

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

Tape cuts out on certain words.

00:00:01:10 MS: Good morning and welcome, my name is Shawn Ferns and on behalf of the all of us here at the DEA Museum, I want to welcome you, just a quick business note before we get started. Out of courtesy to the speakers and to others in the audience, if you could please silence your cell phones, pagers and blackberries, that would be much appreciated.

00:00:18:22 Again... good morning and welcome. This is the third in our spring lecture series marking the 35th anniversary of the Drug Enforcement Administration. Each month we have looked back at a different decade and what could arguably be seen as the major drug trafficker or drug trafficking organization during that decade.

00:00:37:16 March was Nicky Barnes and Frank Lucas and that was the 1970s. April, Pablo Escobar I the 1980s and now we are here in the 1990s and that decade saw the rise of the Oriono (ph.) Felix Organization, it's often referred to around DEA simply as the AFO. We have two excellent speakers joining us this morning, case

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

agents who've been involved in investigation the Oriono Felix Organization from the get-go.

00:01:03:25 Let me introduce both of them and then we'll turn the podium over to them. The first is Special Agent David Harrod from the DEA San Diego field division. Special Agent Harrod graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in 1988 from Michigan State University. Upon graduation he was employed as a Special Agent with the United States Customs Service in San Diego.

00:01:24:24 And in 1991, after working many narcotics and money-laundering related case with... in conjunction with DEA. Special Agent Harrod transferred over to DEA. Upon graduation from the DEA Academy, Special Agent Harrod was assigned back to the San Diego field division. During his work there he was working on Operation Alliance and he was introduced to the Tijuana Cartel.

00:01:48:19 And many of the investigations that Harrod was first exposed to involved the Oriono Felix Organization. In January of 1995, Special Agent Harrod was transferred to a special task force that the San Diego field division had setup known as the Oriono Felix

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

Organization task force where he and others targeted the illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, organized crime and violent acts associated with the AFO.

00:02:17:27 Second we have Mr. Robert Scharf (ph.), a Special Agent with the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations based in San Diego, but out of the Los Angeles field division. Robert Scharf has been a Special Agent with the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations assigned to San Diego, California since 1983.

00:02:39:27 Between 1983 and 1994, Special Agent Scharf was the IRS case agent assigned to numerous organized crime drug enforcement task force related investigations that included the Oriono Felix Organization. It was in 1994 that Special Agent Scharf was first assigned to the AFO task force to help investigate and dismantle the Oriono Felix Organization, also known as the Tijuana Cartel.

00:03:08:26 Since the mid-1990s together Special Agents Harrod and Scharf have been the two principle case agents with

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

lead investigations targeting the Oriono Felix Organization. Please welcome both Agent Harrod and Agent Scharf. [APPLAUSE]

HARROD (?)

00:03:29:01 MS: Good morning. Usually when we talk about the Oriono Felix Organization, we usually do this presentation in four and eight hour blocks, it's a little bit different for us today because it's a... it's an open forum, public's invited. Usually we present it... to law enforcement only.

00:03:48:21 Somewhere during those hours talking about the AFO, sometimes I'll say something I shouldn't or I'll give away a DEA secret or two, so I'm going to apologize ahead of time if I do that. What we hope to do today is... provide a glimpse of the AFO, 25 years of drug trafficking and violence that affect the United States, the San Diego field division specifically, our area of responsibility, their rise to power and their decline.

00:04:19:10 I didn't say demise because I think it's still a little bit premature to... say that the Oriono Felix

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

Organization is... is dead. We hope to one day mention the AFO in the same sentence as the Medine (ph.) Cartel and the Calli (ph.) Cartel where they would be extinct.

00:04:32:28 We're very close, we're working with... the government of Mexico and someday soon we hope that the Tijuana Cartel will be extinct. As we go through the PowerPoint presentation, we're going to... there's a big history to the AFO, a lot of events, a lot of violence, a lot of drug trafficking, there's a lot to talk about.

00:04:55:11 We're going to provide some of the major highlights, the major events that have taken place during the reign of the Oriono Felix Organization. And for those of you that... need to take a break or catch a quick wink or two, we're going to have some videos during the presentation as well.

00:05:16:23 Where to begin, I think we need to begin where we are today with Mexico, the violence that is plaguing Mexico. It's been in the press lately, it's well known that the drug cartels in Mexico are striking at

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

the government of Mexico, law enforcement and anyone else and there's a reason behind that because the government of Mexico has declared war on the cartels, including the Oriono Felix Organization.

00:05:46:11 The Attorney General, this article came out in the "San Diego Tribune" just a couple days ago and for the first time publicly he announced that the violence in Mexico is dire, the situation is dire. Organized crime violence is up 47 percent in 2008 from a year ago and we're only in the month of May.

00:06:05:28 A lot of high level law enforcement personnel have been killed this month alone. The violence in Tijuana especially is troubling, a three hour gun battle that happened on January 17th of this year, broad daylight, 10:30 in the morning. Down here in the corner you've got a... the Mexican Military carrying kindergarteners away from the scene.

