

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

NI

National Institute
of Justice

Research Report

A Guide to INTERPOL

The International
Criminal Police Organization
in the United States

99316

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

A Guide to INTERPOL

The International Criminal Police Organization in the United States

by
Michael Fooner

August 1985

National Institute of Justice

James K. Stewart

Director

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

99316

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this copyrighted material has been granted by

Public Domain/NIJ

US Department of Justice

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the copyright owner.

This project was supported by purchase order number OJARS-84-M-330, awarded to Michael Fooner by the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Copyright © 1985 Michael Fooner

The National Institute of Justice reserves the right to reproduce, publish, translate, or otherwise use, and to authorize others to publish and use, all or any part of the original materials contained in this publication.

Foreword

Cooperation is a critical ingredient in successful law enforcement. This report describes a cooperative international association linking the police forces of 136 nations and dedicated to mutual assistance in pursuing international criminal cases.

Today's mobile criminals with passports can move in and out of jurisdictions without accountability. They often leave a trail of victims in countries throughout the world. With the growth in international crimes--drug trafficking, money laundering, electronic fund manipulations--it is essential that we eliminate the artificial criminal havens often created by national boundaries.

Through cooperation among the 136 member nations' police forces, the INTERPOL system helps solve important international criminal cases and enhance joint efforts to suppress and prevent criminal activity. With sophisticated information exchange capabilities, INTERPOL can assist member police agencies in tracking down fugitives who then can be detained and extradited.

The name INTERPOL is widely recognized all over the world. Less well known to local law enforcement are the kinds of assistance available through INTERPOL. Although INTERPOL has no powers of arrest, the association places a global network of services at the disposal of member police agencies.

This report summarizes a survey of the role of INTERPOL within the framework of United States law enforcement and reports on initiatives addressing major crime problems that are transnational in origin and multinational in scope.

The National Institute of Justice hopes the report will serve as a guide for law enforcement and criminal justice agencies to the crime-fighting resources available through INTERPOL.

James K. Stewart
Director
National Institute of Justice

Preface

United States' membership in the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), authorized by an Act of Congress in 1938, has grown into one of the very important instruments for American law enforcement and criminal justice. Specifically, it functions

--to assist law enforcement officials, at their request, in performance of their duties;

--to discourage and prevent evasions of the law by tracing and capturing criminal fugitives; and

--to address new forms of crime that are spawned by advances of modern technology such as terrorism, money-laundering, and electronic funds transfer fraud; traffic in drugs, guns, and stolen art masterpieces; counterfeit currency and financial instruments.

The INTERPOL system, through cooperation among the police forces of its 136 member nations, helps solve important international criminal cases and constantly seeks ways to improve the methods and facilities of cooperation toward suppression and prevention of criminal activity.

This Guide, a brief summary of the American experience, has been prepared as a resource for the law enforcement and criminal justice communities and for the information of legislators.

Contents

Foreword iii

Preface v

1 What INTERPOL is 1

Notes from a casebook 1

*St. Petersburg, Florida . . . Albuquerque,
New Mexico . . . San Francisco, California
. . . Terminal Island, California . . .
North Olmstead, Ohio . . . New York, New
York . . .*

Washington, D.C. 2

INTERPOL Case Investigator in action 3

Making the INTERPOL connection 5

*What is covered . . . Cooperation:
A two-way street*

The "Man From INTERPOL" 7

INTERPOL identified 8

*Legal status . . . Organization . . . World
headquarters . . . The NCB's*

2 The U.S. participation 11

The USNCB in operation 11

The changing face of American participation 12

3 Foreign countries' participation 15

4 How it all began 17

Curious origins and history 17

U.S. perceptions of international crime and law
enforcement 19

5 For reference 21

How to contact . . . User's requirements . . .
Types of investigative assistance 21

List of members 22

What INTERPOL Is

Notes from a casebook

St. Petersburg, Florida

Police investigation of the cold-blooded shooting death of a narcotics officer led to a man named William Haake. Detective Don Quire had a warrant for Haake's arrest but was unable to locate him.

Haake, recently settled in the city, had received some notoriety as a free-spending man-about-town, a party-loving high roller. Immediately after the killing he was not to be found.

The police department put out an APB across Florida and nearby States. Then Detective Quire received information the man had obtained a passport in a fictitious name, "Michael Eastman." Evidently he was fleeing abroad out of Quire's reach--except that Quire called INTERPOL in Washington.

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Police arrested a local businesswoman, Mrs. Ada Griscom, on bad check and fraud charges, but the District Attorney, because of peculiar circumstances, was hesitant about taking the case to trial.

Mrs. Griscom, a newcomer to Albuquerque, had bought and furnished a luxurious home, had rented prime space in the business district, and had announced she was opening an American branch of the Saudi Arabian Bank of Brussels, Belgium. She said she was handling large-scale loans of oil-rich Arabs' money at attractive interest rates. Naturally, borrowers would have to pay certain expenses and commissions in advance.

She had quickly established herself in the social and business community. She was a short plump woman, flashy in dress, but many people found her charming, even glamorous, when she let it become known her bank was an interest of the royal family of Saudi Arabia.

When her checks started bouncing and she was arrested, she had ready explanations. She guaranteed everything would be made good as soon as her associate, Mr. Yosef Ayoub, head of the bank in Brussels, learned of her cash flow problems. She promised to bring \$50,000 to court for restitution and charges were dropped.

After she failed to make the promised restitution, Chief Deputy District Attorney Robert Schwartz had her rearrested and indicted; but he was concerned about the outcome of a trial when he learned a surprising number of respectable citizens, including some of her victims, continued to trust and admire her.

He felt that although her check transactions were solid evidence of fraud, her skill with glib explanations and her friends as character witnesses might keep a jury from convicting her. He needed facts on her relationship with the bank in Brussels, but that information was thousands of miles away in a foreign jurisdiction. There was no way he could get it--except by calling INTERPOL in Washington.

San Francisco, California

Police investigating a triple shooting on McAlister Street, in the Haight-Ashbury section, filed murder charges against Ernest Kirkwood, an ex-convict with a record of violent felony arrests. As soon as a warrant was issued he disappeared.

Inspectors Earl Sanders and Napoleon Hendrix traced him from one hiding place to another, until they received information he had gone to the island of Jamaica; from there, they learned, he was in flight to West Africa, changing planes in England.

With an assist from the FBI and Scotland Yard, the fugitive was intercepted at Heathrow Airport, London; Sanders and Hendrix moved for his extradition.

But a complication developed. Kirkwood had been active in the so-called "communes" of San Francisco. Now he appealed to the British courts for political asylum. In actuality, members of those communes had engaged in armed robbery, extortion, and drug dealing, but Kirkwood described them as "revolutionary associations" and told the British authorities that if returned to the United States he would face "cruel, inhuman, and degrading" punishment in violation of the Convention on Human Rights.

He acquired a British lawyer skilled in pleading cases of that type, and they induced the European Commission on Human Rights to conduct an investigation.

Sanders and Hendrix had to suspend action on the case in San Francisco while Kirkwood maneuvered for freedom in London, 6,000 miles away. It was possible the British court might free him without anyone being there to refute his allegations.

Inspector Sanders called INTERPOL in Washington to ask if it could help.

Terminal Island, California

David Allan Smith escaped from the Federal prison by boat after a shootout with guards. Deputy U.S. Marshal Tony Lopez knew this would not be an easy case.

Smith, at 28, had been a career criminal since the age of 18, with arrests in cities from New Orleans to Oklahoma City for thefts, frauds, and check forgeries. Now he began specializing in credit card frauds and rental car swindles.

Tracking Smith, Lopez learned that he had made his way to Florida, had obtained passports in false names for himself, his wife, and his small son, and that he had fled to Europe with them. Lopez telexed INTERPOL in Washington, making a request for assistance in locating the fugitive.

North Olmstead, Ohio

Police were called to the Geiger home and found the middle-aged couple had been gruesomely murdered, hacked by multiple knife wounds. There were no witnesses.

Investigation by Detective Sergeant Dennis Sefcek led him to focus on the couple's son, Gordon, 26, who had been estranged from his parents. Gordon was said to be living in Australia in a small town named Bathurst, and Sefcek wanted to question him.

He placed an overseas call to police in Bathurst, but they would only promise to refer the inquiry to Australian police headquarters in Canberra.

North Olmstead is a small, quiet suburban community outside Cleveland and its police department is small. Sefcek felt a need for help with this case; he tried a phone call to the FBI office in Cleveland. They had no jurisdiction, an agent there said, but "Why don't you contact INTERPOL?"

In North Olmstead there had never been occasion for contact with INTERPOL nor for knowing anything about it. Sefcek found a calling number in his National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) directory and teletyped a request: Could INTERPOL help locate the young man? Could it help develop information about Gordon's recent movements in Australia?

