

British Hospitality

In June 1973, the United States Customs Service transferred five hundred experienced narcotic investigators and all its open drug cases to the newly formed "super agency," the Drug Enforcement Administration. One case involved Federal fugitive Harvey Brahman. In August 1971, a "joint" Customs/BNDD investigation resulted in the indictment of six individuals responsible for the smuggling of more than seven hundred kilograms of hashish into New York's 79th Street boat basin aboard a large ketch, a two-mastered sailing vessel. Five of the defendants were tried in the Manhattan Federal Court House and found guilty of importation and distribution of hashish. The sixth defendant, Harvey Brahman, fled to his native England.

However, in July 1975, Brahman applied for a new British passport and was apprehended by Scotland Yard. The provisional arrest of Brahman marked the beginning of a complicated and time consuming extradition process orchestrated by DEA Special Agent Eddie Magnuson. Within a two week time limit imposed by the British Government, Eddie had to locate and obtain certified affidavits from two witnesses at the 1971 trial, along with affidavits from Assistant United States Attorney Lawrence Pedowitz, Customs Agent Robert Snyder, the original chemist, and all agents in the evidence chain of custody.

On November 11, 1975, as a reward for his diligent efforts, Special Agent Eddie Magnuson traveled to the United Kingdom to personally bring Harvey Brahman back to the United States. The seven hour flight from New York arrived at about nine PM at London's Heathrow Airport where Eddie was met by two Bobbies. And in the finest tradition of Scotland Yard, Eddie was wisked through Customs and immediately taken to the Red LYON Pub.

Although exhausted by the overseas flight, Eddie did not want to "insult" his gracious hosts by asking to cut the night short. But when the pub's owner locked the front door at ten PM, Eddie hoped that he would be taken to his hotel for a good night's sleep. However, British hospitality again intervened and Eddie was escorted to the pub's back bar.

After a few hours of "police stories" and warm British ale, the pub's owner mentioned to Eddie that many "yanks" were stationed in London during the "great war." And after a little idle thought, the slightly sloshed pub owner emphatically stated that the "yanks" had three major problems.

"What were they?" a polite and curious Eddie Magnuson asked.

"They were over paid, they were over sexed, and **THEY WERE OVER HERE,**" the grinning pub owner responded while heavily slapping his right hand on the bar.

The next day, a slightly hung over Special Agent Eddie Magnuson, accompanied by fugitive Harvey Brahman, returned to the United States. On January, 9, 1976, United States District Judge Wyatt sentenced Harvey Bramham to three years imprisonment, almost five years after the time of his offense.