00:06:36:20 There's a kindergarten school across the street from this shoot-out. Just a... just a couple of weeks ago, another major shoot-out happened in Tijuana where

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

upwards of 15 or 16 cartel members were killed out on the street...

00:07:02:05 Just on May 8th, the national police chief from Mexico was gunned down at his home. What's troubling about this violence that's occurring in Mexico... is the fact that they're striking back and they're striking back hard. And as I mentioned earlier, it's because the government of Mexico has been successful in their campaigns against the cartels.

00:07:27:26 I don't think the general public realizes or appreciates the great danger that the Mexican law enforcement community is involved in when targeting these cartel members and going after them. It is a dire situation for them and I've got a short video clip that kind of depicts what it's like for the Mexican law enforcement to go against the cartel, to go and try and apprehend these guys.

00:07:50:26 This is a video clip from June 24th, 2004. It's a video clip of the apprehension of... a high ranking AFO member in Tijuana, Mario Berto Garcia Semental El Chris. There's not much to see on this video clip,

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

but there's a lot to hear and this is a daily, almost daily occurrence in Mexico.

00:08:14:07 This is the type of violence and the type of traffickers and the type of people that these guys are going up against. Particularly troubling in this particular clip, maybe some of you have already seen this on You Tube... places, is the fact that the.. the bad guys, El Chris as his nickname was, had a 50 caliber machine gun.

00:08:38:27 So I'm going to play this short clip, it's about two minutes long and.. you'll get a taste of what it's like to be Mexican law enforcement.

00:08:58:20 VIDEO CLIP - NOISE - SPANISH

00:11:28:29 This is just a short video clip of the firefight that day.. what ended up happening is El Chris got into an armored truck, pickup truck, bailed out of his garage and then the firefight carried on through the streets of Tijuana. He was finally stopped where he was apprehended.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

00:11:51:05 Upon being apprehended, he told the Mexican agents, I fear no man, the only reason why I'm taken is cause I ran out of ammunition, it's the only reason. The Oriono Felix family, it's a poly drug trafficking organization that dates back to the mid-1980s, heavily involved in trafficking of marijuana and cocaine.

00:12:16:04 Received the cocaine directly from the Columbian sources of supply and marijuana from the interior of Mexico. The Oriono Felix family.. 11 sibilings, seven sons, four daughters... one son, Ramon Oriono Felix is dead, another daughter Leticia died when she was two. Two other sons are in custody, (Unint.) Oriono Felix is in custody in Mexico, Javier Oriono Felix is in custody in the United States.

00:12:55:16 One other son, Francisco Rafael, the eldest son, recently released from custody in the United States and deported back to Mexico, after serving 15 years in custody between Mexico and the United States. Another son, Eduardo is a (unint.). Right here... the mother, Elisia (ph.), she's the woman that we affectionately refer to as the mother of all evil.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

00:13:21:24 She's still alive and living in the interior of Mexico. Here's another family portrait of the family, you'll notice in both pictures the only person missing in the family is Ramon, somebody's got to take the picture so I guess it was Ramon. My introduction into the Oriono Felix Organization came through this man right here, Joe Plossios (ph.).

00:13:55:11 Joe Plossios was a (unint.) for DEA. I graduated from the Academy in April 1991. On June 20th, 1991, I was sitting in my apartment in University City, California, having a pizza and watching the Detroit Tigers on TV and I thought life was good, 7:30 at night, Joe pages me.

00:14:23:09 I had just graduated from the Academy two months prior and I'm thinking who's going to page me? Well I get the pager off the table, it's a 911 page from Joe. He says, Dave, go to Third Street and Main Street in Jolla Vista, there's two vans, they've got a ton of cocaine in them.

00:14:42:27 And the preceded to give me description of the vehicles. Of course my first reaction was, you got to

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

be kidding me? He goes, no, just get there, you got to get their quick. So what I did was, I called Joe Gonzales, my GS. I called Gordon Ajeoko (ph.) with the US Customs Service and I called a few other agents that I knew that lived down in that area.

00:15:05:01 They got down there and lo and behold they got onto the van, one of the two vans. They followed it to a residence. To make a long story short, we sat on that... those two vehicles in a house in National City for a week. The vehicles... moved locations, we did search warrants and lo and behold... not one ton of cocaine, but nearly two tons of cocaine.

00:15:33:14 And this is two months out of the Academy and I'm thinking to myself... damn this job is easy. Four arrests later, a corrupt inspector... a United States inspector were arrested behind that two ton case. Obviously we knew that the Tijuana Cartel was involved because of the amount of cocaine involved.

00:15:56:26 Out intelligence information that was able to provide to us through sub-sources of information. Joe continued to work cases related to that initial

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

investigation. A Customs led investigation named Operation Bus Stop, he was heavily involved in. He was doing surveillance on buses down in Tijuana, loaded with cocaine, bring them to the border.

