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National Drug Enforcement Policy Board

Report to Congress on CRACK COCAINE

September 1986

Submitted to the Congress pursuant to the
Urgent Supplemental Appropriations Act
of 1986, Public Law 99-349.

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INTRODUCTION

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On July 2, 1986, Congress--in passing the Urgent Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1986, Public Law 99-349--provided that the Attorney General, as Chairman of the National Drug Enforcement Policy Board, convene the Board in an effort to address the negative impact "crack" cocaine is having on the physical, psychological and social well-being of this Nation's affected communities. The Attorney General was further requested to report to Congress the Board's findings and in doing so to develop and implement a national plan of assistance to State and local governments to:

- (1) halt trafficking in rock and crack cocaine;
- (2) promote effective law enforcement efforts to identify, investigate, prosecute and incarcerate perpetrators engaged in enterprises involving rock and crack cocaine; and
- (3) foster public understanding of the dangerous effects of this substance on public health and safety.

In developing this plan of assistance, Congress provided that the Board concentrate on (a) the use of existing laws to combat the unique chemical characteristics and distribution patterns associated with crack, and (b) the amendment of existing laws in an effort to strengthen Federal, State and local crack trafficking enforcement and prosecution tools.

The following report develops a plan to curb the manufacture and distribution of crack and foster a greater public understanding of the harmful physical and psychological side effects of crack abuse. It examines the present crack situation in the United States, determines what laws have been enacted and programs developed in an effort to address the cocaine--and, hence, the crack--problem, and suggests what an expanded, appropriate Federal response to the crack crisis entails.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

A Definition

Paralleling, and to some extent a by-product of, the increase in the supply of, and demand for, cocaine in the United States has been the recent evolution of a phenomenon known as "crack". Also known as "rock," "base," and "freebase," crack is an inexpensive, highly addictive, physically and emotionally destructive cocaine derivative that is being abused in near epidemic proportions in some communities. Unlike cocaine hydrochloride, the white, crystalline powder designed to be introduced to the body intranasally, crack and other free-base forms of cocaine are heated and the fumes inhaled or smoked.

The traditional process of converting cocaine hydrochloride (which will largely decompose if smoked) to a free-base form involves the use of volatile chemicals, most notably the highly

explosive ether, and elaborate paraphernalia, such as acetylene or butane torches. The free-base form of cocaine known as crack, however, is produced by combining cocaine hydrochloride with either baking soda or ammonia and water, thereby eliminating the dangers associated with traditional free-base manufacture. In its final form, crack resembles "rocks" of coagulated soap powder which may be inhaled through a water pipe or sprinkled on a tobacco or marijuana cigarette and smoked. The origins of the name "crack" can be traced either to the crackling noise the drug makes when smoked or its resemblance to cracked paint chips.

Current Trafficking and Abuse Trends

According to a September, 1986 Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Office of Intelligence Special Report (attached), "The Crack Situation in the United States," crack was first noted in 1981 in Los Angeles, San Diego and Houston and is now available in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, Kansas City, Miami, New York City, Newark, San Francisco, Seattle and St. Louis. Availability at some levels has also been reported in Dallas, Denver, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. The DEA report, based on an in-depth survey of its 19 Division Offices and the Minneapolis and Kansas City Resident Offices, found that, with rare exception, crack trafficking takes place in the inner-city at the retail level and is a criminal activity that as yet, is unorganized, consisting instead of a variety of cottage industry "crack houses." These crack houses--also known

as rock, base and freebase houses--are generally apartments or houses, but may also be club rooms, storefronts or similar private locations where crack is manufactured, sold or consumed.

Because the crack crisis has so recently surfaced, hard, comparative data concerning crack trafficking and abuse trends remain elusive. The statistics that do exist with respect to the extent of crack abuse, however, reflect and support what many experts claim is a crisis of epidemic proportions in some areas. Information collected by the Department of Health and Human Service's National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) through the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) indicates that from 1984 to 1985 the number of injuries due to cocaine smoking increased 106 percent, from 618 to 1274. Much of this increase is believed to be due to the smoking of crack. Furthermore, DAWN studies show that among persons admitted in cocaine related emergencies in 1981, only 1.3% reported smoking cocaine. By the first quarter of 1986, this figure had jumped to 14.5%, representing an eleven-fold increase.

