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***CABLE Gram***  
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Publisher, Zhi Hamby-Nye

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*CABLE Gram* Volume 3 Issue 8

21 February 2006 *CABLE Gram*™

Good Morning All,

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Take care,

Zhi Hamby-Nye, Editor

Henry Ziegler, Associate Editor

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We search the topics and Websites that you request, so it is important for you to provide feedback. We are in our infancy and the *CABLE Gram* will be as useful as you help make it. Please let us know the topics and keywords that will assist you in your professional endeavors. Send all comments and suggestions to [zhi@cablegram.org](mailto:zhi@cablegram.org) – please type *CABLE Gram* in the subject line.

Please forward the *CABLE Gram* to all people you feel will find it useful!

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## **FEDERAL**

### **1. Bush, Fox Discuss Mexico Border Security (AP, 20 Feb 2006)**

President Bush and President Vicente Fox of Mexico exchanged ideas Monday on how to stop violence and improve security along the two countries' mutual border, the White House said. Press secretary Scott McClellan said that Bush telephoned Fox while traveling here to give a speech and said the pair "talked about working together" to improve conditions that have been a source of friction between the two countries. McClellan told reporters that Bush has designated Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff to talk to his counterpart in Mexico about the problem and said that Bush and Fox also talked about pending immigration legislation in Congress. Late last year, Washington dispatched federal agents to Texas to combat violent crime along the Mexican border.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.wtop.com/index.php?nid=116&sid=704460>

### **2. Bush Stands Behind Port Deal (Washington Post, 21 Feb 2006)**

President Bush today strongly defended plans to allow a company controlled by the

United Arab Emirates to assume management of key U.S. ports, a stance that distanced him from a growing number of Republicans, including the congressional leadership that has threatened to pass legislation to stop the move. In a 20-minute impromptu meeting with reporters aboard Air Force One, Bush said he would veto any legislation to hold up the port deal. He warned that if the United States derailed the deal, it would send "mixed signals" because no criticism was raised when a British company was in charge. Lawmakers, he said, must "step up and explain why a Middle Eastern company is held to a different standard."

ZGram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?S10226FAC>

### **3. Lawmakers debate ways to fix FEMA (CNN, 19 Feb 2006)**

While officials debated Sunday what should be done to fix the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff warned against drastic changes with hurricane season just a few months away. Chertoff, one of the administration figures blamed for a slow response to Hurricane Katrina, says measures to better prepare FEMA for disasters have already been put in place. Two key lawmakers said the agency was broken and recommended structural changes, with one suggesting FEMA be removed from the Department of Homeland Security umbrella and another saying the agency should be disbanded and rebuilt within DHS. Rep. Thomas Davis, R-Virginia, told ABC's "This Week" he believes FEMA needs to be a Cabinet-level organization.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/02/19/katrina.fema/index.html>

### **4. Airports working on Registered Traveler deals (San Jose BizJournals, 20 Feb 2006)**

Starting this summer, travelers will get what they pay for when it comes to airport security. Airports around the country are negotiating deals with high-tech security companies to operate voluntary, fee-based Registered Traveler programs similar to the one that has been in place in Orlando since last July. More than 15,000 travelers there have undergone background checks, submitted fingerprints and iris scans, and paid \$80 each to bypass regular security lines. The maximum wait time for the special Registered Traveler lines is three minutes, compared with 31 minutes for other security lines at Orlando International Airport, according to Verified Identity Pass Inc., which operates the program.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?X23026FAC>

### **5. TSA told not to count on increased passenger fees (By Basil Talbott, CongressDaily, 21 Feb 2006)**

House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Harold Rogers, R-Ky., said Thursday the Transportation Security Administration should not depend on obtaining an estimated \$1.4 billion in passenger fees to balance the agency's budget. TSA Director Kip Hawley told the subcommittee that he was working with authorizing committees to approve increases in the Aviation Security Fee that the agency failed to get

last year. The agency is seeking to double the current passenger fee to \$5 for a one-way nonstop ticket. Rogers insisted that Hawley decide where he planned to make provisional cuts in the agency's operating budget. Rogers also accused Hawley of "dumping" an unrealistic budget plan "into the lap of this committee" and threatened to slash the agency's budget.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.govexec.com/story\\_page.cfm?articleid=33422&dcn=e\\_gvet](http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=33422&dcn=e_gvet)

#### **6. 6 Arrested for Gun Smuggling, Police Say (New York Times, 20 Feb 2006)**

Law enforcement officials announced the arrest yesterday of six men who they say were behind a gun smuggling ring that brought hundreds of high-powered weapons from other states and sold them to criminals in New York. Standing behind a trove of Chinese assault rifles, Beretta knockoffs from Brazil and other weapons, Police Commissioner [Raymond W. Kelly](#) said during a news conference at Police Headquarters that the seizure of more than 100 firearms was the largest in recent years. Mr. Kelly said the investigation, called Operation Tripod, unfolded over the course of a year and involved undercover detectives who spent \$118,000 buying the weapons.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/20/nyregion/20guns.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/20/nyregion/20guns.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

#### **7. More Drug Makers Are Losing Patience Over Bioshield Funds (Investors Business Daily, 17 Feb 2006)**

Richard Hollis is prepared to bite the hand he hopes will feed his company, Hollis-Eden Pharmaceuticals. The hand belongs to Project Bioshield, a program designed to stockpile drugs and vaccines in the event of a large-scale terrorist attack. President Bush announced Bioshield in January 2003 and signed it into law in July 2004. The program is run by the Health and Human Services Department. It allocates \$5.6 billion over 10 years to create a market for products to counter the effects of chemical, biological and nuclear terrorism.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.investors.com/editorial/IBDArticles.asp?artsec=22&issue=20060217>

### **STATE AND LOCAL NEWS**

#### **8. CA: Surveillance Cameras To Monitor Santa Monica Promenade, Pier (NBC4.TV, 15 Feb 2006)**

SANTA MONICA, Calif. - Santa Monica's 3rd Street Promenade is the latest public place that will soon apparently be under the watchful eye of police surveillance cameras. Tuesday night the Santa Monica City Council has given the green light for a new video surveillance system at the 3rd Street Promenade and the Santa Monica Pier. The video cameras will monitor areas visited by thousands of people. City officials say they decided on the plan after suspicious people took pictures of some of the facilities there.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.nbc4.tv/news/7080205/detail.html>

