DEA_Kingpin

Facilitator (Dianne Martin): Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to all of you here in our auditorium and those of our viewers out on the web. Today's lecture is the first in our fall series and it is entitled The Kingpin Strategy. Today there will be a question answer period after the presentation, and I do ask that you all wait for the microphone to get to you before you present your question so that everybody here as well as on the web can hear it. Also, those people on the web will be able to submit questions online. It is now my pleasure to introduce Michelle Leonhart, the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. Miss Leonhart.

[applause]

Michelle Leonhart: Well, thank you, Dianne and thank you for being our MC for this afternoon. And I want to thank everybody for coming out today for this important lecture series. When I was coming in it was interesting to see many retired agents and retired analysts and personnel of DEA as well as current personnel working in headquarters many of whom go back as long as I do and remember the Kingpin Strategy and actually worked on so many of those cases. So, welcome all of you. Before we get started I do want to just say, on behalf of all the men and women of DEA that serve around the globe our prayers and our thoughts go out to the family members of Ambassador Stevens and the members of his team that were killed yesterday.

And it's important because DEA serves around the globe as well in very dangerous portions of this world, and we're always put in danger's way. And the team that was killed yesterday on September 11th was doing their mission to make our world safer. So, I just wanted to start off with that. But we're here today to learn about the Drug Kingpin Strategy which is an extremely effective approach to tackling what was in the early '90s a new generation of drug traffickers and international organizations that they ran. It's a strategy that has evolved in the past 20 years and provided DEA with a solid foundation for today's operations that confront and dismantle and destroy the

largest drug trafficking organizations in the world. So, it's my pleasure today to introduce today's panelists, Robert Nieves, Doug Wankel, Mary Lee Warren as well as our featured speaker today former DEA administrator Robert Bonner.

Each has had a tremendous impact on our profession during their careers in drug law enforcement. And what they accomplished continues to influence so much of what we do at DEA today. I was fortunate enough to have worked with each one of them. They were my bosses at one point in my career. And Mary Lee, the things that you put in place over at DOJ live on today. So, let's start with Robert Nieves who many of us know as Bobby Nieves. He joined the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the the predecessor agency to DEA in 1969. And for nine years he served in the New York City office and later in San Juan and in Costa Rica as DEA's attaché as well as in various headquarters assignments. Shortly after the arrival of former administrator Bonner, he was tasked with formulating and implementing the Kingpin Strategy. When he retired from DEA in 1995 he was DEA's chief of international operations.

And today he is a partner in Burg Associates, a global business exposure reduction consultancy that specializes in investigating financial crimes. Bob, would you like to stand up and see your friends?

[applause]

Michelle Leonhart: Like Mr. Nieves, Doug Wankel also began his drug law enforcement career with BNDD. Starting in 1970 he served in a number of domestic assignments before embarking on a long and reknowned international career that began with two years as DEA's country attaché in Afghanistan followed by four years in Pakistan. There Doug saw firsthand the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union and then the flood of refugees into Pakistan. Starting in the late 1980s Doug served in various senior leadership positions at DEA retiring for the first time as chief of operations in 1996. But DEA wasn't done with him and he returned in 2003 as the chief of intelligence, and until 2007 he was the director of the counter narcotics task force in Kabul, Afghanistan. The

task force was responsible for the oversight, integration and coordination of U.S. government counter narcotics programs in Afghanistan.

So, today Mr. Wankel is managing partner and Afghanistan country manager for Spectre Group International, a leading provider of specialized security, nation building and risk management services. Doug, would you like to stand?

[applause]

Michelle Leonhart: Mary Lee Warren is a prominent attorney with a long record of achievements both domestically and internationally. And she has practiced law for 35 years first in the priv- -- yeah, she holds her eyes. First in the private sector and then beginning in 1980 with the Department of Justice. For 11 years she was an assistant United States attorney for the southern district of New York and the chief of the SDNY's narcotics unit. In 1991 she moved to Washington where she was chief of the narcotics and dangerous Drug section at Main Justice until she was promoted to the position of deputy assistant attorney general. In 2007 she moved to the Netherlands where she was the U.S. liaison prosecutor for Eurojust, the European Union's judicial cooperation unit. And this unit coordinates investigations and prosecutions between member states and partners such as the United States.

Most recently, Miss Warren was based in Brussels where she was senior counsel for EU in international criminal matters for the U.S. mission to the European Union. Mary Lee, would you like to stand, see your friends?

[applause]

Michelle Leonhart: The discussion of the Kingpin Strategy will be led by former DEA administrator Robert Bonner. Administrator Bonner came to DEA after a long and distinguished federal career as a prosecutor in California including as U.S. attorney for the central district of California and as a federal judge for the U.S. district court for the

central district of California. And it was there that he saw close up the great work being done by DEA not only in southern California, but across the globe. During his more than three years as administrator, which spanned two administrations, Administrator Bonner made an indelible mark on DEA from overseeing the decline of the Medellin cartel to the challenged posed by the rise in cartels in Mexico. And he transformed the interworkings of DEA in our approach to investigations by focusing our energy and our resources on disrupting, dismantling and destroying major drug trafficking organizations through the Kingpin Strategy.

Administrator Bonner's reorganization led to the establishment of not only a separate intelligence division for DEA, but also the creation of the special operations division and a major expansion of DEA's aviation division. Since leaving DEA Administrator Bonner has continued to enhance America's security including as the commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service and he served as I believe the first commissioner of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which today we call CBP. Today he's a senior principal of the Sentinel HS group, a security consulting firm that provides strategic advice regarding homeland border security and related issues. So, Mr. Bonner, would you like to stand? Welcome back.

[applause]

Michelle Leonhart: It is great to see former leadership of DEA and the Department of Justice here all sitting on one panel. And Administrator Bonner, we want to thank you for coming up with the idea. We're glad that we've gotten to this point this afternoon. Thank all of you for coming. And I think you're going to enjoy the afternoon. Thank you.

[applause]

Robert Bonner: Well, first of all, thank you, Michelle, for that wonderful introduction. And thank you also for inviting me to help participate in this presentation on the Kingpin

Strategy. I also want to thank you for the great work you're doing as the administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration. Good afternoon, everyone.

Group: Good afternoon.

Robert Bonner: All right, I see there are some people awake out there, not Doug Wankel, but the rest of you are. I am absolutely delighted to be back here at DEA headquarters. As some of you know, I actually was sworn in as the DEA administrator, right here on this stage, back in August of 1990. And in 1993 I actually led a panel discussion right here on this stage with all of the then former administrators discussing DEA's 20th year of existence, its 20th anniversary. And here we are about ready to celebrate the 40th anniversary of DEA. And as I look around this room it's good to see so many familiar faces. It's a bit like old home week for me to be back here at DEA headquarters. DEA is an extraordinary agency with an extraordinarily important mission. And it's been an incredible journey for DEA these past 40 years, almost 40 years and for the men and women of DEA past and present.

And before I go any further I want to recognize and thank all of you for the job that you do at DEA day in and day out to enforce our nation's drug laws, to attack drug trafficking organizations worldwide and to reduce the pernicious effects of illegal drugs on America and its people. We could, uh -- oh, we do have that slide on. Um, today I want to talk to you about an important part of DEA's history and that is the Kingpin Strategy. Before I get to why or whether it work, I, I think the first thing I would like to do is to discuss with you what is the Kingpin Strategy. And I start with this question because I'm not sure particularly around town here in Washington, and perhaps some other places in the world, it is very well understood. Some of the confusion, by the way, I know from talking to people since from the more recent plan Colombia, which was aimed primarily at an insurgency in Colombia not at major drug trafficking organizations.

And while I'm the first to say that a military strategy is appropriate for defeating an insurgency, such as, such as the FARC in Colombia, defeating powerful criminal

organizations requires a law enforcement strategy and that was, and I think is, the Kingpin Strategy. Perhaps the name of the strategy itself, Kingpin Strategy itself is a source of some confusion because quite a few people, and I'm not saying at DEA, but around this town that I talk to other agencies in the U.S. interagency community and the like, seem to think that the strategy is just about targeting and going after kingpins, the leaders of drug trafficking organizations. And the Kingpin Strategy let me just say this very clearly involve much more than just going after the kingpins. It involves much more than just identifying and targeting high value targets. At its core the Kingpin Strategy was a strategy designed to weaken, dismantle and destroy organizations specifically major drug trafficking organizations.

It was a strategy fundamentally to answer and designed to answer the question, how does DEA working with the U.S. interagency community and with our likeminded foreign counterparts, how does it destroy major criminal organizations? And the first step is to recognize as we did that major DTOs by any measure are large organizations. They operate by definition transnationally. They are vertically integrated in terms of production and distribution. They usually have, by the way, fairly smart all be it quite ruthless people at the top and they have a command and control structure. And they also have people with expertise that run certain essential functions of the organization such as logistics, sales and distribution, finances and enforcement. We all know what that means for a drug trafficking organization. It means killing people for whatever reason either because they think they're disloyal or they've stolen money or the like.

Um, it's important to recognize as this strategy does that there are kingpins and there are key players within these kingpin organizations. They, um, that have critical expertise or skills and a handful of them actually have the skills and abilities to replace the kingpins. These are key lieutenants that the kingpin's taken out can run these major organizations. But there are a handful of them. And then there are a large number, a much larger number of mopes and mules and thugs that are fairly, they are fairly easy to replace. But a kingpin and his key players they cannot be easily replaced. If we can go to the next slide. These organizations, these major trafficking organizations have

vulnerabilities, vulnerabilities that can be exploited by law enforcement to unravel and defeat them.

Legal businesses, by the way, le-, totally lawful businesses often turn to Deloitte or McKinsey consulting or other consulting firms to advise them how to be more efficient, how to better structure themselves to increase their profits. With the kingpin strategy, DEA did just the reverse. We asked ourselves and figured out how to weaken and destroy these large organizations, criminal organizations to be sure. Um, and I don't know you, Bobby Nieves, was introduced to you. And I, and I don't know, Bobby, whether you have earned your Master's in business administration for what you did in terms of the development of the Kingpin Strategy, but you should have because no one taught DEA how to do this. This was something that DEA knew and it taught itself and it's the reserve-, the reverse of what Deloitte Consulting does for a big company. But what are the vulnerabilities? Well, they're the top six are, first of all, supply chains.

If an organization can't get its illegal product to market or they're precursors or essential chemicals to produce the product, and we're talking about metric ton quality, quantities of both, well, if they can't do that, they can't operate. So, we understood and the Kingpin Stateg-, Strategy specifically contemplated, sustained and increased pressure to disrupt the targeted organization supply chains from the source of supply, raw materials, to the production sites. And by the way, I will say this that among other things operation Snowcap, which was a DEA led operation, was a big part of this effort. Second is production. The illegal product needs to be produced somewhere whether -- back then, by the way, the Cali and Medellin cartels' large cocaine laboratories were found and, in the jungle areas Putumayo, for example, of Colombia.

But whether it's in the jungle regions of Colombia or today, by the way, with the Sinaloa cartel large meth labs in the state of Jalisco in Mexico, the strategy calls for locating, attacking and disrupting and destroying their production as much of it as we can locate through intelligence. Third, distribution. In order to make a profit, the finished product must be transported to market first to the staging areas, of course, and then

ultimately sprou-, smuggled across the border of the United States and delivered to the organization's distribution personnel to sell. These were distribution personnel were cells that each one of the cartels had. They worked for the organizations in Colombia back then. Um, so, we're not talking about, by the way, and this is important to understand, we're not talking about getting a few kilos here and there across the border.

We're talking about getting multi ton, metric ton quantities of illegal drugs like cocaine across the border into the United States monthly and consistently. So, the more this vulnerability can be exploited, the more it's disrupted, the weaker the organization and the less profits they're going to make. The fourth vulnerability, the finances. This is a big vulnerability. These organizations that we're talking about are all cash businesses. And they generate huge, huge quantities of cash that must be laundered if they're able to get the illegal drug profits and carry out their illegal businesses. They must pay for, by the way, they have, they've got costs they have to pay for, raw materials. They have to pay for precursors and supplies, transportation, distribution of their product, enforcement and security for the kingpin and his top lieutenants, and bribes for government officials to allow them to operate with impunity.

Cut off the cash flow and they will wither and die. Money is the, their lifeblood and without it these organizations breakdown quickly. And the kingpins and the key leaders of these organizations lose their protective cocoons. A key part of the Kingpin Strategy was following the money trail and disrupting it in every way possible. Every seizure of cash caused tremendous disruption and turmoil within the kingpin organizations. Seizing and freezing bank accounts is even better. The next one is their assets. Strip them of their assets which are the very source of their wealth and influence. Similar to disrupting their money flow this part of the Kingpin Strategy [pauseded] that the kingpin and key leaders had acquired assets which they all have believe me. And they, eh, they've acquired huge assets with their illegally gotten gains. And, by the way, what are these assets? It's important to identify and locate them. Some of them are legitimate businesses car dealerships.

Um, some of them are just ranches, houses, automobiles, airplanes, boats. Because they, because these are bought with dirty money, they should be seized and forfeited. And, yes, these assets are often held in the names of straw men and they're often, by the way, most of the time we're talking about here are very often they're outside the United States. But with the right set of laws, such as we have in the United States by the way, it doesn't take a genius to trace and penetrate these facades and confiscate assets. And finally, there's their communications. This vulnerability must be exploited to the greatest extent legally possible. You cannot operate a business, any business by the way, legitimate or illegal without communicating. And the more we intercept their communications, the more difficult it is for organizations, these organizations to operate effectively. Not to mention, by the way, the huge intelligence gains that come from a robust intercept program.

The central idea of the Kingpin Strategy is that working with our U.S. interagency community and intel community and our for-, our trusted foreign counterparts, all of these vulnerabilities are to be attacked simultaneously and on a sustained basis. We believed that when this is done the organization will be weakened to such an extent that it will be easier, and let me say far easier, to locate, capture and incapacitate the kingpin, his potential successors and the key players within his organization. And that, when that happens, when that happens the organization will collapse. Extradition, by the way to the United States I should say, played a big role in our ability to incapacitate kingpins and top players in these organizations. I might ask Mary Lee about that momentarily. Once destroyed these organizations are no longer a threat to legitimate institutions of the state.

Their grip on Colombia, for example -- and it's hard to imagine, but some of you here I know go back with me to the early 1990's, late '80's, early '90's in Colombia. It's hard to imagine. But it these organizations, um, when they are weakened and when they're destroyed the, their power to corrupt and influence in Colombia was essentially eliminated with it. And they had huge power over the state of Colombia and its legitimate institutions through bribery, through threats, through intimidation and through

large numbers of outright murders including narco terrorism. So, if you attack the six vulnerabilities, um, you will, eh, well, attacking these six vulnerabilities and incapacitating the kingpin, the CEO of the organization, and the organization's vice presidents. I'm going to give them that title for supply and marketing and enforcement and finances. I'm telling you, these organizations will implode. They will collapse. They will cease to exist. Poof.

Next slide please. One of the best examples of how this strategy works is illustrated by the end of the organization Medellin med-, Medellin organization headed by Rodriguez-Gacha, the man pictured in this photograph. Um, it was one of the four main organizations that made up the Medellin cartel. Through intelligence, DEA was able to help the Colombian National Police locate the financial records of Rodriguez-Gacha and his organization. They were buried in a certain spot on a ranch that was owned by Rodriquez-Gacha. So, we were able to provide this to the CNP and they went and they searched, and sure enough, they found essentially all the financial records of the organization. You know, you have to have for-, financial records. These guys they do need to know which bank accounts they have and where they are and what they have in them. So, if I could have the next slide.

Um, these financial records that were seized by CNP and analyzed by a document exploitation team led by DEA, um, within 24 hours we'd identified all of Gacha's bank accounts around the world. And here's, here's the really neat thing about DEA. When we identified the bank accounts, that information was passed on to DEA country attaches in each one of those countries. And on the word of a DEA country attaché, the government of Switzerland, Luxembourg, and the governments in Asia froze these bank accounts. And so, over 200 million dollars was frozen [snap] just like that. And that's pretty good Panama, Hong Kong, Singapore and in Europe. Gacha, by the way, who was on the run at this time, Colombians did have him on the run. So, he had to be moving about a bit. He had no cash. The guy actually had no cash. And so, as a result of that he involved himself with communicating, that vulnerability again.

And he started communicating because he needed to do a drug deal to raise some cash for his organization. And so, that was his downfall because law enforcement obtained some information as to his location and shortly thereafter Rodriquez-Gacha was killed by the Colombian National Police just outta-, outside of Cartagena, Colombia. And that was the death nail for the entire Rodriquez-Gacha organization. So, that's the Kingpin Strategy those vulnerabilities and how to weaken and be able to identify and capture and incapacitate kingpins. That's the strategy in a nutshell. But how did the strategy come about? Well, the three people that are going to join me on the stage in a moment when I finally shut up they're going to, they had a lot to do with how this came about when I was the administrator of DEA back in the early 1990's.

And while a lot of really bright, strategic thinkers at DEA worked on developing the Kingpin Strategy, the one person who is, who had the absolute most to do with putting it together, developing its contours and articulating the strategy was Bob Nieves. And I can remember Bobby briefing me a number of times, not just once, but several times on the Kingpin Strategy before I approved it and then before we then aggressively briefed it to the National Security Council and Justice and the interagency community. From my perspective, there were several reasons that DEA developed the Kingpin Strategy. One is if we can go to the next slide. First, ONDCP actually in the National Drug Control Strategy at least suggested that DEA should develop a Kingpin Strategy for the entirety of the U.S. Government. So, that was a pretty good reason for us to do it I thought. Secondly, DEA was and still is the lead U.S. agency for gathering intelligence and enforcing U.S. drug laws.

And because virtually all the major drug trafficking organizations were based outside the United States, only DEA had the extensive overseas network to coordinate with our foreign law enforcement counterparts. And then third, I, I thought such a strategy was entirely consistent certainly with my philosophy, and I would say with the emerging thinking within DEA, and that was that given our limited resources, and they're still limited -- they're a little better actually now, Michelle. But, but given our limited resources we had to get away at DEA from target, targets of opportunity. And we had to

go to targeting by design. We had to go to intelligence driven targeting if we were going to maximize our impact. And targeting kingpin ord-, organizations was, and I would submit still is, the [quindecential] example of tar-, eh, of intelligence driven targeting.

And targeting, um, the strategy, by the way, it got us away, I'm, some of you will remember this, but, I mean, it did get us away from the headcount mentality how many people were arrested for drug trafficking? And how much was seized into a real metric that mattered and that was have we brought down an entire kingpin organization and diminished its capacity to do harm to our country and to our allies? As administrator I also thought -- I shall share this with you. I thought that DEA at least back in those days had become too defensive. Um, the it got just too bent out of shape when some other agency was playing in the sandbox of drug enforcement The truth was, and probably still is, that we needed other agencies of the U.S. Government and the interagency in the intelligence community to help, to help us and work with us.

Think about, by the way, those vulnerabilities I just showed you. It's sodo-, to do some of them, it absolutely requires Customs, Coast Guard, the Treasury Department, OFAC and others. But this was only going to happen is DEA exercised leadership and had a strategy that contemplated indeed invited other agencies to play important roles in executing the Kingpin Strategy. That was the only way we were going to be fully successful. As an agency I think we, we needed to open our arms not close them. The Kingpin Strategy helped DEA. This is important to understand. It helped DEA get buy in and galvanize the U.S. interagency community around a common strategy. We could then more clearly define roles and responsibilities within that strategy rather than just stumbling into one another. I'm talking about multi agencies here. I won't name them right now. But stumbling into one another in an ineffectual exercise of uncoordinated investigations and one-off operations.

And we needed a strategy that are trusted foreign counterparts including the top political leadership of these countries could understand and embrace and that was the Kingpin Strategy. And that's how it came about. But let me turn to implementation

because a strategy means absolutely nothing unless it's implemented. We could have submitted a strategy document, by the way, to ONDCP and checked a box. That's what usually happens in Washington box gets checked. The strategy document goes nowhere. It looks good on someone's shelf and it gathers dust. But that's not what we wanted. That's not what my then deputy administrator Steve Green wanted. It's not what Dave [Westrait] wanted. It's not what Doug Wankel or Bob Nieves, John Coleman, Greg [Passaic], anyone in the leadership of DEA that's not what we wanted and it's not what I wanted.

