

METROPOLITAN BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1997

Two additional agencies - the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Immigration and Naturalization Service - joined the MBI in 1997, bringing the total number of agencies in the task force to 12. Working in concert with other narcotics agencies, the MBI achieved a 96 percent increase in drug trafficking arrests and participated in the seizure of 208 kilos of cocaine, 4.5 kilos of Methamphetamine, and 4,661 pounds of marijuana. Additionally, the MBI, OCSO Narcotics, DEA and U.S. Customs continued to follow-up on "**Operation Picadillo**," a three-year investigation of a Puerto-Rico-to-Orlando drug smuggling organization that had trafficked in several tons of cocaine and over 400 pounds of heroin. The investigation resulted in 60 arrests and the seizure of approximately \$20 million in cash and \$3 million in other assets. DEA, FDLE, and MBI narcotics agents also continued to investigate the **Sammie Smith** organization in Zellwood, FL, resulting in nine more arrests, further dismantling the organization and bringing the total number of defendants to 35.



Marijuana Grow Operation

Initiatives against illegal vice enterprises were equally productive during 1997. The MBI Vice Unit's enforcement effort was focused primarily on an adult entertainment live performance establishments on the South Orange Blossom Trail, which were long-standing, well-financed businesses operating lewd conduct parlors and estimated to be making more than \$1 million per year. After Vice agents repeatedly raided and made arrests at the businesses, the establishments finally closed their doors. The MBI also responded to a request from the Seminole County Sheriff's Office to assist in the investigation of six "body scrub" parlors in that county. The success of the MBI-CCIB Joint Task Force in eliminating these fronts for prostitution further enhances the quality of life here in Central Florida.

The MBI has been a leader throughout the nation in developing and implementing viable strategies to remove illegal vice operations from this community, having successfully eliminated all adult "peep shows," adult theaters, unlicensed massage parlors, "body scrubs," and more than 200 escort services. The few escort services still operating in Central Florida usually refuse to do business in Orange County. The MBI Vice Unit was also instrumental in obtaining the cooperation of area advertisers not to publish advertisements for illegal vice businesses offering organized prostitution and lewd activity, seriously impacting the ability of those criminal enterprises to remain in operation.



Escort Service Employee placed under arrest

William A. Lutz, Director
Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI)