

Big Raid on Cuban-Exile Dope Ring

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Washington

Federal agents announced yesterday they have smashed a Cuban-exile-run narcotics operation — one of the nation's largest — arresting more than 100 suspected dealers in ten cities and seizing millions of dollars worth of drugs in what they called the biggest raid of its kind in history.

Three of the suspects attempted to shoot it out with

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arresting agents, and two were wounded.

The raids culminated a six-month investigation that netted the richest narcotics haul in history — an estimated \$7.7 million worth of heroin and cocaine.

SUCCESS

Attorney General John N. Mitchell, who held a rare Sunday news conference at the Justice Department, called the raid a "tremendous success" that would have been impossible without the use of extensive wiretapping. Court approval had been obtained for the wiretap, Mitchell said.

Other investigations still are under way, he said, and further raids "undoubtedly" will be made.

John E. Ingersoll, director of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, told newsmen that most of those arrested, including five men he described as "principal subjects" of the narcotics network, were Cuban exiles.

HEROIN

He said they were leaders in a wholesale narcotics federation that dealt in about 30 per cent of all heroin sold in the United States and 75 to 80 per cent of all cocaine.

Heroin, the principal hard drug sold illegally in this country, comes mainly from the Middle East. Ingersoll said about three metric tons (6600 pounds) are used in the United States in a year. Cocaine, derived from the cocoa leaf, comes mainly from Latin America and is of growing importance in the illegal drug market, he said.

More than 350 agents took part in the carefully coordinated operation Saturday night and early yesterday which centered principally in New York, Miami and Chica-

go. Other arrests were made in Washington, Pittsburgh, Hartford, Newark, Las Vegas, Los Angeles and San Juan, P.R.

They arrested 128 persons, mostly Cuban exiles. Another 62 escaped the dragnet. Immigration authorities as well as Interpol, the International Police Organization, were alerted in case they might try to flee the country.

One of the most dramatic moments in the night-long raids occurred in Coral Gables, Fla., where agents cornered Allan Eric Rudd-Marrero, 31, one of the alleged kingpins of the narcotics operation, in the bedroom of his home, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs said.

The bureau said Rudd-Marrero aimed a .38 Colt automatic at the agents from six feet away, and two agents opened fire. He spun into a bathroom, slamming the door behind him, and was found on the floor bleeding from chest and stomach wounds. His wife and 7-year-old son were at home at the time.

SUSPECTS

In New York City, one of two suspects attempting to flee in a car grabbed an agent by the arm and dragged him 75 feet before the agent drew his gun and fired into the car. Esteban Mendoza Orama of Lomita, Calif., who was in the car, was shot in the neck, jaw and shoulder.

He was first reported in critical condition, but a New York hospital later said his condition was satisfactory.

Thirty-three persons were arrested initially in the Miami area, described as a central entry point for cocaine smuggled from Latin America.