But if DEA was going to implement the Kingpin Strategy, DEA had to make some very difficult changes itself to reorganize and restructure itself. And this, ladies and gentlemen, is the most important part of the story. We needed to make two profound internal changes and both of them were driven by the Kingpin Strategy. First, to implement the Kingpin Strategy we needed to identify, um, international level targets at the headquarters level and then be able to guide and task all of DEA, all of DEA's concrete offices worldwide and its domestic field offices to essentially to support, to gather intelligence, conduct investigations and mobilize operations against the targets designated. And this was no easy task given that the DEA field office structure itself was organized around semiautonomous special agents in charge. The domestic field office structure would, simply would not work.

It would not work well if we were going to target major international drug trafficking organizations and go after them and all of their tentacles no matter where located in a coordinated and optimal way. So, what did we do? We'd go to the next slide. First, by the way, we established a process for identifying designated targeted kingpin organizations, TKO's. We designated initially several, but ultimately while I was administrator we designated I think it was up to 10 TKO's. They included all of the organizations that made up the Medellin and Cali cartels. And they also included the foremost heroin trafficking organization of the day the [Cunsa] organization that operated inside of Burma. That was the easy part since DEA had a good understanding

of the major drug trafficking organizations both in terms of their size and volumes and their impact on the United States. We made the TKO's the highest priority within DEA.

The harder part was to create units or teams at DEA headquarters, TKO teams or modules one for each TKO that could direct the field to open or prioritize investigations related to TKO's, that could facilitate Title 3's and coordinate among the field and our overseas offices to maximize the attacks on the TKO's.

At the same time, by the way, we did, eh, we did away with the drug desk. The SAC's, by and large, understood the need for change by and large most of them. The ones that didn't get it we had to do something about. But the creation of the TKO modules or teams at headquarters unquestionably, unquestionably resulted in more focused intelligence driven operations against the largest drug trafficking organizations in the world. But this was not enough. While DEA had good intelligence -- indeed, by the way, the DEA held, and I'm sure still does, the treasure trove of drug intelligence. It, we needed to get a, enough, more intelligence really to truly understand all we need to understand about TKO's, eh, who their key personnel were, how they operated and the like.

We needed to upgrade our entire intelligence capabilities and map out collection requirements that would help not just us, but our foreign counterparts, our domestic field offices and other members of the U.S. interagency community carry out the Kingpin Strategy against the targeted organizations, against the TKO's. For the first time in DEA history, up until that time, we established a separate division of intelligence to recognize how important intel is and would be to carrying out this kind of strategy.

Dave [Westrait] was the first assistant administrator for intel at DEA. We set up the SOD and we also established, I think I'm at liberty to say, powerful or should I say sophisticated analytical tools at DEA and to further that effort. By the way, without mentioning any names here I just want to say about names of powerful analytical tools because Mary we-, Lee Warren said I shouldn't and I'm not going to. But I just do want

to say with that admonition that Bill [Mocklar] actually was the brainchild of one of those powerful analytical tools. Um, we forged a good working relationship with the CIA and the U.S. intel community. Should I say how bad it was before? I won't. I'll just say we forged a good working relationship with the CIA and the intel community and no one deserves greater credit for this than Doug Wankel.

CIA both Langley and the overseas stations began to understand the Kingpin Strategy and DEA's intelligence needs, and, by the way, our own intelligence capabilities as well, and started collecting against our requirements for the first time really. It helped, by the way, that there were likeminded visionaries at CIA's, CIA's counter-narcotic center including Jack Divine and Roger [Mackin]. Re-, regarding financial vulnerabilities, let me just say we created the MAFIC, the Multi-Agency Financial Investigative Center at DEA headquarters, to coordinate the various federal agencies certainly including FBI and Customs at the time, who were doing drug money laundering investigations. Greg [Passaic] had a lot to do with that effort. Working with our colleagues at the Justice Department like Mary Lee Warren and no one at DOJ was more helpful to DEA. I'll say that without fear of any contradiction than Mary Lee Warren. We, among other things, quadrupled our use of Title 3 wire taps.

Far more, by the way, Title 3's than every other agency of the, law enforcement agency of the U.S. Government combined. Four times more that the bureaus. So, we were making, we were exploiting both overseas and domestically the communications vulnerability. Let me just say, by the way, someone once said that federal law enforcement is the roughest, toughest contact sport in Washington. Was that you, Bill? Anyways, somebody said that. And I can attest from a few scars I have there's, there's a lot of truth to that. But in the final analysis the Kingpin Strategy allowed DEA to do what in my view it should be doing coordinating and providing leadership to the interagency community and getting it to support a common strategy that furthered the interest of the United States and helped our allies crush organized criminal groups that threatened their sovereignty and democratic institutions. The strategy was bought into by the Colombian government at the highest political levels.

And while it was not perfectly implemented, strategies seldom are, um, nonetheless, the fact is that both the Medellin cartel and the Cali cartel and all of the major organizations that comprised those cartels, the most powerful, by the way, and the most fearsome criminal organization in the world at least at that time and maybe still, they were destroyed and it was done in about seven, eight years. Next slide please. Here are the major kingpins of the Medellin organization. We started with Rodriguez-Gacha. Lederer serving a life in prison [unintelligible] in the United States. The Ochoa brothers, one of them is serving a life sentence in the United States. Escobar, of course, killed. Next slide. The Cali cartel, the Rodriquez-Orejuela brothers, Roberto, Miguel, both serving 30 year sentences, effectual life sentences in the U.S. prison as a result of extradition. Ivan Urdinola dead, killed. Santacruz-Londono killed. Helmer Herrera, help me, Bobby, killed?

Robert Nieves: Dead, yes.

Robert Bonner: Dead. All right, he's dead anyway. All right. So, let me conclude with this question and that is, was the Kingpin Strategy a success? The answer I submit to you is an unqualified yes. Could it have similar success against the Mexican drug cartels? I have no doubt that if correctly understood and implemented and with the right political will, that's a few ifs, it can and it will. Thank you.

[applause]

Robert Bonner: Okay. That's the end of Kingpin 101. I'm going to invite my three panelists to join me on the stage here and we'll, we'll start Kingpin 201. Remember where you're sitting, Doug?

Doug Wankel: Yeah, yeah.

Mary Lee Warren: I'm following you.

Robert Bonner: Let's all gather around. Get cozy. Oh, that light, that light is bright.

Mary Lee Warren: Yes.

Doug Wankel: Very.