00:16:19:06 We would take them up to the Los Angeles area and we would hand them off. Throughout the.. summer of 1991, law enforcement seized another five tons of cocaine in Los Angeles. Had 30, 40 arrests and I'm thinking to myself, damn this job is easy. March 9th, 1992, Joe's picked up in Tijuana.

00:16:50:04 A week later on March 9th, Joe's body's found tortured, stabbed dozens of times. And then I thought, damn, this job's not so easy anymore. He left behind a wife and five children, including a six month old son. I made a pledge to Joe that day, that his body was found, myself, Joe Gonzales and Mike Conswetta (ph.) with the Customs Service, went to the morgue in Tijuana to identify his body.

00:17:28:23 And I made a pledge to myself that, God willing, one day I would bring his killers to justice or at least help bring them to justice.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

00:17:45:28 End of 1992... one of DEA's finest agents, a person by the name of Jack Robertson, opened up a case on Ben Oriono Felix. He later turned that investigation into an OSEF case, brought it to a task force. The group supervisor at the time that Jack opened the case on the... Oriono's, was a person by the name of Michelle Lenhart (ph.), you've probably heard of her.

00:18:17:03 Hopefully one day she makes it somewhere in this agency. [LAUGHTER] By November 1992, the Oriono Felix Organization, the Tijuana Cartel, is on the brink of war with all the other cartels. The incidence at Christine's Disc Deck cemented that war. November 8th, 1992 was Ben (Unint.) Oriono Felix's birthday.

00:18:43:10 They went to this nightclub in Puerto Viarta, actually Ben Hamen didn't go, he was at a hotel with his wife and family, but Ramon Oriono Felix, Javier Oriono Felix, Ishmael Egetra Guerra and a bunch of their gunmen and henchmen went to this nightclub. During the early morning hours, gunmen burst into the nightclub, shut the lights and started opening fire on

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

the occupants inside, targeting Ramon and anybody else related to the organization.

00:19:17:22 As luck would have it or not have it, the Oriono Felix brothers, Ramon and Javier, a couple of their gunmen, Ishmael Egetra Guerra, were in the bathroom at the time. They escaped through the skylight and went onto the roof. Javier goes one way, Ramon... Ishmael Egetra Guerra and a person by the name of David Brun Corona, goes the other way.

00:19:45:18 David Brun Corona is a gang member from San Diego, from the Logan Heights area of San Diego. He was ingratiating himself into the organization. He was their top assassin at the time. As legend has it, the three of them get the off the roof, gunfire is coming from all around the discothèque, they're returning fire because they have weapons on them.

00:20:12:02 They escape down a tree and come down, Ramon, Ishmael Egetra Guerra and David Brun. They get on the ground and there facing them... is a rival cartel member, drawing down on them with a AK-47. Between the three of them... they didn't know it at the time, but between

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

the three of them... they had one bullet left in their gun.

00:20:36:16 David Brun shot that guy in the head and saved the life of Ramon and Ishmael Egetra Guerra. From that moment on, the war was on between the Oriono's and all the other cartels in Mexico. And from that moment on, David Brun Corona and the Logan Heights gang members were recruited to act as enforcement and protection details for the brothers themselves.

00:21:09:10 May 24th, 1993, the most infamous and probably the most important event in the history of the AFO, the murder of Cardinal Juan Jesus Posada de Campo at the Guadalajara Airport. This single event probably forever changed the landscaping of drug trafficking, especially in Tijuana and especially as it pertained to the Oriono Felix brothers.

00:21:32:01 In Mexico, a country that's 90, 95 percent Catholic, the Cardinals are revered, member, person in that country. Shocking murder, shocking assassination... what happened was two organizations came together and the Cardinal was caught in the middle. Chapel

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

Guzman's organization, Chapel himself was at the airport that day.

00:21:55:10 The Oriono Felix Organization was already in Guadalajara on a mission to kill Chapel Guzman. They left that day for Tijuana because they'd been there for a couple weeks and failed to find him. Chapel arrived at the airport, David Brun Corona... is still outside, Paul Ramon and some of the other gunmen are boarding the plane for Tijuana.

00:22:18:04 Somebody sees Chapel, all hell breaks loose and there's a shootout all over the airport. The Cardinal's in a Grand Marque, a white Grand Marque, a narco type vehicle and probably under the adrenalin of the situation, under the firefight that was going on, David Brun went up to that car and opened up fire on it, killed the Cardinal himself personally.

00:22:45:10 He had great remorse for killing the Cardinal because he knew the fallout that it would cause Ben Hamen and the rest of the organization. From this moment on, when the Cardinal was killed, it was the AFO against the world, against the other cartels, against the

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

government of Mexico and against the United States government.

