

AFFBNA MLS

Sean Ferns: - the event on the webcast. Good morning again. My name is Sean Ferns. I'm the Director of the DEA Museum and Visitors Center in Washington, D.C. Today we are gathered at the AFFNA Conference, the Association of Former Federal Narcotic Agents. It is the largest gathering of retired employees across the country. It is fitting and proper that we host this live webcast of our DEA Museum Lecture Series from the AFFNA Conference. I want to send greetings to those who are joining us, uh, not only from DEA offices around the country but indeed around the world on our live webcast and also those who are watching this program, um, after the fact, uh, it will be posted on the DEA Museum website to run in perpetuity.

Uh, today we're launching our Fall Lecture Series. This is the first time we've done an off-site program, uh, since the lecture series started in 2003. Our theme this fall is the 100th Anniversary of Drug Law Enforcement. It all began in 1914. Congress moved and then finally passed the Harrison Narcotics Act. This law set in motion what had become DEA. It was passed in response to the rising drug problems in America at that time. It addressed things that the earlier Pure Food and Drug Act, which created the Food and Drug Administration, the FDA, in 1906, what that law did not address. And it began drug law enforcement first under the Treasury Department's Miscellaneous Division, then the - under the Bureau of Prohibition.

And when Prohibition ended but the drug laws continued, a new bureau was stood up. This was in 1930. It became the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, FBN. That organization existed from 1930 to 1968 and then, as I said before, has evolved into today being known as the Drug Enforcement Administration. While the name has changed, the mission of enforcing America's drug laws has not.

And so we gather together to put a wonderful panel. Our moderator, uh, today is Retired Special Agent Bill Allman. Bill came on the job with the Federal Bureau of

Narcotics in 1966. He served in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, San Diego, and at Headquarters in Washington, D.C., retiring in 1993 as the Head of Congressional and Public Affairs there. I'm going to leave it and ask Bill to introduce our excellent panel. Bill's going to lead our discussion with the panelists, leaving time at the end for questions.

Uh, those of you who are in the room who would like a - uh, to pose a question to the panel, I will ask you to use the microphone, uh, that, uh, Katie Drew, our Education Coordinator, will have in the center aisle. That way, not only will those of you here in the room be able to hear the question but also those watching, uh, on the webcast. If you are watching on the Web, there is an opportunity for you to submit questions to our panel, uh, using a button on the screen. It's at the bottom, uh, and you can submit your questions and they'll appear here to us here in the room, and we will pass them on. At this time, let me then welcome our moderator for this panel this morning, Retired Special Agent Bill Alden. Bill.

Bill Alden: And thank all of you that are here with us live today and everybody who's going to be watching on the webcast. I'd like to welcome our, uh - my brother, former, uh, FBN, Federal Bureau of Narcotic. We are narcotic agents. Back on those days, we weren't Special Agents. Uh, I don't know why they're so special today, but they are. Uh, first of all, I'd like to, um, introduce Bob Nickoloff. Next to him is Jerry Carey, Tom [00:03:46 Kosecki], Frank Selvaggi, and actually the person in part responsible for me becoming a narcotic agent, and that's Jack Lloyd, who was in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1966, the first narcotic agent I laid eyes on. I go, "I want to be like him." And that was the beginning.

So, anyway, I'm, I'm excited to be here today. Just as a reminder, uh, uh, this is just prior to, uh, Turn On, Tune Out, and Drop Off, uh, the transition in American. Drugs weren't in every community. Drugs [00:04:21 unintelligible] in the inner cities within the United States. The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, because the laws were based on the

Tax Code, had jurisdiction over opiates and coca and marijuana. That was it. Uh, some of the later kiddie drugs, as we used to refer to them back in the old FBN days, uh, were under the jurisdiction of a newly-organized organization called the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control that was created in 1966 under HEW.

But, but at that time, when we were on the street, it was, uh, heroin, cocaine, and marijuana and primarily heroin. That was the drug that the Federal Bureau of Narcotics pursued the most. There was very, very little cocaine abuse in our country during the '40s, '50s, and '60s. So, it was a major focus on, uh, on, on, uh, on, uh, on heroin. Also a reminder. We didn't have computers. Uh, we had 3x5 cards, was our filing system. Uh, we didn't have the Internet. Uh, we didn't have GPS. Uh, we had walkie-talkies that usually didn't work car-to-car.

Uh, the vehicles that we had were seized vehicles. The Federal Bureau of Narcotics never purchased a vehicle. All the vehicles that agents drove, were on the street with were agent - were vehicles that were seized. So - and most occasions, we had pretty nice cars. The seizure statute back in those days was only for conveyances. They were the only things that we were allowed to seize and that were conveyed, were, were used in the conveyance of drugs and then were forfeited to the United States government, then to us in the field divisions. But the FBN didn't buy any cars back in those days.

They also didn't pay a lot of money. Uh, so that was the beginning. So, that's what I want to kind of start off with. I'd like to, uh - I'd kind of like to pick on my golf buddy, Jerry Carey, and ask, ask Jerry, what was like - what was your first day like on Federal Bureau of Narcotics back in the old days?

Jerry Carey: Well, I came on in, uh, October 28th of 1963 in Boston. And, um, I [00:06:22 said] to the officer on at nine o'clock in the morning. And at 9:30, the District Supervisor, John Trainor - they called him Gentleman John - uh, asked Ed Katz to take

me up to, uh, Judge Wyzanski in the Federal Courthouse and get sworn in. So, we went upstairs around 9:30. The Judge - uh, we went to the Judge's chambers. He swore me in, and I, I think Ed and, and the Judge knew each other pretty well. They seemed to respect each other and know each other. And after I got sworn in, we were walking out and, the Judge said to Ed, he said, "Ed, by the way," he said, uh, "I'm getting tired of swearing in these federal narcotic agents." He said, uh, "The next time, go to the Clerk of Court." And Ed turned around and said to him, "Judge, there's only five narcotic agents in all of New England. You can't be that tired."

[laughter]

Bill Alden: [laughs] Well, at, at, at that time, when I started around the same time, a little bit - few years later than Jerry in the FBN, there were about two - I think there were around 272 FBN agents worldwide. That was around the world. We were organized in district, district offices, and they were in the major metropolitan cities, uh, not as spread out as they are today where DEA has around 240 offices throughout the United States in 80 cities across the world in - 80 cities in 67 countries across the world. And they were called districts then. We had district supervisors.

We had an enforcement assistant. Gentleman John Trainor was our Enforcement Assistant because the district in California was in San Francisco back in those days, and San Francisco had a couple of agents in L.A. We had a humongous office of about 24 agents. Uh, I think Miami had three, uh, in those days. So, it was - it was really a changing time. The, the, the, the bulk of the organization were in the metropolitan areas: New York City, Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Seattle, some of the old traditional narcotic-using, uh, locations. So, uh, Bob Nickoloff, what about you? When - where did you start?

Bob Nickoloff: I came on Seattle, but I was not - I didn't live there. But I had to move to Seattle to come on. But I was hired like him, sort of, and taken up to the judge.

And then Portland, Oregon, you know, was where I lived. And so they hired me there so they didn't have to pay me. And - but I had to still get to Seattle on my own.

Bill Alden: That, that - that's something that, that you - that rung true throughout the old Federal Bureau of Narcotic days. They didn't pay you. Uh, it was - it, it was, uh, uh - when we were - uh, when I was talking to Sean Ferns and Katie Drew about preparation for this, uh, uh, symposium today, we talked about how the FBN prided itself in doing a lot with little. Uh, I said sort of like the Marine Corps. Uh, and, and we were very, very proud of that, uh, uh, in, in the old Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Uh, Frank Selvaggi, I know that, uh, uh, you were in New York City, and it was the seat of organized crime particularly with heroin. And I know that you played an really important role with, uh, uh, with Valachi. Could you tell us a little bit about that?

Frank Selvaggi: Yeah. Well, I was on the job about a year. And in 1959, I made a case, uh, with the New York City Police Department. That day, we made four cases with a, a final seizure of 25 ounces. And the partners of the one agent I - uh, the one New York City detective, Harold Kunin, we went to a - we let the other guys do the paperwork, and we went to look at an apartment that was under suspicion. And there was nothing there. The people had moved out. And we were leaving the apartment, and down the street were coming two black females, one carrying a boom box on her shoulder. And they were singing along with the music.

And Harold felt good about the day's events, and he got off the stoop, and there was one girl, uh, with a full-length leather coat, yellow in color. And he started dancing with her on the sidewalk. And he spun her around, and he coat flared out, and I could see the glassine envelope pinned to the lining [laughter] - lining of her coat. She had 10 ounces. They had just come from a - and from her, she gave us the person that, uh, she worked for, who was at one time a very high-ranking drug peddler in Harlem. And - but he became addicted himself.

By mixing it up in a closed room time after time, he became addicted. And, uh, we got him. We hit his apartment, and he gave us the runner, who worked for Big John Freeman, well-known, uh, black gangster in, uh, New York City out of Detroit. And, uh, we worked a undercover agent in. And, uh, he finally ordered 100 ounces. But, uh, the, uh, the deliveryman had one eye, and, uh, he was the driver for John Freeman. And he said he drove John Freeman up to the Bronx and met the Italian connection. And all he could do was tell me landmarks, uh, ending up with a, a concrete arch over a street.

And it took me days and every spare time I had to go through that route. And I finally found it. And on the street was a residential home with one big apartment house on the end of it. And I sat there for days. And sure as heck, Joe Valachi shows up, parks in front, and goes into the apartment building. And after observation, he had his girlfriend there in, uh, in one of the apartments. And we kept surveillance on him until - till finally the case was, uh, culminated with, uh, the seizure of 100 ounces delivered to the undercover agent.

And the agents who were - the agents who were following Valachi - he drove in a funny manner. He drove like he was being followed all the time. I followed him home so many times. He'll go zig-zag and through side streets [00:11:54 unintelligible], you know, just to make sure he's not being followed. [chuckles] And, uh, they, they let him loose, and he became a fugitive. And then, one night, the informant I was using, uh, invited me to a, a get-together in Times Square. And I go there. There's about 20 people there. And his girlfriend knew I was an agent, but none of the others knew I was an agent. And I was saying, "My God. If they ever find out, you're a dead man."

And what happened is they mistook me for a - some other - like a drug peddler, the La Salle Brothers, who were tall like myself. And, and they, they - I got away with it. And then finally he said, "You know, Valachi's supposed to get a phone call in Connecticut tonight." He was a fugitive because after they dropped him, he took off. And, uh, so we - we're out of money. Luckily, the car was full of gas. So, the - my

partner and the fugitive, we drove up to Connecticut and we're just about on fumes. And we just - I never saw a, a highway without a light. When you shut your lights off, you - you're in pitch black.

So, finally, uh, when we're just about ready to lose our fuel and, uh, Valachi was in the phone booth, was down in a gulley off the highway. And he closed the door and the light went on, so we had him. The informant jumped out of the car. How he got home to New York, I don't know to this day. [laughter] He had no money. Neither did we. We had like 25 cents left. So, we got him.

And the funny part of it is that we - I dropped my partner off on one side, and I went to the other side, and we closed in on him. Instead of - realizing - he knew we were police of some sort. He said, "Don't shoot. Don't shoot. Don't shoot." And, uh, I, I finally figured out what that meant a long time ago. So, he was in a plot with several other gangsters to overthrow the Genovese crew -

Bill Alden: Oh.

Frank Selvaggi: - which they - he was a part of. But they were going to try to get Genovese knocked out of the leadership. And that was what his problem was.

Bill Alden: So, so, so, uh, those of you who got, you know, Googled, Googled Joe Valachi - if you don't know who Joe Valachi is, you could be - you'll find a very -

Frank Selvaggi: But walking him - walking him - to finish, so walking him to the men's room - my partner was Arthur Mendelsohn. And he said, "You know, your partner's Jewish. We're Italian. We can talk." And he says, "Give me your phone number." And I gave him it. He would call me 3:00 a.m. every morning after I worked all day, and we'd drive around. I said, "Why 3:00 a.m.?" He said, "Because the bars are all closed and nobody's in the street."

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Frank Selvaggi: And sometimes on Saturdays and Sundays, I'd - he'd call me and go riding around. [laughs]

Bill Alden: So, anyway, you heard the theme again. No money. Uh, and, and that - that's what the old Federal Bureau of Narcotics prided itself in, is ingenuity, uh, and approaching and attacking the various organizations that we worked on. In the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, uh, we were on the street every day. We'd come in in the morning. We'd do our dailies, type them ourselves, daily reports, every single day. And then we'd hit the streets. Uh, we didn't always get in that early because we were working late. So, I, I know in New York you got - I don't know. In L.A., we got in about 9:30. I don't know about New York. New York, you guys probably got in at seven in the morning because you were so eager to get going.

Jerry Carey: Well, I was a group supervisor in New York, uh, after the FBN went, went south. But, uh, in New York, what a group supervisor - it didn't matter what you were doing the night before. The group supervisor's in the office at, at, uh, nine o'clock in the morning.

Bill Alden: You know, I know a lot of things have changed, particularly, uh, uh, as - in terms of, uh, DEA has this elaborate award system now, uh, instant awards that can be given. And I just wanted to ask. I, I know Jerry Carey and I talked before. Uh, he, he, he mentioned, "Ask me about the, uh, the FBN awards." I go, "I didn't know FBN had awards." Jerry, if you would.

Jerry Cary: Well, [clears throat] in - I think it was around 1966 in June, my partner and I were put in for a, uh, Superior Performance Award. Uh, we didn't really know what that meant, but the write-up said that, in the previous 13 months, we had - we had made 97

buys of heroin under cover, myself and my partner. So, they put us in in June. And in those days, the Bureau would wait until the end of the fiscal year to find out if they had any more money left over before they gave out the awards. So, when we got the - we got the certificate, nice-looking certificate with a red stripe down the side and all with your name on it, and they also - it also came with a \$50 government savings bond. [laughter]

So, it - for the 97 buys, the two of us got \$100 in award money. But the kicker was, if you wanted to get the 50, you had to wait nine years and six months [laughter] until it matured. So, it brought us back down to the, the face value of \$37.50, which made it \$75 for the two of us for the 97 undercover buys. But you couldn't cash in it for six months because you had to let it mature until the six months went by. So, I think my oldest daughter at the time was in the first grade. So, by the time I would've got that 50 bucks, I would've been - she would've been in high school. [laughter]

It was almost to the point where you didn't want to go home and tell your wife you won an award [laughter] because she wanted to know where the money was. [laughter] And you had - uh, so, they put us in in June. I didn't get the money till the following March, when I could - when I could turn in the bond, you know?

Bill Alden: Anyway -

Jerry Carey: So, they were very frugal. Let me tell you that.

Bill Alden: You know, anyway, frugal, no money. You hear it over and over again. You know - you know, despite the fact that the, the, the, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics - we really prided ourselves in our ingenuity and the brotherhood of the organization. That was really the key. The loyalty, the relationships that were developed. But they all - they weren't always developed easily or right away, right, Jack Lloyd?

Jack Lloyd: Right.

Bill Alden: So, Jack, what - tell us about maybe the first time - first day you started, when you were sworn in - when you were, uh, sworn in in Detroit.

Jack Lloyd: I was sworn in Cleveland, Ohio, as a matter of fact, in February of '65 and, uh, got sworn in. And I said, uh, "Well, you know, got to get - got to get to work. Uh, where's my badge, credentials, and gun?" "Oh, uh, uh, it's not here yet. [00:18:02 Unintelligible] second." Here I am a federal agent now, no badge, no gun, no credentials. So, I think, well, what the hell am I going to do? So, uh, Art Small, one of the guys in the office who did my background investigation, he said, "Here, kid. Here's a - " uh, kid. I was 31 years old, but, uh, kid. He says, uh, "I'll let you use my badge, but you better not lose the damn thing," he says, "because they're tough to come by." [laughter]

Lucky enough, I had brought my own gun from home, [laughter] so I had a badge and a gun. And they put me out on the street at 55th and Superior. I can remember it like yesterday, the blackest part of Cleveland I can think of. Here I am out there, hat, topcoat, and a briefcase, waiting on the informant to come into the hotel across the street. And I standing with all these people waiting on a bus, and I'm thinking, I don't know whether I'm going to make this or not. [laughter]. But it, it all got better.

Bill Alden: Yeah, and so a, a, a recurring theme. I can remember when I was sworn in in Los Angeles. I was given - uh, they were out of badges and credentials, so I got a letter. And that day, the group supervisor asked - uh, uh, instructed me to go over to LAPD to get a - to, to do a criminal record check because you - that's how you did it. You did it physically. You got - you, you walked out and you walked across Spring Street, and you went over to LAPD. And I showed them my letter. I mean you should've heard the hysterics. I mean, "You've got to be kidding me. You think we're going to give you the file with a letter?" And that's what we had. There was about five of us that

started about the same time, uh, in L.A. in that July, the beginning of the fiscal year back then because the fiscal year began in July.

Jack Lloyd: July, yeah.

Bill Alden: It ended June 30th. Tom Kosecki, what about you when you started? What was it like?

Tom Kosecki: Well, basically, uh, just like, uh, Jack - the same thing. I, uh, uh, got a call. "Come on in Monday," to come in and begin. Uh, so, I came in Monday. [chuckles] They, uh - I met Ed Ervin, and, uh, I knew him before. And, uh, they said, "Well, okay. We're going to go out on a - on a bust." I said, "I don't have a gun or anything." So, I think John Pope gave me a gun. Somebody else, uh, said he had an extra badge. He did give me a badge. And, um, we went. Now, I was a Detroit cop before that, so they said, "You don't have to worry about any training or, or anything like that. You can just go out," and that's how it went.

Bill Alden: Yeah. That was famous in FBN, uh, street training, training by your senior partner. Uh, you know, he'd share all the bad habits he'd developed over the years that he got from his senior partner. And that's how we proceeded. Uh, but we were on the street every day, every day and night. And, and the thing is we loved it. And despite the fact that, uh, uh, it was very, very little pay to begin with, I can remember my first paychecks. My wife was [chuckles] horrified. Uh, uh, but it was, um - it was, uh, uh, definitely an interesting time. We accomplished a lot.

Uh, one of the things that, that was always interesting was, uh, uh, uh, FBN had minimum mandatory, uh, statutory, uh, responsibility. So, when somebody - when we arrested someone, if they had been in the street at all, they knew they were going for a minimum nickel, five years, three-nine good time. Second time, ten. Uh, and so it was a powerful tool that we had as FBN agents, uh, on the streets, particularly when we

wanted to, uh - we wanted to roll - we wanted to turn and make them informants. Uh, Bob, do you remember those days?

Bob Nickoloff: Oh, yeah. Sure. I mean if you - if you had a chance to catch a guy a second time, it's wonderful. First time, they didn't go away for much.

Bill Alden: Yeah, exactly. But the second time that, uh, that, that an offender was charged, with the old Federal Bureau of Narcotic Tax Code statutes, it was - it was a, um, um, minimal mandatory ten years. The judge had no discretion. And so that was one of the major tools that we had as an organization back in those days in order to get some high-level informants, because the truth of the matter was we didn't have a lot of money to pay informants. I mean it was miniscule, the amount of money. Uh, what, what else do you think - do you guys think? What, what - Jerry, what do you think else made FBN unique, uh, I mean besides the fact that we never bought a car, we drove seized cars? We had -

Jerry Carey: Well, well -

Bill Alden: Clearly ingenuity was the, the call of the day.

Jerry Carey: To, to go back to that first day, about eleven o'clock, they called me in to the district supervisor's office. And he said to me - I thought I was going to get a pep talk of some sort. And he said to me, "Have you, uh, been issued a badge?" And I said, "I haven't." And he said, "Well, here, take my badge." And he said, uh, "Did they issue you a gun yet?" And I said, "No. I don't have a gun." He said, "Well," - he opened up his drawer. He gave me the gun, and he said, "Go with Matt [00:22:52 unintelligible], but you're going up to Gloucester.

"You're going to arrest a guy up there by the name of, of, uh - a dope peddler by the name of Barker. You're going to let Matt take the, the prisoner back to the office, and

you're going to seize the car he's driving, a 1962 Ford convertible. And don't get in an accident with that car because that's the car I'm going to be driving." [laughter] I was more nervous than Matt was to take the prisoner.

Bill Alden: [laughs] As you can imagine with seized vehicles that the agents were, were allowed to drive, uh, once we seized them under the conveyance statute, um, it was - is a really tremendous tool that the agent in charge - because I was called an agent in charge then - or the group supervisor had, uh, for rewarding the best producers in the group. And in those days, there was - I'm not sure exactly what the code was, the unwritten code for New York and the East Coast because I was chasing kiddie dope on the West Coast.

And, uh, um, but it was, uh - you had to initiate a minimum two new cases every single month, and you had to develop those cases. And you had about a month free time if you didn't make it. And if by the - by the third month you didn't make a case, you were in - you were in - you were in trouble. And what, what used to happen is, in Los Angeles anyway in our group, uh, if you went dry the second month, then one of the other partnerships in the group would give you an initiation that they had and share that with you. And that helped evolve the comradery.

It, it wasn't shared between group - group to group - because there was a lot of competitions between the groups and between the offices in those days. And I think that's one of the single biggest changes that I've seen, uh, over time in drug law enforcement, is, is the cooperative efforts that now take place across borders, across country lines, across organizations, but particularly across regions in DEA that, frankly, didn't occur in our time. Right, Bob?

Bob Nickoloff: Well, I, I thought they occurred, but we, we - but you didn't have much. You didn't -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: You had to use a land line to talk to people. You - and so -

Bill Alden: Exactly.

Bob Nickoloff: And we had one in the office.

Bill Alden: Right, exactly. So, if, if you had - if you had a lead that was in another city, another office, you picked up the phone. It's, it's the only way you could communicate. And you hoped that you got some - an agent on the other side that, that, that was cooperative. Um, Frank, what about New York? You guys were pretty competitive between the groups in New York, just like we were in L.A., I think.

Frank Selvaggi: Yeah. With the setup, you mean?

Bill Alden: Yeah, the way - yeah, the competitions between the groups.

Frank Selvaggi: Oh, there, there was some competition. There was a lot of jealousy too. [chuckles] It was - it was, uh - unfortunately, there was jealousy. But, you know, ten - we had approximately maybe ten men to a group, maybe, maybe 12 in some groups. There was only four groups. So - which was pretty - a lot of work, a lot of hours. I think one week I worked, I figured out I was making between 50 cents and 75 cents an hour.

[laughter]

Bill Alden: So, so, of all the lessons you learned, of, of, of the careers that each of you spent - I'll ask each one of you this - um, you know, what, what, what lessons did you draw from that? Because I know we all loved it. We loved the job. We loved being out in the street every day. Uh, and we loved making a difference. And, and, and

somewhere along the line, uh, in, in, in the late '60s, things began to change in America. Drugs became more and more popular. We ended up with, uh, uh, what I call de facto legalization of drugs by the '70s.

By '79, uh, there were one in - one in nine Americans using drugs on a monthly basis. And, and, and, and things got really bad - epidemics. Uh, and I, I remember - and, and I - maybe I can help set the stage by this. I think in the '60s as FBN agents, uh, we were popular when we went to, to - in social settings. In the '70s, you didn't admit that you were a BNDD agent. In the '80s when - during the heart of the epidemic, you were - you - people wanted you around because the - they were scared.

And so there's been a significant transition in, in, in drug patterns and drug use. And, and, and, and with the synthetic drugs and the abuse of, uh, prescription drugs, um, uh, you know, things are changing dramatically. What, what, what was it - what were some of the lessons, I think, that you learned that you would share with our audience today, uh, about being a Federal Bureau of Narcotic agent back when you were an FBN agent? Bob.

Bob Nickoloff: Well, I think it meant that you had a, a - not only a person who was a friend usually, eventually, if he wasn't - if you didn't know him before you went there. But also you could depend on other people. Because before that, I'd never seen that in my life.

Bill Alden: So, the comradery really - within the organization really was really one of the strengths -

Bob Nickoloff: Yes.

Bill Alden: - of the organization and made it so effective -

Bob Nickoloff: Right.

Bill Alden: - I think, also really.

Bob Nickoloff: [00:27:37 Unintelligible].

Bill Alden: Yeah, exactly. Jerry.

Jerry Carey: Well, I think the, the basic was the, the partnerships first of all. You, you and your partner lived together like, like brothers. And after the - after the partnership, was the, uh, the group. You're talking about competition. I mean there was tremendous competition between groups in New York City. Um, and the borders between regions were like, uh, the Palestinian and Israeli border.

Bill Alden: [laughs] Yeah, yeah.

Jerry Carey: Believe me.

Bill Alden: Yeah, right. That's right.

Jerry Carey: I mean you couldn't -

Bill Alden: Bob was being kind.

Jerry Carey: I tell you, I couldn't take a - an informant and go - and to into New York City without being undercover in New York City because, if they found out that I was in New York City and, and Greenwich and Bridgeport and Stamford and all those towns down there, everybody in, in, in Connecticut was covered in New York. You could get on a train in Hartford, New York - uh, in Hartford, Connecticut, at eight o'clock in the morning, be on 125th Street at eleven. Two blocks away, you've got 75 bags of heroin in

your pocket, and you're back on the street in Hartford at four o'clock in the afternoon, and you're the top dog on the street, delivering 75 bags of, of, of dope. But a, a Region 1 agent better not be caught in Region 2, believe me.

Jack Lloyd: Yeah.

Bill Alden: [laughs] Tom, what about you? What, what, what, what kind of lessons -

Tom Kosecki: Uh -

Bill Alden: - about FBN?

Tom Kosecki:- trust.

Bill Alden: Trust, yeah.

Tom Kosecki: You had to trust your partner and the people you worked with and depend on them. They depended on you. And if - and if they couldn't trust you, uh, they wouldn't work with you.

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Jerry Carey: Yeah.

Bill Alden: Yeah. That was very difficult. Uh, Frank, what about - what about your experience as being an FBA - and agent particularly in New York?

Frank Selvaggi: I didn't get the -

Bill Alden: The, uh - sort of the lessons you learned. What, what, what were the - were the strengths of the organization back - as you - as you look back now, what would you say the strengths of FBN were?

Frank Selvaggi: Well, there was a, a lack of funds, and there was a shortage of personnel. I mean there was no question -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: - about that. Uh, as far as the rewards you were talking about, they were - they were giving out \$500 for a good case, 300, 200. And, uh - but the, the money for informants were you had a, uh, a, a, a form the informant had to sign and put his thumbprint on for \$25 -

Bill Alden: [chuckles] Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: - you know? I mean they used to look at - you know, "What am I going to do with this?"

Bill Alden: [laughs] Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: And that was the big thing, the shortage of funds. And there was one case I was making by - of a group from East Harlem in, in Manhattan. And, uh, another agent was dealing with a higher, uh, uh, ranking drug peddler, and he needed \$65,000 for - to, to make a - and so they, they couldn't get the money. So, the sent up \$65,000 in counterfeit money.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Frank Selvaggi: And then, the last minute, they said, "Wow. Don't go. Hold that man back. Send that back. What if it gets out in the street?" you know? And I was buying off these three guys, and one guy had one arm. And I had to wrap a bunch of \$1 bills with \$20 bills in a big bundle to make the, the money to pay him, for the drugs.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Frank Selvaggi: And it was a freezing February night, and he walks me down and goes in the hallway of the building. And I give him the big wad of money, and he says, "Is it all here?" I said, "If you don't believe me, count it." The look he gave me, you know, freezing cold, one arm. And he looked at me. I'll never forget as long as I live. [laughter] And then, when we finally knocked him off, the arrested me with the, the, the, the two deliverymen. And, and, in fact, it's the Lower East Theatre. They had movies there ready, everything. And they locked me up in the car. And on the way down to the 93rd Street Federal Building, one guy put a key in my pocket of my coat because we were all handcuffed back of - back of the radio car. And that was the key to the plant where they had their money.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Frank Selvaggi: And then, then the agents went there, opened, and they found -

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: - drugs and money. And -

Bill Alden: Yeah. Uh, one of the things too that - what - uh, the other thing that made FBN special, in a lot of ways really helped set the stage at least for us in L.A. and I think everywhere, was the relationship with, with state and local law enforcement, because you keep hearing the theme again, no money, not enough personnel. There wasn't

enough agents to do the job. And, and we couldn't do our job without working with the state and local law enforcement agencies, uh, in, in the - in the geographical area where we had our responsibility.

And, uh, and that - and, and the way it worked in L.A., which is probably still similar in a lot of ways, each of the groups would sort of develop a relationship with particular agencies within a given area. Uh, for us, we worked a lot with Monterey Park P.D. with, uh, with Sgt. Chuck Carter, who later became a DEA agent; Montebello P.D. with Gary Carter, who later became a DEA agent. Uh, and we worked a lot with the L.A. Sheriff's Department in Los Angeles. And others worked with other agencies, Hermosa Beach P.D., um, back in, uh - back in the '60s down in some of the beach cities.

So, it was - it was those relationships that sort of extended us that multiplying force really that allowed us to have an impact, because we didn't have a lot of the tools that exist today. There was no such thing as, uh, uh, electronic, uh, uh, surveillance. Uh, there was no such thing as, as intercepts, as wire taps. Um, that - those laws weren't passed until - till the CSA in 1968. Um, so, it, it was a different day.

And, and, and as you heard, uh, casually from each of them, uh, just everybody worked undercover. In fact, it was - uh, it was another one of the sort of unwritten rules. Everybody worked undercover. And when you worked undercover, then the agent in charge, when you made your first five, would then take you out and buy you a drink to celebrate. And then you'd pay the rest of the night. [laughs] That was Ben Tyson's, uh, style.

Jerry Carey: [laughs]

Bill Alden: [00:33:08 Unintelligible] in L.A.

Jerry Carey: It sure was.

Bill Alden: The first one was on - first one was on him. The rest were on you. Uh, and that - that's pretty typical of the old Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Um, so - but the key to what - I mean with, with the local law enforcement, with our seized cars - but the real key always was our, our information. The informants, the, the, the confidential informants that we were able to develop was really the most important part of it, following up with undercover and surveillance and the other things that you did. Uh, because back in those days, after you made your two buys and a bust, and if you could continue further, then you did your Reports of Investigation, the 184s.

But you also had to do, which a lot of you will not remember, is a case report, which was you had to lay out the facts for the Assistant United States Attorney. It was the prosecution memo, really, that turned out to be 30 or 40 pages, who can testify to what, that you typed yourself on a typewriter with about eight carbon copies. So, every time you made a mistake, the eraser, you'd write - this was - and so - and so there was a lot of administrative work that was done by the agents them self because there was no admin help. The groups did not have secretaries or administrative help. There was a couple usually in the front office.

And that's the difference, and yet we still loved it. Uh, and so it was - it was sort of an act of love and faith and, and also - but, but, but I want to get back to the informant part because I think, to me, as I remember, it, it, it - the key to success, probably the most difficult part of the job - uh, maybe working undercover on occasion was maybe a little bit more dangerous, some surveillance and arrests - but, but as far as working informants was really, really the, the, the key to, to making cases or even working undercover. Would you - Jack, would you agree with that?

Jack Lloyd: I agree. Uh, you know, in - back about, you know, FBN guys and things like that, they, they were versatile.

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Jack Lloyd: You know, and the police departments, state and local, as you said, uh, they all accepted us for the most part anyway. I never had any problems with them, but, uh, they never cared much about the FBI or any of the other federal agencies usually other than ATF maybe. But, uh, they, they felt that we could do about anything, uh, whatever it was. They figured, if we got a - if, if, if it's a murder case or a robbery or whatever, we could pitch in and help them with that. Because our base of information from informants and so on and so forth, we became a, a valuable tool for them, as they were to us. And, of course, the big thing, I guess, at that time was that we had buy money. We didn't have money for gas or, or tires for the cars -

Bill Alden: Right.

Jack Lloyd: - but we had buy money.

Bill Alden: Right, exactly.

Jack Lloyd: And that ingratiated us even more with state and locals.

Bill Alden: Back in those days, it was called OAF, PEPI -

Jack Lloyd: OAF.

Bill Alden: OAF, Official Advance Funds.

Jack Lloyd: Right.

Bill Alden: And you're right. There, there was, uh - we were one of the few organizations in the United States that did have money to purchase evidence. So, that,

that helped us with our relationships with, uh, with local law enforcement. When I was in Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, they didn't place anyone in Homicide as a detective unless they worked Narcotics.

Jack Lloyd: Yeah.

Bill Alden: They felt that experience on the street, particularly working with us, was so valuable to them, it made them a much better Homicide, uh, detective and deputy sheriff in L.A. That's, that's the [00:36:23 unintelligible]. And I think you're right. I think you touched on the fact that you had to be versatile to be an FBN agent. You had to be able to do it all all the time, and you had to be able to think through, um, a lot of difficult situations with not a lot of financial support or help, uh, at the time. I mean rarely did our - I - I'm, I'm not even sure radios hardly ever worked. Jerry.

Jerry Carey: We didn't have any.

Bill Alden: No?

[laughter]

Bob Nickoloff: Yeah. What radios?

Jerry Carey: We didn't have radios.

Bill Alden: You didn't have radios?

Jerry Carey: Not at all, no. But, you know, getting back to the informants, we - there was about 20 people in Connecticut, the state of Connecticut, when I was there that worked Narcotics pretty exclusively. And we had a, a kind of an agreement with them. The state supplied the informant and the surveillance, and we would supply the

undercover agent and the money. And it worked really well. We made lots and lots of cases that way, and they were always looking for informants.

Bill Alden: Mm-hmm.

Jerry Carey: Because we would - we would come into a, a, a city and, and make 20 or 30 buys in the course of three or four months and then knock off everybody, say, in Bridgeport. Then we'd move into New London and do the same thing and then back to Hartford and up to Springfield. And that's the way it worked for, for 4 1/2 years I was in Connecticut.

Bill Alden: You know, I don't know how -

Jerry Carey: But we didn't have any radios.

Bill Alden: I don't know how true it is today, but, uh - because I think it's somewhat different - but, uh, back in the FBN days, because you participated in a crime, you needed a different type of individual because you weren't reacting. In fact, what you needed was you needed somebody who could go out and initiate and develop an - a source of information, because we all had to have them as partners to develop cases. Uh, and without that, uh, then there were no investigations, there were no undercover buys, there was - there was no surveillance that took place.

So, so, um, uh, there, there was oftentimes, you know, a "plot conceived in hell cannot have a cast of angels" type scenario for what, what we [00:38:11 regard]. In fact, you recruited the individual who you probably couldn't supervise because they usually made the best FBN agents because they had to initiate the investigation. So, it - so, so, it, it, it, it - as a result, there was a, a interesting gathering of different talented individuals that were part of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. And I think that's part of

what made it so interesting and unique, uh, even, even to this day. And, uh, uh, I wanted to ask Sean - and I, I, I know I forgot, but is it time for questions, Sean?

Sean Ferns: Five minutes.

Bill Alden: Five minutes. Okay. All right. So, uh, uh, I was going to, uh, bring up, uh, like a little bit about, uh - well, I talked a little bit about, uh, uh, cooperation. Uh, we, we, we only had a few offices internationally back in, in, in the days of FBN. And I'm trying to remember. I know we had Paris, Marseilles, uh, Istanbul, Rome.

Jerry Carey: Mexico.

Bill Alden: Mexico City. Uh, but it - but in -

Bob Nickoloff: That, that was later.

Bill Alden: Yeah. That was later.

Bob Nickoloff: That came later.

Bill Alden: Yeah. And FBN, I -

Bob Nickoloff: [00:39:13 Unintelligible] in the beginning.

Bill Alden: Yeah. How -

Bob Nickoloff: No.

Bill Alden: Do you remember, Bob? Did - I know we had Rome and Paris.

Bob Nickoloff: We only - when I came on, the only one I'm sure we had was Rome.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: I don't think we had Paris even yet.

Bill Alden: Oh. Paris or Marseilles hadn't been established yet?

Bob Nickoloff: No.

Bill Alden: Because that - the French - yeah, I see. Yeah, yeah.

Jerry Carey: Well, you were Harry Anslinger's partner, weren't you?

[laughter]

Bob Nickoloff: Yeah. I did meet him.

[laughter]

Bill Alden: What, what - you know - and, and, you know, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics existed until 1968. And then we had a merger in July 1st, uh, that black cloud day. Uh, and we became the Bureau of Narcotic and Dangerous Drugs. And then - and we merged with the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control that had been established in 1966 to enforce misdemeanor statute on the kiddie drugs, we used to call them because we used to flush them when we'd find them: mini bennies, barbiturates, uh, LSD. But it was - it was a changing time too. So, everything began changing. We had - we had a - we got - we were removed from the Treasury Department to the Justice Department, uh, and we had new statutes, Controlled Substance Act, uh, as a result of it. So, everything

began changing very fast in 1968. What, what, what recollection do you have from that, uh, Jack? Besides -

Jack Lloyd: Well, we, uh, we had done work with the BDAC, uh, you know, in the early part and, uh, as, as you say, the kiddie drugs and stuff like that. And then, uh - but all of them wanted to be narcotic agents. So, you know - so, anyway, when the merger happened, we'd already been working together with them, and, uh, pretty smooth. I - it was - I, I think it was a lot rougher in other areas, but we - pretty soon it was in Cleveland, and we had some decent guys out of Chicago that, that merged with us. And, uh, the only problem is, is that, uh, we had two bosses. We had the BDAC boss and then the FBN boss. And, uh, you know, who calls the shots?

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Jack Lloyd: And that made it a little difficult, but -

Bill Alden: I think that -

Jack Lloyd: - it all worked out.

Bill Alden: I think we had that - I think we had that in a few of the offices -

Jack Lloyd: Yeah.

Bill Alden: - throughout the United States. You know, it's interesting that you - what you said, because we merged again in 1973, BNDD did, with Customs, and we became DEA in, in, uh, uh, 1973. And what Jack said is true. Everybody wanted to be a narcotic agent. You know, if, if you worked drugs at all, you wanted to be a narcotic agent. You, you wanted to be - whether or not you had cross-jurisdiction or not, you always wanted

to be a narcotic agent. And, uh - so, how was the merger in Boston, Jerry? Were you - or you were in Buffalo then.

Jerry Carey: Well, I didn't - I didn't want to work with them at all because they all walked around with \$300 in their pocket, buying whatever they could find on the street. And, and I couldn't come up with \$300 if I put up \$150 of my own.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Jerry Carey: But they were out there buying everything, and I mean they were coming in with marijuana. They were coming in with pills, [00:42:06 watchers], uppers, downers, and everything you could think of. And, and, and I was really jealous. I mean I didn't hate them, but I was - I was jealous of them. [laughter]

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jerry Carey: And a lot of guys had jumped from the FBN over to BDAC to get grades and, and things of that nature. And then they - then they finally all melded back in together again.

Bill Alden: Yeah. There were some interesting relationships.

Jerry Carey: Yeah.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, again, it's the theme throughout. It was, uh - but it became a badge of honor for us at FBN not having any money. I can remember one time when we ran out of money for gas. We went over and siphoned all the gas out of the seized cars in the lot. And then we cut a deal with one of the gas station guys. Just hold the credit card. I mean you guys - you guys must've been doing it everywhere. I mean we weren't the only ones in L.A. with the kind of ingenuity.

The guy, he would just hold it till the end of the month till we got money, and then he charged the cards through. But if you didn't do that, then you didn't drive, then you couldn't make a case, and then, you know, you weren't out in the street, and then you weren't doing what you were supposed to be doing. So, it was all pretty interesting. Um, so, you know, it's - that's, that's how it worked back in, uh - back in those days. And, Sean -

Jerry Carey: I had - I had a used car dealer, Bill, that used to loan me cars to go out and make buys on. And then I'd give him back the car in the afternoon.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Jerry Carey: So, show up in a different car all the time.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Bob Nickoloff: We used to call the money flash money, I remember, because -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: - there wasn't enough there to -

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: - really [00:43:25 unintelligible].

Bill Alden: Well, the one thing that didn't happen in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics is, I can guarantee you, you never lost the money. Money always got turned back in at the end of the day, at the end of the night, at the end of the weekend. And if anybody

ever - I, I see smiles. If you fronted money on a Friday afternoon, you know you were going to get burned. Uh, and - but somehow that money always got turned back in because there was no such thing as losing the money in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. It did not occur. It didn't happen, uh, because you wouldn't survive if, if that happened.

So - but, but, you know, despite all the - all the - all the interesting things that happened and the difficulties, uh, we really felt like we were having an impact, uh, uh, because we loved what we were doing. Um, and I, I think all of us would agree that, uh, uh, that we would've done it probably for nothing, uh, to get up in the morning and to - and to - and to be out in the street because every day was different back in those days, because we were on the street every single day, as a lot of you will remember. And so it was, uh, some really interesting, challenging times. Um, what else? Sean. Keep going?

Okay. All right. I, I don't want to run over our Question and Answer, and I want to be able to, uh, to, to leave time for questions. Um, Bob, you were in, uh - later on, you were in San Francisco during the transition from, from - you know, and saw Haight-Ashbury. I can remember back, uh, going up to Haight-Ashbury back in the '60s when I was in L.A. to work some investigations. And, and at the beginning, that was - that was the, uh - that was the Tune In, Turn On, Drop Out time. Everything began to change for us really.

Bob Nickoloff: Well, true. Uh, and that - and that people - kids who were from legitimate families in the - in the beginning, it was always working with, you know, people you're trying to arrest or catch - or criminals. The, the whole family's criminals half the time.

Bill Alden: Yeah. He makes an important point because, as I mentioned earlier, when - the Federal Bureau of Narcotics focused most of our attention on the major metropolitan areas where drugs had been part of the culture for many, many years. We,

we lived in a time back in the '60s when that transition changed, when, when it began - when, when drugs - when there were no more boundaries. And it all - and, and, and it all - it all began changing in the mid to late '60s.

Uh, and a lot of it, uh, was driven by San Francisco and L.A., uh, uh, you know, by that counterculture, uh, that, that existed then. And, and there was sort of an attitude like, I can do what I want to myself as long as I don't hurt anybody else. And drugs - I can take drugs, and it's not harming anybody else. Unfortunately, it's not a victimless crime, as we all know. So, so, it was a major transition for us. It was a lot - do you think it was a lot simpler or easier for us because of that when, when, when, when we were on the street, Frank? Do you think it was easier then?

Frank Selvaggi: To what?

Bill Alden: Do you think it was easier? Do you think it, it was easier for us because, there was - you know, it was more of a - it was more of a - we, we were trying to delve into and investigate organizations that had been traditional, and it hadn't crossed the boundaries - the social boundaries and the community boundaries throughout, throughout the rest of the country. So, it wasn't really as complex as it is today.

Frank Selvaggi: Well, with the lack of, of being, being able to put wire taps in in my - when I was an agent, you know, that was a big detriment of any investigation. I mean you had to go to the New York City Police or whatever police was the jurisdiction of where your office was. And that was a, a big letdown, you know? And because then you had to make sure it was prosecuted in the State Court because, if a wiretap come up in the course of the trial, it'd be the - they'd be dismissed. The defendants would've been dismissed if they could prove there was a wiretap. So, uh -

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah. Of course, one of the - one of the downsides of having a minimum mandatory, uh, statute like we had was there, there were some judges

particularly in smaller communities that, um, that just wouldn't prosecute drug cases. And so you had no choice. If it was a conspiracy, you had to - you had to develop an overt act in another federal jurisdiction if you wanted to go federally, or you had to go state and local. That was the case. I experienced that, that, that several times. So, uh, uh, it's now time, uh, for any, uh, questions and answers that - or questions that the, uh, audience may have. Hopefully, we'll have some answers. Tom. Wait for the mic.