Robert Bonner: Um, what we're going to do here is I'm going to moderate in the best Washington Sunday television show, talk show fashion. I'm going to ask these three distinguished panelists some questions to which we'll have a discussion. And then after we've had a bit of a discussion we're going to open it up for questions from the, from the audience. Bobby, let me, let me start with you if I could. I mean, as I indicated in my remarks quite sincerely you were the architect of the Kingpin Strategy. And I said a little bit, at least from my perspective, about how it came about. But how, you know, you were there. You were literally writing this thing and formulating it. Tell us in your own words how it came about from your perspective.

Robert Nieves: Sure. Let, first let me thank Michelle for giving us the opportunity to come back. I feel like I'm back at home seeing a lot of friendly faces. So, that's always great and I always feel like a younger man when I leave DEA headquarters.I was a young man in the early 1990's when I was made the deputy chief of the cocaine section. And at that time I went about the process of trying to learn everything I could about the cocaine business and what DEA was working on. I had a sense of it. I worked in Costa Rica for four years and we were seeing a lot of Medellin and Cali cartel activity there, but not on the national or international level. And so, I became as smart as I could and, of course, we put together presentation materials, um, carousel of Kodachrome slides, for example, that would articulate who these criminal organizations are.

Sorry, did I say Kodachrome slides? For the PowerPoint generation let me say that, um, in those days we had quarter inch poster board. We had Kodachrome slides in a carousel which we then clicked and you'd go through your presentation much like this

one. And you had transparencies with these big cartons with things like that. Anyway, I went about my business of putting those together. And by the time the administrator was appointed in August and wanted to begin to be briefed, I thought I had it together. And so, we briefed the administrator on who these criminal organizations were and we did have a very good idea of how the Medellin and Cali cartels were, were, were articulated in their hierarchical structure, vertically integrated, who was the boss, who did this, who did that. And I thought I did a pretty good job with the briefing only to find out that the administrator, while he understood that we were fairly well conversant with who these organizations were was not entirely sure we were or-, organized in a way to be successful in combating them.

And so, let me say what, um, how we were organized and perhaps that will shed some light on it. In those days we had drug desks. And so, I was in the cocaine section. We had a heroin section. We had dangerous drugs. And even within those sections we were broken down regionally. There were the staff coordinator would have the southeast U.S., another one would have the west coast and so on. And, in fact, I dare say even the White House viewed this cocaine problem at that time as a crack phenomenon and as a violent phenomenon. And when things started to blow up in Miami in the late 1980's and early 1990's, the reaction by the White House was to create the South Florida task force. And so, even the White House was looking at it regionally as a problem that each region of the country was having to wrestle with.

And the administrator, to his credit, um, and great credit is due, said, "Th-, this is not going to work. W-, we need to devise a way to target these groups in a way that gives us a much better way to coordinate investigations and dismantle these groups." And he said, "I need you to come up with a strategy and I need it quickly." Uh, essentially that was it. And so, I organized a team of people to help me with this and took Greg [Passaic] from the financial section and people from the heroin desk, the cocaine desk, intelligence naturally, which I felt played a very important role in helping to articulate these groups. And so, we called Mary Lee and, and let me say an important part of any strategy is having good partners. That means having good counter-partners.

It also means having good partners in this town. This town's a tough town to navigate. And if you don't have partners like Mary Lee and the Justice Department or at the White House or at the ONDCP or wherever it is, people you can go to and speak frankly with and problem solve, you're not going to get anywhere.

And in those days Mary Lee was the person, the go to person in DOJ and I told her I needed a conference room for a couple of days. I had to put together a strategy for the boss and it had to be offsite. I couldn't have beepers and telephones disrupting what we were doing. I went offsite, came up with this strategy and a very, um, let's say in a very crude way. We had all the bases covered so to speak, but there were some obstacles that we'd have to overcome to be successful. And so, we briefed it to the administrator. He came back with some changes. We rewrote it, went back to him and the final analysis we came up the stra-, with the strategy that you are finally briefed on this morning. Let me say it wasn't the most popular thing with agents in charge in the field in those days. They pretty much set their priorities for targeting and they also decided how they were going to spend their money. And the money resided in the field divisions. And so, one of the recommendations to the administrator at that time was to reorganize around these kingpin organizations, and in order to better coordinate with the field, take their money.

Robert Bonner: [laughter]

Robert Nieves: And if we had the money, if we had the money, we'd be sure that they would be, let's say more responsive to the coordinating that we wanted to do and the priorities that we were setting at headquarters. And so, essentially Administrator Bonner, that was how the strategy came about.

Robert Bonner: In, in, Bobby, you talked a little bit there about the importance of reorganization within DEA itself. But maybe I'll ask Doug since I think he was on a point, the pointy end of a few spears. You know how difficult was it, Doug to get the change within DEA itself what we needed to further a strategy like the TKO's?

Doug Wankel: It was interesting times. Um --

Group: [laughter]

Doug Wankel: What was, uh, being proposed was a radical seat change in, uh, in DEA. And, and everything that Mr. Nieves just got through saying was true. Uh, what he left out was is that, uh, Mr. Nieves didn't go out and tell the SAC's --

Group: [laughter]

Doug Wankel: -- that they weren't going to have [unintelligible]. That was left to me. So, I, I think that – but I'm going to answer your question, but let me just say something I think is important. Mr. Bonner you saw his presentation which was a great artful presentation, accurate, historically correct. There were to- -- this was like a perfect storm of law enforcement, if you will, coming together for a much needed strategy, implementation plan program [unintelligible]. Think back if you can, and some of you weren't aren't old enough to think back there, but to what was going on in the late '80's and '90's in Colombia and starting to spread to the region here, you had [e-hem] Pablo Escobar and others controlled the Supreme Court. They owned one or more Presidents at the time. They had massive influence throughout the government, throughout the Colombian National Police.

Mary Lee Warren: The Congress. They had --

Doug Wankel: Congress as well in Colombia. Colombia was controlled -- it was I, it was probably the first acknowledged narcos state big time. And this wasn't going to get better at all. So, this strategy came about much like you heard at the presentation you saw. But you had some very tremendous individuals and, and many of them were within DEA. Certainly, Nieves with his background in in New York. Mary Lee Warren with her background also southern district of New York as a prosecutor, tremendous

credibility, big influence at the Department of Justice through a number of attorney generals. She spoke for attorney generals on drug policy. Tremendous ally and associate of DEA understood international, understood interagency and the need and requirement for it.