**9. CA: Muslim immigrants allegedly approached by FBI to spy on clergy (Daily Bulletin, 21 Feb 2006)**

At least four Muslim immigrants say they have been approached by FBI agents over the past year and asked to spy on clergy in their mosques in exchange for help in becoming legal U.S. residents, Muslim leaders said. The immigrants, who are from South Asia or the Middle East, refused to help, and reported the offers to officials at several mosques in Southern California, said Shakeel Syed, executive director of the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://dailybulletin.com/ci\\_3532046](http://dailybulletin.com/ci_3532046)

**10. CO: Super certificates proposed (Denver Post Editorial Board Member, 20 Feb 2006)**

With all the junk we have stored in the attic, do we really need "heirloom" birth and marriage certificates signed by the governor? That's the proposal contained in House Bill 1154, pending in the House Appropriations Committee. The certificate would be "suitable for display" and would carry a \$45 fee, \$10 of which would be funneled to the Infant Immunization Fund or the Colorado Domestic Abuse Fund. Traditional birth and marriage certificates cost \$15.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.denverpost.com/opinion/ci\\_3526964](http://www.denverpost.com/opinion/ci_3526964)

**11. IL: Daley wants security cameras at bars (USA Today, 14 Feb 2006)**

CHICAGO - Surveillance cameras — aimed at government buildings, train platforms and intersections here — might soon be required at corner taverns and swanky nightclubs. A police camera, mounted with a microphone, can detect the sound of gunshots within a two-block radius. File photo/AP Mayor Richard Daley wants to require bars open until 4 a.m. to install security cameras that can identify people entering and leaving the building. Other businesses open longer than 12 hours a day, including convenience stores, eventually would have to do the same. Daley's proposed city ordinance adds a dimension to security measures installed after the Sept. 11 attacks. The proliferation of security cameras — especially if the government requires them in private businesses — troubles some civil liberties advocates.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-02-14-chicago-cameras\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-02-14-chicago-cameras_x.htm)

**12. IL: County preparing for bioterrorism - Agencies test plan to dispense medication (The Register-Mail, 21 Feb 2006)**

GALESBURG - Knox County's preparedness for a bioterrorist attack was tested Monday. Local emergency agencies tested the county's plan for dispensing medication from the Strategic National Stockpile. In the test scenario, several letters received at the Galesburg Post Office Sunday contained a white substance that preliminary tests indicated contained anthrax. About 150 people were exposed.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.register-mail.com/stories/022106/LOC\\_B91SVMAL.GID.shtml](http://www.register-mail.com/stories/022106/LOC_B91SVMAL.GID.shtml)

**13. KY: State vies for bioterrorism lab (Kentucky Herald-Leader, 21 Feb 2006)**

FRANKFORT - Political and academic leaders in Kentucky and Tennessee will jointly compete against other states for a \$451 million federal bioterrorism research lab in rural Pulaski County, U.S. Rep. Harold Rogers announced yesterday. About 400 workers, including more than 200 highly paid scientists, would study some of the world's most dangerous pathogens in the planned 500,000-square-foot lab, said Rogers, a Somerset Republican. "This is an effort that could literally change the economic landscape of the region," Rogers said in a morning news conference attended by political and academic leaders, including Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.kentucky.com/mld/kentucky/13922097.htm>

**14. NM: Two Fugitive Brothers Are Caught in New Mexico (AP, 19 Feb 2006)**

Two brothers who had eluded a string of felony drug and weapons charges for 15 years were captured and found with stockpiles of drugs, weapons and gunpowder, a U.S. marshal said Saturday. A tip earlier in the week led authorities to a rented house in rural southwestern New Mexico, where the brothers were arrested Friday on weapons, explosives and other charges from a 1991 warrant issued in Merriam, Kan., officials said. Geoffrey Rose, 62, and Gregory Rose, 50, were taken into custody without incident, U.S. Marshal Gordon Eden said. The men were thought to be aligned with white supremacist and anti-government groups, authorities said.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?R2D221DAC>

**15. NC: 6 Arrested In Suspected Immigrant Smuggling Operation (NBC17, 20 Feb 2006)**

ROCKY MOUNT, N.C. - Six people were arrested early Monday on suspicion of smuggling people into the country illegally, authorities said. After receiving a call from Virginia authorities about a possible abduction, North Carolina State Highway Patrol troopers stopped a Ford Econoline van on southbound Interstate 95 near mile marker 150 at about 1 a.m., said Lt. Everett Clendenin, of the Highway Patrol. Inside the van, the troopers found four Hispanic men and two Hispanic women. One of the women told authorities the men abducted her because she didn't pay her transportation fees into the country, Clendenin said.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.nbc17.com/news/7266323/detail.html>

**16. OH: Three Charged With Planning Attacks in Iraq (Washington Post, 21 Feb 2006)**

The Justice Department today announced indictments against three Ohio residents for allegedly plotting to attack U.S. and coalition troops in Iraq, although court documents do not make clear how far the trio got with their alleged plans. The indictments unsealed today allege that the three defendants conspired to "kill or maim persons outside of the United States, including U.S. military personnel serving in Iraq," and to provide material support to terrorists. One of the men is also charged with distributing information about explosives and making verbal threats against President Bush, records show.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:  
<http://makeashorterlink.com/?D14244FAC>

**17. PA: Pittsburgh International might get express check-in (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 19 Feb 2006)**

John Wray travels at least twice a month, and he always winces when he sees his treasured laptop go through the security check at Pittsburgh International Airport. "You watch it going over those little rollers, bouncing up and down, and you go, 'Wow, when was the last time I backed that thing up?' " said Mr. Wray of Ohio Township. That's why he would welcome any new program that might eliminate that step -- and anything else that would land him in the fast lane when it comes to airport security screening, including the part, he said, "where you have to take off your shoes, and then your coat while forgetting to take your boarding pass out of the pocket."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:  
<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/06050/656598.stm>

**18. TX: Houston eyes cameras at apartment complexes (AP, 15 Feb 2006)**

HOUSTON - Houston's police chief on Wednesday proposed placing surveillance cameras in apartment complexes, downtown streets, shopping malls and even private homes to fight crime during a shortage of police officers. "I know a lot of people are concerned about Big Brother, but my response to that is, if you are not doing anything wrong, why should you worry about it?" Chief Harold Hurtt told reporters Wednesday at a regular briefing. Houston is facing a severe police shortage because of too many retirements and too few recruits, and the city has absorbed 150,000 hurricane evacuees who are filling apartment complexes in crime-ridden neighborhoods. The City Council is considering a public safety tax to pay for more officers.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:  
[http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/national/1110AP\\_Police\\_Cameras.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/national/1110AP_Police_Cameras.html)