00:23:10:02 This led us to January 1st, 1995, the formation of what we call the AFO task force, the Oriono Felix Organization task force, made up of federal, state, local enforcement personnel that came together to try and target the organization specifically, to bring them down, to indict them, to locate them, to apprehend them, to do all they could because of all the problems that they were causing.

00:23:35:13 DEA, IRS, FBI, INS, Customs.. some local law enforcement presence, San Diego PD, Chula Vista PD, all came together to target this organization. Between 1995, January 1st, 1995 and November 8th, 1997 when we came together as a group, we had to come up with a strategy, a prosecutorial strategy, an investigative strategy, how to target this organization.

00:24:11:14 What we ended up with was, because obviously when you're up there with the brothers at that level, it's very hard (unint.) in that type of evidence against

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

them specifically. So what we decided to was, we decided to target their top lieutenants, Ishmael Egetra Guerra on side, Arturo Piaz Martinez on the other.

00:24:33:03 A member of our audience today, Paula Misambra (ph.) and Jack Robertson were responsible for targeting Ishmael Egetra Guerra. Bob and I were responsible for targeting Arthur Piaz Martinez. During the course of our investigation we were able to come up with enough evidence to change KiKi.

00:24:52:16 But our biggest problem was, at the time, was trying to get these guys apprehended. During that 1996-1997 time period, we would have bi-lateral meetings with our and Mexico, with our counterparts. And to tell the truth, those meetings were very frustrating. You could always tell when we all came together, that there was a lot of mistrust.

00:25:16:11 That there was a lot of friction, just... it was a very tense situation when you came to... to the table and try and share the information with them. We didn't have anything to loose because we wanted KiKi apprehended.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

And to this day, one of my most vivid memories is remembering Chuck LaBella, the acting US Attorney in San Diego at the time, at one of these meetings, getting very angry with the government of Mexico, with the people there at that... table.

00:25:49:25 Daring them, telling them, in a very, very angry way, that the government of Mexico doesn't want to go after these guys, they don't have the political will to do it. I remember him pounding the table with his fist and I'm thinking to myself, when I'm seeing this, I'm like... wow, that's going to do well for relations.

00:26:15:14 But you know what, it was tough love and lo and behold our first big break in the case, within a short period of time, government of Mexico arrested KiKi Piaz on November 8th, 1997. November 8th Ben Hamen's birthday, there's something about November 8th that's... not good for these guys.

00:26:37:24 So then of course, onto our next step with KiKi. We had to request his extradition and that's what we did. A couple weeks after... KiKi was arrested, Dave Brun Corona's murder on Thanksgiving Day, he's killed in a

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

crossfire as the Oriono Felix Organization tried to assassinate the editor of the newspaper Zada (ph.), Jesus Barn Kanales (ph.). [GUN SHOT SOUND]

00:27:09:11 That was just to make sure you guys were awake. As you can see, David was coming up on the side of that wall, coming up to the Explorer. Usually the AFO, they're pretty good at tactics, they're probably better than most law enforcement and police agencies. Probably because the way that... Jesus Barn Kanales' bodyguard was trying to escape, put him in this position.

00:27:40:04 AFP hit men were at the front of the car shooting back, one of the gunmen that day had an AK-47. It ricocheted off the fence, caught David in the left eye, killing him instantly.

00:28:02:06 And just to prove what a cutthroat business it is to work for the Oriono Felix Organization, only one guy had an AK-47 that day. He killed Dave Brun accidentally, but David was such an important person to the Oriono's, their top assassin, the top killer,

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

that that guy had to pay for killing David and he paid, they killed him. That's the price of loyalty.

00:28:33:23 March 11, 2000, another milestone in the history of the cartel. Jesus Labriabulus (ph.) is arrested on the 40 yard line of a football field watching his son play football. And we're thinking at this point in time, wow, that is a big hit, that is great progress, tremendous.

00:28:56:11 Jesus Labriabulus is a senior partner to the Oriono Felix brothers, long time member of the organization, long time trafficker, dating back to the 1970s. A couple months later, one of the biggest hits. On May 3rd, 2000, Miell (ph.), Ishmael Egetra Guerra is arrested in Encinitas, Miell was the.. in charge of the day-to-day operations of the organization since the death of the Cardinal in 1993.

00:29:29:11 Ruthless killer in his own right, there are some stories going around, I don't know if they're true or not, that perhaps the brothers themselves were behind putting Miell in place to be apprehended because Miell

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

was getting too big, he was causing too many problems for the... for the brothers and the organization.

00:29:53:00 We come to 2001... since KiKi's arrest in 1997, what the task force was trying accomplish, trying to do, was to obtain evidence that we could charge the brothers with and from time to time we would return indictments, supersede, depending on our witnesses, the strength of our evidence.

00:30:11:02 January 2001, the Mexican Supreme Court... comes out with a decision that says, a Mexican national can be extradited from Mexico to the United States. Two weeks after that decision's made, Chapel Guzman, who'd been arrested in 1993, behind the murder of the Cardinal, escapes from Punta Grande maximum security prison, two weeks after that Supreme Court decision.

00:30:42:20 He remains to today, the most wanted man in Mexico. On May 4th, 2001... lo and behold... KiKi Piaz is extradited to the United States, the first Mexican national to be extradited from Mexico to the United States to face drug charges. Tremendous breakthrough for us.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

00:31:04:12 October 2001, he pleads guilty to a CCE, money laundering and on January 14th, he's sentenced to 30 years in custody. Coming up we have a short video clip... referencing Piaz's extradition and the historic significance.

00:31:32:28 VIDEO CLIP

00:35:23:22 Part of our investigative strategy back then was to get one of these lieutenants in custody in the United States because we needed somebody to cooperate with us, to give us the inside scoop, the inside story on the brothers themselves, to give us that evidence we were lacking so that we could indict the brothers.

00:35:43:17 Probably the second most important event in the history of the AFO occurred on February 10th, 2002 in Maizaland, San Loa, the murder of Ramon Oriono Felix. [GUN SHOTS] Without a doubt, he was the most feared, the most respect member of that organization, loved killing people just for the sake of killing people.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

- 00:36:11:05 Ramon Oriono Felix, just to give you a little glimpse of his mindset and things that he's done. He had two families... his real wife and a second wife that he had a couple children with. The second wife, he killed his brother-in-law because he was being too mouthy about Ramon's brother-in-law, so he killed him.
- 00:36:39:11 Eduardo's wife, Salinas Martinez, her sister, her mother, he had all three of them killed as well. And his brother Carlos, at least two lovers of Carlos have been killed at the hands of Ramon. The murder of Ramon, without a doubt, led... oh I'm sorry, I'm going to play a videotape of... America's Most Wanted, highlighting Ramon's murder.
- 00:37:10:29 VIDEOTAPE
- 00:42:08:03 Shortly after that program aired, within a couple weeks, Ben Hamen Oriono Felix was arrested on March 9, 2002 in Pueblo, Mexico. Another watershed moment for us in our investigation of the Oriono Felix Organization and as... our former SAC, Errol Chavez has mentioned, as (unint.) had mentioned, there's no doubt in my mind or in our minds as investigators, that the

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

only reason that Ben Hamen Oriono Felix was arrested was because his brother was killed.

00:42:40:06 That's how much fear and respect Ramon had, not only had with the other trafficking organizations, but with the government of Mexico and the Mexican military. We're going to have a short, one minute video clip, of Ben Hamen's... arrest.

00:43:05:02 VIDEO CLIP

00:44:39:03 Those two events, Ramon's death and Ben Hamen's arrest... gave us the break we needed because that top lieutenant in the organization who was extradited, who pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 years in custody in January, decided to cooperate with the United States government.

00:45:01:00 For the first time, KiKi Piaz's cooperation was the foundation of an indictment that could be used against the brothers themselves, outlining great excruciating detail 15 years worth of drug trafficking, 15 years worth of violence, murders, kidnappings, 15 years worth of money laundering.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

00:45:25:09 From February of 2002 to July 2003, things were going great at the task force, we were working diligently.. and for the first time, we came together to return a super-C indictment, this time a Ricco indictment targeting all the entire leadership of the Oriono Felix Organization, the three brothers themselves, Ben Hamen, Eduardo and Javier, top lieutenants, Ishmael Egetra Guerra, Umberto (ph.) Egetra Guerra, and a few other high ranking members of the organization.

00:46:02:21 Back after Ben Hamen was arrested, we were working with the United States attorney's office in the Southern District of California. Laura Duffy was the primary AUSA at the time and we came up with a idea, we said, wouldn't it be great in a show of cooperation, a unified front, if we could get the government of Mexico onboard to announce these indictments and to work with us to go after these guys once and for all?

00:46:33:07 Well that happened, it was a year in the making, a lot of hard work, but on July 8th, 2003, Attorney John Ashcroft and then attorney.. then Attorney General from

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

Mexico, Rafael Masado (ph.) de la Concha (ph.) came to San Diego... to announce this precedent setting indictments, targeting the entire hierarchy of one cartel, the Tijuana Cartel.

00:47:04:00 In this video clip that's coming up, outlining the precedent and historic coming together of Mexico and the United States..

00:47:15:04 VIDEO CLIP

00:50:08:10 The reason why it was so important to bring the government of Mexico onboard is because we needed their cooperation like never before. We finally had an opportunity to sit down, exchange information and go after these guys once and for all. Operation United Eagles was born in the fall of 2003, based on that precedence setting press conference.

00:50:26:28 Then Administrators... Administrator Karen Tandy.. had this operation (unint.), Operation United Eagles where (unint.) bi-lateral effort to exchange information, investigative strategy to target those high ranking

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

fugitive members of the AFO for apprehension, whether in the United States or Mexico.

00:50:51:05 Also in this time period... prior... just shortly prior to returning our (unint.) in July, we put a little bit of pressure on one of the witnesses to... to provide some information that we needed. That witness, in an effort to get out from underneath the... spotlight so to speak, whispered in our ear and say hey, why are you going after me?