New York, New York

Inspector Paul Vitrano's organized crime case seemed to be going nowhere after 5 months, even after the Federal Strike Force joined the investigation.

Then suddenly, the dapper little Englishman appeared.

Two of Vitrano's detectives from the District Attorney's special squad were on surveillance of Jimmy's Lounge, a mobsters' hangout on the Lower East Side, when the little guy arrived by taxi and went in. He was short and elderly, moved briskly, wore clothes with style, and spoke with an English accent. He seemed entirely out of place in those scruffy surroundings but, they learned from wiretaps, he was meeting Vince Rizzo and they became curious.

Rizzo, the main target of the investigation at that time, was a known racketeer involved in heroin, loansharking, and extortion--but the investigators felt sure he was also involved in something else, something really big, which they had yet to discover. Maybe the well-dressed stranger would cause some fresh leads to open up.

Vitrano's detectives trailed him to a midtown hotel and learned he was registered as Tony Grant from London, England; but when they searched criminal records--city, State, and Federal--they drew blanks everywhere. Tony Grant was totally unknown to lawmen in the United States, a complete mystery...

Until Inspector Vitrano sent a request to INTERPOL in Washington; could they ID this Tony Grant, and check if there was a criminal history on him anywhere?

Washington, D.C.

These requests for assistance were received at the INTERPOL bureau, now located at 15th and H Streets NW. in midtown Washington, as part of a stream of messages arriving daily from city police, State troopers, county sheriffs, prosecutors, and Federal agents in all parts of the United States and from foreign countries. Another stream of messages is dispatched from these offices every day.

The bureau occupies several floors of the building, guarded by its own security checkpoints. A wall map of the world in the reception area suggests the bureau's range of interests and commitments. A profusion of computer terminals in the offices and work rooms confirm that its principal operations mode is communications.

That the substance of its concerns is crime--criminal activity of every conceivable kind by people around the world--is not outwardly obvious. The men and women going about their business here would fit a description of almost any contemporary management-service organization.

But they do have a special sort of involvement, whether with a cop-killer, a lady con artist, a "revolutionary commune" member, a jail-breaking swindler, a patricide, or any other of the myriad offenders who come to their notice.

The emotions, whether excitement or revulsion, that stir the communities where such offenders have their moments of notoriety are generally absent here. In these offices, each offender is the subject of some sort of puzzle to which the men and women of INTERPOL have a special set of keys.

As requests for assistance arrive, they are checked in and coded by technical staff, then entered into the INTERPOL Case Tracking System (ICTS), a computer-controlled index of persons, organizations, and other crime information items. The ICTS conducts automatic searches of new entries, retrieving those with association for international crime.

Simultaneously, the assistance requests are channeled to senior staff members serving as INTERPOL Case Investigators.

INTERPOL Case Investigator in action

The INTERPOL Case Investigator is a relatively new kind of law enforcement professional in the United States. Typically, he or she is a veteran investigator from one of the principal Federal agencies, with a strong background of field experience that includes exposure to foreign criminal police work.

Each is on loan from one of the regular agencies and has to make the switch from its specialized activity to the broadest range of investigative subjects and methods. No one here will ever get credit for solving a case, since the nature of the job is to facilitate the work of others. But there is a fascination to an investigator in having a whole world of investigative resources at his fingertips and an unending variety of criminal problems and mysteries to which he may have to apply them.

The Case Investigator never knows but that the next case dropped on his desk will be a stolen Rembrandt, the gun used in an attempt to assassinate a prime minister, a kidnapped child, a flamboyant swindler of international banks, a narcotics traffic ring-leader, a band of contrabandistas, or a fugitive from a murder charge.

Some cases seem simple when they first come in.

In the matter of the Florida cop-killer, the Case Investigator decided an international wanted notice was called for.

For several months the fugitive, Haake, remained undetected. Then one morning, as a staff technician in the Washington INTERPOL office was processing incoming radio messages from overseas and entering names in the INTERPOL Case Tracking System (ICTS) computer, the screen lit up with a "hit."

This particular message was from Spain and said their police had arrested a United States citizen,

Michael Eastman, as he was crossing the border from France and that they were holding him on illegal drugs and weapons charges.

The ICTS computer in Washington was associating the name "Michael Eastman" with one it had on the index as an alias of William Haake, Florida fugitive. The INTERPOL Case Investigator immediately notified Detective Quire, who moved quickly for extradition proceedings.

To start with, the identification of the prisoner had to be verified. Quire assembled documents that the INTERPOL Case Investigator transmitted to authorities in Spain. The actual extradition had to be requested through the Office of International Affairs of the Criminal Division in the Justice Department.

Then a complication developed. Florida law permits capital punishment; Spanish law does not. Under its extradition treaty with the United States, Spain can refuse extradition where an accused would be at risk of capital punishment if brought to trial.

The INTERPOL Case Investigator now channeled communications between Florida and Spanish authorities on the question: If Florida would agree not to impose the death penalty in the event of conviction, would Spain honor the extradition request? It would. This agreement clears the way for the fugitive's extradition to the United States as soon as he completes the sentence imposed for crimes committed in Spain.

The Albuquerque matter was a little more complicated from the start. Since the Prosecutor, Robert Schwartz, needed information from Brussels, the Case Investigator at the INTERPOL bureau in Washington telexed a request to the Belgian INTERPOL bureau.

Each country belonging to INTERPOL maintains a special office for such contacts.

The request was channeled to Inspector Maurice Ricour of the Brussels police force. He investigated through the banking community of Brussels and found that the bank with which Mrs. Griscom claimed association did not exist and never had. At the address she had given as its location Inspector Ricour found a hotel.

He interviewed the hotel manager, who recognized the name of the person Mrs. Griscom had said was head of the bank, Yosef Ayoub. He had been a guest at the hotel but had since returned to his native Lebanon.

Back in the United States, when the Case Investigator transmitted the report from Brussels to Schwartz in Albuquerque, the Prosecutor felt his case was strengthening. But to wind up a loose end, could they investigate the facts behind Mrs. Griscom's claimed association with Ayoub and the Saudi Arabian royal family?

For that, the Case Investigator radioed a message to the INTERPOL bureau of Lebanon. The request became an assignment for a Beirut police officer who located Ayoub and interviewed him. Ayoub disclaimed ever having any connection with the royal family or business dealings with the lady in question.

Beirut radioed the information to Washington and the Case Investigator transmitted it to Albuquerque, where the prosecutor could now feel confident his case was complete--except for one more problem:

In New Mexico courts, radio messages from foreign police were not admissible as evidence.

Schwartz was on the line again to INTERPOL: Could they get the Belgian police officer to testify in person at the trial? The Case Investigator went back on the telex to INTERPOL-Brussels, obtaining their agreement and advising on arrangements for Inspector Ricour's visit.

The lady con artist was tried, convicted, and sentenced to serve time. But that did not close the case for INTERPOL.

While out on \$100,000 bond awaiting appeal she absconded, fleeing to Europe.

So Albuquerque was back on the line for help in locating her and bringing her back. In Washington, the Case Investigator ordered a telex message to the INTERPOL bureau of France--following a tip Schwartz had received--requesting assistance, which was granted. Within days, Paris police located her at the Hotel George V and made the arrest.

Chief Deputy District Attorney Robert Schwartz applied for extradition and the INTERPOL Case Investigator closed his file on the case--at least for the time being.

The San Francisco matter presented the Case Investigator with a different sort of problem. He figured the initial response to the murder suspect's maneuvers for asylum was to monitor proceedings of the British court. He arranged for reports by the legal attache at the American Embassy in London and by a Scotland Yard officer for transmittal to the detectives in San Francisco.

Proceedings stretched out for more than a year, but Sanders and Hendrix were thus able to maintain contact with the case.

As the final hearing stage approached, Washington notified them. They traveled to London and presented evidence that the charges against Kirkwood were entirely a criminal matter without political overtones.

The court ruled for extradition, and the detectives escorted their man back to San Francisco for trial in the California courts.

In the case of the Terminal Island jail breaker, David Allan Smith, INTERPOL arranged for an international wanted notice.

On information that Smith was living with his wife and small son on a farm in the mountains of Italy, the Case Investigator in Washington radioed an investigation request to the INTERPOL bureau in Rome, which transmitted it to the Carabinieri post of that district. A surveillance team went out to the farm and reported back it seemed to be the right man.

But before they could complete arrangements to arrest him, Smith moved on. After that he was sighted a number of times in France and Germany, each time several steps ahead of police.

A trail of fraudulent credit card receipts in a large assortment of names made it quite clear he and his family were living well, getting about easily in rented cars, even traveling to the United States on bogus passports.

It happened that while on such a visit he went to Denver to pick up some fresh credit cards, using faked ID's. An American Express clerk, making a routine check of his application, noticed a discrepancy in matching it with his passport. The clerk phoned an inquiry to the U.S. Passport Office.

Smith had achieved notoriety as a prolific forger and was the subject of a lookout there. A passport officer alerted the U.S. Marshals Service in Denver that Smith was in town, and a Marshal tracked him down. Smith was arrested as he was about to board a chartered aircraft--signed for on another bogus credit card.

But the Case Investigator could not yet close his file. Smith, in an effort to reduce charges and prison sentences, offered to disclose information about contacts with the Red Brigade terrorist group of Italy and about running plastic explosives for them between Germany and Italy.

The Case Investigator radioed the information to the INTERPOL bureau of Germany where an investigation by the Munich police CID was ordered. Their report, radioed back to Washington, was transmitted to the Marshals Service and the Federal prosecutor in Denver: Smith's story was a pack of lies.

Sometimes the INTERPOL Case Investigator has to coordinate investigations in two widely separated foreign countries to meet the need of a local police officer in the United States.

In North Olmstead Detective Sergeant Sefcek had originally interviewed neighbors, friends, teachers, and local merchants about Gordon Geiger, and all had spoken well of him. But when the Case Investigator, at Sefcek's request, asked the INTERPOL bureau in Australia to investigate, the case took an unexpected turn. They interviewed Gordon's landlady in

Bathurst, followed up with inquiries at a bank in Sydney, at the Australian Youth Hostel Association, and at the Department of Immigration.

It appeared that Gordon had been leading a double life.

Evidently, the Case Investigator reported to Sefcek, Gordon had created for himself a fictitious ID, complete with false bank account and false passport, in the name of "Robert Jones," actually the name of a school chum.

Australian police also found that Gordon had visited Canada, and the Case Investigator in Washington requested the INTERPOL bureau there to have him traced. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police identified the places and dates of "Robert Jones" crossings into and out of Canada.

Sefcek now had the grim picture of Gordon slipping out of Australia as "Robert Jones" and traveling to the United States under that name, committing murder along the way, then traveling back to Australia to resume his original identity as Gordon Geiger.

When brought back to the United States and tried, his alibi that he had been in Australia at the time his parents were killed did not work. His other intended defense, insanity, failed credibility when the elaborate scheme he had concocted and carried out was described. He was convicted and sentenced.

The mystery of Tony Grant from England and his connection with Vince Rizzo in New York was soon solved, but the case fanned out into one of the biggest organized crime investigations of its time. The INTERPOL Case Investigator in Washington radioed INTERPOL headquarters in France and, in response, received an extensive dossier by radio on one Hyman Klebanov, aka "Tony Grant" and a few other aliases.

He was a colorful international crook wanted by police in several countries for jewel theft, fraud, and swindling and was believed to have settled in Argentina.

The Vitrano-Strike Force investigation of Rizzo now moved ahead rapidly through surveillance of Tony Grant in the United States, while the INTERPOL Case Investigator checked him out in South America and Europe.

He opened communications with the INTERPOL bureaus in Buenos Aires and Santiago, leading to the disclosure of a large-scale cocaine importation conspiracy Rizzo was organizing and to the capture of Soboski, the "King of Cocaine."

By coordinating their investigations through INTERPOL, the New York and South American lawmen also uncovered Rizzo's connection with a counterfeiting ring stretching from Canada and New York to Argentina, Chile, and Japan.

But these activities seemed to pale beside Rizzo's really big operation: international traffic in stolen and counterfeit stocks and bonds--in billion-dollar quantities. The Case Investigator channeled reports between detectives and agents in the United States and their opposite numbers in Europe and Latin America; Rizzo, Grant, and a score of crime syndicate members were arrested and prosecuted. In the fallout from the Tony Grant involvement, on-going investigations disclosed the scheme to swindle the Bank of the Vatican, the Sindona affair, and connections of Sicilian drug dealers with terrorists and international bankers.

Making the INTERPOL connection

The old-fashioned expression "long arm of the law" takes on new and modern meaning when INTERPOL capabilities are considered, with a reach circling the globe available to any law enforcement agency in the United States, even the smallest and most remote.

In effect, the police resources of 136 nations around the world are accessible to them--and the service is free of charge.

Moreover, INTERPOL provides the only practical means by which most local enforcement authorities can pursue a criminal matter outside the country.

To do the same thing without INTERPOL, a local police department would need personnel with foreign language capabilities, with knowledge of a foreign country's criminal code and criminal justice system, with contacts to establish credibility among the foreign authorities. It would also need a budget for foreign travel and communications.

Some Federal agencies, such as the FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Customs, and Secret Service, have developed their own contacts abroad over a period of time and have agents stationed in some foreign countries, but the contacts are selective and the foreign stations are limited. Those agencies use INTERPOL connections to supplement their own contacts or to coordinate with foreign police when multinational investigations are being pursued.

Since the U.S. National Central Bureau (USNCB) is linked to the NLETS, all of the more than 20,000 local police departments across the United States have access to it through their own terminals. There are also, of course, the telephone, Western Union, and the mails.

All transactions are conducted with an eye to rights of privacy and confidentiality. Every case handled by the USNCB is screened for compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, Department of Justice policy, the INTERPOL constitution, and international stand-

ards on investigations and exchange of criminal information.

Requests for investigative assistance are required to be made in writing on a departmental letterhead or some other form of "hard copy" when a telecommunications system is used, identifying the requester, specifying the nature of the criminal activity under investigation and the relevance of any individual mentioned to the investigation. Under the INTERPOL constitution, inquiries with political, religious, racial, or military elements or overtones do not qualify for INTERPOL assistance and are rejected by the USNCB and by other member countries.

What is covered

The offenses and requests for investigative assistance received by the USNCB range broadly from murder, robbery, narcotics violations, illicit firearms traffic, and large frauds, to counterfeiting, stolen works of art, bank swindles, and locating fugitives for arrest and extradition. The bureau also receives investigative requests for criminal histories, license checks, and other ID verifications. Sometimes location of persons lost or missing in a foreign country is requested or other matters of a humanitarian nature are subjects of inquiry. Through INTERPOL, witnesses may be located and interviewed and weapons or vehicles traced. In principle, the cooperation extended by foreign police agencies to law enforcement in the United States covers any and all matters of legitimate criminal investigation.

Cooperation: A two-way street

Law enforcement authorities in foreign member countries use the INTERPOL network to obtain assistance regarding their own fugitives, missing persons, or criminal investigative matters within the United States. The USNCB in Washington channels each request to a Federal, State, or local enforcement agency or retrieves criminal information from computerized storage systems.

Foreign investigative requests are handled the same way as domestic: they are checked in at the USNCB by technical support staff, entered into the ICTS computer, then channeled to the Case Investigators who decide if and how each case should be handled. The USNCB, at its discretion, will reject a request it considers improper under INTERPOL rules, and the bureaus of all other INTERPOL members have the same option.

A request is considered legitimate if it meets these criteria:

- 1) It relates to a serious crime that has been committed in the country making the request, and the offense would be considered a violation of criminal law if it had been committed in the United States.

- 2) There is a link between the crime and the individual about whom information or other police assistance is being requested.

- 3) The crime is not of a political, military, religious, or racial nature--INTERPOL rules exclude these from consideration.

The system, including these criteria, assures a domestic police officer that in cooperating with a foreign police entity the assistance requested is legal and proper. The USNCB Case Investigators evaluate foreign requests accordingly. After that, the procedure is similar to that of domestic requests.

Sometimes this brings a Case Investigator into a criminal matter circling the globe. The West German bureau of INTERPOL was searching for a fugitive wanted on charges of forgery and fraud. INTERPOL headquarters distributed an international wanted notice on him to all members. In time, his trail was picked up in Japan, and the INTERPOL bureau there put a message on the communications network stating he was sailing as a crew member on a Danish ship bound for Los Angeles.

In Washington, the message from Japan, when entered into the ICTS computer, matched with the earlier entry from the international wanted notice and flashed a "hit" on the screen. The INTERPOL Case Investigator decided the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) unit in Los Angeles was probably in the best position to handle the matter and sent a photofacsimile copy of the wanted notice. INS identified the fugitive and made the arrest. The Case Investigator notified the German bureau of INTERPOL; its judicial authorities sent documents for an extradition hearing in Los Angeles; a Federal court ordered extradition and the USNCB Case Investigator telexed German police they could come pick up their fugitive.

Sometimes the Case Investigator finds a transoceanic saga continuing into a cross-country trek before the file is closed.

In September 1983, the Director of the General Services Agency of Liberia absconded with a million dollars of his government's money, fleeing "without a trace" according to a warrant Liberia issued in November. In February 1984, the fugitive, Charles McArthur Taylor, became the subject of an international wanted notice. His trail was picked up in London as he was departing by air for San Francisco.

The USNCB in Washington now received a telex request from the INTERPOL bureau in Monrovia, Liberia, to detain Taylor until his extradition could be arranged. The Case Investigator decided San Francisco's Office of Customs could handle it, but the message arrived too late. The fugitive had passed through.

However, his Customs declaration on entering the country showed an address in New Brunswick, New

Jersey. In April, the INTERPOL Case Investigator telexed the Chief of Police there, requesting the suspected fugitive be placed under surveillance.

Meanwhile, the money was being traced; it had allegedly been paid out to a New York firm, International Earthmoving and Equipment, Inc. On INTERPOL's request to investigate, New York police found it was a fictitious company and bank account set up by the Liberian ex-official solely for this scam.

While New Brunswick police were awaiting documents for verifying the fugitive's identity, he moved on to Somerville, Massachusetts. The Case Investigator turned to the U.S. Marshals Service for surveillance followup, positive identification, and an arrest. INTERPOL then notified Liberia to get the extradition process going and take their man back.

There are also instances when, by responding to a foreign police request, an American police department serves its own interest. For example, the New York City department started an investigation of a \$10 million securities theft case that they had to shelve because they had no suspects and all leads ran out.

About two months later they were asked to supply criminal histories to the Swiss police on two Americans arrested attempting to cash \$2 million worth of stolen bonds in Lugano.

The request came from Switzerland to the USNCB, where an INTERPOL Case Investigator linked the suspects to New York, and the New York department connected their loot to the \$10 million bond theft. In Switzerland the two Americans, along with two Italian accomplices, were convicted and imprisoned while New York police, in tandem with the FBI, developed new investigative leads on a criminal organization engaged in theft and fencing of securities. The USNCB continued to serve as communications link between the New York and Swiss investigations.

Some investigative material moving between countries through INTERPOL is highly dramatic, such as the identification in the United States of the gun used for the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in Rome. Much of it, however, is routine, though vital to the processes of criminal justice in this and other countries. In the small border town of Blaine, State of Washington, the U.S. Customs agent stopped a man named Silverman with seven undeclared oil paintings concealed in his station wagon and charged him with smuggling.

Notice to the Canadian bureau of INTERPOL in Ottawa immediately solved a Toronto burglary, since those paintings were on record as having been stolen there. Then a criminal record check transmitted by the Ottawa bureau to Washington revealed the man had a 20-year career in smuggling, credit card fraud, heroin trafficking, and check fraud, as well as art

swindles in France, Lebanon, Sweden, and Canada. He became part of an ongoing investigation into a multinational criminal gang, based in Montreal and notorious for its past involvement in the "French Connection" heroin case.

The "Man From INTERPOL"

These cases, lifted at random from the files of INTERPOL in Washington, provide a brief glimpse into a seemingly unconventional police organization whose function is not always clearly understood.

As crime stories go, the real-life cases on these pages may seem very unlike those served up in television shows where "INTERPOL" is occasionally brought into the narrative. In recent performances, the fictional investigator barks an order to his assistant, "Check with INTERPOL!" and that's it; but several generations back in television history, "INTERPOL" was the center of the action.

Some people believe this was the cause of general misunderstanding about the real-life INTERPOL among the general public and legislators as well as within the law enforcement community. Briefly, this is what happened:

A program called "The Man From INTERPOL" attained considerable popularity in the early days of television with a series of fictional stories depicting the adventures of a purported "international agent" with some such name as "Inspector Duval." It caught the public fancy and has since been made into a prototype for a species of television drama spawning heroic main characters ranging from "The Man from U.N.C.L.E." to "James Bond," and from "Indiana Jones" to "Mr. T."

In most of these, one basic appeal is the exotic foreign settings of the fictional event and the image of a rugged, handsome fellow zipping about unrestrained by geographical boundaries and single-handedly zapping the bad guys.

Another feature is that the fictional "international agent" frequently ignores due process of law, performs searches and seizures without legal limitation, and gets out of a tight spot by a display of fabulously accurate gunshooting. He may often, with impunity, violate the laws of gravity.

As a consequence of the popularity of this type of entertainment, INTERPOL officials, when speaking to groups or writing articles, often feel impelled to offer disclaimers of the "Supercop" or "Supersleuth" image and to explain patiently that the actual INTERPOL has no "international agents" hurdling national frontiers to make love to native beauties and to collar masterminds of crime.

Still, thanks to the power of television, the fictional image has survived. Many Americans, including law enforcement people, carry an impression that INTERPOL is a fiction, or that it is some sort of clandestine organization using a fictional facade as a "cover," or that at the other extreme it is merely a routine system for exchange of police information that has been falsely glamorized by the media.

The confusion partly helps to explain why law enforcement professionals have been slow to acquire familiarity with the INTERPOL system.

On the record, the American law enforcement community has been hesitant to recognize the advantages, or the necessity, of international cooperation. The United States did not join until 15 years after INTERPOL had been established, and for the initial 30 years of its membership, the United States' commitment and participation were minimal.

The reasons are understandable in that since its founding as a Nation this country has carried a firm dedication to the principle of local policing and a strong rejection of the idea of national police authority—a tradition derived from our pre-18th century British heritage carried over into the 20th century.

Thus while foreign countries with their national police authorities could reach out to each other for cooperation on mutual problems, police responsibilities in the United States have traditionally been fragmented geographically and segmented by specialties in Federal matters of law enforcement.

In effect, large numbers of police officers, Federal agents, and other criminal justice professionals may not have had opportunities or occasion to learn about INTERPOL. That explains why, after close to a half century of membership, the U.S. law enforcement community often asks what exactly is INTERPOL?

INTERPOL identified

INTERPOL is the world association of national police forces established for mutual assistance in the detection and deterrence of international crimes and criminals. Its aim is to facilitate cooperation for those purposes among the police of member countries, despite differences of language, culture, and systems of criminal justice.

Founded in 1923, INTERPOL ceased operation during World War II. It was reorganized in 1946 and again in 1956 to reflect growth of the organization as well as changes in the scope and nature of international crime.

By the early 1980's, it was again felt that modernization in management and technology were imperative

to meet the challenges of international crime growth and complexity. Expert advisory groups on management, fiscal affairs, and telecommunications were set to work to assure the organization operates at state-of-the-art levels in the final decades of this century.

It was originally named the International Criminal Police Commission, but in 1956, the word "Commission" was changed to "Organization" with the acronym "INTERPOL" added.

INTERPOL's concern is with a broad range of offenses, but emphasis changes from time to time as new international crime patterns emerge. High on the list now are international terrorism and assassinations, narcotics traffic and money laundering, financial fraud, traffic in stolen works of art, and apprehension of fugitives.

Starting with less than two dozen members at its inception in 1923, the organization grew to embrace 136 nations by the mid-1980's. The membership roster somewhat parallels that of the United Nations, with notable exceptions such as the Soviet Union and several of its East European neighbors; but Romania, Hungary, and Yugoslavia are members; Cuba, Vietnam, and Brazil are dropouts. The member countries range in size from tiny Monaco to the geographically vast and populous Peoples Republic of China.

Unlike the United Nations, no country has veto power in INTERPOL and there is no council of member countries with special authority.

Legal status

INTERPOL is something of a legal curiosity. It conducts intergovernmental activities, but it is not based on an international treaty, convention, or similar legal instrument. It is founded on a constitution written by a group of police officers who did not submit it for diplomatic signatures, nor have they ever submitted it for ratification by governments.

Nevertheless, the organization received almost instant official recognition. Governments began applying for membership immediately after its formation, appointing delegates, appropriating funds for dues, and otherwise acting in accordance with the organization's rules and regulations. The League of Nations, while it was in existence, gave it de facto official recognition by mandating to it the administration of the 1929 League of Nations Convention on the Suppression of Counterfeiting. A number of international official bodies have affiliated with INTERPOL, such as the Council of Europe, the Customs Cooperation Council, and the International Narcotics Control Council. The United Nations Economic and Social Council has granted it official status as an intergovernmental agency.

A significant aspect of INTERPOL's legal status is that member governments have not delegated to it any powers or authority. For this reason, it must function wholly within the limits of the laws of each member country as well as within the provisions of its own constitution. That explains why INTERPOL itself has no powers of arrest, nor of search and seizure, nor authority to conduct criminal investigations. These powers are exercised by the police of member nations themselves.

Moreover, in its function of facilitating cooperation among member police agencies, INTERPOL must deal exclusively with "common law" crimes; its constitutional mandate rigorously excludes involvement with political, military, racial, or religious matters.

Organization

INTERPOL has a two-tiered structure comprising a world headquarters establishment called the General Secretariat and a network of National Central Bureaus (NCB's), one in each member country.

