

**State of California
Department of Justice**

ORGANIZED CRIME IN CALIFORNIA

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE 1996



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Message From the Attorney General



One way or another, nearly every citizen in California is affected by organized crime, street gangs, and/or criminal extremists. We suffer the fear perpetuated by those criminals and we pay enormous costs for their illegal activities. Most of all, too many Californians are directly victimized by their terror.

Ranging from high-tech, sophisticated white-collar crimes to violent and brutal homicides, crime by organized criminal factions continues to present a dangerous threat to the safety of California's citizens.

The information contained in this annual report on organized crime is designed to help law enforcement and public health officials better understand patterns of organized criminal activity and thereby aid in seeking solutions. Statistics show that both Asian and Russian organized crime groups are continuing to infiltrate California, with serious public safety ramifications. A combination of new technology, expanded recruiting, and increased migration of these organized crime factions have facilitated the establishment of alliances between these emerging groups and traditional crime rings such as La Cosa Nostra (LCN). These criminal networks have already been established in several major California cities, including Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and Sacramento.

In addition to organized crime, an estimated 300,000 violent and dangerous street gang members continue to threaten the citizens of our state. The recruitment of female and juvenile members, combined with multiracial alliances, has enabled organized crime to be committed at a higher frequency and with greater effectiveness.

While we have enacted tougher laws and better law enforcement strategies to drive down our crime rate faster than nearly any other state, gangs and organized crime groups are the toughest challenge we face. Hope for solutions can be found in the same strategies that already have brought success in crime fighting efforts here in California. This report should be used to help focus the energies of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies into a coalition to combat these toughest criminals.

DANIEL E. LUNGREN
Attorney General

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Russian organized crime figures continue to migrate to the United States from the former Soviet Union and enjoy ease of travel with falsified passports or visas easily obtained in Russia through bribery. With no way for authorities to check their criminal histories, these criminals routinely enter the United States. Russian organized crime groups have established criminal networks in several major California cities including Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and Sacramento. These criminals are involved in sophisticated crimes and take advantage of our bureaucracy to mask their crimes and delay detection. One such case involved the staging of auto accidents and a false billing scheme. A suspect was arrested in March 1996 for devising and establishing a criminal network that defrauded the insurance industry out of an estimated \$20 million. Russian organized crime groups are diverse in their criminal activities and have formed alliances with other major organized crime groups such as the Colombian cartels, the La Cosa Nostra (LCN), and other Italian organized crime groups.

The LCN's Southern California Crime Family remains weak and ineffective. However, the Southern California Crime Family is attempting to recruit members from other LCN families to conduct their illegal money making operations such as bookmaking, extortion, narcotics trafficking, and especially infiltration into legitimate businesses. Family members have infiltrated bars, restaurants, and nightclubs associated with the entertainment industry. Migration of LCN members from the East Coast to the West Coast continues to be a major threat to the security and safety of California's citizens.

Organized crime in California is also associated with the gaming industry. Gambling is proliferating in the state without the benefit of a regulatory agency to deal with enforcement issues. The lack of regulatory oversight invites organized crime groups to infiltrate these gambling operations.

Indian casinos are moving toward full-scale casino gaming in anticipation of the passage of a Tribal/State compact. By the end of 1996, three new Indian casinos opened and an estimated 14,300 slot machines were in operation at Indian casinos throughout California. These Indian casinos are making millions of dollars in profits, drawing the attention of organized crime groups and white-collar criminals.

Asian organized crime groups continue to be active in armed robbery, prostitution, drug trafficking, extortion, alien smuggling, computer chip theft, and murder, primarily in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas. Asian organized crime groups are drawn to gambling establishments where they are active in loansharking, follow-home robbery, and money laundering associated with this industry.

New Asian organized crime groups are emerging. The Jackson Street Boys, once considered to be a violent street gang, has become a menacing organized crime group. San Francisco has become the domain of the Jackson Street Boys where they are involved in extortion, armed robbery, heroin distribution, kidnap for profit, and prostitution.

Strong law enforcement action has made inroads to slow the progress of several Asian organized crime groups operating in California. Many members of these Asian crime groups who had been sent to prison for their criminal acts are now being released. As a result, the law enforcement community may observe a revitalization of these groups in terms of recruitment of young Asian males and increased criminal activity.

Violent and dangerous street gangs continue to plague law enforcement authorities and the public. Gang membership in California is estimated to be approximately 300,000--an all-time high. Many gangs are profit motivated and some are becoming more sophisticated in their crimes.

Criminal extremist groups, such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), continue to commit crimes in support of their philosophies. The community is especially in danger as these groups target universities, restaurants, department stores, research laboratories, and agricultural businesses. Other groups, such as anti-government criminal extremists, live by their own laws and have no regard for law enforcement, government, or the general public.

Analysis and Trends

- As the Russian economy continues to deteriorate, some of the criminal element from Russia will flee the former Soviet Union and settle in California's major cities.
- Russian crime groups may become more powerful and dangerous due to their alliances with other notorious crime groups such as the LCN and Colombian cartels. These alliances lead to the internationalization of organized crime.
- Street gang membership will continue to grow. Some gangs are evolving into sophisticated organized crime groups. Many have access to weapons and will not hesitate to use them.
- Criminal extremists continue to carry out crimes against the public and government in support of their beliefs. These groups will continue to target government buildings, restaurants, and universities.