00:51:18:16 If you want Javier Oriono Felix, all you got to do is follow this guy over here, (Unint.) vas Egardo (ph.), he's Javier's personal assistant. He was Ramon's personal assistant but now he works for Javier. If you follow him, you'll get Javier. Well during that timeframe, we were busy with the indictment, we were busy trying to put together extradition packages.

00:51:43:09 So we took that information about Egardo and filed it away in our pocket to use one day later. Within a very short period of time, we're working with our Mexican counterparts... and we arrest two high ranking members of the organization, arguably two of their top

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

lieutenants, Efrom Perez on the left, Jorge Oriono Felix on the right.

00:52:12:25 They were arrested on June 3rd, 2000... 2004. I was able to go to Mexico City when they were apprehended and talk to them. It took me 11 years, but for the first time, I brought Joe Plo9ssios' killers or at least helped bring his killers, to justice. El Chris, arrested three weeks later in a shootout that you saw videotape earlier.

00:52:44:28 El Chris, infamous within the organization, because he came up with a method to (unint.) that nobody had really done before and that was to dissolve them in acid. And as Ramon used to tell other people in the organization, it's a lot easier to pour someone down the drain then to go dump their body in the street.

00:53:08:12 Two months later, Gilberto Egetra Guerra is arrested in a short... in a small little community east of Mexicali (ph.). Tremendous success in a very short period of time, working with our Mexican counterparts. The arrest photos on the bottom, the top two photos

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

are their credential photos that they used to obtain...
false law enforcement credentials from Mexico.

00:53:37:25 El Chris' law enforcement credentials. The picture on the bottom, it's hard to see, but that's a 50 caliber projectile that was shot out of that... rifle. Again, he fears no man, the only reason why he was apprehended is because he ran out of ammunition, that's the type of mentality these guys have, that's what the law enforcement community in Mexico has to go up against every single day.

00:54:14:02 The arrest of Gilberto... the success of Operation United Eagles led to... Operation Shadow Game. For those of us that have worked the Orion's since the beginning, this was the pinnacle of our success right here, Operation Shadow Game. After the dust had settled and the major UE arrests were behind us, we got the extradition packages out of the way for those that were already in custody.

00:54:47:13 We went back to our pocket, pulled that information about Egardo les bes Condone. We did what the witness told us to do, monitor his activities, he'll take you

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

to Javier. What ended up happening and it's a very long story, so I'll try and make it short, is we identified a yacht, called the Doc Holliday.

00:55:13:04 And we thought well, it's very simple, we watch the yacht, they get on the yacht, they go into the international waters, we apprehend them, simple. Not so simple. Another agent and myself, John Zieglar and I went up to Alameda, California to the US Coast Guard.

00:55:32:28 And we came to them with our operation proposal, just that you know what, we need an asset dedicated to us. So if the Doc Holliday ever ventured in international waters, we'd be in a position to interdict it. The Coast Guard were great, they know all about the AFO, they knew all about the history.

00:55:54:00 And we ended up asking them a question, okay, what if we tell you the boat's in international waters, what happens? And they tell us, well what we'll do is, we'll look at the radar and we'll see where all our assets are and if we have one close, we'll see if it's busy.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

00:56:08:26 If it's not busy, we'll have it go respond. Of course my reaction was, well that's not good enough. We knew the single key to this operation was we needed the asset and we pleaded with the Coast Guard, hey, do you think you can dedicate an asset to us for a short period of time?

00:56:29:12 Lo and behold they agreed. The... for a six week period, beginning in July 2006, they dedicated an asset for the Operation Shadow Game. Six weeks they deployed on or about July 1st. The weekend of August 14th... we know that... the Doc Holliday is in Cabo St. Lucas.

00:56:59:26 Well the only problem is, our asset is at its six week market, it's going back to San Diego. Monday morning, August 14th, 2006, I get a phone call, the boat's in international waters, what do you want to do? I said, where's the asset? Quickly call Alameda and they say the asset's two hours past Cabo St. Lucas.

00:57:27:17 Can we turn him around? We'll do our best. Lo and behold, 12:15 PM, 1:15 Cabo St. Lucas time, the Coast

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

Guard interdicts the Doc Holliday, 13.1 miles south of Cabo St. Lucas, international waters by 1.1 mile. Eleven people onboard, eight adults, three children, Javier is taken into custody.

00:57:55:02 It takes a long time to get identification photos to us, they eventually e-mail them to us from Alameda and at 4:15... we see his picture. We just won the super bowl. It's a photograph of us coming in... myself, Oscar Lopez with the FBI and Laura Duffy actually flew out to the monsoon to greet the boys coming in.
[APPLAUSE]

00:58:31:20 That's Javier coming off the boat, being escorted by our ASAC on the left, Alan Pulzack (ph.) and our GS at the time, Scott Wells on the right. I think we have another short video clip outlining the arrest of Javier.

