



Two defendants are taken into custody—one in Tijuana (left), the other at about the same time in Los Angeles (right). The international roundup resulted in 113 arrests.

American Embassy. All the intelligence so far pointed to Guadalajara as a probable location of one of the big laboratories.

That same day the Seattle grand jury returned indictments on 15 defendants. San Diego, Phoenix, San Francisco, and the others followed. The last to go was Milwaukee on August 19.

San Francisco had a problem when their case, partially based on a Title III wiretap, went to a hearing that disclosed the case. The San Francisco agents were forced to make their roundup at once or have the defendants flee.

On August 22, we met Attorney General Ojeda-Paulada in his office in Mexico City and briefed him in detail. His reaction was positive, and his moves to handle it were enthusiastic. He assigned three of his best commandantes with their groups to travel to Guadalajara and Tijuana.

The Mexican Federal Prosecutors studied our information and extracted whatever would be evidence under their law. They suggested a procedure similar to the letters rogatory under the Napoleonic Code. Back in San Diego, we took complete statements from four of the witnesses, had them notarized, then certified before the Mexican Consul. These documents were then delivered to the Mexican prosecutors, who issued the orders for arrests.

All this took a few days. Meanwhile, on August 29, two undercover agents from Seattle flew to San Diego to negotiate with some of the local traffickers for a delivery of minibennies. CENTAC 4 agents took a break to participate in the surveillance and arrests.

That week the DIA office in Calexico came up with some information about tableting machines in Mexico City. Two agents from Calexico went there. As a result the Mexican Federal Judicial Police raided two labs, containing two machines each, and arrested eight people.

On September 3, a group of 17 Mexican federal agents came to San Diego and spent the night. At dawn the next morning they started rounding up defendants in Tijuana.

During that day 12 of the biggest violators in Tijuana went to jail. Some of them were the old legendary heroin dealers who had branched out into minibennies because they saw it as an easy and lucrative business. Most of

them were multimillionaires, which gave them local stature in both political and criminal circles. The defendants were loaded into a camper in secrecy as a precaution against an attempt at a break by associates, and transported to Guadalajara. Prosecution of all Mexican defendants will be in the Guadalajara courts. Six weapons and a half-kilo of heroin were seized during these arrests.

Other defendants in Guadalajara and Mexico City were arrested, and some escaped. So far 27 have been rounded up, and the search is still going on.

On September 10, the domestic roundup began. Most of those indicted were arrested that night. During the raids other associates were found in possession of drugs and added to the list. The total number of minibennies seized incidental to the arrests came close to one million. Other seizures included weapons, cars, growing marijuana plants, a motorcycle, and an airplane. As of now 113 defendants are in custody and will be prosecuted in these cases. Eleven remain at large in fugitive status.

Going back to the fundamentals, we enforce the law by locking up criminals; not for vindictive punishment of that one offender, but rather as an example to others contemplating the same crime. It is no example if the others never know about it. Although many policemen distrust reporters and prefer to work in privacy, public communication can be an important deterrent. Almost every major newspaper in the country carried the story of CENTAC 4 and it was widely covered on television. We must now wait for the effects of the operation to be felt in the minibennie traffic. There are probably millions of dosage units sitting in caches on this side of the border, and these will be sold off in the months to come. We can expect to find minibennies on the street for a while, probably at increasing prices, even if production in Mexico should be completely shut down.

The Mexican authorities did not seize all the clandestine machines. We know, however, that the Mexican violators are susceptible to law enforcement pressures and will turn to less dangerous enterprises when threatened with vigorous enforcement.