The California Department of Justice, Bureau of Investigation, continues to provide a proactive approach to combat organized crime groups, gangs, and criminal extremists. One of the most effective ways to counter these criminal groups is to collect, analyze and disseminate criminal intelligence to law enforcement authorities so that they have the knowledge and the tools to detect and prevent criminal activities by organized groups. The staff of the Bureau of Investigation, Intelligence Operations Program, provides an active leadership role in the field of criminal intelligence, an invaluable resource for law enforcement agencies in California and throughout the nation.

RUSSIAN ORGANIZED CRIME

Introduction

The term “Russian organized crime” (ROC) refers to criminal groups from the 15 republics which comprised the former Soviet Union. ROC has existed for 20 years in the United States but during the last five years law enforcement authorities have observed a distinct increase in their criminal activities. Criminals from the former Soviet Union have established their networks in California's major cities including Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Sacramento, and are also emerging in some smaller cities. ROC groups are involved in murder, money laundering, extortion, auto theft, weapons smuggling, narcotics trafficking, prostitution, counterfeiting currency, and a multitude of complex fraud schemes.

Background

ROC in the United States evolved in Brighton Beach, New York, which at one time was a small Russian immigrant community. During the 1970s and the early 1980s, the Soviet government liberalized its immigration policy which allowed its citizens to immigrate and travel freely. Approximately 200,000 Soviet citizens immigrated to the United States to escape religious persecution which they had endured during the 70 years of communist rule. It was during this time that many Soviet criminals came to the United States under the guise of fleeing this religious oppression. Additionally, some United States government officials suspect that the KGB emptied their prisons of hard-core criminals much like Cuban dictator Fidel Castro did during the Mariel boat-lift in 1980.

In California, the first indication of a Russian organized crime element surfaced in 1981 when the Los Angeles Police Department initiated an investigation to identify organized crime groups. The investigation revealed that approximately 20 Russian emigres were involved in a myriad of criminal

activities including murder, theft, fraud, forgery, counterfeiting, extortion, receiving stolen property and various vice activities. It was also determined that Russian organized crime activity in the Los Angeles area was controlled and directed by Russian organized crime figures in the Brighton Beach area of New York.

After the break up of the Soviet Union in 1991, many Russian criminals and organized crime figures fled to the United States. By 1992, Russian authorities had alerted U.S. law enforcement officials of the arrival in New York of Vyatcheslav Ivankov, identified as a leader of the "Thieves in Law," which is a traditional-style organized crime group that predated communism in 1917. The "Thieves in Law" obeys a code of conduct much like the traditional LCN. This group existed throughout the Soviet era and is a formidable threat there today.

Ivankov spent approximately ten years in a Russian prison before bribing his way out. Russian authorities speculated that Ivankov came to the United States to organize the existing networks of Russian criminals operating within the United States, including California. He was arrested in June 1995 in New York for attempting to extort \$3.5 million from an investment firm operated by two Russian emigres. In January 1997, Ivankov was sentenced to over nine years in prison for conspiracy to commit extortion.

California law enforcement authorities have identified varying levels of organization and sophistication among these criminal networks, ranging from professional organizations with an identifiable structure to loosely aligned criminal networks and amateur criminals who periodically assist in criminal activities. The professional groups generally have an established allegiance to a leader and follow a criminal code.

The loosely aligned criminal networks are in a continual state of transformation and are highly mobile. Members are opportunistic and form with one particular criminal scheme in mind. Once the scheme is completed, they disperse and re-form to commit other crimes. Allegiances may change to accommodate a current scheme or if it is of monetary advantage. Some criminal groups also form along ethnic lines such as Armenian organized crime networks operating in Southern California which specialize in crimes

such as extortion and protection rackets. These groups may have recruited ex-KGB and military personnel who possess the skills and training necessary to avoid detection and arrest.

Frauds are the core of these groups' criminal activities and involve the theft and use of stolen credit cards, insurance schemes involving staged auto accidents and/or false billings for medical treatment, theft of excise taxes in the fuel industry, theft of telecommunications signals (used to clone cellular telephones), and immigration fraud. Examples of the most sophisticated frauds are listed below.

Fuel Fraud -- Russians criminals in the Brighton Beach area of New York were the first criminal group in the United States to devise and perpetrate fuel frauds in the early 1980s. In order to operate, the Russian criminals paid a tribute or "mob tax" to members of the LCN. The alliance was profitable. It is estimated that the LCN was paid up to 1.5 cents per gallon of fuel, reaping millions of dollars per week from the Russian thieves. Currently, fuel frauds, centered mostly in California and the New York metropolitan area, cost the federal and state governments in excess of \$1 billion annually in lost tax revenue.

As Russian criminal organizations migrated to California, law enforcement personnel observed an emergence of fuel fraud beginning in 1987. The majority of the fuel fraud is committed by Russian and Armenian organized crime groups operating in the Los Angeles area. There are a variety of schemes, including falsifying state and federal tax forms, use of fictitious companies (known as "burn" companies), increasing fuel volume by blending tax free additives (such as transmix or alcohol), rigging fuel pumps, and selling lower grade fuel as a premium product.

The Mikaelian Organization ran a black market diesel fuel network that supplied gas stations and truck stops throughout Southern California. In 1996, 12 members of this criminal group, were found guilty or pleaded guilty to various charges, including racketeering. The leader pleaded guilty to narcotics trafficking, tax evasion, wire fraud, mail fraud, and telecommunications fraud. In March 1997, he was sentenced to 14 years in prison and

ordered to repay \$2.2 million in restitution to the California Board of Equalization and \$170,000 to the IRS. Mikaelian has also been ordered to forfeit additional property including an apartment complex valued at approximately half a million dollars.