Audience Question: I'd like to - is this on?

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Audience Question: I'd like to ask Bob about what kind of training academy he went to before he went on the job?

Bob Nickoloff: [laughs]

Bill Alden: Who?

Bob Nickoloff: Me.

Audience Comment: Bob Nickoloff.

Bill Alden: Bob.

Bob Nickoloff: Me. [chuckles] He, he knows.

[laughter]

Audience Comment: It's a loaded question, right?

Bob Nickoloff: [holds thumb and index finger together] That much.

Bill Alden: He went to the - he went to the same one I did.

Bob Nickoloff: Yeah.

Bill Alden: None.

Bob Nickoloff: Yeah. Never made it to [00:48:17 T Lot] School.

Bill Alden: Me either.

Bob Nickoloff: [laughs]

Bill Alden: Okay. So, two of us - [chuckles] it - it's pretty obvious we never had any training.

Audience Comment: You've got to give your pensions back.

Bill Alden: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah. Yeah, Ernie.

Audience Question: Uh, yes. I'd like to hear from you. Um, the public perception is that, uh, FBI was the one who led the organized crime - the discovery of organized crime in the United States. And, uh, and those of us that know the real history, uh, of our involvement - can you guys talk about that a little bit?

Bill Alden: Yeah. I think, uh, uh -

Bob Nickoloff: I - I'd be happy to.

Bill Alden: Yeah, both Frank and Bob. I -

Bob Nickoloff: [to Frank] Okay?

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: What was that?

Bill Alden: The, the question was, uh, that, uh -

Bob Nickoloff: Perception.

Bill Alden: Perception is that - the, the public perception is that the FBI really identified - were the first to identify organized crime in the United States, which we know isn't true.

Frank Selvaggi: Which we know is not true.

Bill Alden: Yeah. Could we talk a little bit about that? Do you have a few comments about that?

Frank Selvaggi: Yeah. Well, it, it was - that was the case, but, uh, then again, the Director himself of the FBI claimed there was no organized crime and no Mafia. And, uh, dealing with undercover agents and surveillance and working with informants, we pretty much knew what the Mob was in New York City. And, uh, you know, we, we actually - we had a, a National List Book of major narcotic violators. And we also had a Mafia Book with pictures and - and, of course, Valachi helped some of that, but we had that book before I arrested Valachi. And, uh, we were pretty much the, the, the authority on the Mob in New York City.

Bill Alden: Bob.

Bob Nickoloff: Well, I think that's throughout the country. We were the only ones that kept track of -

Bill Alden: Organized crime.

Bob Nickoloff: - major organized crime -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: - because -

Bill Alden: Yeah. I think that's - uh, even, even out in L.A., we, uh, we did the same thing.

Bob Nickoloff: [00:50:03 Unintelligible]?

Bill Alden: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely true. Absolutely true. Uh, other question?

Audience Question: Thank you. I have, uh, just one or two questions. Uh, first, I'd like to mention that, uh, the FBN did use Camp Gordon, uh, CID School to, uh, send its agents there. I, I was sent there in 1954 when I came on from Cleveland. Uh, and, uh, I'd like, uh - I'd appreciate a mention of the marquis reagents -

Frank Selvaggi: [to Jack Lloyd] Can you hear him?

Audience Question: - the field testing -

Jack Lloyd: Pardon me?

Frank Selvaggi: Can you hear him?

Audience Question: - on the problems -

Jack Lloyd: Yeah. [00:50:46 I hear him].

Audience Question: - that, uh, were associated with, uh, uh, the marquis reagents. And, uh, uh, the, uh - those two points, please.

Bill Alden: Yeah. Marquis reagent was the field test that we used to test whether or not it was heroin. And, and my memory of the, the marquis test was the vial was so tiny, [chuckles] whenever you'd break it, you'd spill it all over half the time.

Bob Nickoloff: You had to shake it down first before opening it up -

Bill Alden: Yeah. Yeah. I mean it was like, uh -

Bob Nickoloff: - so you had enough.

[laughter]

Bill Alden: Yeah. I mean it was, uh - you -

Jerry Carey: You needed a white card to put behind it -

Bill Alden: Because, yeah, did it turn purple?

Jerry Carey: - to, to look for that purple -

Bill Alden: Did it turn purple or not?

Jerry Carey: - purple that went through there -

Bill Alden: Yeah, because -

Bob Nickoloff: [laughs]

Jerry Carey: - to make sure you weren't buying Turkish.

Bill Alden: Right, because that's the first thing you did. As soon as you got back and you made your undercover buy, you got back with surveillance and you did a marquis test on the supposed drug to make sure that it turned - because it's heroin - make sure that marquis reagent turned purple. And it was very, very difficult to see. Uh, and the vials were so tiny, uh, initially. And then you - then, then, then, then they came up with a package where it was actually a package after it was just the vial. Because I remember it as a vial first, and then it - then it - then it was in a package. Then you put the substance in and you broke the plastic package with the vial.

Jerry Carey: Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: That was way [00:52:02 unintelligible].

Bill Alden: Yeah. That was way later. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: [00:52:04 Unintelligible].

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah. That was way later.

Bob Nickoloff: Yeah, and -

Bill Alden: Yeah. I know -

Bob Nickoloff: - can the vial fit in the little can?

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: Little -

Bill Alden: Yeah. Yeah. They were - it was sort of reliable. [laughs]

Bob Nickoloff: So-so.

Bill Alden: So, so-so. Uh, and, uh, and, and I, I - as far as training, uh, I started as a CPI, uh, in Cleveland and then transferred over to the FBN. I was supposed to have gone to Treasury School when I was a CPI, and I came on. They got filled up. And then I went - I got - then I went to L.A. And I had already had a year on the job, so they sent other agents. So, I never went to training. And that's probably -

Bob Nickoloff: [00:52:41 That's, that surprising].

Bill Alden: That's what - that's what usually what happened. There was a limited number. And then, of course, the next year, we had the merger, uh, and became BNDD. And it was definitely way too late for us - for me to go to training, uh, once that occurred. So, any other questions?

Jerry Carey: Could I just make one comment?

Bill Alden: Yeah. Yeah, Jerry.

Jerry Carey: I, I happened to see the 1962 Roster of Headquarters, and there were nine names on it: Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Chief of Enforcement, two inspectors - one for the East Coast, one for the West Coast - the guy in charge of Registration, and a - and the Chief Counsel and the Secretary. Nine people. [laughter] The Headquarters. And it worked pretty good.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

[laughter and applause]

Bill Alden: There, there, there - obviously, there was a lot of autonomy in the field divisions, uh, uh, you know, because, uh, we didn't need all - [chuckles] you know, all those - that's, that's an - that's an interesting observation, Jerry. Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: At the office, you had to take a freight elevator to get to him.

AUDIENCE COMMENT: [00:53:43 Unintelligible].

Bill Alden: Yeah, even - yeah, even then - even then, one too many attorneys. Yeah. You're right. [laughs]

[laughter]

Audience Question: Hey, uh, what was your, uh, starting salary when you joined FBN? And, secondly, did you ever have to, uh, do any firearms qualification? And what weapons did you carry?

Bob Nickoloff: We, we, we earned \$2550 - \$3250, \$3250.

Bill Alden: Yeah. I started, it was, uh - I started, it was \$5321, I think, five thousand three hundred and twenty-one dollars a year. Jack.

Jack Lloyd: I started at \$6,000, and the first gun I got - I think it must've come off the streets of New York or wherever it was - but anyway it was a cheap .38 Detective Special, had the sights all filed down on the front. [laughter] It was - it had a aluminum frame. I carried it for - I don't know - a couple years, I guess. Then I got in a fight in Columbus, Ohio, and I smacked a guy in the head with the gun. And everything looked all right. It was bent a little bit, but anyway, [laughter] we straightened it out. I went to the range three days later, shot three times. It all locked up, and I said, "Call Detroit. Would you please send me a real gun?"

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Jack Lloyd: Yeah, but that's the kind of guns that we had in [00:55:13 unintelligible].

Bill Alden: I, I don't remember qualifications in FBN.

Jerry Carey: I don't either.

Jack Lloyd: Yeah, we did. We -

Bill Alden: You did?

Jack Lloyd: We qualified at the local police departments.

Bill Alden: Oh, okay.

Jerry Carey: But I had - I had a gun for 20 years, the same one that Jack had probably.

Jack Lloyd: [laughs]

Jerry Carey: And, and I went down to FBI Headquarters - uh, I mean down to Quantico to qualify, and the guy wouldn't let me shoot. [laughter] He said, "I [00:55:34 didn't] let you shoot on my range with that gun. [laughs]

[laughter]

Female Voice: Question, Bill.

Bill Alden: Yes.

