



United States
Department
Of Justice



U.S. Attorney's
Office

Northern District of
Indiana

5400 Federal Plaza
Suite 1500
Hammond, IN 46320
219.937.5500

Joseph S. Van Bokkelen
U.S. Attorney

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POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

Anti-Gang Strategy Taking Shape at Justice Department

Article published on CNSnews.com

05/24/2006 Washington, DC | U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales Tuesday announced a new national strategy to crack down on violent street gangs. The government now believes there are more than 21,500 gangs in the U.S., and more than 700,000 gang members.



"I have directed each U.S. attorney to convene a gang prevention summit in his or her district by the end of this year," Gonzales said. "[The summits will] help coordinate gang prevention efforts among the many partners and interested parties that must be involved if we are to succeed."

The Department of Justice and other federal agencies have recently taken other steps to curb the growth of street gangs. U.S. attorneys around the country last year were directed to designate a coordinator for anti-gang strategies and Gonzales said he has "launched a comprehensive anti-gang initiative in six locations around the nation."

The Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) also joined gang prevention efforts in February 2005 with the launch of Operation Community Shield.

According to a Justice Department press release, Operation Community Shield has led to the arrest of 2,388 members of 239 different gangs and the seizure of 117 firearms. More than 900 of those arrested were members of the street gang Mara-Salvatrucha (MS-13), which the FBI identified in 2005 as one of the seven gangs posing the greatest danger to American communities.

Full Story:

<http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewCulture.asp?Page=/Culture/archive/200605/CUL20060524a.html>

67 in Chicago Gang Face Drug Charges

Article published by The Associated Press

05/09/2006 Chicago, IL | Authorities began rounding up 67 members of a street gang Tuesday after prosecutors unsealed charges accusing them of conspiring to distribute large amounts of crack and other drugs.

The arrests came after a two-year investigation of the New Breed gang.

Police went undercover to buy drugs at the gang's alleged base - a large housing complex southwest of downtown known as The Square and described by prosecutors as a fortress-like scene of frequent violence.

Investigators estimated the gang's drug sales reached \$5 million a year.

Forty-three members were in custody by late Tuesday. Officers confiscated more than four pounds of cocaine and two pounds of heroin, authorities said.



"If you engage in street gang-controlled retail distribution of narcotics and use firearms, you expose yourself to federal prosecution that will relocate you for many years - in prison," U.S. Attorney Patrick J. Fitzgerald said in a statement.

More than 700 police and federal agents, including SWAT teams from neighboring cities, participated in the sweep.

Full Story:

http://www.examiner.com/a-103158~67_in_Chicago_Gang_Face_Drug_Charges.html

Related Story:

<http://www.thetimesonline.com/articles/2006/05/11/news/illiana/e35fed47a9181b188625716b0004c4f9.txt>



Cyberspace Offers New Turf for Gangs

Article published by the Chicago Tribune

05/19/2006 Chicago, IL | With a few clicks on his laptop, Naperville Detective Rich Wistocki is staring at a St. Charles man who appears to be smoking marijuana.

He clicks again, and there's another picture of the 22-year-old, nearly hidden under a large pile of what looks to be bags of marijuana leaves.



"Look at this. How stupid is this?" Wistocki says as he prints out the photo and saves a "screen grab" to his computer. "These guys put this out there, thinking that nobody's watching. That it's only their friends, but they are wrong."

Wistocki, who works in his department's Internet crimes unit, has seen hundreds of photographs like these: Guys pointing guns, spraying graffiti, flashing gang signs or handfuls of money. Law enforcement officials say it's all part of the growing trend of

gangs pushing thug life on the Internet.

A search for gang sites will turn up links to anti-gang sites started by law enforcement or anti-crime organizations. Other sites claim to be academic, presenting the real story behind Chicago's gangs.

The more you click, however, the more likely the site you enter belongs to someone purporting to be a gang member. And it's likely a police officer is looking at it too.

West Chicago Police Cmdr. Bruce Malkin teaches about gangs around the country and surfs the Internet searching for gang sites almost daily. He keeps a cache of Web sites, though he discourages the public from visiting them. He thinks some gangs use devices called "cookies" on their sites to track down site visitors' personal information. (Malkin and other officers use Internet addresses that bounce trackers to bogus names.)

