?

00:55:07:26 Well there are two laws. The 959 law basically gives us extraterritorial authority. In other words, if we... if we can show that someone's trafficking to the United States but we don't know where in the United States, we can indict them in the United States, all we have to show is that they guy had intentions to traffic heroin to the United States.

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00:55:28:16 So that's a strong one, in fact over at SOD, there's a 959 group that does these cases and they're very effective, they're great senior investigators, they've got a great supervisor, Brian Dodd, and they go all over the world and they work these cases. The second law which came under the Patriot Act, we call it the Hyde Amendment basically.

00:55:48:05 It basically says if you're a foreign terrorist organization, you're trafficking and support of your organization, that you're indictable in the US and we don't have to show venue, we don't have to show... that drugs ever got to the United States. And not only that, if you're... supporting a terrorist activity, if you're using drug dollars to support terrorist activities, that we can indict you in the United States.

00:56:13:11 Now that's a valuable tool for the US Government, it's a strong tool because everyone of the organizations that our guys are working on, in Kabul right now, and we're limited right now. We're in Kabul... obviously

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we're working cases in Kabul, we're working out in Nagahi (ph.) province.

00:56:29:03 We're building up the Konduse (ph.) which is up north, up on the Tiget (ph.) border and we're doing operations down in Irat (ph.) which is down on... on the Iranian border. But if we can show that you're trafficking heroin and you're using those... the proceeds from your trafficking to support the insurgency, then we can indict you and we'll be doing that.

00:56:50:23 We are indicting people and we are planning to extradite people to the United States. Extradition is a... a valuable weapon for us. The administrator when she was there just not too long ago, about a month ago, dealt with President Karizai (ph.) the national security advisor to President Karizai, the attorney general of Afghanistan, General Savat (ph.) and the various Afghan leaders to talk about the importance of extradition.

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00:57:17:28 And they are supporting extradition, they are supporting extradition. I can tell you everyone of the cases that we have in the United.. in Afghanistan has a link to the insurgency, they're either supporting some way or somehow the insurgency or they're being taxed by the Taliban to support the insurgency.

00:57:41:26 And that's why it's a national security interest for us because those guys are out there planning attacks on our soldiers. I think that's all I got. Yes, that's all I got. Thank you. [APPLAUSE]

00:58:04:08 FS: Now if I could ask both of you to come back up to the stage, you thought you were sneaking off. We'd like to give the audience... a chance to ask for any questions, Q and A. Okay, don't be shy.

00:58:38:20 That just made it easier for them. This concludes our presentation this afternoon. I'd like to ask everyone again to join me in giving them a big round of applause. [APPLAUSE] One last thing before we conclude this. I would like to... throw out to the

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audience and if you would be kind enough to pass this onto your co-workers.

00:59:06:21 The Museum staff is very interested in continuing this. We would like to hear from our co-workers as to what other topics or ideas you would like us to cover in our future series, these presentational series. So if there's anything that... comes to mind that you would like to learn more about... please contact one of the Museum's staff, especially I'd be...

00:59:37:16 I apologize for not introducing earlier Katie Drew, wave Katie. She is actually new to DEA and she is our Museum educator and so she will be continuing these series. So please contact one of us, Katie would be the best person. You could e-mail her, her last name is Drew or you can give her a call on extension 1362 and that's actually 31362.

01:00:01:25 Thank you again for joining us. [APPLAUSE]

END OF TAPE