

CELEBRATING THE APPOINTMENT OF LYNNE UNDERDOWN AS THE NEW CHIEF PATROL AGENT FOR THE MIAMI BORDER PATROL SECTOR OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Lynne Underdown on her appointment as the new Chief Patrol Agent for the Miami Border Patrol Sector and also to commend INS Commissioner Doris Meissner on Ms. Underdown's groundbreaking appointment.

Ms. Underdown will serve as one of 23 Chief Patrol Agents nationwide in the U.S. Border Patrol, the largest uniformed federal law enforcement organization. Ms. Underdown will be the first female chief in the 75 year history of the Border Patrol, the uniformed enforcement arm of the Immigration and Naturalization Service with more than 8,000 officers charged with protecting our Nation's borders.

I would like to share with my Colleagues the attached News Release from the Immigration and Naturalization Service announcing Ms. Underdown's appointment and detailing her wide-ranging professional experience.

Mr. Speaker, the Border Patrol performs a critical mission—to facilitate legal immigration and commerce and prevent illegal traffic in people and contraband, while ensuring the safety of those living in border communities. In Miami, our frequent and unhappy experience with immigrant smuggling makes it particularly essential that the Border Patrol and all immigration-related agencies discharge their responsibilities professionally and with sensitivity for the people involved.

I am sure that Ms. Underdown's wide-ranging background and experience with detention

and deportation issues will serve her well in her new position. Hopefully, her appointment also will promote the development of additional professional opportunities for women in all branches of law enforcement.

NEWS RELEASE, SEPTEMBER 21, 1999

INS NAMES NEW CHIEF PATROL AGENT FOR MIAMI SECTOR

WASHINGTON—Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Commissioner Doris Meissner today named Lynne Underdown, currently the Director of INS in New Orleans, as the new Chief Patrol Agent for the Miami Border Patrol Sector. Underdown will be the first female chief in the 75-year history of the U.S. Border Patrol, the uniformed enforcement arm of INS charged with protecting the nation's borders.

"Lynne Underdown brings 19 years of distinguished service to the job. Her appointment underscores my continuing commitment to appoint the best-qualified applicants to key positions throughout the agency. It is a special pleasure that for Miami the result is our first female chief," said Meissner.

The Miami Sector has 55 Border Patrol Agents and 36 support staff stationed in Florida. In addition, the sector has jurisdiction over North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

"I have great respect for the hard working and dedicated agents for the Miami Sector. They have accomplished a great deal when faced with extraordinary challenges. It will be my privilege to represent them," said Underdown.

Underdown began her career with INS in 1980 as a Border Patrol agent in San Diego. While in San Diego, she served as a field agent and also worked as Field Training Officer, Sector Training Officer and Recruiting Officer.

In 1987, Underdown was promoted to Supervisory Border Patrol Agent in Yuma Sector, where she was supervisor of the Criminal Alien (BORCAP) unit. She also supervised Employer Sanctions, the K-9 Tactical Unit and all Sector recruiting activities.

In 1990, Underdown transferred to the El Paso Sector, where she was stationed in Carlsbad, New Mexico and continued her

work with the Criminal Alien unit and employer sanctions. She also handled outreach activities with the community and local employers.

In 1992, Underdown was promoted to Assistant District Director for Detention and Deportation in the New Orleans District. She was responsible for supervising one of the largest and most complex detention and deportation operations in the country, covering a five-state jurisdiction and the Oakdale Federal Correctional Institution for criminal aliens. She was promoted to District Director in New Orleans in June 1998.

Born and raised in Chicago, Underdown has a brother on the Chicago police force and another brother who works for the Cook County Sheriff's Department. Her father was a 30-year veteran of the Chicago Police Department. "I come from a law enforcement family and I am proud to carry on that tradition," said Underdown. She currently resides in New Orleans with her two children and her husband, who is Chief Patrol Agent of the New Orleans Border Patrol Sector.

Underdown will serve as one of 23 Chief Patrol Agents nationwide in the largest uniformed federal law enforcement organization. The U.S. Border Patrol was officially established on May 28, 1924 by an act of Congress passed in response to increasing illegal immigration. The initial force of 450 officers was given the responsibility of combating illegal entries and the growing business of alien smuggling. The Border Patrol now numbers more than 8,000 well-trained and well-equipped officers.

While the Border Patrol has changed dramatically since its inception 75 years ago, its primary mission remains unchanged—to detect and prevent the unlawful entry of aliens into the United States and to apprehend those persons found in the United States in violation of immigration laws. Together with other INS officers, the Border Patrol helps maintain borders that work—facilitating the flow of legal immigration and goods while preventing the illegal traffic of people and contraband and ensuring the safety of all those living in border communities.