**19. WA: Impact study could be done on passport proposal (Peninsula Daily News, 19 Feb 2006)**

PORT ANGELES - An economic impact study might be conducted on impending travel identification requirements for U.S. citizens following last week's 40-person lobbying trip to Washington, D.C. "There's interest from both [political] parties because they see this is a train heading down the tracks," said Russ Veenema, executive director of the Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce. "This will buy us some time. We painted a picture of economic hardship across both northern and southern borders." Members of the lobbying group argued that the trade issue goes beyond just the border states, affecting the entire country, Veenema said.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:  
<http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/sited/story/html/230658>

**KEY PEOPLE**

**20. PA: Ex-Easton cop to lead county gang strike force (The Morning Call, 20 Feb 2006)**

Northampton County District Attorney John Morganelli appointed former Easton Police Lt. Barry Golazeski to head a new gang strike force made up of prosecutors, members of the sheriff's department, and Bethlehem and Easton police investigators. "The specific goal here is to provide a new angle of attacking the problem," Morganelli said in making the announcement at a news conference this afternoon. Golazeski, who will be a county detective, is to be "the focal point for the accumulation of information and intelligence that will target individuals who we know are gang members and who are actively involved in illegal activities throughout Northampton County." In November, Morganelli said street gangs operating in the county would be prosecuted under the state's corrupt organization statute, making it illegal simply to belong to a gang.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.mcall.com/news/local/all-gangforce0220.0.4891062.story>

## **GANG ACTIVITY**

### **21. A Sixteenth Member Of The US Intelligence Community (Contributed by Steven Aftergood, Federation of American Scientists, [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org))**

With the creation of the Department of Homeland Security in 2002, the U.S. intelligence community gained its fifteenth member. Last week, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) became the sixteenth member. "This designation does not grant DEA new authorities, but it does formalize the long-standing relationship between the DEA and the IC," according to a February 17 news release from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. See:

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2006/02/odni021706.html>

### **22. AZ: Police struggle with rising gang violence (East Valley Tribune, 19 Feb 2006)**

At first glance, the dark streets seem serene in this central Chandler neighborhood, where long-established families have raised their children in the older, modest homes. But as a gang detective slowly cruises by a house in his unmarked car late one Friday night, it's clear that he is being closely followed. "Hear the whistles?" says detective Ron Kelley. "It's their signal — to let everybody know there's police in the neighborhood." Ten years ago, gangs ran rampant throughout the Valley, and violence, such as beatings, drive-by shootings and execution-style gang hits, reached an all-time high.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/index.php?sty=59462>

### **23. CA: Hells Angels settlement garners a lot of attention (Mercury News, 19 Feb 2006)**

When Santa Clara County agreed earlier this month to pay the Hells Angels and their friends \$990,000 for a botched 1998 raid, county officials probably would have preferred that the world not take too much notice. After all, it's hard for elected officials to settle with a motorcycle gang.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/local/13911320.htm>

**24. FL: Alleged Gang Member Faces 13 Counts Of Attempted Murder (NBC6.net, 17 Feb 2006)**

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. - A teen who police say is a member of a notorious gang is facing 13 counts of attempted murder. Police said the 14-year-old plotted with members of the Latin Kings to kill rival gang members in a drive-by shooting. Bayardo Gutierrez was in court Thursday and denied bond. He is being charged as an adult. A police report says Gutierrez requested fellow members of the Latin Kings to help get revenge on rival gang members who jumped him in October 2005.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.nbc6.net/news/7151835/detail.html>

**25. IN: Six teens jailed for gang related shooting; more arrests expected (NewsCenter16 Reporter, 20 Feb 2006)**

Goshen, IN - Six-teenagers are in jail following a deadly shooting in Goshen. It all started early Sunday morning with a fight at the teen dance club, La Bamba, which is located on West Pike Street in Goshen. The fight led to a car chase and shooting that killed a 14-year-old.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.wndu.com/news/022006/news\\_48091.php](http://www.wndu.com/news/022006/news_48091.php)

**26. LA: FBI calls for teamwork as thugs seek foothold - Local gangs' absence creates tempting void (The Times-Picayune, 17 Feb 2006)**

The winds of Hurricane Katrina might have blown New Orleans' violent yet unsophisticated street gangs out of town. But the FBI warns that it's only a matter of time before more brutal and better-organized criminal groups, some from outside the state and some from outside of the country, try to fill the void. The FBI invited more than 200 officers from local, state and national law enforcement agencies to a seminar Thursday in Metairie to discuss the threat, and in his introduction to the packed house, Jim Bernazzani, special agent in charge of the New Orleans field office, identified some of the potential criminal carpetbaggers as Russian organized crime, the Latin Kings and MS-13, an ultra-violent Latin American gang already menacing 23 states with drug and firearms trafficking. MS-13, or Mara Salvatrucha, has dubiously earned its own federal task force.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.nola.com/news/t-p/metro/index.ssf?/base/news-13/11401606985020.xml>

**27. MD: Police emphasize caution as gang graffiti increases in city (The Diamondback, 21 Feb 2006)**

In the tunnel where the Paint Branch Trail cuts underneath Baltimore Avenue, there are concrete walls with gray blocks of paint covering what was originally spray-painted letters and symbols, probably created by a gang member or members, according to University Police. University Police spokeswoman Maj. Cathy Atwell said gang graffiti is on the rise in College Park and police are concerned gang activity "happening around the county might come to the campus." While no gang-related graffiti has infiltrated the campus yet, Atwell advises students to be cautious.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.diamondbackonline.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2006/02/21/43faff09c30ee>

**28. MD: Gang Leader Gets 80 Years in Md. Firebomb (Forbes, 21 Feb 2006)**

A gang leader was sentenced Tuesday to 80 years in federal prison for trying to intimidate a neighborhood anti-drug activist by firebombing her home. Terrence Smith was the leader of the Bloods gang that planned the January 2005 attack on Harwood Community Association President Edna McAbier, who had repeatedly told police about neighborhood drug deals, prosecutors said.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.forbes.com/work/feeds/ap/2006/02/21/ap2542231.html>