Dr. Arnold Washton, Research Director of the National Cocaine Hotline (800-COCAINE), has also compiled a number of statistics concerning crack abuse based on information provided by individuals calling the hotline. Although these statistics represent only those who have called the hotline and, hence, may be biased towards (1) certain geographic areas (where the hotline has been adequately advertised) and (2) users whose cocaine

problem is severe enough to warrant a call for assistance, some of the numbers are nevertheless illuminating. Between May 1983, when the service was established, and October 1985, the hotline did not receive a single call concerning crack. During a May 1986 survey, however, approximately 33% of the calls represented persons using crack.

Sources of Popularity

The rapid increase in the popularity of crack can largely be attributed to three factors: price, purity and method of ingestion. Although unit packaging, quantity and price vary, crack is generally sold in clear plastic vials containing one-tenth to one-half gram of cocaine for between \$10 and \$50. This is in sharp contrast to the \$100 dollar price tag generally associated with a one gram sale of cocaine hydrochloride. The introduction of this inexpensive, single-unit dose cocaine marketing concept has effectively removed the price barrier which previously existed and, unfortunately, made the drug affordable to this nation's children and less affluent citizens.

A second important factor contributing to the rapid spread of crack abuse concerns the purity levels at which the drug is sold and consumed. Cocaine hydrochloride, normally ingested intranasally, is sold at purity levels of 30 to 60 percent and takes two to three minutes to have an effect lasting 20 to 30 minutes. Crack fumes, on the other hand, are inhaled into the

lungs--the most efficient method of absorbing cocaine into the body--at purity levels ranging from 75 to 90 percent. The effects of crack, therefore, are far more intense and occur much more rapidly than those resulting from cocaine consumed intranasally. With crack, powerful feelings of euphoria occur within seconds, but last just five to ten minutes, and are followed by a deeper depression--or "crash"--than that normally associated with intranasal consumption. In order to escape this intensified depression, the user will often immediately seek out more crack, creating a cycle of drug use and depression that may lead rapidly to addiction. According to NIDA, an addiction to cocaine ingested intranasally normally develops after three to four years of use, whereas crack abusers are usually addicted after just six to ten weeks. Many experts, in fact, believe the onset of crack dependency occurs even more rapidly.

A third factor behind the expanding popularity of crack can be traced to this drug's method of ingestion. For the potential cocaine abuser, crack--because it is smoked--provides an attractive alternative to the seemingly more hazardous intranasal and intravenous methods of cocaine consumption. And for the regular cocaine abuser, crack is an alternative that satisfies the desire for a more intense "high" without the complications and dangers associated with both traditional free-basing and the use of hypodermic needles during cocaine injection.

Harmful Effects

The documented physical, psychological and social side-effects associated with the recent, widespread abuse of crack cocaine support Dr. Washton's assertion that crack is "the user's nightmare." Crack affects the human body in several ways. Within the central nervous system, crack triggers an explosive release of neurotransmitters, depleting the brain's supply of these naturally occurring chemicals and setting off a craving for stimulation that causes users to return to the drug in an attempt to satisfy it. Crack also induces an increase in blood pressure and heart rate that may, in some cases, result in brain hemorrhages or convulsions and heart attacks, respectively.

An 800-COCAINE survey conducted in May 1986 revealed the following with respect to physical and psychological side-effects of crack abuse:

- 82% of the callers using crack reported a compulsion to use the drug again as soon as the brief high wore off;
- 78% reported the onset of compulsive use and significant drug-related problems within two months of first use;
- 85% experienced severe depression;
- 78% reported irritability;
- 65% felt paranoia;
- 64% had chest congestion;
- 40% had a chronic cough;
- 40% had memory lapses;

- 31% showed violent behavior
- 18% ATTEMPTED SUICIDE; and
- 7% had brain seizures with a loss of consciousness.

The physical and psychological costs of crack abuse translate quickly into a broad, destructive array of social ills as well. According to Wilhelmina E. Holliday, Deputy Commissioner of Community Affairs at the New York City Police Department (in testimony before the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control and the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, July 15, 1986), crack use and addiction lead to tragic personal, social, legal and financial problems for both the abuser and his or her community. Driven by dependency, crack becomes more important than the abuser's personal health, food, sex, family and career. Unable to support what quickly becomes an increasingly expensive habit, crack abusers often turn to drug trafficking, robbery, burglary, prostitution and assorted other crimes in an effort to generate income for the purchase of more crack.