00:58:48:01 VIDEO CLIP

01:04:28:01 Because Javier was caught in international waters... we were able to return a super-ceding indictment against him and another top lieutenant that was caught with

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

him, Arturo (Unint.), del Nagon in which they were death penalty eligible. I've never done a death penalty case before, I didn't Bob has either, the task force certainly hasn't.

01:04:49:01 But there was a lot of pressure during the trial prep days of trying to put together a death penalty eligible case. Lo and behold... what happens on the way to trial the government of Mexico extradites several high ranking members of the Oriono Felix Organization to include Ishmael Egetra Guerra, his brother Gilberto (unint.) and gang member Jose bat Marquez.

01:05:23:02 They also extradite the former leader of the Simoloa (ph.) Cartel, one of the former leaders of the Simola Cartel, Jesus Hector (unint.) Palma.

01:05:42:06 The recent pleas out of those case investigations, Ishmael Egetra Guerra pled to 40 years in custody. (Unint.) brother (Unint.) 30 years... del Nagon 30 years. The eldest brother, a month after Javier was arrested, the eldest brother, Francisco Rafael was extradited as well to the United State on September 16, 2006.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

01:06:11:00 He was extradited based on a case from 1980, nine ounces of cocaine, he got nine years, pretty much a year for each ounce. And then the... the leader of the cartel, Javier. Ultimately Attorney General Roberto Gonzales decided not to pursue the death penalty against Javier or del Nagon, he's the only one that make the decision... life in prison.

01:06:50:13 Somebody that was interesting just to kind of put into perspective the violence of this organization, during our time that we were preparing for trial, two things stuck out in our mind. One was... we had some information from some witnesses, high level witnesses, that came onboard.

01:07:09:10 And they talked about the murders that were committed by the Oriono Felix Organization over the years and they talked about this... little house they called the Casita. And they said, you know, that little house is where we killed a lot of people. So the question is, well how many people did you kill?

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

01:07:28:03 And the answer was, well we killed about three or four a week. The next question, for how many weeks? He said weeks, years, from 1994 until May of 2000, do the math. The other thing that was evident and it's no secret and I'm not giving any secrets, we had intercepted the cartel leaders on their communication devices, on their radios.

01:08:06:13 It's a long involved story, but the gist of it is, they would pickup people. Recently in the last several years they've kind of gone away from drug trafficking and got into kidnappings for ransom. And they would run their kidnapping victims' names over the radios, so to all their crew members, to all the members of the organization.

01:08:28:22 If somebody in that organization vouched for them, it's good, you get to go home. If they didn't vouch for them, chances are you didn't get to go home. From the inception of the United Eagles in 2004 until August 14th, 2006, the Tijuana Cartel ran over 1500 names over their radios.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

01:08:55:25 The great majority of those people were disappeared in acid. December 2007, Operation Shadow Game Two... targeting Gustavo Rivere Martinez, another high level member of the organization, actually was rumored that he took over the leadership for Javier. We were able to work very closely with our Mexican counterparts...

01:09:30:20 And on March 11th, 2008... Gustavo Rivere Martinez was arrested in Baja, California sur... Another major blow to the organization, the dominos keep on falling and it's because of our cooperation with the government of Mexico. The relationships we developed and cultivated over the years to actually get rid of this organization once and for all.

01:09:58:12 This photograph was taken... the next morning after Gustavo Rivere was arrested. The person in that photograph is Roberto Velasquez Bravo, one of the high ranking Mexican government officials that worked with DEA in Mexico. He was killed a couple weeks ago, outside his home, targeted by another cartel.

01:10:24:28 We affectionately refer to him as the Lion King because he went up and climbed this hill, kind of

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

looked down on all of us cause he was trying to get cell phone reception. I'd only met him a couple times... but I could see why there was a great relationship between him and DEA.

01:10:42:20 And the great thing about meeting and talking to him for me was he spoke better English than I did. The guy's a hero. Four days after Gus' arrest, another high level lieutenant in the organization, Saul Montez de Oga, El Siego, was arrested as he was getting ready prepared to drive an off road race in Baja, California.

01:11:12:24 Another major blow to the organization. We had an extradition package that we filed on Gus a short time ago... Siego Saul, we're going to work on an indictment against him in the coming months and efforts will be... going toward his extradition as well. Awaiting extradition, these guys are part of the 11 original leadership figures of the cartel.

01:11:38:21 The big one of course is Ben Hamen, his senior partner, Chui Lagra, Efrom Lacombe, Brig Roberto Yannis is the cousin of Ishmael Egetra Guerra and

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

Armando Martinez Duarte, Loco Duarte was another high ranking member of the organization. We keep hearing rumors that their extraditions are... on the brink, that they're pending.