**29. MA: Lowell police fear escalation in gang violence (Fox Providence, 21 Feb 2006)**

LOWELL, Mass. Lowell police are concerned about a possible escalation in gang violence in the city after a weekend shooting left one man dead. A 19-year-old known gang member was shot early yesterday morning. Police think Chhoeup Chhom was shot on Stevens Street, before friends, not realizing how badly he was injured, drove him to Ware Street, where he was found suffering from multiple gunshot wounds to his upper torso about 2:30 a-m.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.eyewitnessnewstv.com/Global/story.asp?S=4528154&nav=F2DO>

**30. MO: Do we have a gang problem? (News-Leader, 19 Feb 2006)**

Springfield has 10 gangs with more than 200 members, but police say that alone doesn't put it in the same league as cities plagued by violent street gangs. Yet. Officers worry that the most violent international street gangs may be drawn to the area to prey on growing immigrant populations. They're also concerned violent Hispanic gangs like Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13, could try to fill an unmet demand for methamphetamine in the Ozarks.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060219/NEWS01/602190383>

**31. NM: Program targets gang, drug problems (The Daily Times, 19 Feb 2006)**

FARMINGTON - City leaders across the nation say they cannot solve serious problems within their boundaries on their own. Instead, they are working with nearby communities on issues to bring a better quality of life to the masses. This concept is called "Safe Communities Initiative," and the city of Farmington is currently working to implement the process here. Through the initiative, the city is calling on all agencies and organizations in San Juan County to join together and combat an impending drug and gang problem in the region. This was stated in a Dec. 13, 2005, resolution passed by the city council.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?R54025FAC>

**32. TX: White Supremacy Gang Increasing Crime Rate (KCBD, 17 Feb 2006)**

Friday's arrests would be just one of many involving the white supremacy group in the past week. Earlier Friday afternoon, police arrested a known Aryan Nation member for aggravated kidnapping and drug possession. NewsChannel 11's Jennifer Vogel has been researching the group and found many ties and similarities from one crime to the next. The Aryan Nation started off nationwide as a prison gang. Now, they are moving across the South Plains being arrested for crimes of violence, theft, and narcotics. Officers tell us the group's increasing crime may be related to increased drug activity.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.kcbd.com/Global/story.asp?S=4520312&nav=3w6y>

### **33. In an exclusive interview, star FBI informant tells how he duped criminals (Democrat and Chronicle, 19 Feb 2006)**

As he looked around the Henrietta hotel room, preparing to help federal agents take down a man suspected of a murder and a \$10.8 million armored car heist, Anthony Delmonti noticed the lamp.

It was the same brass table lamp he'd seen in hotel rooms in Cleveland and New York City.

This was the lamp the FBI loaded with monitoring equipment so agents could surreptitiously film conversations between Delmonti and men who thought he was one of them — a criminal. What they didn't know as they plotted crimes — from another armored car robbery to the peddling of illegal Viagra — was that Delmonti was a paid federal informant.

Here the FBI was spending millions on this undercover case, Delmonti thought, yet this lamp shadowed him across the Northeast.

"I said (to the FBI), 'You can't buy another lamp?' It followed us everywhere — every state, every city, every room.

"I said, 'You don't think nobody's going to remember that lamp?'

"And nobody did," Delmonti said in an extensive, in-person interview with the *Democrat and Chronicle*, one of the few interviews he has granted since going into hiding in early 2001.

FBI agents peg Delmonti as one of the most active informants in the Northeast in recent years. He broke up a cocaine pipeline between Ohio and California, destroyed a extensive illegal gambling operation in Ohio and solved two notorious Rochester-area crimes.

Once active in organized crime, Delmonti was an unlikely person to become an informant. In the interview, Delmonti revealed how he was recruited for the role, how he kept his cool during hundreds of hours of undercover work, how he feared at times that the FBI would botch the whole operation. And how he has been reborn.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?D25032FAC>

**34. Canada: New Initiatives to Target Gangs and Organized Crime (Darren Bernhardt, The StarPhoenix, 17 Feb 2006)**

Major new initiatives are about to be launched in Saskatoon to fight gang activity and organized crime. As of April, a provincewide enforcement unit focused strictly on organized crime will begin operations with offices in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert. Each unit will consist of local police service officers and RCMP members, charged with the mandate of "disrupting and dismantling" organized crime, explained Insp. John Cantafio, the RCMP officer in charge of the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit (CFSEU). "There are organized crime groups in Saskatchewan. There's a lot of them," he said. "Last year, 46 were identified through intelligence gathering and it's probably going to be even higher this year because the intelligence will be enhanced." Although each local police force has their own organized crime investigators, their resources are limited. Despite that, they've been able to prove "there really is a problem out there," said Cantafio.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?C26021FAC>

**35. Honduras killers send grim message on gang talks (Reuters, 20 Feb 2006)**

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras - Unidentified killers shot dead a gang member and attached a note to his corpse criticizing talks planned between Honduras' government and two ultra-violent gangs terrorizing the country. The tattooed body of a 37-year-old member of the Mara 18 gang was found near a Roman Catholic seminary on the outskirts of the capital Tegucigalpa on Monday, said a police chief. The corpse had been dragged through the streets on a rope. A white placard attached to the body read: "If the government wants to negotiate with the gangs, we don't; we will continue with a clenched fist."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?S27021FAC>

## **NARCO TRAFFICKING**

**36. NY: Drug Traffickers Find Haven in Shadows of Indian Country (New York Times, 19 Feb 2006)**

ST. REGIS MOHAWK RESERVATION, N.Y. — He had eluded the authorities for years. Witnesses against him had mysteriously disappeared. Shots were fired from his highly secured compound here last year when the state police tried to close in. The man, John V. Oakes, like a fast-rising number of American Indian drug traffickers across the country, saw himself as "untouchable," as one senior investigator put it, protected by armed enforcers and a code of silence that ruled the reservation. After he was finally arrested last May, Mr. Oakes was recorded from jail talking on the phone with his estranged wife. "I can't believe people let this happen to me," he said, according to Derek Champagne, the Franklin County district attorney who listened to the recorded call. "You can't touch me. I'm on the reservation, and I do what I want."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/19/national/19smuggle.html?th&emc=th>

