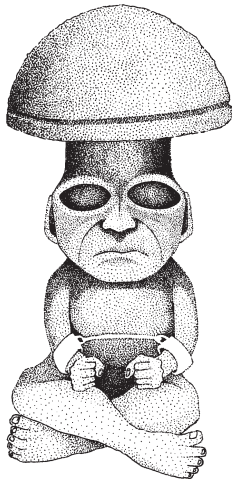




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by Richard Glen Boire

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# PHARMACO PROHIBITA

BY RICHARD GLEN BOIRE

**Q:** Is CHEMICAL RESALE OF SANTA BARBARA (CRSB) a DEA cover?

**A:** The DEA has been known to set up fake chemical supply companies aimed at attracting and then busting manufacturers of controlled substances. For example, in 1982 the DEA operated a company called UNIVERSAL SOLVENTS OF AMERICA, and advertised the company in "drug oriented" magazines. Similarly, the DEA ran a bogus laboratory equipment and chemical company called GEO-DATA CHEMICALS in Boise, Idaho. Both fronts led to arrests and convictions.

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By all indications (including reports from people who received orders), CRSB sold chemicals and glassware to the general public. The company's "we deal with anyone" manner, combined with their product line, and odd payment policy (some transactions had to be paid with a personal check), has led to speculation that they might be a DEA front. Orders could be placed via CRSB's web site, which was well-indexed on all the major search engines. I have only seen a partial list of the chemicals sold by CRSB. While all appeared legal themselves, some could be used in the manufacture of controlled substances.

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While I doubt that CRSB was a DEA front organization, it is possible that the DEA now has the names and addresses of anyone who ordered from CRSB. In July of 1997, TOM KASPER, CRSB's owner (known as "wirehead" on the CRSB web site), assaulted a flight attendant while on a Continental Airlines flight from Houston to Los Angeles. Evidently, he blew his top when the airline refused to upgrade him to first class. Enraged, he grabbed a scalding pot of coffee and poured it on one of the stewardesses, causing severe burns on her hand. He then tried to open one of the airplane doors as it was landing. Kasper was arrested for interfering with a flight crew during flight (REUTERS 1998).

No doubt, from the time of his arrest, KASPER was the target of intense federal investigation and certainly the investigators must have learned of his chemical resale business. In late 1997 and early 1998 there were rumors on an online discussion forum that the DEA *did* shut down CRSB for selling GHB precursor chemicals; I was unable to confirm these rumors. On January 12, 1998, KASPER pled guilty to the federal charge of disrupting the flight and currently faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. Sentencing is set for April 27, 1998.

CRSB's web site is no longer accessible; I suspect that the company is defunct. Of course, a man who faces life in prison has a great incentive to cooperate with the authorities. I wouldn't be surprised if the feds take an interest in CRSB and, one way or another, obtain information about CRSB's former customers, or those people who now contact the company via mail. On the other hand, the government has evidently chosen not to maintain the CRSB web site or transform it into an information-gathering front; a move they would logically have taken if they believed it would lead them to underground chemists. ✱