Credit Card Fraud -- There are several Russian criminal networks involved in the theft and manufacture of credit cards in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, and Sacramento. These groups use stolen or counterfeit credit cards to buy expensive merchandise from department stores throughout California and other states. The following is an example of one criminal network based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

A San Francisco credit card theft group came to the attention of law enforcement personnel in December 1995. This loosely aligned confederation of Russian criminals is comprised of approximately 70 subjects who steal mail from unlocked rural mailboxes in upper-class neighborhoods, where residents might have high credit card limits.

The group is loosely governed by three or four subjects, who "call the shots." To avoid a duplication of effort the subjects chair meetings to decide territorial divisions. Young Russian emigres in their early 20's and emigrants from abroad are recruited to use the stolen credit cards. They buy thousands of dollars worth of merchandise such as expensive clothing, jewelry, and electronics from upscale department stores throughout California and other states. The criminals utilize the credit cards until the cards are at their limit, after which the cards are discarded.

In April 1996, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department arrested two members of the group for stealing credit cards. The cards were stolen from rural mailboxes in Woodside and Portola Valley. The subjects were charged with conspiracy and receiving stolen property and received county jail sentences and probation.

In September 1996, Immigration and Naturalization Service investigators arrested a subject who had been recruited by the group in Russia and traveled to the United States to steal and fraudulently use credit cards. He was charged as an undesirable alien and is waiting a deportation hearing.

Medical Insurance Fraud -- In Los Angeles, Russian organized crime figures are involved in numerous medical and auto insurance frauds. A naturalized United States citizen, born in the Ukraine, was arrested in Texas in March 1996 for masterminding a multi-million dollar insurance fraud that was operating in Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas, Miami, and Sacramento. He had approximately \$250,000 in cash in his possession at the time of his arrest.

This subject and his criminal network established chiropractic clinics, law offices, insurance companies, a notary company, and a translation company to fraudulently bill insurance companies. A long-time resident of West Hollywood, he recruited doctors, chiropractors, and attorneys in the community and conspired with them to submit fraudulent bills. In return for referring clients, the subject received kickbacks from his co-conspirators. His "lieutenants" recruited indigents to stage auto accidents and file injury claims against the victims' insurance companies. With each claim averaging between \$8,000 and \$15,000, investigators estimate the subject and his co-conspirators defrauded the insurance industry out of \$20 million over the past eight years. He also established a fictitious import/export company to facilitate the illegal entry of Russian nationals. In March 1997, he was sentenced to five years in federal prison for mail fraud and tax evasion.

Immigration Fraud -- According to United States Immigration officials in California, Russian organized crime networks are involved in marriage frauds, employment based frauds, money laundering, and organized alien smuggling through fraudulent visa petitions.

Law enforcement personnel have learned that Russian organized crime networks are establishing fictitious or shell corporations in California in order to facilitate the illegal movement of money and people. Once a fictitious business is established, Russian criminals can obtain a business visa through United States-based contacts to travel to California. These visas facilitate the entry of hitmen, enforcers, and other criminals who then leave the country immediately after committing their crimes. The fictitious companies are also used to launder money or export and import illegal

materials. Huge sums of money have been found to be wire transferred to the United States via business bank accounts established in the name of the fictitious corporations.

Auto Theft -- Auto theft rings are operating throughout the state. These Russian criminal networks are stealing thousands of vehicles ranging from Hondas to more expensive vehicles such as Land Rovers and Mercedes. Members of a Northern California auto theft ring came to the attention of law enforcement in early 1993. They operated in Sacramento and other parts of Northern California, Oregon, and Washington State. Eventually, the group became involved in extortion, cellular telephone fraud, prostitution, and trafficking small amounts of narcotics. In July 1996, 12 members of the group were named in a 17-count federal racketeering indictment on charges including conducting the affairs of an enterprise through a pattern of racketeering, extortion, trafficking in certain motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts, and unauthorized use of telecommunication services.

Extortion -- There have been a wave of extortions committed against Russian and Armenian immigrants in California. Extortionists primarily target both small and large businesses in Russian and Armenian communities. Law enforcement sources indicate the extortions are not the efforts of a single large Russian organized crime group, but are attributable to smaller competing Russian criminal rings. Members of the groups are becoming increasingly violent and have been known to kill those who default on payments or those who are perceived as competition.

Analysis and Trends

- Russian organized crime groups are opportunistic and engage in almost any criminal activity with any criminal group as long as there is a profit potential.
- Bribe money and corruption in the former Soviet Union allows these criminal groups to obtain passports and false identification to easily

travel around the globe. Their ability to operate on this international level makes investigations difficult.

- Russian organized crime groups make enormous amounts of money from various fraudulent schemes where they bring their experience in the Russian black market. Russian organized criminal groups in the United States are immersed in sophisticated gasoline excise tax frauds and massive insurance frauds. Nationally, the FBI ranks their criminal threat only behind Italian and Asian organized crime.
- West Coast Russian criminal networks are influenced by the criminal activity occurring on the East Coast. Many Russian criminals who were involved in fuel frauds on the East Coast are becoming involved in cigarette bootlegging, odometer rollbacks, increased medical and insurance frauds, and securities fraud. California law enforcement authorities expect these crimes to increase in California. Additionally, it is likely that Russian criminal networks will become involved in other sophisticated violations such as computer-related crimes.
- As a result of the incarceration of Ivankov, it is anticipated that others will be sent to the United States to complete his organizing tasks. This restructuring of power may cause repercussions or turf battles to occur in California.
- It is anticipated that Russian organized crime groups will become involved in extensive narcotics trafficking. Russian organized crime groups have established alliances with other criminal groups such as Colombian drug cartels, the LCN, and organized crime groups from Italy. With access to old Soviet shipping routes and the Italian and Colombian distribution networks, entrance into the drug trafficking arena may be a natural progression.

TRADITIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

Introduction

Traditional organized crime, commonly referred to as the Mafia or the La Cosa Nostra (LCN), is one of the largest and most powerful criminal organizations in the country. The LCN is comprised of 24 “families” in 15 states--including California. A national commission, based in New York City, oversees its operations and mediates disputes. Although three of these families are located in California, only one is criminally active; the Southern California Crime Family.

The Southern California Crime Family has approximately 20 members who reside in several Southern California and Nevada locations. Although this group is criminally active, it has been ineffective for many years because it has not been able to enforce its territorial control. As a result, California has long been known as "open territory" in which no one family controls any portion of the state. There are, however, representatives from the various “families” in the United States present in California.

Background

Over the past year, the Southern California Crime Family, led by crime boss Peter Milano, has undergone numerous changes. Although this crime family is disorganized and in a state of disarray, law enforcement sources indicate that Milano is attempting to revitalize the family’s criminal activities.

Milano recently recruited several young criminals into his organization. These recruits reportedly have ties to or are members of other criminal organizations such as the Sicilian Mafia, Hells Angels, and other LCN families on the East Coast. Although there have been active attempts to breath new life into this organization, recent indictments, including the convictions of Vincent “Jimmy” Caci, a captain, and Stephen Cino, a soldier

in the family, have damaged the family's ability to turn a profit from illegal enterprises.

In February 1996 Vincent "Jimmy" Caci, and most of his "working crew" were convicted on federal charges for conspiracy, wire fraud, and interstate transportation of fraudulently obtained money for their role in a telemarketing scheme that victimized over 100 people from the Midwest, most of whom were elderly. In August 1996, Caci was sentenced to 46 months in federal prison. According to law enforcement personnel, Caci's imprisonment has left an organized crime leadership void in the Palm Springs area, with no one moving in to fill his position.

In January 1997, another member of the Southern California Crime Family, Stephen Cino, pled guilty to conspiring to bribe an official of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators of the United States and Canada, also known as the Stagehands' Union. In April 1997, Cino was sentenced to three years probation, four months of home detention, and a \$2,500 fine for conspiracy to bribe a union official. This conviction grew out of an original 1992 indictment in Nevada along with New York-based Gambino Family Captain Natale Richichi and pornographer Kenneth Guarino. While Richichi and Guarino were indicted for tax evasion and conspiracy, Cino was charged with attempting to bribe the union official.

California's greatest threat from traditional organized crime groups comes from the migration of LCN members from the East Coast to California. In recent years, several top leaders and soldiers on the East Coast have been indicted. As a result, many LCN members are relocating to California to avoid publicity and to conduct their illicit activities.

Representatives of these East Coast LCN families are attracted to California for several reasons. Probably the most lucrative, in terms of making money, is the infiltration of legitimate businesses by crime family members. The Southern California Crime Family, along with their East Coast counterparts, often muscle their way into legitimate businesses using the ultimate LCN threat; the application of force or violence. Additionally, California is considered "open territory" allowing some members to "make a

name for themselves.” Finally, the glamor of the entertainment industry possesses an unique magnetic allure which attracts wealthy business entrepreneurs, organized crime figures, prostitutes, and drug traffickers.

Many LCN members and associates continue to be involved in traditional money-making crimes such as illegal gambling, extortion, and narcotics trafficking. Many are also involved in the infiltration of legitimate businesses associated with the Hollywood scene including trendy bars, nightclubs, and restaurants; often using celebrities and or wealthy business entrepreneurs as “front owners.” These business ownerships provide opportunities to launder money, skim profits, hide ownerships, evade taxes, and commit other illicit acts.

Prior to his death from a heart attack in May 1996, New York City based Genovese captain Joseph Denti lived in a Beverly Hills mansion where he worked on several movie productions. While living in California, Dente maintained racketeering, gambling, loan sharking, and bookmaking operations in New York. It is also believed that he was a hidden owner of several businesses in New York and California which were used to launder money obtained from his criminal enterprises.

Because of the lack of members and associates in California, the LCN finds it necessary to seek cooperation between members of different LCN families throughout the United States to achieve common criminal goals. They are also seeking alliances with other organized crime groups.

Analysis and Trends

- The Southern California Crime Family has never been strong enough to maintain a territorial boundary. Law enforcement efforts to arrest and convict family members have caused the family to lose many of its primary “money makers.” During the next several years, the family may continue to weaken if it is unable to replace these money makers or establish alternate sources of income.

- Crime family boss Peter Milano and several members are aging and may increasingly rely on younger members to conduct their day-to-day illegal operations. Members may also be absorbed by competing LCN families.
- As more emphasis is directed towards investigating and prosecuting LCN members on the East Coast, relocation of some members to California is likely. Infiltration into the business industry, particularly those in Southern California, will continue to be primary targets of LCN members.
- Members of the LCN and their associates will continue to be drawn to the glamour of the entertainment industry where organized crime figures and other criminals are fascinated with the glitz of Hollywood. Some entertainers, equally fascinated with the “mob,” may form alliances with this crime family and may be utilized as business connections and “fronts,” further eluding law enforcement detection.
- Continued law enforcement focus on the criminal activities of the LCN will minimize the negative impact on California citizenry.

Introduction

Organized crime groups, historically, have infiltrated profitable gambling establishments. The large-scale gambling operations in California are ripe for infiltration by these crime groups. Without the benefit of a regulatory agency, infiltration of the undesirable element is inevitable.