**37. NV: Sky Marshals Accused of Drug Smuggling (KLASTV.com, 21 Feb 2006)**

Two U.S. air marshals face federal drug charges accusing them of using their positions to smuggle narcotics through airport security and onto planes for transport, federal prosecutors said. Shawn Ray Nguyen, 38, and Burlie L. Sholar III, 32, both of Houston, were arrested Thursday after an informant delivered 33 pounds of cocaine and \$15,000 in "up front money" to Nguyen's Houston home, authorities said. "We expect and demand that our law enforcement officials will themselves abide by the laws that they are sworn to uphold," said First Assistant U.S. Attorney Don DeGabrielle.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.klastv.com/Global/story.asp?S=4501168&nav=menu102\\_2](http://www.klastv.com/Global/story.asp?S=4501168&nav=menu102_2)

**38. NC: Gambling, extortion and drugs target of probe (Outer Banks Sentinel, 21 Feb 2006)**

Police in Kill Devil Hills recovered nearly \$90,000 and close to a pound of marijuana in the Feb. 8 arrest of Steven K. Bansal, 31, a member of the Bansal crime family, at his home on Veelee Drive. The arrest was part of the culmination of a two-year investigation nicknamed "Operation Underdog" which was undertaken by hundreds of police in the counties of Fairfax, Prince William, Arlington and Stafford, Virginia, along with Frederick County, Maryland and Kill Devil Hills. By simultaneously making house raids on the morning of Feb. 8, police made eight arrests and seized a total of \$2 million in cash and nearly \$1 million in jewelry.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://obsentinel.womacknewspapers.com/articles/2006/02/18/top\\_stories/tops316102.txt](http://obsentinel.womacknewspapers.com/articles/2006/02/18/top_stories/tops316102.txt)

**39. OH: Delaware County authorities arrest 18 crack-cocaine dealers (The Columbus Dispatch, 17 Feb 2006)**

DELAWARE, Ohio - An increasing number of crack-cocaine dealers from Columbus are expanding their market north into Delaware County, law-enforcement authorities say. A month-long sweep by the Delaware County Drug Task Force targeted street dealers and netted 22 suspects, including seven from Franklin County. As of this morning, 18 of the suspects had been arrested. Some of the drug sales were traced to Columbus gangs, and at least one transaction has been linked to an attempted murder in Columbus, Delaware County Sheriff Al Myers said at a news conference.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.columbusdispatch.com/news-story.php?story=167096>

**40. SC: Police seize drugs from Bluffton home (Island Packet, 19 Feb 2006)**

The Beaufort-Jasper Multit-Agency Drug Task Force and the Beaufort County SWAT Team seized 526 grams of various drugs from a Bluffton home and arrested three Bluffton residents on drug-related charges Friday, according to a news release from the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office. At about 8 a.m., the task force confiscated about 28 grams of cocaine, about 29 grams of crack and about 469 grams of marijuana from the home at 704 Field Planters Lane in Bluffton, the release states. It also seized \$1,300 and digital scales. Yusof Lates Youmans, 32, of 704 Planters Lane, was arrested on charges

of trafficking in crack and cocaine and possession with intent to distribute marijuana, the release states.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/briefs/story/5536175p-4985215c.html>

**41. WA: Dizzying Rise and Abrupt Fall for a Reservation Drug Dealer (New York Times, 20 Feb 2006)**

LUMMI INDIAN RESERVATION, Wash. — For a time, Room 246 at the Scottish Lodge Motel, 13 miles south of the Canadian border, was a Shangri-La for Eugenia Phair. With its stained carpets, its stench of vomit and stale cigarette smoke, its bathroom sink smudged with burn marks from the crack-cocaine cooks who had used the room before, Room 246 was where her drug smuggling operation began to take off, she said, the first headquarters of what would become a well-organized and lucrative drug ring on and around this reservation.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/20/national/20gena.html?th&emc=th>

**42. Dominican Republic: Arrest extraditable linked to 1,675 kilos of cocaine and heroin (Dominican Today, 21 Feb 2006)**

SANTO DOMINGO.- An extraditable with an arrest order issued by the Supreme Court's Penal Chamber for federal conspiracy charges in connection with 1,675 kilos of cocaine and six kilos of heroin taken to the United States, was detained yesterday. The arrest of Luis Alfredo de la Rosa Montero, alias Luis Viagra or Compadre, was carried out during a Police Swat team operation. The Penal Chamber's arrest order was issued on the 3rd of this month, at the request of the U.S., country which wants de la Rosa under charges from Puerto Rico's U.S. South District Court.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.dominicantoday.com/app/article.aspx?id=10556>

**43. Panama: Cocaine intrudes on paradise (Los Angeles Times, 19 Feb 2006)**

ACHUTUPO · After keeping the world at bay for five centuries, the Kuna Indians on Panama's unspoiled Caribbean coast now confront an insidious intruder: cocaine traffickers. The fiercely independent tribe inhabits Kuna Yala, a semiautonomous area that includes a coastal strip and the San Blas islands. The region is known mainly to foreign eco-tourists who can afford to reach its isolated white sand beaches.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://makeashorterlink.com/?I39362FAC>

**44. Bolivia/US agree on "zero cocaine" policy (MercoPress, 21 Feb 2006)**

Bolivian President Evo Morales reached an agreement with the United States to reduce surplus coca crops in the central Chapare region and adopt a "zero cocaine" policy. Morales and his vice president, Alvaro Garcia Linera, held a long meeting over the weekend in Government House with U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia David Greenlee to discuss the anti-drug policy to be implemented by Bolivia's new government. President Morales whose political background is closely linked to the union representing coca farmers in Bolivia's central jungle region, said peasants would have to eradicate excess

coca crops “either voluntarily or with the help of anti-drug forces”. Like neighboring Peru, Bolivia allows the cultivation of small amounts of coca for nutritional, cultural and medicinal purposes.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.mercopress.com/Detalle.asp?NUM=7259>

**45. Colombia: Navy seizes US\$25 million worth of cocaine (The Daily Journal, 21 Feb 2006)**

BOGOTA – Authorities boarded a speedboat near Colombia's Pacific coast and discovered millions of dollars worth of cocaine that was probably being smuggled to the United States, the Colombian navy said Monday. Navy officials in a boat approached the Colombian-flagged vessel for an inspection Sunday morning near the port city of Buenaventura on the Pacific coast, 350 kilometers (215 miles) southwest of Bogotá, the navy said in a statement. Several people aboard immediately jumped ship and successfully escaped into a nearby inlet. But on board, the navy said it found 930 kilograms (2,046 pounds) of cocaine, worth about U.s.\$5 million (euro 21 million) in the United States.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.thedailyjournalonline.com/article.asp?ArticleId=225906&CategoryId=12393>