The present crack situation, in short, is bleak. This inexpensive, highly addictive by-product of a readily available illicit stimulant is, in some communities, rapidly attracting a cross section of Americans without regard to age, sex, income level or race. Attacking this crisis presents some unique problems for law enforcement officials. First, because crack is easy to manufacture, numerous "kitchen chemists" have appeared in affected areas, leaving investigators without a centralized

organization to identify and target. Second, because crack is trafficked in such relatively small amounts--reflecting the "cottage industry" nature of crack distribution--dealers and consumers find crack both easy to conceal and, if necessary, to destroy when confronted by law enforcement personnel; and third, even when arrests for crack trafficking or possession are successful, adequate prosecution and sentencing--given, again, the small quantities involved--become exceedingly difficult.

Because the manufacturing of crack is primarily done at the local level in a kitchen chemistry atmosphere and sold almost exclusively by low-level retail dealers with no widespread wholesale or importation networks (unlike some other illegal drugs, including marijuana and cocaine hydrochloride), crack trafficking naturally lends itself more to local and State law enforcement solutions. Any "cottage industry," however, that traffics in small, inexpensive units of a highly addictive controlled substance presents serious problems, nonetheless, especially when this industry is expanding in such rapid fashion. The crack situation, therefore, must be addressed by all levels of government cooperating together and operating in areas and roles where they have proved most effective in the past.

It is clear that in a few major metropolitan areas, State and local officials are having difficulty addressing the rapidly growing crack cocaine problem. Therefore, as part of its continuing proper role as the nation's catalyst in the areas of

combating drug trafficking and abuse, the Federal government will take a number of steps to assist and cooperate with State and local law enforcement authorities to effectively deal with what is fast becoming a problem of epidemic proportions in some large U.S. cities.

A FEDERAL RESPONSE TO CRACK

General Discussion

The Federal response to the crack problem has been and will continue to be structured around two important and inescapable facts: first, the recent crack phenomenon is the symptom of a much larger and far more complex drug law enforcement and abuse crisis--the introduction of vast quantities of cocaine into this country from abroad; and second, it is the Federal government that has the resources, expertise, and historical and legal responsibility for reducing the wholesale flow of cocaine (and other illicit drugs) into and throughout the United States. Therefore, the Federal government's role in responding to the crack problem will continue to be centered on diplomatic efforts to induce cocaine source countries to participate in crop eradication programs; the interdiction of cocaine shipments while in route from source and transshipment countries; and the investigation and prosecution of major cocaine trafficking organizations and the forfeiture and seizure of their assets. This role also includes extensive research into the most effective methods

of cocaine abuse prevention and treatment. In addition to these efforts aimed at addressing the larger cocaine threat, the Federal government will, as appropriate and feasible, continue to work with State and local governments in countering the more specific crack problem.

Federal Crack Initiatives

At the Federal level, the following initiatives will be emphasized:

- (1) The Drug Enforcement Administration has proposed an expansion of its State and Local Task Force Program through the creation of 24 Crack Task Forces (CTF), requiring the aquisition of approximately fifty additional Special Agents (SA). The ratio of SAs per State and local agents could be increased by up to 1:10; and, ideally, DEA can enter into agreements wherein State and local agency space and equipment can be utilized, offsetting significantly the need for additional funding. In the vast majority of cases--given the small quantities normally associated with crack manufacture, distribution and consumption--prosecution will take place in State courts, pursuant to agreements with State and local prosecutors. In addition to the establishment of CTFs, DEA can assist State and local agencies by providing intelligence, providing orientation, assisting in education and drug identification, providing training to address a particular crack situation, and assisting State and local prosecutors in utilizing their laws to develop cases.
- (2) President Reagan's Drug-Free America Act of 1986 contains several provisions that would improve crack education, abuse prevention, and treatment research; and increase penalties for the manufacture, distribution and simple possession of crack cocaine.
- (3) United States Attorneys (USAs), through their district Law Enforcement Coordinating Committees, will continue to work with local law enforcement officials and community representatives to combat crack from both the demand reduction and law enforcement perspectives.

- (4) The Department of Health and Human Services will continue to use the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to expand cocaine abuse prevention and treatment research in response to the growing crack problem.
- (5) The Department of Education will modify its drug abuse literature and programs to include a comprehensive discussion of the destructive nature of crack cocaine.