Then you had a lot of people. [unintelligible] was a huge a critical guy to come forward and do stuff that led to the so called at the time fifth floor in this project. And Mary Lee's going to hit me if I say much more so I won't say anything else. The special operations situation Snowcap, you had some minor team leader named Mike Braun at the time. Snowcap later came on and did other things and he, Michelle and Tommy [Harrigan], created, FAST team which is a continuation, if you will, or evolution that's very important and critical today in Afghanistan and other places. So, we had a lot of this stuff come together, but it wouldn't have come together, it wouldn't because coming together is what's key, eh, was important. Without the leadership and the foresight and the political capability and clout that the, the gentleman sitting right here Mr. Bonner had. He didn't do it all himself. He had another guy named Russ [Hayman] also known as Doogie Howser --

Group: [laughter]

Doug Wankel: -- that was here by his side and helped explain to us what he was actually talking about sometimes because we didn't understand all this stuff. And so, you had, uh, all that come together and work in great way. And you had DEA really step out from being a me agency to a we agency, all right? They begin leading an interagency effort. Here before you had never had, never had the intelligence community working with DEA. They didn't trust them. They didn't believe them. They didn't think they could live up to what needed to be done to, to maintain confidences and security and stuff like that. You had the military who had never worked with DEA or law enforcement really either. And it's not, I'm not casting aspersions on them anymore than I am on law enforcement who hadn't yet worked with them, okay? So, this was a first time effort you had to come together. And just one little vignette and I'll, I'll shut up

for a minute is, is if you think back to my birthday, December 2, 1993, that was the culmination of the life and career of Pablo Escobar. And what had gone on for a year or so -- Steve Murphy's here.

He was very much involved in that along with Javier Pena in Colombia. You had in depth activity and work from special forces, special ops, military. You had all kinds of intelligence. And, yes, you even had diplomats that worked together working with the intel, military and law enforcement community on targeting, on coordination and doing things. And it led to the demise on a rooftop of the first I guess documented billionaire in drug trafficking in the history of the world. A big deal. And it also led to other things going on. So, I probably didn't answer your question, but I just wanted to make my point.

Robert Bonner: I, I think you answered a number or questions that I get, and I don't have any way to object for non-responsive answers.

Group: [laughter]

Robert Bonner: Uh, uh --

Doug Wankel: Well, I watch Sunday TV shows before.

Group: [laughter]

Robert Bonner: But I will say this. I'm going to ask Mary Lee something here. But I will say this that I take no credit for the Kingpin Strategy. All I did was I came here. I said, "What's our mission? How do we, how do we actually do something that has impact on the largest organiz-, drug trafficking organizations in the world?" And every single idea I talked about here came up from within DEA. I want you guys to know that, okay?

Doug Wankel: Well, a lot of the meetings when you were pointing your fingers at people and your voice raised a great deal more than what it just was seemed to indicate a little bit different than that.

Group: [laughter]

Robert Bonner: Oh, I, I don't remember that, Doug. Uh, okay, Mary Lee, Mary Lee from, from the Justice Department perspective of things or maybe the interagency community more broadly read. Was the development and implementation of the Kingpin Strategy the shift by DEA to this kind of targeting? Was it important and, and why, from your perspective? And anything else you want to say, Mary Lee.

Mary Lee Warren: Yes, I'll take the same liberties. Um --

Robert Bonner: As everyone else has.

Mary Lee Warren: Yes, it was extremely important. And in, with 20/20 hindsight I can say that it was just the obvious logical step. At the time it didn't seem so easy to take. Doug might complain about pointy end of the spear from various SAC's or out in the regions. I was at the pointy end of the sphere of many prosecutors across the country, um, suggesting that perhaps I've been drinking the Kool-Aid in Washington and that what happened to the cases they had Wichita and they just weren't going to be able to do what they had done before. So, it, it took settling down and some time for the prosecution standpoint for the prosecutors to realize a success out of, eh, across the country out of the strategy. But it was exceedingly important to target the limited resources of the experts in this field on the, at the highest levels. The, the top of the mountain and his higher echelon. I, as a prosecutor, particularly appreciated this intelligent approach, intelligence in lots of different ways. But it required close coordination with a prosecutor all along the way. Targeting communications meant Title 3's court authorized wire taps. Prosecutors

needed to be involved in those early on. So, we formed a team working toward what would be a s-, a case that could result in a successful prosecution later on. But that teamwork from, from the very beginning was exceedingly important. Um, it was also important in the interagency to have a, a comprehensive strategy that is, was meant to be a working strategy and that we were going forward with it. It wasn't just one more writing assignment. But how were we going to go forward and just stand together on that was a big step, uh, in bringing the rest of the community along I think.

Robert Bonner: And I should have said too that how important it was as part of the team federal prosecutors of which I was one once assisted U.S. attorneys, DOJ prosecutors [unintelligible] very least leadership here, but both were Title 3's for prosecutions that made sense against arms and distribution cells and monitoring money laundering cells. And, by the way, bringing these big time indictments against people so that when they were extradited they weren't killed, but they were extradited to the U.S. we actually, you know, there was some great assistant U.S. attorneys and DOJ attorneys who prosecuted these cases. And it did effectively incapacitate them. I'll, you know --

Mary Lee Warren: Could I launch on extradition at that point?

Robert Bonner: I was just going to ask you about how important extradition was. [unintelligible] you, you preempted me. Yes, how was the extradition important here at all?

Mary Lee Warren: Mmm. It was essential. In fact, it's my mind it was the end game. The U.S. Criminal Justice system was recognized certainly by the kingpins as one that would result in justice which meant conviction for them. There was confidence in, in our system. At the time in Colombia, they were averaging a conviction rate of zero to three percent. I give them the three percent because I'm a nice person. It was more like zero percent. And why not? I mean, you were, a judge would either be killed or he would be paid off. You had the choice of silver or lead. Until we had a singular strategy, it was

suggested, for example, that we turn over all our evidence to the Colombian authorities and have them prosecute at a zero percent conviction rate. And I recall it a time traveling to Borgata and met by a high-level diplomat there who wanted to know if I brought the evidence with me. And when I said, “No,” because we didn’t want to turn that over and his hard one fought cases that we’d put together, lives put at risk, I wasn’t about to turn it over, I was told by that diplomat to get back on the plane and fly home.

Um, when we had a singular strategy that brought all arms of the government together including our state department and those onsite, we had a wall of force saying that Colombia needed to extradite their their nationals, change your c-, your constitution back, allow for that extradition and let’s get underway. Finally, that was done. Today there’ve been 1,400 extraditions from Colombia, our best extradition partner in all the world. And started slowly, but we got the, the big guys back who were still alive. And they knew how strong our prosecutions were and the cases that have been developed. Typically, they started cooperating on the plane being flown up to the United States because they knew they were done for. There was going to be a conviction at the end of it, of that ride. Um, it was one of the most important things that I think we did co-, as a collateral effect since we had demanded extradition of nationals from Colombia. In the future when we started negotiating other treaties starting in Latin America, we demanded the same thing. We wouldn’t sign a treaty unless it had that clause in it that nationals would be extradited. And now it’s extended around the world. I’m back from Europe, the Europeans, “Oh, we don’t extradite our nationals.” We won't sign a new extradition treaty that would exclude nationals. So, it had a far reaching effect.