Background

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), established by the United States Congress in 1988, formally recognized Indian gambling as a right within the parameters of state gaming laws. The details of how these operations would be run were to be agreed upon by a compact (a modern day treaty) between a tribe and a state. Many of California's Indian tribes have used IGRA as an opportunity to bring prosperity to their people. The most profitable operation in a casino is the slot machines, which are not currently legal in California.

Three new Indian casinos opened in 1996 and others expanded. In 1995 there were approximately 9,300 illegal slot machines in Indian casinos and by the end of 1996 the number was over 14,300. These casinos continue to operate Class III gaming including house banked card games, blackjack, and slot machines, without benefit of a compact with the State as required by IGRA.

In October 1996, the California Attorney General's Office on behalf of the Governor, began negotiations with the Pala Band of Mission Indians in San Diego County. Although this tribe has not opened a casino, these negotiations will most likely result in a Tribal/State compact that will serve as a model for other tribes and address the slot machine issue.

During the establishment of casinos on Indian reservations in California there were several attempts by organized crime groups to infiltrate gambling operations. The Rincon tribe in San Diego has fallen victim to these groups twice in the past ten years. Additionally, investigations by tribal gambling regulators from other states into some individuals working in California Indian casinos have established that they are unsuitable to be in a position of trust. Currently, there is no mechanism for California tribal gambling operators to identify these unscrupulous subjects.

In addition to gambling on Indian reservations, California card rooms offer other opportunities to make wagers. There is; however, no enforcement or oversight of activity in a card room beyond the police powers of local jurisdictions. If illegal activity occurs within a card room and it can be proved that a licensee was involved, the Gaming Registration Unit of the California Department of Justice can revoke the license. In 1996, there were three hearings to revoke licenses at the Bicycle Card Club Casino in Bell Gardens in which the licensees condoned multiple illegal activities. These included:

- Receiving kick backs from a known convicted felon
- Involvement in a loansharking operation
- Licensee and employees allowing various other criminal activities to occur in the club
- Employee acting in the capacity of a licensee without having been licensed by the Gaming Registration Unit

The gambling demand has also been met in various otherwise legal businesses, where thousands of illegal slot machines can be found. These include bars and liquor stores, restaurants, laundromats, and “Mom and Pop” grocery stores. They may be highly visible and look like the typical Nevada-style slot machine, or they may be cleverly disguised as a video skill game which can be converted by remote control to a game of chance. Law enforcement agencies in jurisdictions of all sizes have reported this activity. These slot machines are so profitable that a distributor can abandon the

device when criminal investigations are initiated and still make a profit. One machine can easily bring in over \$2,000 per month to a business owner.

Analysis and Trends

- Gambling is expanding in California where the citizens are becoming desensitized to illegal gambling. Enforcement of gambling laws is not a high priority for law enforcement authorities, so it remains a low-risk, high-profit crime. The public's attitude toward expanded legalization of gambling may change from anti-gambling to "legalize it and tax it."
- New on the gambling scene is the advent of Internet casinos. However, this has created law enforcement jurisdictional confusion. For example, a casino operating from a legal off-shore site, may not be legal in a gambler's state.
- For organized crime groups, the gambling industry will continue to be a prime target. Historically, these groups have infiltrated gambling operations, whether by direct control or control of ancillary businesses. Crimes regularly associated with gambling include skimming, cheating, loansharking, money laundering, extortion, follow-home robbery, and tax/credit card fraud. These activities will continue to permeate gambling operations. There has been little question that California needs a gambling commission based on the enormous gambling industry that continues to grow. The need for oversight at the state level has been recognized in almost every state that has gambling.

Introduction

Asian organized crime groups are located primarily in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Los Angeles area. Groups including the Wah Ching, United Bamboo, Jackson Street Boys, triads, and Korean criminal groups are involved in crimes such as extortion, narcotics trafficking, robbery, burglary, loansharking, gambling, and murder. Some of these groups recruit Asian street gang members to commit these crimes.

Background

Jackson Street Boys -- Formerly known as an Asian street gang, the Jackson Street Boys in San Francisco, is evolving into a formidable Asian organized crime group. The group's activities were first identified by law enforcement authorities during a Wo Hop To Triad investigation in the early 1990's in Northern California. It was learned that the Wo Hop To Triad utilized the Jackson Street Boys as "enforcers" because of their violent reputation. Extensive law enforcement action and prosecution of Wo Hop To members allowed the Jackson Street Boys to usurp territory once controlled by the Wo Hop To. As a result, the Jackson Street Boys have become the most criminally active Asian organized crime group in Northern California. This group, which consists of approximately 110-130 ethnic Chinese males from Vietnam and China, is led by a Vietnamese immigrant. However, he may be ousted in an ongoing power struggle and replaced by a local gang member.

The Jackson Street Boys are involved in the extortion of commercial businesses, armed robberies of local massage parlors and gambling clubs, the importation and distribution of Asian heroin throughout the United States, kidnaping for profit, and prostitution. This group has expanded its

loansharking activities into legitimate gaming establishments in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Several members of the group are employees of a card club in the San Francisco Bay Area. One common activity associated with some of the card clubs is the illegal sale of employment positions such as those of manager, dealer, and floor personnel. The selling of positions is a lucrative business which has led to the attempted murder of a card club manager in order to gain control of his position.