The organization operates under a constitution that designates a General Assembly as its governing authority, representing all member nations. Each member nation has one vote in the General Assembly, regardless of size, importance, or financial contribution. The assembly meets annually, each time in a different country, to receive reports, debate issues, consider policies and proposals, elect officers, and designate committees for delving into problems. Expenses of the organization are met by annual dues paid by each member on a sliding scale that considers the member's size and economic strength. Members determine their own level of dues payment subject to approval by the General Assembly. The annual budget is around \$6 million, of which the United States' dues are a little over 5 percent.

The General Assembly elects a president and three vice presidents, no two of whom may be from the same continent. They, together with nine delegates and two auditors, form a 15-member Executive Committee that monitors fulfillment of the General Assembly decisions and oversees the work of the General Secretariat at headquarters.

World headquarters: The General Secretariat

This has been located since 1967 in St.-Cloud, a suburb of Paris, France. Due to recent growth of INTERPOL and forecasts of its expansion to the end of the century, its plans are to transfer the headquarters to the city of Lyons in central France, where new facilities, designed to meet future needs, are being constructed.

INTERPOL's chief executive officer at headquarters is the Secretary General, selected by the Executive Committee and endorsed by the General Assembly, for a 5-year term that may be renewed. He directs a staff of professional, technical, and support personnel numbering about 225 in the mid 1980's--a surprisingly spare staff for an international organization of such wide-ranging interests.

There are three divisions.

The Police Coordination Division is the central core of the entire organization. It manages liaison with and among the NCB's and the channels for assistance requests between police of one country and another. This division also manages the criminal records systems and selective cumulative files, including one with more than 3.3 million names of international criminals, arranged alphabetically and phonetically and accommodating all languages, including Chinese. Another unique system has test examples of all currencies of the world, both authentic and counterfeit, including cumulative records on counterfeits in circulation. There are also selective systems of case files, fingerprints, and mug shots, and indexes covering boats, autos, aircraft, and other objects in common use by criminal enterprises.

The other two divisions provide administrative services and conduct research. The Administrative Division operates INTERPOL's vital telecommunications systems, centering on its global police radio network, supplemented by teletype, telephone, facsimile, and postal services, for linking the General Secretariat with the worldwide network of National Central Bureaus. The Research Division assembles and analyzes information on crime subjects of special interest to the membership and on topics to be discussed and voted on at General Assemblies.

The General Secretariat, mainly through its Police Coordination Division, directly intervenes in more than 50,000 cases a year. It issues 700 to 800 international wanted notices a year against persons and nearly 250 international notices about stolen property. It supplies more than 20,000 reports to the National Central Bureaus for them to act upon and, in 1984, transmitted about 800,000 radio teletype messages.

Mainly through its Research Division, the General Secretariat also publishes a monthly journal for confidential distribution, special-subject studies such as those on hostage taking, drug traffic, typewriter ID, rented car theft, international fraud, computer crime, and so on, and the unique "Counterfeits & Forgeries Review."

The NCB's

Each member nation establishes and controls its own National Central Bureau. The bureaus differ widely from each other in size and amount of activity, from a one-man office to elaborate facilities employing substantial staff and equipment. The United States has one of the larger and more active bureaus.

Each NCB has a triple responsibility--maintaining open channels to all police units in its own country, connections with the NCB's of all foreign countries, and liaison with the General Secretariat.

The National Central bureaus are, in effect, points of contact among member countries for the coordination of international criminal investigative requirements, whether transmitting assistance requests, exchanging criminal information, or facilitating investigations.

In principle, this places a global network of police services at the disposal of any police officer with a problem involving a foreign jurisdiction.

There is usually a Chief appointed from among the nation's professional police officers--sometimes as a full-time assignment, sometimes as an addition to other duties. He is usually a member of his country's delegation to the INTERPOL General Assembly.

In most foreign countries, the INTERPOL NCB is a component of a national police service. Since the United States does not have a national police service as such, its NCB has evolved a format of its own, reflecting American concepts.

The U.S. participation

The American NCB is a separate agency within the United States Department of Justice. At the same time, it is part of the worldwide law enforcement association formally named the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). For brevity, the "INTERPOL" element of the official name is frequently used alone.

The unit in Washington is officially named the United States National Central Bureau, also referred to as "INTERPOL-USNCB," often shortened to "USNCB." With all its international connections, it is still a completely integral part of the United States law enforcement system.

It is organized to reflect a multiagency cooperation concept of enforcement.

Legal jurisdiction for the USNCB resides with the Attorney General, who serves as Permanent Representative to INTERPOL, and with the Secretary of the Treasury as Alternate Representative to INTERPOL. They or their designees head the delegation to the General Assembly.

Thirteen Federal agencies are represented in the operating echelon; heads of those agencies or their deputies may serve as members of the delegation to the Assembly.

The USNCB in operation

The National Central Bureau operates under a Chief, a Deputy Chief for Investigations, and a Deputy Chief for Operations and Administration.

For staffing, there is a complement of permanent employees furnished by the Department of Justice plus personnel on detail from Secret Service, Customs, the FBI, IRS, DEA, the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Postal Inspection, Office of the Comptroller, Department of Agriculture Inspector General's Office, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice.

These cooperating agencies appoint senior investigative agents plus management and support personnel. The result is an organization that can provide expertise on where and how to obtain foreign assistance for almost any investigative problem a local police officer or Federal agent is likely to have, from simple name checks or auto registration checks to full field investigations, from interviewing witnesses to searches for evidence, from detention of fugitives to extraditions.

In most instances, the police officer or Federal agent obtains his foreign assistance without leaving home and free of cost to his agency.

This applies to both domestic and foreign police requests for assistance. The USNCB makes the contacts with police agencies here and abroad, handles interchange of followup messages, retrieves information from files, and transmits results back to the home office of the investigator who made the request.

But sometimes a department or agency decides it has to send its own personnel to conduct an investigation in foreign territory. INTERPOL assistance identifies the specific officers in the foreign country who can help and establishes the visiting officers' credentials.

For example, in the Norma Wilson murder case in Los Angeles, the District Attorney found it necessary to conduct an investigation in 10 countries of Europe and North Africa. The USNCB arranged contacts for the California investigators with police authorities in each country, enabling them to question witnesses, inspect documents, and otherwise probe for clues which provided evidence resulting in a conviction.

In the Rizzo organized crime case, the New York District Attorney found it was urgent to conduct surveillance of the suspect during a week-long trip to Munich, Germany--but the DA could spare only one young detective. The detective had no knowledge of the language nor of German law on wiretaps and bugging. The USNCB, on request, arranged for German police cooperation. The Munich department assigned 16 detectives to assist the American, guided him through the legal requirements for wiretaps and bugs, furnished vehicles and surveillance teams, and provided translations of everything going on. Ultimately a very large criminal conspiracy went down.

The core of the United States' INTERPOL participation is its own NCB's interrelated electronic and computerized communications systems, domestically across this country and externally around the world. Domestic law enforcement officers can contact the USNCB through the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS), or by mail, telephone, or facsimile. Foreign police contacts with the USNCB are made through the international INTERPOL radio system or by telex, cable, telephone, or mail.

The USNCB has a direct telecommunications link with INTERPOL headquarters in France; message transmission can be virtually instantaneous.

In processing cases, the USNCB has links to all major U.S. computerized criminal records systems including the Treasury Enforcement Communications System (TECS), the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Interstate Identification Index, the Department of Justice administrative communications system (JUST), the DEA's Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Information System (NADDIS), the State Department's Advanced Visa Lookout System (AVLOS), and the Master Index files (MIRAC) of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

A photofacsimile installation enables the USNCB to send and receive high-resolution laser-beam images of photographs, fingerprints, and documents.

In recent years, the volume of activity at the INTERPOL bureau of the United States has shown a rising trend. By the mid-1980's, the total caseload reached a level of about 32,000. At that time, the NCB was closing some 8,000 to 9,000 cases a year but was receiving about 12,000 new investigative matters a year. About 5,000 of the pending cases each year are concerned with fugitives and other international criminals for whom wanted notices have been posted.

Also, in the mid-1980's, State and local police departments across the country and the USNCB, in communicating with each other via NLETS teletype, were generating more than 18,000 messages a year, coming and going. Annual traffic with foreign INTERPOL bureaus mounted to 20,000 messages transmitted from the USNCB and about 14,000 messages from foreign NCBS.

Most of the growth in volume has occurred in the recent 10 years. To manage these dimensions of cases and message traffic, to keep track of new and ongoing cases day by day, even hour by hour, the USNCB has been upgrading its in-house INTERPOL Case Tracking System (ICTS), the computerized index of persons, organizations, and property relating to international crime cases. In addition to retrieval of information, the system is ultimately expected to have capabilities to automatically signal interrelationships in multifaceted criminal investigations.