**46. Argentina uncovers drug runways (BBC, 19 Feb 2006)**

Argentine authorities have found 12 secret runways used for importing drugs from Bolivia and Paraguay, and arrested five people, including two policemen. Investigators are now trying to trace the owners of the land and to arrest more officers implicated in the ring. The investigation was sparked by a confession from one of the smugglers.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4730854.stm>

**47. UK: 'Sophisticated' Flava gang jailed - Flava sold drugs worth thousands of pounds every day (BBC, 17 Feb 2006)**

Two members of a "sophisticated" gang have been jailed for flooding Aberdeen with drugs. Richard Brown, 21, and Jason Zajaz, 31, were both jailed for three years and nine months for selling heroin and crack cocaine. They admitted being members of the Flava gang, a secretive outfit caught after a major surveillance operation by detectives in Aberdeen. The duo, from Wolverhampton, were jailed at the High Court in Edinburgh. Heroin and crack cocaine worth up to £3,000 a day was being sold, the court heard. Judge Lord McEwan said it was "a well organised" operation involving drugs of enormous value.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/scotland/4724336.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/4724336.stm)

**48. Portugal makes 'record' drug haul (BBC, 20 Feb 2006)**

Portuguese police have made what they say is the largest ever single seizure of cocaine in Europe. Eight-thousand kilograms (17,600 lbs) of unadulterated cocaine, split into more than 300 separate bundles, was discovered. Most of the drug was at a warehouse in the

southern Algarve region but some was in a lorry that was already transporting it north. Seven Spanish citizens - six men and one woman - have been detained.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4726428.stm>

#### **49. New Zealand: Customs seize 500g of cocaine (Stuff, 18 Feb 2006) – Liquid Cocaine**

Half a kilogram of liquid cocaine has been found in perfume bottles seized from travellers at Auckland International Airport, investigators say. Customs officials say it is the first time they have seen the cocaine smuggled in a liquid form into New Zealand – a sign that traffickers are finding new ways to avoid detection. Three people from Sydney have been arrested, and investigators believe the drug was Australia-bound when it was discovered at Auckland Airport on Wednesday.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3576024a11,00.html>

### **CYBERTHREAT & THEFT**

#### **50. DHS official lays out cybersecurity responsibilities (FCW, 17 FEB 2006)**

SAN JOSE, Calif. – The Homeland Security Department wants its technology procurements to meet recognized standards for security and privacy, a senior DHS official said yesterday. DHS is working with industry and standards bodies to create procurement requirements that meet those standards, said Jonathan Frankel, director of law enforcement and information-sharing policy in DHS' Office of Policy Planning and International Affairs. Once the standards are in place, the procurement policies will ensure that the government only buys from vendors that meet them, Frankel said at the RSA Conference 2006 here. He spoke during a panel discussion about the role of government in information technology security.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fcw.com/article92362-02-17-06-Web>

#### **51. Panel: Industry crucial to fighting cybercrime (FCW, 17 Feb 2006)**

SAN JOSE, Calif. - The private sector, not federal law enforcement, is the most crucial element in fighting cybercrime, a panel of international law enforcement experts said Feb. 15. Businesses will always be the “tip of the spear” because they see threats before the government does, said Steven Martinez, deputy assistant director of the FBI's Cyber Division. He spoke at the RSA Conference 2006 here. Industry also has information and techniques that the government lacks, Martinez said. Industry, which is the victim of many cybercrimes, must work with the FBI and the Justice Department to provide notice and evidence of crimes, said Arif Alikhan, vice chairman and executive director of the DOJ Task Force on Intellectual Property.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fcw.com/article92364-02-17-06-Web>

### **TECHNOLOGY**

**52. Board works to protect research - FBI, university presidents meet to discuss ways to keep intellectual property from being stolen by spies (Alameda Times-Star, 20 Feb 2006)**

FBI officials and university presidents are increasingly concerned about the theft of unclassified but sensitive university research that could be used by foreign countries for business advantage or military use. To prevent such crimes, the presidents of 17 colleges and universities who are on the National Security Higher Education Advisory Board met with FBI officials a little more than a week ago in Washington, D.C., to discuss terrorism, counterintelligence and homeland security on campuses. It was the second meeting of the group, which was formed in September 2005. "Much of the intellectual property (in the United States) is produced on college campuses," said FBI spokesman William Carter. "There are those who would try to take advantage of that to steal for their own use in their own country."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

[http://www.insidebayarea.com/timesstar/localnews/ci\\_3528364](http://www.insidebayarea.com/timesstar/localnews/ci_3528364)

**53. Online Stores Are Caught In Jihad Web (Tampa Tribune, 20 Feb 2006)**

When Stacey Turmel placed an order online with Davida, an English motorcycle accessory company, she was looking for protective gear with style and comfort. But after plunking down \$255 for a two-tone Deluxe Jet helmet, she found herself dragged into the shadowy world of global jihad. Turmel, a St. Petersburg lawyer, has learned that she was among several Davida customers whose personal and credit information was placed on a public Web site - 3asfh.net. The site, hosted temporarily by a Tampa-based Web-hosting company, has been used to exchange information on hacking by people waging war in the name of Islam.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://news.tbo.com/news/metro/MGB47AQ4WJE.html>

**54. Tracking technology could have homeland defense apps (EETimes, 17 Feb 2006)**

KADIMA, Israel — SuperCom Ltd. has unveiled new technology for active tracking of people and assets. The Israeli provider of smart card and electronic identification products has developed movement detection technology that can monitor and track numerous items simultaneously. The tracking technology employs small, low-powered RF tags attached to an object or a person. License-free radio bands are used to track the RF band from a programmable transmitter. SuperCom claims its Pure RF product can monitor and locate tagged items using a hand-held tracking device, which can also be integrated into cellphones. SuperCom has joined with Green Science International Ltd., an Asian distributor of health products, to customize its contactless smart card system and integrate it into Green Science's retail systems. With an eye on the U.S. homeland security market, the company has appointed former CIA Director R. James Woolsey as chairman of its advisory board. The board was established to help identify new applications for homeland security, military and document authentication markets.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.eetimes.com/news/latest/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=180204127>