Several card club dealers who have been identified as members of the Jackson Street Boys or Wah Ching have been associated with the extortion of club patrons. These dealers point out big winners and losers to other members of the crime group. Some of the winners are targeted for follow-home robberies while the losers are offered loans at loan shark interest rates. Violent methods are used to collect loans from those who do not repay the loans in time. Some enforcers used to collect the loans are Vietnamese street gang members who have a reputation for intimidating and torturing their victims. Many of these crimes are never reported by the victims for fear of retaliation.

Wah Ching -- The Wah Ching in Southern California has become a dominant, organized crime group. It has 12 factions--each comprised of approximately 100 members--primarily located in the San Gabriel Valley and Los Angeles' Chinatown. They are involved in a variety of crimes ranging from extortion and loansharking to gambling and murder.

There has been a resurgence of activity on the part of the Wah Ching in San Francisco. Approximately 70 members have been identified in a myriad of criminal activities ranging from extortion to murder. The leader of the group is closely aligned with the Sun Yee On Triad, the largest Chinese organized crime group in Hong Kong.

United Bamboo -- The United Bamboo is a Taiwan-based organized crime group. It has become an international organized crime group operating in the United States, Canada, and throughout the Far East. It is

one of the largest and most powerful Asian organized crime groups in the world. Criminal intelligence indicates that the leaders of this group in Taiwan may be directing the United Bamboo in the Los Angeles area.

World-wide membership is estimated to be between 25,000 and 30,000. A large number of members, and associates reside in the San Gabriel Valley area of Los Angeles. Criminal intelligence indicates that each faction of this group consists of a leader, senior and retired members, active members, and associates.

The United Bamboo is involved in narcotics trafficking, prostitution, alien smuggling, loansharking, gambling, home-invasion robbery, computer chip take-over robbery, money laundering, murder for hire, and corruption of public officials.

The United Bamboo has formed alliances with such criminal groups as the Four Seas Gang, Wah Ching, the Hung Mun Organization (also known as the Red Door Gang), and the Fukienese Gang, which is based in the Fujian Province in China.

As a result of a joint law enforcement task force operation in 1995 several United Bamboo members and associates were prosecuted for bookmaking and related crimes. Since then, several older members have been released from prison and have returned to their criminal activities.

Currently the United Bamboo is experiencing a resurgence among younger Asian males, with heavy recruiting occurring in the San Gabriel Valley. Additionally, Asian street gang members are claiming affiliation with the United Bamboo. United Bamboo members may in fact be directing these young Asian street gang members to commit various crimes. Young Asian males displaying leadership potential are reportedly sent to China for training and later return to control their local gang.

Triads -- Triads, Chinese organized crime groups of long standing, have an impact on California--particularly in the Chinatowns of Los Angeles and San Francisco. Two triads, the 14K and Four Seas, are active in alien smuggling in Southern California. The illegal aliens, often Thai females, are smuggled into the country to work as prostitutes. Smugglers, known as

“snake heads,” are extracting up to \$50,000 per person for their illegal passage. Usually, the aliens pay half up front, and the balance is paid in the form of indentured servitude. Some of the aliens are smuggled into the country through Canada and others through Mexico.

Some organized criminals associated with the triads are involved in the theft and robbery of computer chips. Numerous arrests were made during April 1996 in New York and California. Some of those arrested had ties to the Hong Kong triads and several other foreign countries. The initial arrests resulted in 27 federal indictments and involved 4 “bosses” of the operation; 1 from Folsom, California; 2 from Elk Grove, California; and 1 from New York City, New York. This investigation is continuing, and more arrests are expected.

Korean Criminal Groups -- Korean organized crime began in Korea in the 1940's. It started as political groups seeking to further the Korean National Independence movement which later became corrupt. In Korea, these criminal groups are referred to as “PAs” and have rigid organizational structures. The typical structure of a PA includes a boss, a second-in-command, an advisor/patron (who acts as counsel to the two leaders), the staff or middle management, and the activity leaders and activity members who are the individuals who commit the street crimes. Their leaders are usually in their 30s and 40s, and the activity members are usually in their teens.

As the Korean government moved to dismantle the PAs, the leaders fled to other areas, including the United States, to re-establish their criminal organizations. They settled within various Korean communities in this country and formed more loose-knit organizations compared to the rigid structure of the traditional PA. According to law enforcement sources, these leaders had studied the structures of the traditional organized crime groups and Chinese triads operating in the United States and adopted some of their features in terms of establishing their new criminal organizations.

Although structured, the various Korean organized crime groups in the United States do not have a single leader and vary in size from 20 to more than 100 members. Koreatown, in the Los Angeles area, has the largest metropolitan Korean population outside of Seoul, Korea. Most of the illegal activities perpetrated by these criminal groups take place in Koreatown or are directed from that area. Crimes committed by the Korean organized crime group include prostitution, alien smuggling, gambling, business fraud, robbery, burglary, auto theft, carjacking, and the counterfeiting of designer clothes and compact music discs.

Yakuza -- There are no known Yakuza (Japanese organized crime groups) members living in California; however, approximately 20 criminal associates of this group have been identified in this state. They appear to be involved in Southern California hostess clubs. It is suspected by law enforcement authorities that some of the financing used to open these clubs may have come from Yakuza organized crime sources.

Analysis and Trends

- The once powerful Wo Hop To has weakened as a result of aggressive law enforcement action. The Jackson Street Boys are rapidly taking advantage and have established their presence as a controlling organized crime force. Their struggle for control of territory in San Francisco could result in street violence and murders of other competing gang members.
- The United Bamboo may gain strength as older members are released from prison. They are expected to regain control and establish their prior criminal activities. Heavy recruitment of young Asian males to carry-out crimes is anticipated.
- In July 1997, Hong Kong reverted to the Peoples Republic of China. Law enforcement personnel anticipate that a number of Chinese

immigrants, including members of Asian organized crime groups, will migrate to California. This may also lead to an increase in the smuggling of Chinese immigrants.