The changing face of American participation

More significant than its increasing caseload is the changing nature of United States involvement in INTERPOL.

The changes are, in part, a response to growing public awareness of international crime and conspiracy and the power they have to damage the Nation's social and economic well-being.

The changes also reflect a recognition by the law enforcement community of its previously unused capabilities for stronger measures against crime through INTERPOL.

Specifically, regarding such matters as international terrorism, criminal money laundering, and illicit drug traffic, INTERPOL has a potential through which the international law enforcement community can deal more aggressively with these offenses than it has in the past.

The United States delegation to INTERPOL began a series of initiatives at the turn of the present decade encouraging the organization as a whole towards increasingly forthright responses to those problems.

The Americans, along with several other member countries, recognized that there was a gap between what was being done and what needed to be done; consequently, the United States delegation began exerting a more determined influence in the management of the international organization itself.

Preliminary to such moves, the USNCB established in its own offices an Antiterrorist Unit. Its mission was to take a fresh look at how INTERPOL's special capabilities in exchanging and coordinating criminal information--if applied to terrorists--could mitigate terrorist activity.

Next, the USNCB established an Economic and Financial Crimes Unit to consider how investigations of financial crimes, fraud, and bank crimes could be coordinated to fight large multinational conspiracies for laundering criminal money.

A third move was to set up a Fugitive Unit to see about jacking up this aspect of law enforcement, which had become notoriously lax. Expansion of the existing Drug Unit was also planned.

Following these preliminaries, the United States delegates to INTERPOL initiated seminars, working parties, and committee meetings with INTERPOL representatives of other countries at which tactics and strategies for intensifying INTERPOL's involvement in these matters were considered.

As a result, new and more aggressive policies are being adopted by the international organization itself, with the aim of setting up specialized units at INTERPOL's headquarters, the General Secretariat. A pattern for this had previously been developed in the highly successful Drug Subdivision, to which 20 countries contribute the services of specialist native officers as headquarters staff. With intensified international police collaboration, this unit is handling nearly 30,000 illicit drug trafficking cases a year.

Following the pattern, special units are being further developed at the General Secretariat for the Anti-Terrorist program, the Economic and Financial program focused on money laundering and electronic funds transfer fraud, the Stolen Art Works program, and the Counterfeit Financial Instruments program, with the aim of passing on to the international police community the sophisticated investigative techniques developed in the United States.

Similarly, the U.S. delegation is looking toward the creation at INTERPOL headquarters of an international fugitive tracking unit, a unit to deal more effectively with crimes against property, and a unit concerned with the control of explosives and weapons trafficking.

The decision of the United States to have its representatives become more involved in the management of INTERPOL and to offer more leadership in the international law enforcement community represents a historic change in American policy, and it has been generally well received by the foreign membership. Reflecting their recognition and approval of the American initiatives was the election of an American as President of INTERPOL for the first time in the organization's history. The General Assembly in 1984 chose John R. Simpson, Director of the U.S. Secret Service.

Foreign countries' participation

Police forces vary from country to country in size, structure, practices, and policies, and their INTERPOL participations do so, too. However, all member countries are uniformly required by INTERPOL rules to establish a national central bureau for carrying on INTERPOL functions, as well as to designate a nation's police authority that has responsibility for it.

Each NCB is supposed to centralize and coordinate communications and documents relating to international crimes and criminals, and to serve as continuous liaison with INTERPOL headquarters, with all other NCB's, and with all police services of its own country.

The goal of these NCB liaison relationships is speed and efficiency in cooperatively dealing with a law enforcement situation through direct contact and informality. Some do the job better than others; not all police forces are equally experienced or equipped to those ends. Some are located in newly independent nations, some accommodate more slowly to the idea of cooperation or to other INTERPOL concepts, and some are less advanced in technology and investigative techniques. INTERPOL provides opportunities for training and upgrading less favored police agencies through seminars and workshops.

INTERPOL members also represent wide differences in cultural and political background as well as in social and economic national structures. Sometimes this makes for differences in perception as to the seriousness of a given type of crime, as was exemplified for years past regarding the drug traffic, with the United States deeply concerned and other countries unconcerned or even aiding and abetting the traffickers. INTERPOL served as a forum in which the drug problem could be discussed and other countries brought closer to the United States' viewpoint. Similarly, dramatic differences among INTERPOL members have manifested themselves regarding terrorism and money laundering; here, too, INTERPOL is serving as the forum in which such questions are discussed and differing interests accommodated.

Aside from these differences, member nations also vary in the facilities and personnel they assign to their NCB's; this in turn influences the intensity of each one's participation. In some countries, the INTERPOL function is assigned to a police unit as an addition to its other duties. In other countries, a separate unit is created for the INTERPOL function.

In England, for example, the NCB is situated in the London Metropolitan Police, with offices in New Scotland Yard. In Italy, the NCB is a component of

the Ministry of the Interior, Administration of Public Security, with offices in a suburb of Rome. In Germany, the NCB is housed in a large national police administration complex outside the town of Wiesbaden, and recently a branch office was added in the capital city, Bonn.

In some countries, INTERPOL is considered a specialist career service; in others it is staffed by temporarily assigned police officers of an established law enforcement organization.

An INTERPOL Case Investigator can sometimes astonish a law enforcement man in the field by "delivering" foreign assistance from an overseas NCB with notable speed and completeness. In an illicit gun trafficking investigation in New York, the ATF agent, working undercover, met with a suspect who offered to sell a large number of advanced design submachineguns, and he arranged preliminaries of the deal on the spot by telephoning overseas. The ATF agent was only able to hear the telephone number called and the first name of the contact. It was not much to go on, and the agent drew blanks in all the law enforcement files in trying to identify the dealer. He requested help at INTERPOL in Washington.

The Case Investigator, after determining that the number was that of a telephone in Finland, put the inquiry to the NCB in Helsinki.

Within 36 hours, NCB-Helsinki telexed a detailed dossier; it identified the individual referred to by first name in the conversation and the source of the guns, a manufacturing company; and the bureau assembled a background report on each. The agent in New York was readily able to put his case together through a "sting" operation.

Sometimes, time is of the essence, not speed, as in a case that lasted 16 years before INTERPOL could close the file. It began in Chicago, in December 1967, when a physician, Dr. John M. Branion, shot and killed his wife. Detectives Mike Boyle and his partner, John Mannion, rapidly completed their investigation and made the arrest in January 1968. The doctor was tried, convicted, and sentenced, but his appeals were not exhausted until June 1971. Ordered to start serving his sentence, Dr. Branion fled the country, forfeiting bond.

Chicago police requested an international fugitive warrant, but Boyle and Mannion lost track of the doctor. In January 1972, they learned through INTERPOL that he was in Tanzania and setting up a medical practice there. Next, they heard their fugitive was sighted in Ethiopia, a little later in Algeria, then in Brazil. The detectives, on a tip

that he'd gone to the Sudan, requested the USNCB to track him there; the Sudan NCB said he had been deported to Uganda.

The Case Investigator at the USNCB then asked the Uganda NCB to locate Dr. Branion, calling attention to the international wanted notice on him issued by INTERPOL. But there was a break in diplomatic relations between Uganda and the United States at this time, and the Uganda NCB did not respond until 1978.

Through the French and Nigerian NCB's, they passed the information that they had located the fugitive. In 1979, after a change in Uganda's political regime, its NCB resumed handling the case and inquired of the USNCB whether the man was still wanted. The USNCB answered in the affirmative and, in 1981, Uganda police reported through the INTERPOL network that they had him under surveillance, awaiting further instructions. Since there was no extradition treaty between Uganda and the United States, the USNCB asked that the fugitive be deported to the United States, which was arranged in 1983.

The INTERPOL bureaus of seven foreign countries had participated in returning him to a Chicago jail 16 years after the crime.

Meanwhile during this period, both detectives left the Chicago Police Department, Boyle to become a prosecutor, Mannion to become a judge. After a while, Boyle returned to the Police Department as a lieutenant, and he was on hand when Dr. Branion was escorted back to Chicago.

Thus, with 136 member countries, each devising its own version of how the INTERPOL connection works, there are country-to-country variations in the services rendered. The goals of speed and efficiency may not always be in evidence, but there is a form of mitigation for the uncertainties.

Every year, at the General Assembly when representatives from all member nations gather, there is an unlisted agenda item. The delegations have opportunities to meet face to face with the people at the other ends of the telephone, telex, and cable lines with whom they conduct the affairs of the organization. They spend a week renewing old acquaintances and making new ones as they discuss problems, obstacles, and proposals relating to control of crimes and criminals. At these encounters, each man takes the measure of his counterparts in other lands, testing and judging each other's professionalism, as a guide to trust and to expectations.