Except for the DEA Crack Task Force proposal, these initiatives, in addition to others, are discussed in detail below. Following this discussion, a brief description of selected Federal drug law enforcement and abuse prevention initiatives designed to combat the larger cocaine threat is provided.

The Drug-Free America Act (DFAA) of 1986

In an effort to establish a drug-free learning environment and assure that America's youth are fully informed as to the serious physical, psychological and legal consequences associated with drug abuse, the Drug-Free Schools Act has been included in the President's DFAA. This Act would authorize a new State-administered grant program to assist State and local educational agencies. Among the authorized State projects would be: training for teachers and school administrators; the development and implementation of curricula and teaching materials to prevent drug and alcohol abuse; educating parents about the symptoms and effects of drug use; and cooperative programs between schools and law enforcement agencies and drug and alcohol treatment programs. Clearly, any effective efforts to prevent

crack abuse must begin by educating teachers, parents and students as to the physically and emotionally destructive nature of this drug.

The DFAA's Substance Abuse Services Amendments also include provisions that will strengthen crack prevention and treatment efforts. This portion of the DFAA authorizes appropriations of \$490 million for fiscal year 1988 and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 1989 through 1992 for the alcohol, drug abuse and mental health services block grant program administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. More importantly in terms of addressing the crack problem, many of these grant funds will be distributed to States based on such factors as present treatment demand, availability of treatment slots and the types of drugs rising in addiction patterns. Hence, those States hardest hit by the crack problem and unable to adequately meet crack abuse treatment demand will be prime candidates for grant funding under this section of DFAA.

Title 5 of DFAA--the Anti-Drug Law Enforcement Act of 1986--contains several provisions designed to increase law enforcement tools against crack manufacture and distribution. The Drug Penalties Enhancement Act (subtitle A) includes, among other important measures, two amendments to current law that will assure increased penalties for crack trafficking. First, this Act calls for the amendment of current law by adding two new types of particularly dangerous controlled substances (one being

crack) to the list of those requiring the most severe penalties. It would extend those penalties to persons trafficking in 25 or more grams of crack. Second, this Act would amend current law by raising the allowed term of imprisonment and increasing fines for trafficking in smaller amounts of controlled substances, including crack.

The Drug Possession Penalty Act (subtitle B) would amend current law by providing for the imposition of mandatory fines (regardless of previous conviction record) and mandatory terms of imprisonment (for those who have a previous State or Federal drug conviction) for persons guilty of simple possession of a controlled substance. Passage of the Drug Penalties Enhancement Act and the Drug Possession Penalty Act should, if implemented effectively, send a clear message to crack distributors and users that drug quantity will no longer be the only barometer for determining the legal consequences of controlled substance abuse.

Lastly, the Juvenile Drug Trafficking Act (subtitle F) would provide for additional penalties for persons who make use of juveniles in drug trafficking--a tactic practiced by crack distributors. This act also amends current law--which provides extra penalties for those guilty of distributing controlled substances within 1000 feet of an elementary or secondary school--by expanding the prohibited activity to include manufacturing as well as distributing a controlled substance, thereby reaching such conduct as operating a crack house within the prohibited area.

Federal Agency Efforts

In addition to the drug law enforcement and abuse initiatives aimed at the crack problem present in the President's Drug-Free America Act, numerous Federal agencies have lent, and will continue to lend, their resources and expertise where feasible and appropriate to programs designed to aid State and local governments address the crack problem, through investigation, intelligence sharing, education and abuse prevention/treatment research funding. DEA initiatives in this area include the following:

- DEA sponsored a management conference in June in New York City--involving participants from DEA, the Department of Justice, the White House Drug Abuse Policy Office (DAPO), and NIDA in addition to local law enforcement officers and health and medical experts--in an effort to address the crack problem in general and the possible Federal responses in particular.
- The DEA New York Field Division developed a special intelligence task force in May, 1985 to collect and analyze information that will enable DEA and affected State and local agencies nationwide to make informed management decisions on combating the crack problem.
- The DEA New York Unified Intelligence Division maintains liaison with the recently established New York City Police Department Special Anti-Crack (SAC) task forces, exchanging information and assisting the task forces when requested.
- The DEA Detroit Field Division, in conjunction with local police agency task forces, established a local cocaine hotline to receive tips on suspected drug traffickers. A key target of the hotline is crack cocaine; and within four days of the service's inception, approximately 500 calls covering crack were received.
- The DEA Office of Intelligence has completed an in-depth national intelligence survey, entitled "The Crack Situation in the United States," through all its domestic Field Offices. The survey included questions concerning

the following eight items related to crack manufacture and distribution: availability, trafficking situation, where sold, packaging, retail prices, purity of exhibits seized, local police activity and media attention. This survey will be used to fine-tune DEA's draft enforcement strategy for dealing with the crack problem.

