PEOPLE AT WORK:

Cracking Down On Fraud

David H. Snipe, deputy assistant inspector general handled the first Medicaid fraud case.

The U.S. Inspector General's office is in charge of investigating suspect fraud in health and welfare programs. A former NYC dectective is in charge of the criminal investigations division.

Veteran criminal investigator David H. Snipe, who worked his way up through the ranks in the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, is a key cog now in the federal IG operation with the most upper - level black officials.

Under HHS Inspector General Richard Kusserow's May 10 reorganization, blacks are in charge of one of the three offices (investigations, systems integrity and audit) and head three of the four major divisions in the Office of Investigations.

A former New York City detective, Snipe is deputy assistant IG in charge of the criminal investigations division, reporting to Larry D. Morey, the assistant IG for investigations.

Snipe isn't exaggerating when he says "every day has its challenges" in the IG's office. In general, the challenge is to ferret out and prevent fraud and abuse in an agency that runs more than 350 health and welfare programs and is spending more than $250 billion this year.

As HHS Secretary Richard S. Schweiker points out, the department spends about 35 percent of the total federal budget, an amount that surpasses the budget of every country in the world except that of the United States and Russia.

Snipe says that since Kusserow took over OIG is stepping up its pro - active efforts to combat wrongdoing and inefficiency, such as through computer cross - checks, along with beefing up re - active responses, but he would like to have more manpower. The criminal investigations division has 176 people in the headquarters complex and in 11 field offices, 155 of them working as agents.

For a unit handling roughly 2,000 investigations annually, Snipe says, "We don't have enough manpower, that's for sure; we do the best we can."

Millions of dollars in taxpayers' money are saved each year by the IG's office. Its 1981 report shows its investigations led to 184 convictions, another 58 convictions in cases jointly conducted with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies — and as a direct result brought about $34.9 million in recoveries, fines, restitutions and savings.

Among the other important slots filled by blacks in the OIG operation are:

— At the assistant inspector general level, **Margaret (Peg) Washnitzer**, a Howard University and Case Western Reserve University graduate, is acting head of the Office of Systems Integrity.

Ms. Washnitzer, a native of North Carolina, joined the OIG staff in 1977 after a stint as program director for the Administration for Public Services in HHS' Office of Human Development Services. She has 20 years experience in social services, health and welfare services work for private, city, state and federal agencies.

She has a staff of 56 people, 20 of them in the regions.

"We are that independent area in the department that can be objective in assessing the delivery of services to our constituencies, in analyzing issues and policy development. We have no programs of our own, no turf to protect," Ms. Washnitzer said.

Others at the division level in the Office of Investigations:

Eileen T. Boyd, a Howard University School of Law graduate with 11 years diversified federal management experience and a former executive assistant IG, is deputy assistant IG in charge of the newly created civil fraud division.

Charles C. Maddox, a U.S. Secret Service agent for 11 years before joining HHS last December, is director of the security and protection division.

A Virginia Union University graduate and holder of a master's degree in criminal justice from George Washington University, Maddox is the security person most likely to be at Secretary Schweiker's side when he travels in this country or abroad — even when the Secretary does his jogging.

While with the Secret Service, Maddox served as senior agent in the Baltimore field office and was assigned to the presidential protective division at the White House under Presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter.

— **Ed Evans**, another former New York City detective, heads the Washington Field Office in the investigations office. Before taking the job in 1979 Evans, a 22 - year police department veteran, had served as chief investigator for the House Subcommittee on Assassinations.

The John Jay College of Criminal Justice graduate has 16 people in his field office shop, 10 of them investigators.

— Another sensitive position is

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Charles C. Maddox, and Eileen T. Boyd chat before entering senior staff meeting.

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