Malkin, like several of the detectives interviewed, said most of what he finds he uses to educate himself about gangs in his area.

Although a lot of the chatter is cryptic, Malkin said that with close monitoring and gang know-how, police can learn a lot.

Full Story: <http://www.tmcnet.com/usubmit/-cyberspace-offers-new-turf-gangs-police-mining-internet-/2006/05/19/1656631.htm>

Related Story: [Police: 'Cyberbanging' helps track gangs online](#)

Article published by the [khou.com](#)

05/11/2006 Houston, TX | Anyone who's logged on to the Internet knows there is a wealth of information to be found. But you may not know that it's become a message board for gangs to share their next move? Police are calling it "cyberbanging." "They'll put it on the Internet that they're having a party at a certain location and we use that info to follow them and track them," explained Avendano. "Also to show pride in themselves by using either the graffiti online or using their colors online."

http://www.khou.com/news/local/stories/khou060509_mh_internetgangs.2636a863.html



Feds: Deport 14 Gangbangers

Article published by the [Chicago Tribune](#)

05/24/2006 Aurora, IL | Fourteen Aurora men arrested as part of a sweep of illegal immigrants with ties to violent street gangs face deportation to Mexico, officials said Tuesday.

The men all were taken into custody late Monday as part a nationwide investigation targeting gangs with foreign-born members. The Aurora men are all illegal immigrants who are documented members or associates of the Sureno 13 street gang, according to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.



All but one of the men have prior criminal records, including convictions for burglary, retail theft, drunken driving and resisting arrest. While five of the suspects were handed over to local authorities to face state charges, the remaining nine are being held in federal custody pending deportation, authorities said.

Once the local court cases are resolved, the other five people will also be eligible to be deported, police said.

"The lawlessness that these violent gangs propagate presents a grave threat to public safety," said Elissa A. Brown, ICE special agent in charge. "We will use all of our authorities to arrest, and ultimately deport, foreign-born gang members who terrorize our communities."

All of the men are associated with Sureno 13, or Sur 13, a street gang that originated on the West Coast, but has begun to migrate across the country. Sureno 13 is not a common gang in the Fox Valley.

Full Story: http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/beaconnews/top/2_1_AU24_GANGS_S1.htm



School Bans Sesame Street Gang T-Shirts

Article published by the Washington Post

05/23/2006 Brockton, MA | Brockton High School has banned T-shirts with Sesame Street characters. But these are no regular pictures of Bert and Ernie's.

On some, Oscar the Grouch emerges from his garbage can, wielding a 9 mm handgun. On others, Bert and Ernie are standing in a gang posture, armed with automatic weapons.



"We were amazed," said the school's principal, Susan Szachowicz. "You focus on the Sesame Street character. But the more we looked at it, the more we saw the things in it, the guns, the gang stuff."

There have only been a few shirts at school, but officials said students are being told to stop wearing them because of the pro-gang message.

School officials also said they violate the school dress policy.

Full Story: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/23/AR2006052301347.html>



Gangsters Recruiting in Smaller Towns

Article published by the Salt Lake Tribune

05/31/2006 Caldwell, ID | Police departments in southwestern Idaho have started programs to stop the spread of gangs in smaller communities, which officials say is an increasing problem as the region grows.

"There are very few [cities] that don't have a gang problem," Nampa Police Chief Curtis Homer told the *Idaho Press-Tribune*. "It's now a fluid community between Nampa, Caldwell, Boise, Garden City, Fruitland. You get some members of gangs actually getting more people to join them by going to smaller communities and try to recruit them from there."

In Homedale, a town of about 2,500 residents located 18 miles southwest of Caldwell, police have formed Trojans Against Graffiti. Named after the town's high school mascot, the student-based group meets to paint over gang graffiti.

Students and teachers painted over graffiti in areas in town on May 5, and since then there has been only one incident of graffiti, called tagging.

"In school, we saw an increase in gang writing on notebooks, gang-type clothes," said Michelle Babcock of the Homedale Police. "We're seeing an increase in that minor stuff. We would like to be proactive so that in the future we are not reactive to the gang problem."

In Fruitland, a gang-related attack and shooting last month resulted in the death of an Ontario, Ore., man.