01:12:02:10 We've been told recently that... at least as far as Mr. Efrom Lacombe, that their extraditions were approved. The Oriono Felix brothers yesterday, that's what they looked like in their heyday when they were kings of the hill, the drug lords of Tijuana. And this is what they look like after 15 years of exhaustive investigative work, trying to bring these guys to justice.

01:12:43:04 The one that's been a tough egg to crack is Eduardo, Eduardo's been a recluse since the murder of the Cardinal in 1993... but obviously efforts are underway to find him as well. The future of the AFO... there is still a future. I think those of us that have been in DEA long enough, have learned lessons from long ago, especially lesson learned on July 3rd, 1997, the death of Emoto Creo Fuentes, the lord of the skies.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

01:13:15:17 Killed on an operating table as he underwent plastic surgery. Everybody said, you know what, that's the end of that organization, that is the end of the Juarez Cartel because nobody in that organization can be a leader like Emoto Creo was. Well guess what, his brother Fuentes stepped up and the Juarez Cartel is still one of the most violent and dominant drug trafficking cartels operating in Mexico today.

01:13:44:23 Larry Roberts, the RACK of (unint.) Juarez has his hands full down there. The reason why I mention that is because we do have a choke hold on the AFO, we are coming closer to the end, but the job isn't finished and we're working aggressively with our counterparts in Mexico to complete the task at hand.

01:14:05:14 And that for us the task won't be complete until there is no person by the name of Oriono in Tijuana, trafficking drugs. Eduardo, the last surviving brother, Fernando Sanchez Oriono, he's the nephew, he's the head of the organization today. Jorge Brecino Lopez is Javier's brother-in-law, running the organization.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

- 01:14:30:22 A lot of rumors and innuendos out there about (unint.) and Adina, that she may play a pivotal role in the organization these days. Obviously we're... we're looking toward that, she's under investigation, we don't know whether or not those rumors and innuendos are true, but we're going to look into it.
- 01:14:51:22 A couple other high ranking members of the organization that have stepped up, Nasio (unint.) Rodriguez, Logan Heights gang member, he stepped in to fill the void for Gus, when Gus was arrest in March. Eduardo (Unint.) El Tao, it's El Chris' brother.
- 01:15:09:27 The shootout that happened in April, at the end of April, April 26th and 27th, when there was 15, 18 cartel members that were killed in the streets of Tijuana. Allegedly the rumor is that the shootout occurred between Tao's people, Fernando's people and Jorge Precino's people because Tao was conducting unauthorized drug trafficking and unauthorized kidnappings.
- 01:15:37:01 So they're policing themselves. He may not be around too much longer, whether at our hands or the cartel's

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

hands. (Unint.) fugitives, \$5 million bounty on Eduardo, \$2 million bounty on (Unint.) Gelindo (ph,), another senior partner, (Unint.) partner from back in the day.

01:16:04:26 Long time drug trafficker from the (Unint.). And this man right there, Eguardo Lavi Escandone (ph.), the personal assistant to Javier Oriono Felix and before that Ramon Oriono Felix. They say a picture's work 1000 words and for us that have tried to tackle this cartel and bring these guys to justice, it's been a long hard road.

01:16:30:27 But that's one of our favorite pictures, we actually used this picture on a plaque for people that leave the group because it tells a story, it tells the story of 20 some odd years of the most dominant drug cartel in our area and certainly one of the most drug cartels in Mexico.

01:16:54:18 It tells a great story.. the rise and the decline of the Tijuana Cartel. Bob.. Bob tells me from time to time that I talk a lot. So I know it's been long for you guys and we appreciate you.. your patience in

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

letting us present this. So on behalf of.. the San Diego field division, the Tijuana resident office, the Maizland resident office, all our other offices in Mexico.

01:17:24:25 On behalf of the government of Mexico and the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District in California, thank you for your time and patience and we'll be more than happy to answer any questions if you have any. [APPLAUSE]

01:17:40:29 MS: If I may, for those who have questions, we have microphones on either aisle, if you could.. signal your question and we'll pass a microphone to you so we can have the whole audience grab your question for either of our Special Agents.

01:18:02:05 MS: Well if there's no further questions or no questions at all, we have one last video to show. And a lot of these videos that you know we showed you today, a lot of them can be found on You Tube which is kind of funny, but they can. I was searching You Tube the other day just to come up with a good way to end this presentation.

**DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION LECTURE SERIES
HARROD, SCHARF AND ZIEGLAR**

01:18:23:08 And I found this video and it tells a great story and I'm not sure that... the Tijuana Board of Tourism would appreciate it, but we'll show it anyway. So for those of you that want to watch it, that's great, if not, thank you again. [APPLAUSE]

01:18:49:21 VIDEO CLIP - MUSIC - GUNSHOTS

01:24:52:17 MS: That concludes our presentation today. I want to thank again Special Agents Harrod and Scharf for coming here today and thank you all for participating. Next month we'll continue with our presentation on the 2000's and Haji Baz Mohammad, thank you all very much. [APPLAUSE]

END OF TAPE