Audience Question: Bill, uh, could I get a show of hands of people in the room that the best holster they were ever issued was a series of rubber bands around the -

Bill Alden: [raises hand] Yeah. [laughs]

Jerry Carey: [laughs and raises hand]

Frank Selvaggi: [to Jack Lloyd] That was that gun with the age, and it was aluminum frame.

Jack Lloyd: Yeah, yeah.

[Frank and Jack continue to talk under the next speaker]

Audience Comment: I came on in 1965, about the same time you did, as a CPI. And in San Francisco, uh, there was - and I'm sure there's a number of people here that will verify the fact that, in the '60s, FBN and Customs had a troubled relationship at best. Um, we got along extremely well in San Francisco because Customs had the, uh - had

the, [chuckles] the benefit of money. And it was more than once that I made very good friends over in the FBN office because I had a gas credit card.

Jack Lloyd: Yeah.

Audience Comment: Our problem was we didn't have the fancy, fancy, fancy cars and the, the neat rides that you guys did. And we had to make a choice whenever we were trying to pull somebody over on the Waterfront because the automobiles that we operated were incapable of allowing you to run the headlights, the siren, or the radio. You had three - you had three items to use. Pick one.

[laughter]

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah.

Audience Comment: If the siren was running and you hit the - and the, uh - and you hit the radio, the car would stop running.

Bill Alden: Yeah. Well, I think - uh, to add to what you say, I, I think, again, the success of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and, and those of us who were narcotic agents were our ability, uh, that - and you learn really quickly - that, that, that you, you - to do more for less, you have to make friends. You have to make friends if it's somebody in Customs, if it's somebody in the Sheriff's Department, if it's somebody else. You made friends with a magistrate to make sure that you're getting high bond. You did - you, you, you did what you had to do to develop the relationships to make sure that you were successful because, uh, it, it, it - that's what it, frankly, depended upon, uh, back then. Right, Jer?

Jerry Nickoloff: Oh, yeah.

Bill Alden: Anybody else?

Audience Comment: You know, I remember back in '71, when we came on in BNDD, we trained at the - on I Street. So, all of our - we actually had training. Um, it was firearm and physical defense. And, um, um, it was all in one building. And, thank God, there was a bar on the first floor so we knew where to retreat at the end of the day. [laughter] Um, but those are great memories, and that's - uh, I don't know if those were the original days when they had actual, uh, training classes and you - you know, you had classroom classes. And I do recall, you know, it would be in, uh, the classroom during the day.

And there'd be - we'd start with 50 agents the first week, and we'd be sitting in a room like this. And, uh, on the second week, the door would open. There was only one door at the right of the classroom. And the door opened, and someone would come in and point the finger, and one of the trainees would get up. And he'd disappear. You'd never see him again. And then we'd pray the door would open, the finger would come in, they'd point. Another trainee got up. Never see him again. So, you found that they were doing background checks while we were in there.

Bill Alden: [laughs]

Audience Comment: And, and if these guys didn't clear the background check, they were gone. So, by the fourth week, when the door opened, everyone was ducking. No one wanted to look. [laughter] And then, when the guy got up and left, everyone grabbed his books and his candy and whatever's on the table because we knew he wasn't coming back. So, those are great memories in '71.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah. Well, well, I, I think, you know, the important part of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics was tradition it built and the comradery it built. And, and, and we took our jobs very seriously, uh, and what our responsibilities were. And I think

we, we helped set the stage, because today it's so different. I mean it's - I, I think, uh, Quantico is 17 weeks of training. It's really, really difficult training. It's a different world. Uh, they're attacking the targets at, at a - at a higher level because the targets are different than they were when we were there.

Uh, in Los Angeles, we were chasing brown heroin that was coming in from Mexico. Uh, so, we were targeting East L.A., South L.A., and into up in the Valley. Uh, and we knew, you know, the areas that we had to attack. And we knew just about every one of the sources of supply was in Mexico, uh, and, uh, and, and pretty much untouchable because we had, uh, two agents in San Diego and a - and maybe an office in Mexico City, but I don't remember an office in Mexico City -

Bob Nickoloff: No.

Bill Alden: - back then.

Bob Nickoloff: No, no.

Bill Alden: Uh, and so - and, and so it, it was - it, it was a simpler time. We, we were a reflection of the culture of the time. It was a simpler time. It started getting complicated, uh, but I think we helped set the stage, uh, you know, for what it is today.

Sean Ferns: I'd like to, uh, to hear from each of the panelists, please, uh, your, your best day on the job and why it was your best day.

Bob Nickoloff: I'd have to think. There were a lot of fun days

Bill Alden: Go ahead, Jerry.

Bob Nickoloff: A lot of fun days.

Jerry Carey: I could tell you all about bad days. [laughter]

Bob Nickoloff: Well, we don't talk -

Jerry Carey: Hmm. I don't know. They were kind of all the same to me. I, I enjoyed going to work every morning, really. I - you know, I, I can't - well, good - when you - when you put cuffs on a good guy, I mean that was a good day. It was a real good day, especially if you've been chasing him for two, three months, you know.

Bill Alden: Tom.

Tom Kosecki: It would probably be I retired because it meant, uh, you didn't get indicted on anything.

[laughter]

Bill Alden: Frank. Frank, what would you say your best day on the job was?

Frank Selvaggi: It was a seizure of 95 kilos of heroin in -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: - Columbus, Georgia.

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: That was - that was the best day.

Bill Alden: Yeah, and -

Frank Selvaggi: And now I - that was the biggest seizure up to that point in the - in the history of the country for heroin. I get that's gone now. My gosh -

Bill Alden: Yeah. That's right. Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: - they're seizing stuff by the ton.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah.

Jerry Carey: Was that the desist case?

Frank Selvaggi: Huh?

Jerry Carey: Desist? What was the name of the defendant?

Frank Selvaggi: It was a warrant officer, and it was a major, uh, in the Army, who was soliciting him. And they had a, a mansion in France, and he would solicit these soldiers who were camped around -

Jerry Carey: Right.

Frank Selvaggi: - the, the home. And the, the warrant officer brought it in, and there were two Italians in New York waiting for it.

Bill Alden: Jack, what was your best day on the job?

Jack Lloyd: I'd say, um, probably the day I was sworn in because I always wanted to be a federal agent and, um, every day after that. I had - uh, I always said I'd never had so much fun in all my life and got paid for it.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack Lloyd: So -

Frank Selvaggi: Very little pay, though.

Jack Lloyd: Very little pay. [laughter] If you had -

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah.

Jack Lloyd: You could do with what you got to do -

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack Lloyd: - but, uh, I'll say one thing, though. Uh, what's good for us and everything, uh - I guess we owe a lot to the wives and the -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Jack Lloyd: - families for putting up with all our bull crap.

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Jack Lloyd: And, uh -

[applause]

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Jack Lloyd: - we put out a lot of bull crap throughout the years in there. So, I think they deserve your round of applause.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely. I mean there's no question about that. I think, for me, it was, uh - Sean, it was, uh, uh, you know, the same thing as Jack, when I - when I - actually when I got the word that FBN was going to hire me. That's probably my best day because I was a CPI and -

Jack Lloyd: Yeah.

Bill Alden: - envied FBN agents. I wanted to be an FBN agent, and the day that happened. Yes, sir.

Audience Question: Question. The panel touched on it briefly, but I'd like to hear a little more opinion about the unique qualities of those men that made up the early FBN years. Uh, do you know how many men we had that actually went through, say, New York and, uh, retired and went on to other careers? We have at least two doctors that I know of. Uh, we have a very famous Capuchin Monk by the name of Timmy Sheehan.

Bill Alden: That's right.

Audience Question: In fact, he was the guy that showed up at a federal trial, and a, a defense attorney by the name of Ted Krieger went berserk, saying, "You federal narcotics guys are up to your usual." [laughter] They had this guy come in with his, uh, his monk, uh -

Bill Alden: Yeah. [laughs]

Audience Question: - garb. So, I'd like to hear the panel, what they think or what their feelings are -

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah.

Audience Question: - about the, the unique qualities of the men that -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Audience Question: - made up those old days.

Bill Alden: That's interesting. We, we, we actually had a collar - a, a white collar, uh, and so we could dress up as, as religious in L.A. Of course, we, we had a taxi cab like you guys had in New York that, uh - [chuckles] we don't want to tell stories about that. But, uh, uh, yeah. I, I think that's interesting. What, what were the unique qualities that, that the FBN - particularly some of the early FBN agents had that, that made it so special?

Bob Nickoloff: I thought most of them were unique -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: - and different than, than anybody I'd ever known really.

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: And until then, I was not in law enforcement before I took the job.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah. Jerry, what, what, what do you think it was?

Jerry Carey: I don't know. I think, in Bob's time, it was, uh - in the - in the '50s, it was most of the guys had been in the military. When I come on, most of the guys were - had

been in the Korean War. Um, it was, uh - they were street guys. They were guys that - they were knock-around guys. They, they weren't guys just coming out of college with all kinds of, you know, fancy, fancy knowledge in their heads. They knew how to - they knew how to throw a punch if they had to throw a punch. They, they, they were really street guys. And I think that was what made them really good undercover agents.