"We've noticed an increase in gang-related activity within the last year," said Rick Skelly, Fruitland's chief of police. "This was kind of a wake-up call in our department. It's not been near as prevalent as in the Nampa and Caldwell area, but our citizens are more aware of it."

Full Story: http://www.sltrib.com/utah/ci_3882606

International

Gangs Claim Their Turf in Iraq

Article published by the Chicago Sun-Times

05/01/2006 Camp Cedar II, Iraq | The Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings and Vice Lords were born decades ago in Chicago's most violent neighborhoods. Now, their gang graffiti is showing up 6,400 miles away in one of the world's most dangerous neighborhoods -- Iraq.

Armored vehicles, concrete barricades and bathroom walls all have served as canvasses for their spray-painted gang art. At Camp Cedar II, about 185 miles southeast of Baghdad, a guard shack was recently defaced with "GDN" for Gangster Disciple Nation, along with the gang's six-pointed star and the word "Chitown," a soldier who photographed it said.

The graffiti, captured on film by an Army Reservist and provided to the Chicago Sun-Times, highlights increasing gang activity in the Army in the United States and overseas, some experts say.



Military and civilian police investigators familiar with three major Army bases in the United States -- Fort Lewis, Fort Hood and Fort Bragg -- said they have been focusing recently on soldiers with gang affiliations. These bases ship out many of the soldiers fighting in Iraq.

"I have identified 320 soldiers as gang members from April 2002 to present," said Scott Barfield, a Defense Department gang detective at Fort Lewis in Washington state. "I think that's the tip of the iceberg."

Of paramount concern is whether gang-affiliated soldiers' training will make them deadly urban warriors when they return to civilian life and if some are using their access to military equipment to supply gangs at home, said Barfield and other experts.

Full Story: <http://www.suntimes.com/output/news/cst-nws-gangs01.html#>



156 Killed in Wave of Police vs. Gang Violence

Article published by CNN

05/01/2006 San Paulo, Brazil | The body count grew in South America's largest city Wednesday as police -- who lost 41 comrades in gang attacks -- killed 22 more suspected criminals. Authorities said little about the latest deaths, generating criticism from rights groups.

Police did not identify any of those they killed, say where they were killed or in what circumstances, Sao Paulo's leading newspapers reported Wednesday.

Human rights activists said they feared innocent people may have been hurt in the strikes by police enraged by a notorious gang's attacks on officers on the streets, at their stations, in their homes and at after work hangouts.



Saulo de Castro de Abreu, Sao Paulo state public safety secretary, told reporters the identities of the criminals killed were not revealed "so as not to jeopardize investigations."

The latest deaths boosted the overall death toll to 156 since a wave of violence enveloped Sao Paulo last Friday, and came after officers shot 33 presumed gang members dead only a day earlier.

"The climate of terror can't be turned into carte blanche to kill," said Ariel de Castro Alves, coordinator of Brazil's National Human Rights Movement.

But in an interview with Brazil's Globo TV, the commander of Sao Paulo's state police said officers are now convinced they have stopped the gang attacks because most of the latest shootings happened outside of metropolitan Sao Paulo and none were the work of the First Capital Command gang.

Police claimed earlier they had gained the upper hand in their fight against the gang, accused of ordering the attacks on authorities after eight gang leaders were transferred to a lockup hundreds of miles from Sao Paulo.

In contrast to earlier killings of police suspects, Col. Elizeu Eclair told Globo TV that the confrontations Tuesday night and Wednesday morning were sparked by smaller-scale criminals seeking clashes with authorities.

"We're seeing that this had nothing to do with organized crime," he said.

The six-day death toll of 156 included 93 suspected criminals, 41 police and prison guards, 18 prison inmates killed in riots and four civilians, according to the state police. Eclair said authorities were still trying to identify 40 of the dead criminal suspects.

Full Story: <http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/americas/05/17/brazil.violence.ap/index.html>

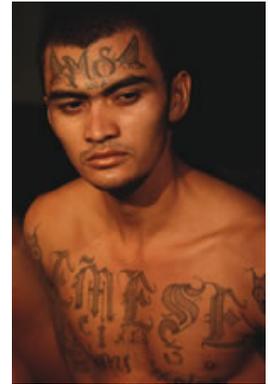
America's Most Dangerous Gang

Article published on policemag.com

Spreading from El Salvador to L.A. and across the United States, Mara Salvatrucha 13 is increasingly well organized and deadly.