- The DEA Office of Training has included courses on crack in its curriculum for Basic Agents and provided briefings on crack to about 200 State and local law enforcement officers at the recent annual re-training conference of the National Drug Enforcement Officers Association in Memphis, Tennessee.
- DEA has also included courses on crack in its Clandestine Laboratory School curriculum. Six schools on clandestine laboratory investigations are provided each year at separate locations around the country for Federal, State and local narcotics agents.
- DEA conducted a training session on crack cocaine at the 27th International Conference in Arlington, Virginia, sponsored by the International Narcotic Enforcement Officers Association. The Attorney General, and DEA and other Federal agencies will also be participating in the October, 1986 International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) conference, where crack is expected to be a major topic of discussion.
- The DEA Cocaine Investigations Section is studying the feasibility of establishing a monitoring system on certain, unique cutting agents used in the manufacture of crack cocaine.
- DEA now includes a presentation on crack in each of the DEA-sponsored Sports Drug Awareness Program seminars for high school coaches.
- DEA is also editing a videotape of the June 1986 conference in New York that covers the extent of the crack problem and its method of manufacture and distribution. DEA Field Offices will be able to use this tape in public education programs across the country.

United States Attorneys (USAs) are also participating in the Federal effort to address the crack cocaine problem. Across the country, USAs are using their district Law Enforcement Coordinating Committees (LECCs) in a variety of ways to combat crack from both the demand reduction and law enforcement perspectives. A

number of districts have initiated LECC sponsored training programs on crack for both law enforcement officials and parents, students, educators, health care professionals and civic groups. Based upon the success of the initial LECC crack training programs, a model crack education package--including variations for law enforcement and non-law enforcement audiences--has been developed for all USAs. The law enforcement component is intended to help State and local officials handle crack from an investigative and prosecutorial perspective as it spreads to new jurisdictions. USAs have also addressed the crack problem in comprehensive LECC sponsored drug education and abuse prevention conferences; in demand reduction speeches before civic groups; in cooperative enforcement initiatives with State and local officials, such as Maine's cocaine/crack Task Force; in school assembly programs; and as part of large-scale community efforts such as Detroit's No-Crack Week, October 6-10, 1986.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has also expanded its cocaine prevention and treatment research programs in response to the recent evolution of the crack problem. In an effort to more accurately analyze crack abuse trends, NIDA included specific questions on crack in its latest High School Senior Survey, the results of which are scheduled to be released in late 1986. In addition to its surveys, NIDA sponsors a Community Epidemiology Work Group, which twice a year brings together local experts from major metropolitan areas to identify, assess and share information on local abuse trends. At the most

recent conference, in June in New York City, crack was a major topic of discussion and concern. NIDA is also actively exploring ways of including crack in its multi-media anti-drug campaign. NIDA will continue to sponsor, conduct and publish the findings of studies that address the prevention and treatment of cocaine/crack dependency in an effort to promote the realization of a drug-free environment.

Federal Cocaine Initiatives

Perhaps the most effective, long-term method of addressing crack trafficking and abuse, however, is by reducing the wholesale introduction of cocaine into the United States. This, in turn, requires a coordinated Federal effort aimed at reducing both the supply of cocaine--through, for example, crop eradication, drug interdiction, and the investigation and prosecution of organized, high-level cocaine traffickers and the seizure and forfeiture of their drug-derived assets--and the demand for cocaine--through research into the best methods of drug abuse prevention and treatment.

Source Country Control

One of the most recent and successful cooperative international efforts to halt cocaine production and distribution has been Operation BLAST FURNACE. As of September 24, 1986 the joint Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Defense and

Government of Bolivia program coordinated the destruction of 16 cocaine processing facilities in Bolivia. As a result, the market for coca leaves in that country has been significantly depressed, taking--at least temporarily--the profit out of coca leaf cultivation in Bolivia. Another successful and continuing effort to curb cocaine trafficking is DEA's Operation CHEM CON. Initiated in December of 1983 as the result of an intelligence study of the worldwide movements of ethyl ether and other essential precursors used in the production of cocaine hydrochloride, CHEM CON's objectives are two-fold. The first strategy is to identify suspect shipments of precursors and track them to clandestine laboratories. The second strategy is to arrange the voluntary restriction of sales of selected precursor chemicals by manufacturers and brokers to suspect buyers. In 1984 and 1985 alone, Operation CHEM CON coordinated the seizure of 16,978 fifty-five gallon drums of ether intended for the production of approximately 203,000 kilograms of cocaine.

