

# Thornburgh's drying 'em crazy

**A**TTORNEY GENERAL Dick Thornburgh has instituted an unusual water torture as he gets ready to disassemble the country's 14 elite bands of federal mob busters — the Organized Crime Strike Forces.

Thornburgh, a former U.S. attorney in Pittsburgh, wants to merge the units into the U.S. attorneys' offices. Since he broke up a mob numbers bank in Pittsburgh — where, at last count, the FBI said organized crime consisted of 13 mobsters — Thornburgh has made no secret of his disdain for the strike forces.

After he stated his intention to dissolve the units three months ago, important strike-force resources, such as secretaries and other support personnel, began drying up.

The other day, Thornburgh tried an unusual tactic against the Justice Department's flagship unit, the Brooklyn strike force.

Government maintenance workers took out the water cooler, although they left about a dozen 5-gallon water bottles for it. (In Philadelphia, workers took the water, but left the cooler.)

"Before they merge us with the U.S. attorney's office," said outgoing Brooklyn strike force chief Edward McDonald, "we're going to merge with the Philadelphia strike force. Maybe next, they'll try to starve us out."

★★★

Gang Land touched a nerve last week in our report about Jesse (Doc) Hyman, the former dentist who got bored filling cavities and hooked up with the mob only to be convicted of **extortion** and get sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Rather than spend all that time in jail, Hyman cooperated with the feds and testified at the 15-month-long murder and **racketeering** trial — currently winding down in Manhattan Federal Court — of six accused mob killers.

Hyman, 45, called to say we got it wrong, however, when we said that was the *only* trial at which he testified.

He was a key witness against two Teamsters union officials convicted of **racketeering** charges last year — John Mahoney Jr., of Local 808, and John Long, of Local 804 — a fact confirmed by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joan McPhee.

Hyman, a former partner of Colombo capo Michael **Franzese**, said we should expect to see more of him. "Now that Michael is cooperating, I think there's going to be a few more cases that will be coming down," he said.

★★★

As Brooklyn Federal Judge John Bartels took over the drug trial of reputed Gambino mobster Gene Gotti from Judge Joseph McLaughlin, McLaughlin took on a drug case that Bartels originally handled.

The judges switched assignments after an appeals court reversed convictions of six defendants and ordered Bartels not to preside over the retrial.

The cases had identical guilty verdicts and bizarre similarities in their juries, when a lone juror in each case refused to deliberate.

"We have a problem with one juror," said the note from the McLaughlin jury. "She claims she cannot reach a decision of guilty or not guilty no matter what. She will not be comfortable with any decision."

Eventually, Bartels took an 11-person verdict. McLaughlin, who gave the same secondary instruction to his jury as Bartels, was successful in getting



**GANG LAND**  
JERRY CAPECI

the holdout to deliberate and concur in the verdict.

★★★

McLaughlin does have a way with words. As prosecutor Gregory O'Connell ended his questioning of a witness in the case, he turned and

walked out of the courtroom to copy a one-page document he'd been ordered to give the defense.

"Go ahead," said McLaughlin to the defense lawyer. "If he's dumb enough to walk out to Xerox something, go ahead."

When O'Connell returned five minutes later, and realized the defense lawyer had been cross-examining the witness without him, he asked to have the colloquy read back to him.

"Sit down," said McLaughlin.

Later, O'Connell tried to explain his actions.

"I know," said McLaughlin, "but I assumed you had enough common sense to give it to one of your two (federal drug) agents or your intern and not simply walk out of the courtroom with the jury in the box. Don't do it again."

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### Afghans battling

KABUL, Afghanistan — The government reported a new offensive around Jalalabad, which Moslem guerrillas have had under siege since early March, but said yesterday its soldiers repulsed the insurgents.

A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry said at least 139 guerrillas had been killed and 70 wounded since the attack began Sunday. He did not give government casualties.

Guerrillas based in neighboring Pakistan said they began the attack Saturday on government posts around Jalalabad, 75 miles east of Kabul. They claimed to have captured several posts and killed or wounded 70 soldiers.

Neither claim could be verified. Each side usually exaggerates the other's casualties.

The Associated Press

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