Within one hour, two people were found murdered miles apart in suburban Nassau County, N.Y. After an intensive investigation, police officials learned the murders were the work of the violent street gang Mara Salvatrucha 13. It also soon became apparent the gang was sending a bold message to its members and associates. That message: "If you are not loyal, you are dead."

But there was another message in the brutal slayings for the people of Long Island. And that message was that gang violence had moved into the upper middle class enclaves of the Island, into the kinds of communities where the locals assume that crime is somebody else's problem.



Mara Salvatrucha 13 (MS-13) is unfortunately becoming everybody's problem. This plague that came to Long Island from El Salvador by way of the streets of Los Angeles follows the same migratory patterns as the Salvadoran immigrant community that it preys upon, fanning out across the United States from ethnic enclaves in California.

Coming Together

Until recently, MS-13 wasn't that big a player in East Coast gang culture. The reason for its weak position in the East Coast crime world was obvious: It wasn't very well organized. MS-13 was comprised of a group of cliques that operated independently of each other.

No more. Law enforcement officials now report that gang members from across the country have come together to unite affiliated groups up and down the East Coast. The leadership for these cliques is now coming from as far away as California and even from El Salvador.

Robert Hart, senior agent in charge with the FBI, says that when individual groups of MS-13 unite, the results can be devastating. "The cliques, instead of operating independently of each other, are beginning to come together," Hart explains. "The difference is by doing that, obviously you have a much tighter organization, much stronger structures and, instead of having various cliques doing whatever they want, wherever they want, there is one individual who is the leader and is able to control the payment of dues and the criminal acts they engage in. The result is very, very similar to what you would see in what we refer to as traditional organized criminal families."

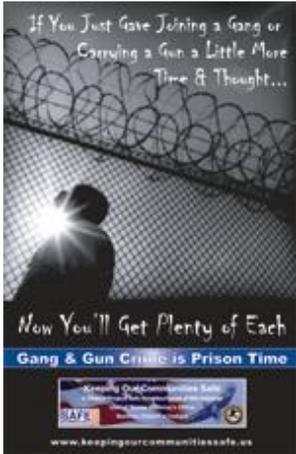
Finding Sanctuary

Los Angeles and New York law enforcement and even politicians are aware of the impact of MS-13 on their streets and on their crime statistics. So they've taken action. The results are usually not stellar, but at least these cities have recognized that MS-13 is a problem. Unfortunately, the leadership of MS-13 is not stupid. Once the heat comes down hard in L.A. and New York, they head for new turf, choosing Midwestern and Southern and suburban cities where gangs "are not an issue" and local officials and authorities are in denial.

And once MS-13 takes hold in a community, it grows fast. The gang reportedly has some 300 members in suburban Long Island. A few years back it didn't have any.

Full Story: http://www.policemag.com/t_cipick.cfm?rank=90876

Gang Resource Cards and Awareness Poster Series



The U.S. Attorney's Office has released a series of law enforcement reference cards pertaining to gang awareness and identification. The cards include a law enforcement sensitive gang identifier card, a parent's reference card and a Spanish version of the parent's reference card. The gang identifier card includes information on various gangs found in the Northern District along with graffiti, colors and symbols relating to each gang. The parent's cards contain warning signs of gang involvement and tips for curbing the chances of their youth joining a gang. These are available in both English and Spanish text as mentioned before.

The poster series features four scenarios outlining the repercussions of gang and gun violence. They are ideal for schools and community centers as an awareness reminder that crime has consequences. Both the posters and resource cards can be ordered by contacting the LECC program (information below).

Check them out at:

<http://www.keepingourcommunitiesafe.us/gangs.htm>



From the Editors

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter. We are always trying to improve the quality and effectiveness of our products

If you have any comments, suggestions or articles that can be used in the "G.A.I.N." Newsletter please send them to:

L.E.C.C. Program
C/O U.S. Attorney's Office
5400 Federal Plaza, Suite 1500
Hammond, IN 46320
Phone: (219) 937-5666
Fax: (219) 937-5537

E-mail: ryan.holmes@usdoj.gov