Robert Bonner: You can see why we, we needed Mary Lee Warren and who also handled some other very tough negotiations with some, some other agencies that were very important to the Kingpin Strategy and our ability to gather intel. But Doug, I ended my remarks, and this is to Bobby too, but I ended my remarks by essentially saying that asserting that the Kingpin Strategy was successful. And I, I wonder what’s your view. Was it successful? And if it was successful, why?

Doug Wankel: Well, just going back to what I said earlier about the, the status and the situation that existed in Colombia for some number of years that it pretty much come to a head at that point in time. The Kingpin Strategy and what evolved from that certainly was very significant in, in turning things around bringing a government back to Colombia, bringing security and, and, and more safety if you will. You still had [unintelligible], but it was much different than what existed during the Escobar. Pablo Escobar, Murphy can tell you better than me, but Pablo Escobar is reportedly responsible for the death of about 3,000 policemen across Colombia during his career. He paid bounties on them and things like this. So, this guy was gone. The other guys that you saw on the on the screen were taken out and their organizations are reduced considerably, significantly. So, yeah, it made a big difference because you really did have intelligence driven, focused targeting of organizations with law enforcement following to do what was necessary to bring people to justice one way or the other. So, yeah, it was, it was highly significant.

Robert Bonner: I'm going to open this up for questions in just a moment. One quick question though for Mary Lee and/or Bobby. Asset confiscation, how important, not just in the U.S. where we confiscate assets under our laws and so forth and forfeited them. but in Colombia and elsewhere how important is essentially confiscating the, the kingpin's assets?

Mary Lee Warren: Exceedingly important. Typically, these guys cared more, almost more about their, their money and their assets then their liberty. It was extraordinary. If we could -- most of them no longer had assets in the United States. They were smart enough not to place their assets there. But they deposited things around the world and purchase, made purchases around the world homes on the Rivera as well as bank accounts in Switzerland and in Luxembourg. And once found it frozen then we began long-term and very dogged litigation to get a final judgment and get that money of out of those countries and to the United States or sharing with our partners in order to build stronger cases. One of the most difficult issues, however, were the assets that were in

Colombia. All those investments and ongoing businesses that, for instance, the Cali cartel had. How could we have some impact on those?

Um, and that's led to the development of the use of IEEPA, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, where we were able to specify targets, same targets, and those who provided the material support as against the national security of the United States and it all U.S. persons were forbidden to deal with them in any way. Well, they had an, this CBS of Colombia, for example, [unintelligible] from Baja, um, that relied on our pharmaceuticals, our over-the-counter drugs, their IBM cash registers, everything. When U.S. corporations could no longer deal with them, the, that asset was devalued enormously. It was across the board like that. So, working from the money end, not just to follow the money to find who the perpetrators were, but to really cripple them had to be part of the strategy and had to be implemented fully.

Robert Bonner: Thank you. Now, let me open it up for questions from the audience. Do we have any out there?

Mary Lee Warren: [laughter]

Robert Bonner: Is anybody awake?

Robert Nieves: [e-hem]

Robert Bonner: I'm also told we -- oh, there we go. Yes, yes, sir.

Male Voice 1: Sir, two questions, one sort of a lighter question which is you alluded to the fact that the Kingpin Strategy has been misunderstood in part because of the name. When you were looking at different names, what alternative names –(over here [WAVES]). What alternative names did you come up with or were you thinking about? And, and the more serious question is of the elephant in the room which is you've also alluded to the fact that there are lessons to be learned in the Kingpin

Strategy for today. So, when you look at the situation in Mexico and West Africa and Afghanistan and elsewhere, what do you think needs to be done or what do you think we need to learn from, from what you put together 20 years ago? Thank you.

Robert Bonner: Yeah. Uh, well, perhaps others can answer it to. But, yeah, the strategy itself, uh, eh, at the time I thought Kingpin Strategy sounded okay and it, it did have some, uh, some sex appeal within the interagency community and that sort of thing. But if I were looking back at it, I would have called it the TKO strategy. I mean, it's targeting kingpin organizations. That's the strategy and as I would describe it. So and it was, it, yeah, it is, I, I hope everybody understand much, much more than just targeting the heads of drug trafficking organizations. Lessons for today, look, profound lessons from Mexico and the Mexican drug cartels. They said [Lower] cartel is the most powerful criminal organization probably in the world today. Bazettas are probably not too far behind and are an absolutely ruthless, merciless or-, organization operating both in Mexico and now in Central America. Um, I think there are lessons to learn here. If you want to just -- I'll give you one quick one and that is you tell me how many assets of [unintelligible] Guzman had been seized and confiscated by the Mexican government? Tell me. Give me a dollar value. None, okay?

They don't, they don't seize and forfeit assets. And the reason is they don't have a law that's capable of doing it. They have a law. It requires you to get a conviction. They get a, get a conviction in maybe four to five percent of the ca-, of the, peop-, drug traffickers they apprehend. And so, the courts get back anything they could seize. And they really are -- they're not aggressively seizing and forfeiting assets. You want Guzman take his assets. They're in [unintelligible] names and they're probably pretty easy I think to identify. And you'll find -- and, and Guzman will be stripped of the protection that he has and put on the run, you will locate him. You will be able to incapacitate him and remove him. And he's a very important kingpin as far as I'm concerned. But it's true of look at all at those organizations. Afghanistan, I'm going to leave that one to Doug Wankel. I mean, those are, those are pretty, uh, I guess they're

still heroin trafficking out of Afghanistan and so forth. But let me -- I dominated that, Doug. Do you have anything or Mary Lee or Bobby to add to lessons learned or --

Doug Wankel: Well, one, one of the biggest problems you have specifically in Afghanistan is that you have a nation that's ranked by the International Transparency Index as second most corrupt nation in the world I think behind Somalia. And it's true. It's accurate. In fact, they're probably number one. But, not all the votes are in maybe.

Group: [laughter]

Doug Wankel: And, and, and as long as you have corruption and you have a government that is, that is largely controlled and things like that, you don't have a valued partner, a trusted partner that you can work with which is absolutely critical to do. You've got a little better situation in, in, in Mexico in the outgoing president and some of the other, but look at all the problems they've had in Mexico with all of the law enforcement agencies to some degree the military agencies with the corruption things going on. So, that's a huge deterrent to having the, the interagency effort that can be transferred and, and worked with your, your local partner in a foreign nation which is critical in order to do what has to be done. So --

Robert Bonner: And, Bobby, you know, I talked about trusted partners, but, I mean and make it brief because out time is limited.

Robert Nieves: Yep.

Robert Bonner: But how important are embedded units within our trusted law enforcement [unintelligible]?

Robert Nieves: Really important. I think a great part of success of Kingpin in Colombia was the fact that we had police that we can trust and work with and share valuable intelligence with without fear of compromise. And so, that really served as the

model for better teams. But unfortunately, better teams costs a lot of money and in those days we didn't have it. And certainly, the money that was available we didn't control. And it wasn't until later that we were able to get that vetted team money to establish like organizations throughout Latin America and other places a priority across the world. So, very important to have good partners.

Robert Bonner: Yeah. Okay, other questions out here? We might have time for at least maybe one or two more. I'm not sure. Somebody will tell me.

Facilitator: Hello, we actually have a question from a web viewer online.

Robert Bonner: All right.

Facilitator: First, thank you for your past and continued service. If you were to compare DEA's organization today as compared to the way it was organized when you all were working, would you implement anything from back then today?

Robert Bonner: Oh, that's a tough one to put to us. And I'm not going to put Michelle on the spot. So, no, and I don't know actually. As I sit here I'm actually not that converse. I know the, the, the division of intelligence still exists. I know some analytical tools and, and SOD and, and things have, have been carried forward. But I don't know. I'm not in a position and, and I'm not even sure I'm going to ask any of our, my co-panelists to comment on whether DEA should be [unintelligible].

Doug Wankel: What if we want to?

Group: [laughter]

Robert Bonner: Yeah. Because we can't do -- you know, and it's, and, and I don't know. The answer is I don't know.

Doug Wankel: Excuse me, boss.

Robert Bonner: Yeah, go ahead.

Doug Wankel: At the risk of, of being, appearing to be insolent I will, I will go just a little bit farther than what he said. I think it's important and, and I look at it from afar. I'm not internal to DEA anymore. But wha-, what DEA is always been known for and, and I think tremendous about and better than any law enforcement agency in the U.S. Government is they, they take a good idea and they make it better. So, if you look at what DEA is today, you look at how the SOD has progressed, I would say that SOD is easily the most professional, capable, qualified law enforcement entity in the world period. Okay? You look at, at the, the attacks that go on against the major organizations and how the Kingpin Strategy, whatever you want to call it, how its evolved. DEA has, has continued in the last 20 years and made things better, all right?

What DEA has done as they did all of that is the solidified themself as a standalone agency. Many of you don't remember how fragile it was. Michelle does. She was walking around the halls here back in those days. How fragile things were in the end of the '80's beginning of the '90's as far as DEA being merged into a larger organization. Uh, that was a very difficult time and came very close to happening. Ain't going to happen anymore. It's finished. Uh, if anything, some probably merged into DEA maybe, but it's not going to go the other direction. So all of that has, has matured. DEA has matured and things have evolved and grown. Finally, let me say about the intelligence division, the establishment of the intelligence division, which was great on the part of the boss Mr. Bonner and, and Dave [Westrate]. It was also helped a great deal by Dick Blige, Judy [Bertini] and a lot of the professionals in intelligence.

And, and then and now especially people across the interagency community and certainly within DEA see, see the intelligence research specialist, the intelligence analysts as being partners of the agents. They're no longer thought of necessarily as support to the agents. They're partners. If you didn't have them, you couldn't do the, the

focused intelligence driven targeting and law enforcement operations that go on. So, there's a lot of things that have evolved and developed and is, and, and ensued the dedication of effort of the DEA professionals and all the support staff that support them as well. It's a great organization and it's critical to the national security of the United States then and now. Especially when you see the nexus between drugs and terrorism it's critical that DEA continues. Look at what's happened, uh, in, in recent years Victor Booth. Who would have ever thought that Victor Booth could have been, uh, arrested and brought to justice, okay? Uh, uh, [unintelligible] Cazar, stuff like this, people are starting to recognize it.

Uh, in fact, DEA has now been nominated special operations division I was just reading. Lou [Mileon] and William Brown and, you know, [Maltz], group of guys out there, uh, for I guess it's called a Samuel, oh, what's it called, Samuel J. [Haimons] Service to American Metal, SSAM's a very prestigious award and I think maybe the winners announced tomorrow. But as far as I'm concerned DEA has already won by being nominated for the award. So DEA is alive and well. They're doing great and the Kingpin helped it along, but DEA has taken it and run further. So --

Robert Bonner: I'm going to deem those as Doug Wankel's wrap up comments.

Group: [laughter]

Doug Wankel: I'm done.

Robert Bonner: And I'm going to ask Mary Lee and/or Bobby, anything you want to say by way of a quick wrap up here before we conclude the program? Mary Lee?

Mary Lee Warren: Um, it -- [laugh] It's so hard to be, uh, brief. Uh --

Robert Bonner: As Doug just demonstrated.

Doug Wankel: [laughter]

Mary Lee Warren: But I, I do I second a lot of what Doug said and I don't always do that.

Group: [laughter]

Mary Lee Warren: I, to me, one of the great strengths of DEA, and this has grown over time and particularly with SOD, has been the clear recognition of the importance of teamwork with the prosecutor as well. If we're going to get, um, cases worked effect-, effective, efficiently, as comprehensively as possible, we, the prosecutor needs to be involved earlier. It is SOD is the one, uh, time that I was pounded by law enforcement to have more prosecutors assigned out there. And I think it showed the recognized the importance of that teamwork.

Robert Bonner: Thanks, Mary Lee. Now, Bob, you have the last word here.

Robert Nieves: Real quick. Um, first I'd like to give credit to Bill Mockler, colleague retired, recently had a heart attack for those of you who don't know and thankfully recovering very well. Uh, Bill [Mokler] conceptualized SOD. He came forward with it. It was a brilliant idea. And it came totally out of hide. And what I mean by that is it wasn't budgeted for it, but in a matter of three months the administrator found the money to build it in an abandoned FBI, FBI facility in Newington. And Mary Lee and Doug spoke about the resistance to SOD at the time by the interagency community, prosecutors and whatever as it turned out to be the recipient of prestigious awards. I think the credit correctly goes to [Mokler] for conceptualizing it and for the administrator in building it. And so, congratulations to you and the administrator.

Robert Bonner: Thank you, Bobby, for that. And that, ladies and gentlemen, concludes are program. We could you join me in thanking our panelists for this excellent [unintelligible].

[applause]

Robert Bonner: That's a wrap.

Doug Wankel: That's a wrap?

Robert Nieves: Thank you. It was great.

Facilitator: If I could just say --

Robert Bonner: Oh, oh, it's not a wrap. Excuse me.

Facilitator: If I could just remind everyone that this is the first in our fall lecture series. And we will be having our next one October 4th here at 2:00PM in the auditorium. And it is going to be *entitled Inside the Golden Triangle: Opium to Coffee in Northern Thailand*, excuse me, Thailand. And we also have another one scheduled for November 27th. So, you'll be seeing our notices out there. Again, thank you for joining us today and have a good evening. Thank you again.

[applause]

End of recording.