- Currently, Taiwan law enforcement authorities are conducting a crackdown on organized crime groups. This enforcement action may trigger an increased exodus of Taiwanese criminals to the United States. Once established in the United States, violent confrontations between these groups may result as they fight for power and control.

CRIMINAL EXTREMIST GROUPS

Introduction

Criminal extremists form alliances and commit crimes in order to advance their political or social causes or beliefs. Some members of these alliances, particularly members of the Animal Liberation Front and various anti-government criminal extremist groups, committed acts of vandalism, threats, and fraud in California during 1996.

Background

Animal Liberation Front -- The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) is a clandestine organization comprised of independent cells throughout North America and Europe. Members of this organization commit crimes in an effort to stop medical research on animals or the production of animals for food and clothing. During its 12-year existence, the ALF's criminal activities in California have resulted in millions of dollars worth of damage through vandalism and arson to universities, restaurants, department stores, research laboratories, and agri-businesses.

In June and July 1996, two fast-food restaurants in Garden Grove and two similar restaurants in Huntington Beach, became targets of the ALF. A Molotov cocktail was thrown through the window of one restaurant, causing minor fire damage. The other restaurants were damaged by graffiti. The graffiti included phrases such as "Animal Liberation," "Next Time Fire," and "Meat is Murder." The phrase, "Meat is Murder," was also used several years ago following similar types of arson and vandalism attributed to animal rights activists.

The ALF and its criminal associates, such as the clandestine Earth Liberation Front (ELF) could be responsible for a series of eco-crimes including arson and attempted arson in other parts of the country during 1996.

Anti-Government Criminal Extremists -- During 1996, California law enforcement authorities and other government employees came in contact with anti-government criminal extremists--some of whom are common law court adherents identifying themselves as Freemen. Freemen typically defy government authority, denounce the legal system, and establish their own courts. Common law courts have been established by these Freemen in Alameda, Butte, Colusa, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, and Tuolumne counties.

Anti-government criminal extremists in California have threatened bodily harm to judges, a sheriff, and other workers in state and local government. Some of the criminal extremists have been arrested for driving without a drivers license, conspiracy, mail fraud, money laundering, falsely making and passing U. S. obligations, bank fraud, filing a false claim with the Internal Revenue Service, being an ex-felon in possession of weapons, assault, resisting arrest, threats, providing false identification or information to a police officer, and assaulting a police officer.

Some Freemen have issued homemade subpoenas to law enforcement authorities; drafted and attempted to pass fraudulent negotiable instruments as legal tender; acted as self-appointed notaries, justices, marshals, and clerks of the common law courts; and issued their own driver's licenses.

In April 1996, a Freeman from Livermore was arrested for signing a fraudulent certified bankers' check to bail an associate from the Sonoma County Jail. The Freeman had also written fraudulent checks to the County of Santa Clara, the California Franchise Tax Board, and the Internal Revenue Service. He had additionally attempted to deposit a fraudulent check for \$8 million in a San Francisco bank. The Freeman was subsequently convicted by a federal jury in San Jose of conspiracy, bank fraud, mail fraud, and filing a false claim with the Internal Revenue Service.

Also in April 1996, a Palmdale resident who described herself as a sovereign tax protestor and "lien queen" was arrested along with five other individuals for mail fraud, counterfeiting, and conspiracy. She held seminars in Orange, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino counties where hundreds of

attendees paid \$125 or more for fraudulent certified bankers' checks created by the suspect to pay their debts. Five months prior to her arrest, she had acquired a "Declaration of Quiet Title" from a common law court in Los Angeles declaring herself to be a "state." She then claimed she was not a subject of the United States nor subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. In October 1996, she was found guilty on 26 counts relating to conspiracy, mail fraud, money laundering, falsely making U. S. obligations, and passing falsely made U. S. obligations. She has subsequently been sentenced to 17 years in federal prison; ordered to pay a \$26,000 fine; and placed on 3 years supervisory release.

Analysis and Trends

- The crimes at the fast-food restaurants in Southern California could reflect a resurgence of criminal activities by the ALF. If true, then universities, research facilities, department stores, and agri-businesses could become potential targets of this group.
- The Earth Liberation Front could begin to target entities in California that they believe threaten the environment. Their eco-crimes could mirror crimes committed by the ALF.
- Anti-government criminal extremists could attempt to carry out a common law court's order to "arrest" law enforcement authorities or other public officials and bring them to "court" for sentencing. Such an attempt could result in a violent confrontation between the extremists and the officers or officials.

CRIMINAL STREET GANGS

Introduction

Criminal street gangs remain a major problem in this state, with an estimated membership of 300,000. Many gangs continue to recruit female and juvenile members who become involved in criminal activities such as burglary, robbery, theft, assault, and murder. Some gangs tend to be turf oriented while others are roving criminal enterprises. The gang problem in California primarily consists of Asian gangs, African-American gangs, Hispanic gangs, and white gangs.

Background

Asian Gangs -- There are an estimated 25,000 Asian gang members in California. These gangs, which were once formed along ethnic lines, are now becoming multiracial. A few of the gangs are also allowing females to become gang members. Years of exposure to longstanding street gangs have resulted in many Asian gangs adopting gang characteristics such as hand signs, monikers, gang colors, or declaring gang territory.