How it all began

Since INTERPOL is a unique organization as well as the world's oldest international deliberative institution for intergovernmental cooperation, it seems useful to summarize its history--for perspectives on its role in world affairs and perhaps as an aid in assessing its future potential.

Curious origins and history

INTERPOL's origin is credited to Albert I, Prince of Monaco. In April 1914, he convoked an international conference on crime that was attended by high police officials, lawyers, and jurists from two dozen countries. The discussions focused on observations that criminals were easily able to move from one country to the next, thereby evading police who have no legal authority beyond their national frontiers. In fact, the then-new means of transportation--automobiles and railroad networks--were giving the crooks a big edge over the cops, and the conferees discussed proposals for a system of cooperation among national police forces that would counteract the criminals' advantage.

Although the setting was picturesque, within sight of the Monte Carlo Casino, the Prince's meeting was notably well organized. Committee reports were efficiently presented, and principles for action were articulated; at the conclusion, the conferees agreed to meet again and establish an organization.

However, within months, World War I was underway, and the Prince's scheduled conference could not reconvene. But the idea of an organization for police cooperation remained alive, and after the war seemed more urgent than ever. The Austro-Hungarian Empire had been dismembered, new states had been carved out of the old map of Europe, and political upheavals and economic stresses threatened chaos. Europe of the 1920's was a happy hunting ground for thieves, forgers, swindlers, and counterfeiters, who moved about easily from country to country. In 1923, the Police Commissioner of Vienna, Dr. Johann Schober, took the initiative.

He organized a conference of police officials from some 20 countries and proposed that they set up an organization then and there. They had the spadework of the Monaco conference to build upon, and they rapidly brought an organization into existence, calling it the International Criminal Police Commission. Schober was named president, a small headquarters was set up in Vienna with a rudimentary staff, and the annual General Assembly meetings were begun.

Originally, attention was focused on systems by which police of one country could identify criminals from another country and on improving procedures for arresting international criminals for return to countries charging them with law breaking. To these procedural concerns the founders quickly added substantive crime matters and, very early on, the agendas of the General Assemblies show them working on efforts to control such international types of crime as illicit drug traffic, traffic in women for prostitution, art theft, financial crimes, and counterfeiting.

The involvement of INTERPOL with counterfeiting is of landmark significance in two ways. It provided the fledgling organization formed by policemen with a form of official world recognition; and it was an opportunity to design, test, and prove a system for control of international crimes that may ultimately have the widest application.

In the aftermath of World War I many European governments, struggling with complex economic problems, turned on their printing presses to mitigate those problems with banknotes. It also became open season for free-lance producers of the currencies of all nations. There was so much of all kinds that it was becoming difficult to tell the difference between good and bad banknotes.

Fearing inundation by a rising tide of bogus cash, a number of governments took the matter before the newly formed League of Nations which, after deliberation, came up with what can be referred to as the 1929 Geneva Convention on Suppression of Counterfeit Currency. It provided for three basics: (1) Every country should have laws on its books declaring currency counterfeiting to be a punishable crime; (2) Every country would treat counterfeiting as a crime regardless of which nation's money was the offender's target; (3) Police work of all nations would be centralized and coordinated by the international police group that we now call INTERPOL.

The League of Nations has since dissolved, but the Convention is very much alive. All countries of the world participate in INTERPOL's administration of it, whether or not they are signatories of the convention and whether or not they are members of INTERPOL. Counterfeiting has not been eliminated from the world, nor does anyone expect it ever will be, especially with the advances in printing technology--but under INTERPOL's handling of the Convention and multinational cooperation, counterfeiting as a world phenomenon has been contained to manageable dimensions, and no nation feels threatened.

During the 1930's, the roster of INTERPOL's crime subjects and its membership grew. A secretariat was

set up in 1930; in 1935 it opened the INTERPOL international radio network. In 1938, the United States joined.

It so happened that the United States joined just in time to witness the disaster that overtook the organization. In 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Austria and made it into a province of the Greater Reich. Nazi functionaries seized control of the Vienna headquarters of the International Criminal Police Commission and later transferred it to Berlin.

The United States immediately suspended its connection, as did all the other members except those where the Nazis had seized power. In effect, the original organization became defunct until World War II was over.

At that time, former police leaders who had survived the war assembled a conference in Brussels to restore the organization, and in 1946 it resumed under a revised constitution and organizational structure. These were further revised in 1956 better to accommodate the growing membership and the expansion of world crime problems. In that year 57 nations were members; by 1984 there were 136 members.

The restored organization established its headquarters in Paris, first in space donated by the French police, later in a specially designed and constructed edifice (which it has since outgrown) in the suburb of St.-Cloud. Meanwhile, the "flavor" of the organization changed--from central European, which it had been at the start, to more sophisticated West European, when France and Paris became the "home office."

But world events were exerting pressure in this aspect of the organization. With the post-World War II proliferation of new nations outside of Europe and the concurrent membership growth in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, the Pacific, and the Caribbean, criticism began to be heard that the organization was "too European" or even "too French" in its outlook, headquarters, and top management. A process of "internationalization" was called for.

One of the first steps in that direction was to hold the INTERPOL General Assembly in Washington, D.C., in 1960, the first time this annual meeting had been convened outside of Europe. That seemed to break the geographical barrier--during the next ten years, five meetings were held in non-European countries. At about the same time, by formal resolutions and by modifications of the constitution, INTERPOL began arranging for all offices, committees, and staff positions to be spread out among professionals native to countries in all parts of the globe.

The posture of the so-called Eastern Block nations has shown interesting development. During the post-World War II years they stood outside of INTERPOL, except for Yugoslavia, but now Romania and Hungary

have joined. The Peoples Republic of China joined in 1984.

Most political, racial and religious identities are to be found among the nations holding INTERPOL membership, and its constitution specifically prohibits "any intervention or activity of a political, military, religious, or racial character." The intent is exclusive concern with "common law" type crimes, and then only if there is something international about them. If a bank is held up and the robbers flee to another country, that could obviously be considered an INTERPOL matter--but what if the robbers claim to be a revolutionary organization financing their political aspirations?

Some criminal events are fraught with heavy political considerations and wide public agitation. What came to be called "international terrorism" is not the only type but has become the most notorious. Terrorism itself is not new, but since the 1960's it has become increasingly pervasive and outrageous, with widespread endangerment to the public and to public order.

Perpetrators in all nations, whether engaged in sky-jacking aircraft, bombings, assassinations, extortion, or kidnapping, usually allege political motives. As straight crimes, they would fall within INTERPOL's purview, but what if some members give credence to the "political motive" assertions? To avoid splitting, the organization moved with caution.

Actually, INTERPOL had been active against terrorism long before it was "big news." Starting in 1951 and coming forward to the late 1970's, an INTERPOL series of resolutions positioned the organization for varying degrees of cooperation in efforts against terrorists, but when measured against the growth in international terrorists' ferocity, that effort was not enough.

In the 1980's, INTERPOL reexamined the issues that had induced its caution and adopted a set of rules and procedures by which law enforcement officials in any country could respect legitimate political dissidence and activity, but at the same time take legal action against those committing murders or other offenses that had no direct connection with the political life of the offenders' country or the political cause for which they fought. In other words, violence endangering the general public and harming innocent bystanders, or to publicize a cause, or to obtain the release of accomplices from foreign prisons would no longer be exempt from law enforcement and criminal justice under INTERPOL's constitutional prohibition. The NCB's of all nations are authorized to exchange information about terrorists and take joint action against them insofar as their behavior is criminal.

This latest action seemed to close a gap in INTERPOL's policy and operations. The United States delegation to INTERPOL was particularly active in

analyzing the previous restrictions the organization had placed upon itself and in demonstrating to the membership that they could and should adopt a more aggressive posture in the world struggle against terrorism. The initiatives taken on this subject are part of the change in the nature of the United States' involvement in INTERPOL that was mentioned previously.

U.S. perceptions of international crime and law enforcement

United States membership in INTERPOL was authorized by an Act of Congress in 1938 (22 U.S.C.263a) and mandated to the U.S. Attorney General who, in turn, designated J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the FBI, as United States representative to the organization.

In the 30 years that followed, the U.S. relationship with INTERPOL was a curious exercise in futility alternating with make-do. The "off-again-on-again" policies largely explain why the Nation's law enforcement community has been uninformed about the organization.

The United States was almost totally absent from the scene during INTERPOL's early formative years. The New York City Police Commissioner, Richard E. Enright, attended the 1923 founding conference in Vienna, but without authority to commit his country to anything; and he invited Schober, the first President of INTERPOL, to visit him with a view to meeting people and stirring up interest. Nothing resulted.

Actually, Schober and his colleagues were very eager to have the United States as a member, but were frustrated because no one in America seemed to be a recognized leader or spokesman for law enforcement interests of the Nation.

