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Law Enforcement Sees Drugs and Gambling as Major Targets

Each year, the Pennsylvania Crime Commission asks other law enforcement agencies to give their assessment of organized crime in the Commonwealth, to highlight their investigative efforts, and to make recommendations for strengthening the law enforcement apparatus.

In its 1983 Report, the Commission noted that organized crime's involvement in drugs was becoming a significant problem, even in some of the Commonwealth's more sparsely-populated counties.

This trend has continued. Consequently, many law enforcement agencies, especially at the federal level, are focusing more and more on illegal drug networks, many of which generate profits that dwarf those of major American industries.

The responses the Commission received in 1985 also indicate that illegal gambling is drawing more attention from law enforcement, particularly at the state level.

Those responses follow. In a few cases, material may be somewhat duplicative in nature. However, in most instances, it has been left intact since it is illustrative of the multi-faceted and highly specialized approach that law enforcement uses in combatting sophisticated crime.

N. G. Dellarciprete Acting Commissioner Pennsylvania State Police

During 1984, this Department continued its cooperative efforts with a number of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute organized and professional criminals in many areas of the Commonwealth. Investigations have focused on major narcotics traffickers, large-scale fraud and theft rings, arson for profit, public corruption, and wide-spread illegal gambling operations.

The Drug Law Enforcement Division has uncovered large, clandestine methamphetamine laboratories in several locations in eastern Pennsylvania. Significant seizures of cocaine, in quantities up to three kilos, have been made in the northeastern area of the Commonwealth. Major raids aimed at curbing illegal heroin traffic were made in central Pennsylvania. As a result of investigations using court authorized electronic surveillance in western Pennsylvania and the use of the statewide investigating grand jury by the Office of Attorney General, a significant number of arrests have been made of major heroin and cocaine traffickers. A part of these investigations led to the largest cocaine seizure ever made in West Virginia.

Several investigations by members of our Fraud Investigation Units and various State Police Troops have led to other jurisdictions such as Georgia, Kentucky and New York. Stolen construction vehicles, expensive trucks and cars were recovered and the illegal activities of several theft rings and insurance fraud rings were curtailed.

“There is a need for additional investigative grand juries, both state and local, to serve the needs of investigators and prosecutors who are not able to get their cases heard because of the heavy case load of the present investigative grand juries.”

N.G. Dellarciprete
Acting Commissioner
Pennsylvania State Police

The White Collar Crime Units conducted several investigations involving public corruption. Major thefts of money from insurance companies and products from a computer firm were successfully investigated as were cases involving forgery, perjury and complex frauds.