Interdiction Efforts

Interdiction efforts focused on detecting, identifying and interrupting shipments of cocaine entering the United States are also important elements in the Federal government's war against drugs. Cocaine seizures by the Coast Guard and Customs Service highlight both the increased level that cocaine trafficking has reached and the expanded efforts law enforcement agencies are making to counter this threat. In 1982, the Coast Guard seized

just 40 pounds of cocaine in route to the United States. In 1985, however, the Coast Guard seized 5,890 pounds of cocaine--reflecting, in part, the increased use of vessels in the trafficking of large quantities of that drug. The Customs Service also reported a significant increase in cocaine seizures between 1981 (3,741 pounds) and 1985 (49,297 pounds). Law enforcement agencies will continue to work individually and in concert to curb the wholesale introduction of cocaine into the United States.

Investigation and Prosecution

A third important element of the administration's battle against cocaine involves the investigation and prosecution of major cocaine trafficking organizations and the seizure and forfeiture of their drug-related assets. An important development in this area was the establishment, in Fiscal Year 1983, of 13 regional Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) designed to coordinate Federal law enforcement efforts with State and local efforts to combat the national and international organizations that grow, process and distribute illicit drugs. Between 1983 and 1985, over 75 percent of OCDETF investigations involved cocaine trafficking; and during that same period cocaine was charged in 884--or 44.3% of the total--indictments and informations returned. Total OCDETF asset seizures and court-ordered forfeitures increased appreciably between 1983 (when approximately \$35.5 million was seized and \$13.1 million forfeited) and

1985 (\$164.6 million and \$56.3 million, respectively). Disrupting major cocaine trafficking organizations will continue to be a primary drug law enforcement objective.

Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment

The White House Drug Abuse Policy Office (DAPO) and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) are the two main organs within the Federal government responsible for research into the prevention and treatment of cocaine abuse. DAPO provides the President with a direct advisor on drug abuse policy matters and a center for the coordination and oversight of the drug abuse functions of all executive branch agencies. NIDA's role is to develop and disseminate new knowledge about drug abuse prevention and treatment, and to exercise national leadership in encouraging and assisting the private sector and State and local governments in the implementation and support of drug abuse prevention and treatment programs in their communities. In addition to NIDA's two ongoing epidemiological surveys (the National Household Survey and the High School Senior Survey), NIDA sponsors the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) which monitors abuse trends based on emergency room and medical examiner office reports. NIDA also provides grants for State and local epidemiological studies, distributes publications and sponsors conferences on cocaine abuse prevention and treatment, and coordinated the multi-media campaign--consisting of radio and television public service announcements and print ads--called "COCAINE. THE BIG LIE." The

Department of Education, which recently published a booklet (Schools Without Drugs) providing parents, educators, students and community leaders with information on how to keep schools drug free, also has an important role to play in reducing the demand for cocaine in the United States.

CONCLUSION

The Reagan Administration, the Congress and the American people are committed to a timely and effective response to the drug crisis that faces the United States. The drug that now poses the greatest threat to the physical, emotional and social well-being of this nation is cocaine. In combating the cocaine problem, the Federal government will continue--consistent with its present level of resources, expertise and historical and legal responsibilities--to focus its efforts on reducing the wholesale introduction of cocaine into the United States. Crack, at present, is an extremely destructive, localized symptom of the larger cocaine problem. However, a few areas State and local officials, given present resource levels, are having difficulty addressing this growing threat. The Federal government, therefore, will lend, as appropriate and feasible, its drug law enforcement and abuse prevention and treatment resources and expertise to the crack problem.

NOTE: Given the rapidity at which the crack problem is expanding in some metropolitan areas, trafficking and abuse trend data change frequently. This report reflects information gathered and analyzed through mid-1986. The NDEPB, in conjunction with Federal drug law enforcement and abuse prevention agencies, will continue to follow with concern the evolution of the crack problem.