

Profiles in Power

INTERPOL SECURES INCREASED GLOBAL SUPPORT

First American Secretary General Revolutionizing 190 Member Organization

(This begins a series of "Profiles in Power" in the newspapers of the California-based Valley News Group focusing on low profile-big impact individuals and organizations in the public and private sector. Next, Solina Chau, Hong Kong philanthropist and business tycoon - Kathleen Sterling, Publisher)

By Larry Carroll

(Los Angeles) - There are frequent references in the media to African Americans who have achieved exceptional fortune, fame and influence. Oprah Winfrey has the money and the global image to often top any list. LeBron James and Kobe Bryant, Beyonce, Jay Z, Will Smith and Denzel Washington are close behind.

There is another African American whose remarkable career would justify top ranking on any list, African American or not, and whose achievements affect all of us in every nation. He is Stanford law grad and tenured NYU law professor Ronald K. Noble, a respected former federal prosecutor and U.S. Treasury enforcement chief responsible for the US Secret Service, Customs Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and other Treasury agencies. In 2000, he became the first American to be named the world's top cop as Secretary General of INTERPOL.

Now in his third 5-YEAR term, he is leading the near century-old, 190-member country organization through a critical transformation so as to effectively counter increased and complicated transnational crime. On his watch, INTERPOL has garnered co-operation among disparate nations, extended its reach and improved its stature and relevance.

Currently, INTERPOL is tackling a wide range of global crimes including counterfeiting of medical products, environmental abuses, trafficking in illicit goods and even international soccer match-fixing at the request of FIFA, the sport's governing body.

At the same time, more and more countries are relying with success upon the powerful INTERPOL data bases like that which contains some 38 million records of stolen and lost passports and other travel documents. During the last five years, member countries launched some 2.5 billion searches of that database resulting in 200,000 "Positive Hits" including



Left: United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and INTERPOL Secretary General Ronald K. Noble as historic partnership agreement is announced to the world.

Below: Interpol Secretary General Ronald K. Noble is received by then Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican. The Pope praised the "perseverance and dedication in INTERPOL's work in dealing with the changing face of crime."



Left: INTERPOL's first woman President, Mireille Ballestrazzi, Deputy Central Director of the French Judicial Police, receives official INTERPOL Passport from Secretary General Noble.

detection of fleeing felons attempting to escape to countries around the world.

In addition to the constant search for terrorists and fugitives as well as efforts to prevent cybercrime, INTERPOL provides key support in major international pedophile and human trafficking operations.

Most recently, relying on a confidential source brought to attention by his private attorney, Secretary General Noble is assembling a multi-national team including private sector entities to help Libya track down and repatriate to the Libyan people billions of dollars looted from that country by Muammar Gaddafi. INTERPOL's efforts have earned grateful praise from Libya's Prime Minister and other senior Libyan officials.

INTERPOL is also developing innovative partnerships with leading private sector enterprises that can provide expertise, technology and resources to help INTERPOL pursue its goal of a safer world.

INTERPOL is also working closely with the United Nations so as to provide law enforcement support for key Security Council and other UN actions. "The only way to succeed is to join forces. INTERPOL is our natural partner. I am pleased the United Nations and INTERPOL will sign a new agreement to develop an action plan on international police peacekeeping," said UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon.

Almost 30 years ago, then U.S. President Ronald Reagan clearly defined INTERPOL's mission. "Whether it's organized crime, narcotics trafficking, terrorism, or any other area of criminal activity, the increasing sophistication and power of criminal syndicates calls for a response from those who are pledged to uphold the law and protect society from the hardened criminal. And this is the work of INTERPOL," Reagan said in 1985.

In recognition of INTERPOL's achievements, France, where INTERPOL's global headquarters is located, presented Secretary General Noble the Legion d'Honneur, its highest award, once given to U.S. Generals Douglas MacArthur and George Patton and President Dwight Eisenhower.

INTERPOL has earned praise and support from many world leaders echoing the words of South Africa's legendary Nelson Mandela who called its mission "a most noble pursuit" and asked all nations to "join together in helping INTERPOL."

Next year, INTERPOL will celebrate 100 years of international judicial police cooperation. Some international leaders like Elias Murr, Lebanon's former Defense and Interior Minister, believe INTERPOL should be a strong candidate for a Nobel Peace Prize nomination in 2014.

In recent years, the coveted award has been occasionally given to an organization for a body of work rather than an individual for one achievement. Previous winners include the United Nations, European Union, International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Panel on Climate Change.

Larry Carroll is a veteran broadcast journalist and producer.