**55. Blood Test Could Speed Bioterror Care (HealthDay News, 17 Feb 2006)**

FRIDAY - A test focused on genetic changes in white blood cells could be a quick means of confirming whether someone has been exposed to a bioterrorism agent, scientists say. "We see very specific changes in gene expression that are quite unique to each pathogen as little as two hours after exposure," researcher Rasha Hammamieh, of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, in Silver Springs, Md., said in a prepared statement.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.forbes.com/lifestyle/health/feeds/hscout/2006/02/17/hscout531051.html>

#### **56. Pittsburgh student to have anthrax project published in journal (AP, 20 Feb 2006)**

PITTSBURGH - A high school student who showed in a science fair project that using a clothes iron on mail can kill anthrax-like spores inside - without damaging the contents of the envelope - will have that research published later this year. Marc Roberge, 17, a senior at Central Catholic High School in Pittsburgh, decided to experiment on the issue after discussing his father's work as a medical toxicologist for the U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention office in the Pittsburgh suburb of South Park. His research will appear in the Journal of Medical Toxicology in June.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.philly.com/mld/philly/news/13918736.htm>

### **RESOURCES**

#### **57. Homeland Security Intelligence Strategic Plan (Contributed by Steven Aftergood, Federation of American Scientists, [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org))**

Efforts by the Department of Homeland Security to assert itself as a viable member of the U.S. intelligence community have yielded a new strategic plan for homeland security intelligence and a management directive organizing the Department's intelligence activity.

The new strategic plan is a handsome document, but largely devoid of significant content.

See "DHS Intelligence Enterprise Strategic Plan," January 2006 (3.3 MB PDF file):

<http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/dhs/stratplan.pdf>

And see "Intelligence Integration and Management," DHS Management Directive 8110, January 30, 2006:

<http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/dhs/md8110.pdf>

Relatedly, "DHS Has Not Implemented an Information Security Program for Its Intelligence Systems," according to the title of a new DHS Inspector General report (flagged by BeSpacific.com):

[http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interweb/assetlibrary/OIG\\_06-13-Dec05.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interweb/assetlibrary/OIG_06-13-Dec05.pdf)

**58. Congressional Research Service Report On Probable Cause And Reasonable Suspicion (Contributed by Steven Aftergood, Federation of American Scientists, [www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org))**

The terms "probable cause" and "reasonable suspicion" have almost become household words by now due to continuing public controversy over the legality of NSA surveillance program.

The legal definitions of these terms were examined in a new memorandum prepared by the Congressional Research Service for the Senate Intelligence Committee. A copy was obtained by Secrecy News.

See "Probable Cause, Reasonable Suspicion, and Reasonableness Standards in the Context of the Fourth Amendment and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act," January 30, 2006:

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/intel/m013006.pdf>

Two leading Democratic members of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees wrote to the Director of the Congressional Research Service yesterday to reject charges of CRS "bias" that were leveled by Rep. Pete Hoekstra, Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, last week.

"We write to correct the record," wrote Senator Dianne Feinstein and Rep. Jane Harman.

"We have found these CRS documents very helpful in conducting our oversight responsibilities, and disagree that they are 'speculating with respect to highly sensitive national security matters' as Chairman Hoekstra asserts."

"Indeed, the legal analyses provided by CRS have been especially informative given the Executive Branch's unwillingness to provide information to the Congress or to the American public as is Appropriate," they wrote.

See their February 7 letter here:

[http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2006\\_cr/hf020706.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2006_cr/hf020706.html)

**59. CDW-G assesses state, local IT spending (FCW, 20 Feb 2006)**

A new study found that consistent executive and legislative leadership, strong academic programs, and significant information sharing through user groups and associations necessary for developing robust information technology security in state and local governments. CDW Government released "Technology Investment Curve," a comprehensive study of state, city and county government spending on IT security products, today. Andy Lausch, director of CDW-G's public-sector sales for state and local government, said the study shows an unbiased view of purchasing data over five years, from 2000 to 2005, and a measure of how pervasive technology is throughout a state. Unlike the federal government, state and local governments do not have a unified

framework for assessing technology purchases, Lausch said. The study is a way to provide better insight into purchasing data – including the current assessment of the market and future trends – to government and industry officials, he said.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.fcw.com/article92361-02-20-06-Web>

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

### **60. Certification group issues last call (Government Health IT, 21 Feb 2006)**

The Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology will give the public a final opportunity to comment on its work to date before beginning the first certification reviews of health IT products for outpatient care. The commission announced that it will post its certification criteria, inspection process, pilot test results and draft certification handbook on the commission's Web site March 3, and it will accept comments through March 31. The schedule calls for the commission to adopt the package at its April 24 meeting. "Commercial certification will be launched shortly thereafter," the announcement states, "with the first certified vendors announced in late June."

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://govhealthit.com/article92365-02-21-06-Web>

## **EVENTS**

### **61. CA: Yolo agroterrorism workshop planned for 1 March.**

The Yolo County Department of Agriculture will be hosting a workshop on March 1 titled "Understanding the Dangers of Agroterrorism," which is sponsored by the Western Institute for Food Safety and Security in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and UC Davis.

This workshop will address the potential impacts of agroterrorism; recognition of response and recovery resources; response and coordination strategies for local, state, federal and private entities; and identification of individual roles within a local response team. Suggested attendees include emergency responders, supervisors and managers with law, fire and rescue, emergency medical services and the office of emergency services; state and local public health agencies; hospital clinicians and administrators; emergency planners; agriculture industries, including cultivation, processing, distribution, storage and transportation; and elected and appointed public officials.

"Unfortunately, agroterrorism is a growing threat in our world today," noted Yolo County Agricultural Commissioner, Rick Landon. "For the viability of our agricultural industries in Yolo County it is important that we be informed and diligent in our food safety and security measures."

The workshop, which is free of charge and includes lunch, will be held on Wednesday, March 1, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Yolo County Agriculture Department, Norton Hall at 70

Cottonwood St., Woodland. For more information or to RSVP, contact Barbara Christopherson at 666-8140 or [barbara.christopherson@yolocounty.org](mailto:barbara.christopherson@yolocounty.org).

**62. GA: Agrosecurity awareness class offered (The Northeast Georgian, 21 Feb 2006)**

UGA Cooperative Extension offices in several Northeast Georgia counties will be offering an agrosecurity awareness training class in March, with an expanded emphasis on poultry. "Our agriculture and food industries are vulnerable to terrorism and other disasters," says Billy Skaggs, Extension coordinator for Hall County. "Did you know that most cities have no more than a seven-day supply of food? The fact is that Georgia could be devastated economically by an attack on agriculture." Agroterrorism, in particular avian pathogens, presents unique problems to those who work in agriculture-related business that can be minimized if those individuals working on the front lines are properly trained, he adds.

CABLE Gram Suggested URL:

<http://www.thenortheastgeorgian.com/articles/2006/02/21/news/business/01business.txt>

**63. SC: Homeland Defense Classes at Clemson University**

Upstate residents can take classes to make their lives safer over the next month. The Clemson University fire department and EMS along with the South Carolina Defense Brigade and Americorps, are offering a series of classes on homeland defense issues. The classes include instruction in shelter operations, identifying weapons of mass destruction, crime prevention and protection, CPR, first aid and advanced medical training for triage and emergency management. The courses are designed for anyone interested in assisting in a disaster situation. Classes will be held every Tuesday night through March 28th at 7:30 pm in Tillman Hall.

**FULL REPORTS**

**64. United States Arrests Four Colombians for Alleged Drug Conspiracy - Members of cocaine drug ring arrested near Panama, U.S. customs agency says (By Eric Green, Washington File Staff Writer, 21 Feb 2006)**

Washington - U.S. authorities have arrested four Colombian nationals off the coast of Panama on charges of engaging in a conspiracy to distribute cocaine with a street value of more than \$90 million, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency announced.

In a February 17 statement, ICE said that if convicted of the charges, the defendants -- Abel Pardo Salgado, Alberto Cortes, Dionisio Velez Tarquino and Carlos Arturo Moreno -- face a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment and a maximum sentence of life in prison.

ICE said that on February 6, U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement officers on board a U.S. patrol ship stopped and boarded the fishing vessel *Victoria*, in international waters, about 40 nautical miles north of Panama. During a search of the fishing vessel, the officers

discovered about 1001 kilograms of cocaine (one ton). The four Colombian crewmembers on the vessel were arrested.

According to the complaint affidavit filed in a U.S. federal court in Miami, the Coast Guard found the cocaine in a hidden compartment on board the *Victoria*. The access to the hidden compartment was located in the pilothouse of the vessel and the area appeared to have been painted recently, said ICE, which is the investigative arm of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The complaint also alleged that the crew of the *Victoria* attempted to sink their vessel by allowing seawater into the engine room. In addition, the *Victoria* crew attempted to ram the U.S. patrol ship before being stopped, according to the affidavit.

U.S. authorities said stopping the Colombians in this case is an example of continued U.S. drug interdiction operations in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. (See [related article](#).)

Jesus Torres, ICE special agent in charge in Miami, said that "global criminal organizations that flood American streets with deadly contraband, that spread violence in our neighborhoods, and that exploit U.S. financial systems to cleanse their dirty money, pose a direct threat to the homeland security of the United States. We will continue working closely with our law enforcement partners in our efforts to dismantle them."

The U.S. State Department said in a report that Panama's geographic position and well-developed transportation infrastructure makes it a "major transshipment point for narcotics from the Andean Region to the United States and Europe."

The State Department said in its *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report -- 2005* that excellent cooperation exists between U.S. and Panamanian law enforcement agencies to stem the flow of narcotics, illegal firearms and money. The [section](#) of the report dealing with Canada, Mexico and Central America is available on the State Department Web site.

For information on U.S. policy in the region, see [Central America](#).

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

#### **65. U.S., Bulgaria Cooperate on Narcotics Control, Law Enforcement - Signing ceremony formalizes agreement on U.S.-Bulgarian cooperation (Dept. of State, 21 Feb 2006)**

Washington - The United States and Bulgaria have signed an agreement to support joint law enforcement projects in Bulgaria, the U.S. State Department announced February 17.

Under the agreement, the United States is providing more than \$4 million to support programs in Bulgaria aimed at strengthening institutions in the criminal justice sector, including forensics skills and laboratory equipment; combating human trafficking;

enhancing the government's ability to investigate and prosecute computer crime; and strengthening police/prosecutor cooperation.

The agreement was negotiated in May 2005. The signing ceremony, which took place at the State Department February 15, formally implemented the agreement, according to a State Department source. Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Anne Patterson and Bulgarian Minister of the Interior Rumen Petkov took part in the signing ceremony.

“By affirming its support for reforming and restructuring its judicial system and modernization of its criminal justice institutions, Bulgaria has made a significant commitment to its future democratic development and has taken a major step towards securing entry into the EU [European Union],” said the State Department announcement.

Bulgaria is “one of the United States' closest and most committed Southeast European partners” in combating the threats of corruption, transnational crime and organized crime, the State Department said. “We congratulate the people of Bulgaria on the progress they have made and the commitment they demonstrated towards achieving our common goal.”

The funds are provided through the Support for East European Democracies Act (SEED), which Congress passed in 1989 to facilitate development of democratic institutions, political pluralism and free market economies. Since 1990, Bulgaria has received more than \$460 million in SEED assistance, according to the State Department.

According to the department's *International Narcotics Strategy Report for 2005*, Bulgaria is a producer of synthetic drugs as well as a transit country for heroin from the Golden Crescent (Asia's principal area of illicit opium production -- an area overlapping Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan) as well as some marijuana and cocaine.

The report says the government of Bulgaria “has emphasized its commitment to combat serious crime including drug trafficking,” but that poor interagency cooperation, inadequate equipment to facilitate narcotics searches, widespread corruption and an overall weak judicial system hamper counternarcotics efforts.

The United States supports various programs through the State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, Justice Department and Treasury Department to address problems in the Bulgarian legal system. A criminal law liaison with the American Bar Association/Central and East European Law Initiative (CEELI) advises Bulgarian prosecutors and investigators on computer crime and other issues.

The State Department [media note](#) on signing of agreement and State Department background notes on [Bulgaria](#) are available on the State Department Web site.

The *International Narcotics Strategy Report for 2005* discusses Bulgaria in the section on [Europe and Central Asia](#).

The CEELI Web site has more information on its programs with [Bulgaria](#).

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