Suddenly in the early 1930's, it seemed to them that the gap was filled: J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI had captured the public's imagination, and Hoover was being hailed as America's "Number One Lawman" in the media. Schober and his colleagues began to solicit his interest. Evidently they believed that because of his renown, Hoover's association with their organization would add to its prestige and draw other countries to membership.

Hoover acquiesced, and with his popularity in the Congress a bill was drawn up and passed. But before much could be done, the Nazi German takeover occurred, and Hoover ordered all connections aborted. When the organization was reassembled in 1946, the United States resumed the membership which had remained authorized by law. Hoover was elected a vice president and named a member of the editorial board of the organization's monthly magazine.

As the revived organization got underway, however, relations between its leaders and Hoover became cloudy, then stormy, with the causes of disappointment somewhat complex. Hoover resigned in 1950. The position of U.S. representative was so much identified with him that no thought was given to a successor or to continuing the membership actively.

But in the enforcement responsibilities of such agencies as Secret Service on counterfeiting, Customs on smuggling, and Narcotics on illicit drug trafficking, contacts with foreign counterparts were seriously important, so the Treasury Department allowed agents of those bureaus to continue an informal INTERPOL "connection" and the bureaus to contribute toward the organization's expenses. In 1958, Treasury "came out of the closet"; the law was amended authorizing the Attorney General to designate another department as U.S. representative to INTERPOL and he designated Treasury.

Not much changed. U.S. participation in INTERPOL was mainly whatever initiatives individual agents undertook in foreign countries. The National Central Bureau concept, which other countries were developing, was unattended to in Washington. The NCB comprised only one administrative official, who had other duties as well. Requests from foreign police for assistance took months to answer, and hardly anyone in American law enforcement even thought of requesting assistance through that channel. At the General Assemblies, the American delegation was seen but seldom heard from. This quiescence continued through 1968.

Thus for the 30 years of its membership, INTERPOL meant very little to the United States law enforcement community and was virtually unknown.

Then something startling happened in 1968. At the General Assembly that year in Teheran, the Shah's spokesman announced that Iran was going to end its 13-year prohibition on opium production. That meant the world supply of the raw material for heroin was about to be augmented by thousands of tons and, in time, the competition for markets, along with other factors, thoroughly destabilized the illicit traffic patterns.

About the same time, the seriousness of the narcotics traffic burst upon American public awareness. The Administration declared a high priority for combating it. Among other steps, some attention was directed toward INTERPOL and relations with it were ordered to be strengthened. An actual NCB was activated in Washington, and the bureau's mandate was extended to all forms of international crime. Since 1968, the post of chief has been filled by a succession of Secret Service Agents and by a Drug Enforcement Agent from 1979 to 1981.

By 1970, the USNCB, with a staff of two, was handling some 300 cases a year; by 1979, a staff of seven was handling several thousand cases annually. By then, international terrorism and criminal money

laundering had joined drugs in public concern as problems of frightful proportions.

Meanwhile, a bureaucratic-type problem at INTERPOL had to be resolved. In the mid-1970's, the Attorney General and Department of Justice, after decades of ignoring their legislative mandate for INTERPOL, decided they wanted to take it back. The Treasury Department, having been in charge for two decades and having built it, up to a point, as a going concern, claimed a de facto right to hold on and fiercely resisted a takeover.

In 1977, the contest was resolved by a somewhat unusual agreement establishing dual authority for administering the USNCB and conducting the representation to INTERPOL, as described previously in the section "The U.S. Participation." It was formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Departments of Justice and Treasury under which the USNCB's management positions of Chief and Deputy Chief for Investigations are filled on a rotational basis by senior career professional law enforcement employees from each department, and the Deputy Chief for Operations and Administration is a career Department of Justice employee to assure continuity.

This cleared the way for a fresh look at the growing demands for assistance on international criminal cases by both foreign and domestic police forces.

The newly designated management of the USNCB programmed the expansion that brought Federal agencies with international enforcement interest into direct INTERPOL participation. In 1979, there had been only 2 such agencies; but by 1984 there were 13 participating. During that period, staff had expanded from 7 to 60 persons.

An even more significant process began in 1979 when USNCB management began to take a critical look at the INTERPOL organization as a whole to evaluate its role in relation to American concerns over the on-going growth of drug trafficking, illicit firearms, international terrorism, financial and economic offenses, money laundering, and other forms of multinational-based crime.

Conclusions from this assessment were that INTERPOL was not fulfilling its potential, that serious gaps in performance existed, and that aggressive leadership at the organization's world headquarters was needed. Specifically, the Americans felt that the posts of President, Secretary General, and seats on the Executive Committee should be occupied by persons who would take an aggressive stance in their conduct of the organization's affairs.

To turn this situation around, the USNCB worked with like-minded foreign members in the years that followed to bring about the election of progressive law-enforcement professionals.

In effect, the United States experienced a complete reversal in policy regarding international law enforcement cooperation, from almost complete indifference to complete commitment. Historically, until after World War II the field was neglected, climaxing with a firm rejection in 1950 after FBI Director Hoover had sampled the experience. There followed a period of "side door" relationships as Treasury Department agents formed one-on-one contacts with foreign police officers. Then, in 1968, the idea of systematic multinational cooperation took root with the establishment of a small National Central Bureau in Washington, until finally in the 1980's the INTERPOL system is gaining widespread endorsement.

The American law enforcement community appears to perceive INTERPOL as an effective channel for access to international enforcement authorities, each helping the other fulfill its enforcement missions.

With the election of an American as president of INTERPOL in 1984 . . .

With the emergence of a concept that this post should be not ceremonial but executive-management-leadership in character . . .

With the apparent concurrence of a majority of the member nations that the organization can and should involve itself more aggressively in at least the major forms of world criminality, whether terrorism or drug traffic or illicit explosives and firearms commerce, and certainly in the underground dispositions of criminal income and assets . . .

There is a strong possibility that the international law enforcement community is shaping a new era for itself in world affairs.

For Reference

How to contact

The USNCB of INTERPOL is open to receive inquiries and other messages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year, subject to the following:

Mailing address for regular and express mail:

INTERPOL
United States National Central Bureau
U.S. Department of Justice
Shoreham Building, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20530

NLETS: DCINTER00
Facsimile: 202-272-8147, ITT compatibility groups 1, 2, and 3
TWX: 710-822-1907
Telephone: 202-272-8383
Photofax: 202-272-8148. System is Amecon by Litton.

Normal working hours are 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time Monday through Friday. Duty Officers provide weekend and 24-hour coverage.

User's requirements

All requests for assistance and inquiries must comply with Federal statutes and regulations, Department of Justice policy, and international standards on exchange of information and investigations.

Where compliance is not self-evident, the request may be questioned either by the USNCB or by the foreign bureau where assistance is sought.

Requests should be in writing, on an official letterhead, or by "hard copy" if a telecommunications system is used.

The originator of the request should identify himself and his agency, should specify the criminal activity under investigation, and the relationship of persons inquired about to that investigation.

The USNCB will decline to handle requests or inquiries involving political, military, religious, or racial matters.

Types of investigative assistance

Name checks
Criminal histories
License checks
Fingerprint checks
Photograph, physical description checks
Fugitive searches
Witness location and interview

Weapons traces
Modus operandi information
Extradition, deportation proceedings
Stolen property (selected types) identification, recovery
Information on missing, ill, or deceased persons
Wanted notices

List of members

Algeria
Angola
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Bahamas
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belgium
Benin
Bolivia
Botswana
Brunei
Burkina Faso
Burma
Burundi
Cameroon
Canada
Central African Republic
Chad
Chile
China
Colombia
Congo
Costa Rica
Cuba*
Cyprus
Denmark
Djibouti
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
Equatorial Guinea
Ethiopia
Fiji
Finland
France
Gabon
Germany (Federal Republic of)
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea*
Guyana
Haiti
Honduras
Hungary

Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Ivory Coast
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kampuchea*
Kenya
Korea (Republic of)
Kuwait
Laos*
Lebanon
Lesotho
Liberia
Libya
Liechtenstein
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Maldives
Mali
Malta
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Monaco
Morocco
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
Netherlands Antilles
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Panama
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Peru

Philippines
Portugal
Qatar
Romania
Rwanda
Saint Lucia
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Somalia
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Suriname
Swaziland
Sweden
Switzerland
Syria
Tanzania
Thailand
Togo
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Uganda
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom
United States
Uruguay
Venezuela
Yemen (Arab Republic of)
Yugoslavia
Zaire
Zambia
Zimbabwe

United Kingdom NCB
Subbureaus:
Bermuda
Cayman Islands
Gibraltar
Hong Kong

*Countries that have ceased to be functioning members.