Bill Alden: Tom.

Tom Kosecki: That's about the same thing. Uh, a lot of, uh - in Detroit, we had about ten guys, I think, when I came on. At last half were cops, Detroit cops. And, um, they had law enforcement experience. They, they knew, uh - most of them didn't even go to college. So, I mean they had -

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah.

Tom Kosecki: - good street sense.

Bill Alden: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh, uh, for me, I remember L.A. when I first went to L.A. and the group I was in. Eclectic is the word really. There was, uh, Joe Gordon, who was an African American agent who was a tremendous guy, great personality. I mean he - we'd get Joe undercover. He'd never come out. [chuckles] Uh, and he's always charming everybody. He was tremendous. Uh, Sergio [01:05:58 Unintelligible], who had a - uh, whose love of toys and gadgets, became really our sort of unofficial tech guy. Uh, Frank Tarallo, who had just come off LAPD, Hollywood, working Hollywood Vice. Uh, Chuck Sherman, who had played, uh, defensive back for the - for the New England Patriots.

Uh, Ray McKennan. I don't know if Ray's here. Ray McKennan, who, uh, uh, was - Ray and I were the two college graduates in the group. Uh, Ray graduated from Cal State L.A. and was originally from San Francisco, was, uh - had some working on the

streets up in San Francisco. But, uh, it was - it was - it was a blend of really, really interesting and, and, and dynamic people. They, they, they seemed to be able to pick people who could really be - have the flexibility to do what they needed to do. Frank.

Frank Selvaggi: Well, most of the, uh, people in New York were either college graduates or prior law enforcement experience, and some from the military also.

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Frank Selvaggi: So, it -

Bill Alden: Yeah. But, but, but for those of us who came in out of college - I - I'd only been a, a year as a CPI - it, it was - it was that day-to-day experience on the street with your senior partner, with your group every single day. You learn fast. You learn quick, uh, or you don't survive. Simple as that. Jack.

Jack Lloyd: When I started, uh, most of the guys in the office had prior law, law enforcement experience and, uh, college also. But, uh, with the experience they had from the, the local - you know, state and locals before, uh, it seems like an easier transition to come on the job. Uh, it wasn't so much that - you know, that you've got to lead them here, lead them there. And, uh, they pretty much knew what they had to do. And it, uh, just worked out well.

And, of course, a lot of the guys that would - had come on the job out - right out of college, you know, the first thing they wanted was their car. And then they, they want this and they want that. And the older guys, they just kind of took it in, in stride that, you know, you get what you get when you get it and, uh, make the best of it.

Bill Alden: Yeah. In later years, I had the opportunity to, um, to head up a, a panel that we, we were doing interviews, uh, for basic agent - agents. And I traveled

throughout the West for, for a while with the panel. And as I was doing that, I was trying to think of, in my experience, what, what, what - what's the profile of a really good agent? I tried to think of agents that had worked for me in L.A. I was running the Vegas office at the time, trying to think of the agents that I knew that were really good. What is it? What are those characteristics?

What are the, you know, four or five things that make - and, you know, I really - you know, I couldn't - you know, because each was different and was unusual and unique. And I think - I think a lot of it - what I tried to always find is passion. You've got passion and belief. Do you - how bad do you want the job? And I always thought really, particularly with the kind of job that we had - because, because let's admit it, it becomes a way of life. It's not a job. And it was certainly a way of life back in, uh - back in those days.

Audience Comment: I've got a comment on what was just said. I'm one of those guys - and there's a bunch of other guys in this room - that are - that are the first wave, let's put it, of being BNDD. And most of these guys in the first wave, I would say between '69 and maybe '74, were basically neighborhood guys, urban guys. We were raised in cities. We were raised in neighborhoods. You fought for your lunch money, and you knew how to survive.

What comes later - and my son is one of them. He's a group supervisor in Miami. He's a suburbia guy. So, his mentality on how to do things is a lot different than the way we thought when we came on. And then we had these guys as mentors. Now, like - I mean I was hired in Boston. Everybody thinks I'm from Boston. I'm from New York. And when I went from Boston to New York as a volunteer, which was unheard of, [laughter] and Chris Egan can attest to that, I was in Boston for ten months, and I volunteered to go to New York because I was getting married. It was on my, my watch.

I came in. It was a totally different world than what it was in Boston because, you know, I showed up. Nobody even knew I was there. I was transferred on the words of Durkin and Dick Callahan. Dick Callahan called Durkin to say, "Hey. I've got this kid. He wants to come to New York." I was staying in New York. He says, "When can he be there?" I said, "I could be there next week." He says, "Okay. Send him down." I reported. I had not teletype or anything to - I walked into the front office. They wanted to know, "Who are you?" I says - [laughter] "I'm here. I'm supposed to come here." And I wound up in, uh, I think it was Morty Benjamin's group at the time.

But what I'm - what I'm trying to say is the, the guys that came in with me - college graduates because we were all college graduates. When BNDD started and they hired us, that was one of the prerequisites - a lot of us were urban guys. I would say the majority was. So, it was easy for us to fit in with the old crew. And as we moved along and saw what was coming down the pike, especially when you became a supervisor in ASAC, the guys were totally different. Like Jack said, they wanted their cars, they wanted this, they wanted their guns.

I would have every new guy come in, as a supervisor, and sit down with them and tell them, "This is the group. This is what you're going to do. This is the guy you're going to work with. And this is how we work." And at the end of every interview, I would say, "You got any questions?" And he said, and invariably, "Yes. Where's my car?" [laughter] "Ah. I meant to tell you that. Your car's in the dealership." [laughter] "Mine's in the garage." [laughter] "Take the keys, go get it washed, and bring it back." [laughter and applause]

And every new guy would set up the following new guy with that same thing. "Make sure you ask the boss - he's a nice guy. Ask him for the car." And it - I got four guys like that in the course of two years.

Male Voice: Thank you, [01:11:52 Pat].

Bill Alden: Yeah.

[applause]

Bill Alden: It, it was - it was even worse in our time, right, Jack?

Jack Lloyd: Yes.

Bill Alden: Because, uh, I couldn't get a ride home either. Uh, and I certainly didn't get a car. And I had - I had to find a ride home and back in on my own for the first three months because I wasn't accepted yet. And it, it was that air - that - it was that - it was that, you know, let's see who he is.

Bob Nickoloff: We didn't take cars home.

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Bob Nickoloff: You'd, you'd better live by the garage -

Bill Alden: [chuckles]

Bob Nickoloff: - or you walked.

Bill Alden: Yeah. So, it -

Jack Lloyd: My first car was a Cleveland, Ohio, bus -

Bill Alden: Yeah.

Jack Lloyd: - from the YMCA to the office. [laughs]

Jerry Carey: When, when I got transferred down to Connecticut, it was a one-man office with a one-man car - with one car. And, and the, the boss said, "I would suggest you move into my neighborhood." [laughs]

[laughter]

Sean Ferns: Bill, we're, uh -

Jerry Carey: And I moved two streets over.

Bill Alden: I, I, I did the same thing. I moved next door to Irv Swank, who was my group supervisor, also the guy that hired me in Cleveland, Ohio. Um, yeah. And, and I think - I think we were a reflection of the culture at the time, is what we were. Yes. Oh, it's time, time to end? Well, we're having too much fun, Sean.

Male Voice: I, I can't end.

Sean Ferns: Yeah.

Bill Alden: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

Sean Ferns: Okay. Uh, I want to thank -

[applause]

Sean Ferns: Absolutely. I want to thank our panelists Bob and Jerry, Tom, Frank, and Jack. Jack, uh, we did get a - it's not a question but a comment from an agent watching up in Washington, D.C., uh, one of our senior leaders up there, John [01:13:21

Delayna]. Uh, you don't know if - you don't know if you recognize his name. Uh, you were his lieutenant -

Jack Lloyd: That's right.

Sean Ferns: - uh, when he worked the, uh, Collier County Sheriff's Office. You were doing Vice and Narcotics Bureau after your DEA retirement. And, uh, he - you are the reason he is on the job.

Jack Lloyd: Yeah.

Sean Ferns: And he sends greetings. Uh, thank you to our panel. We appreciate the time you took to share your recollections. Bill, thank you for moderating. Today was the first of our Fall Lecture Series. Please note the next one is on October 15th at 2:00 p.m. It will be from the DEA Museum in Washington with a live webcast. The, uh, subject of that is Harry Anslinger, the Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics from 1930 to 1962. And it was touched upon today, our final program on November 6th at 11:00 a.m., all about the Mafia, uh, and, uh, the DEA lead in, uh, going after the Mafia as the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us today, and, uh, wish you the best. Thank you.

[applause]

End of recording.