Most crimes committed by Asian gang members are for monetary gain. Primarily targeting the Asian community, these gang members commit home-invasion and follow-home robberies; computer store and factory robberies; extortion; and counterfeiting of credit cards, currency, and travelers' checks.

The violence that accompanies many of these crimes often results in serious injury or death to the victims. In February 1996, Academy Award winning actor Haing Ngor--known for his role in the movie *The Killing Fields*--was shot to death as he exited his vehicle outside his apartment in Beverly Hills. After two months of investigation, three members of a Southern California Asian gang were arrested for this crime. Law

enforcement authorities believe the murder may have been the result of a botched robbery.

Some of the shootings and killings related to Asian gangs are the result of attempts to evade arrest or seek control of certain criminal activities. In July 1996, an Asian gang member shot and killed a California Highway Patrol officer during a routine traffic stop in Fullerton. The officer, while attempting to impound the suspect's vehicle and issue him a ticket for driving without a license, was shot several times. After the shooting, the gang member took the officer's weapon and fled the scene in the officer's patrol car. The car was later recovered abandoned in Anaheim. During the follow-up investigation, law enforcement authorities discovered the suspect's vehicle contained forgery equipment and a large number of counterfeit travelers' checks. The suspect was identified through latent fingerprints found in his vehicle. The investigation ultimately led law enforcement authorities to Houston, Texas, where the suspect was arrested four days following the shooting. The suspect is currently awaiting trial.

In November 1996, the leader of a Vietnamese gang in San Francisco was shot to death at the direction of a rival Chinese/Vietnamese gang. According to law enforcement authorities, the victim had recently been released from prison and was attempting to retake control of certain criminal activities in the Tenderloin District where he previously operated a protection racket. According to a witness, the suspect fired several shots at the victim who fell to the ground. The suspect then fired two additional bullets into the victim's head. Law enforcement authorities have since arrested and charged four Asian gang members with this murder. These suspects are currently awaiting trial.

The Tiny Rascal Gang (TRG) is a typical Asian gang that has become violence oriented. The gang began as a small group and was primarily comprised of Cambodian youths in Santa Ana. It has since evolved into a multi-ethnic gang comprised of male and female members whose criminal activities now extend throughout California and the rest of the United States. There are currently an estimated 580 TRG members in 85 cities throughout this state. At least 85 of the gang members are female.

One characteristic that separates TRG members and other Asian gangs from traditional street gangs is their mobility. TRG members travel throughout the country committing crimes for monetary gain or gang notoriety. Violence associated with these crimes has escalated--often leaving behind seriously injured or dead victims. During a one-month period in mid-1995, TRG members were involved in a series of home-invasion robberies, assaults, and drive-by shootings that extended from Spokane, Washington, to Sacramento and San Bernardino, California. Left behind were a total of 13 victims--11 of whom were killed.

Asian gang members continue to traffick in stolen computer chips and components. These chips are easily stolen due to their minute size and ease of concealment. Literally worth their weight in gold, these stolen chips are often sold to independent computer chip dealers who, in turn, sell the chips around the world.

In February 1996, more than 500 local and federal law enforcement authorities in San Jose, served numerous search warrants and arrested more than 100 suspects involved in stealing and trafficking in stolen computer chips. These arrests were the result of an 18-month investigation of suspects who were not only involved in the theft and trafficking of computer chips but also robbery, burglary, possession of illegal narcotics, and the sale of unregistered weapons. Law enforcement authorities believe this criminal organization may have been responsible for the loss of \$1 million per week to Silicon Valley businesses.

African-American Gangs -- There are an estimated 100,000 African-American gang members in California, the majority of whom belong to various Crips and Bloods street gangs. While some African-American female gang members have been involved with male-dominated gangs, they were not typically looked upon as actual gang members. Recently, some of these females formed their own gangs and have become just as violent as male gang members.

Many of the younger gang members, both male and female, are expected to sell narcotics to benefit the gang and to participate in burglaries,

robberies, and drive-by shootings. These crimes often involve violence and the use of firearms.

Much of this violence leads to serious injury of innocent victims. In February 1996, two members of the Denver Lane Bloods in Los Angeles were standing across the street from an elementary school when a rival gang member drove by. As the vehicle passed, the Denver Lane Bloods began shooting at the rival gang. One of the bullets penetrated a window in the school library and struck a teacher in the head. Fortunately, the teacher survived. Both gang members were arrested for this shooting.

Some gang members are practicing defensive tactics in anticipation of arrest by law enforcement authorities or confrontation with rival gang members. In June 1996, law enforcement authorities in Southern California observed members of the Eastside Piru, an African-American street gang, rehearsing escape tactics. One gang member was pretending to be a police officer searching another gang member who was leaning against a wall. The gang member being searched spun out of the search position and attempted to take the "officer's" weapon while subduing the "officer" by knocking him down.

Other defensive tactics include gang members wearing bulletproof vests. These gang members have stated they wear the vests because they know there are warrants for their arrests, and they do not want to return to prison. They may also believe a rival gang has a "hit" out on them, and they do not want to be killed. A few members wear vests when committing crimes in anticipation of a shooting confrontation with law enforcement authorities.

Some African-American gangs are becoming involved in crimes that require precision and timing. In the early 1990s, a criminal organization known as the Romper Room Gang came to the attention of law enforcement authorities when gang members began committing a number of pizza parlor take-over robberies. Although the gang was originally active in Vallejo, it extended its area of criminal operations during 1996 to ten other cities in ten counties. They also expanded their criminal activities to include credit union, bank, and jewelry store take-over robberies.

The Romper Room Gang has been connected to 35 robberies with an estimated loss of \$1,400,000. Other criminal activities committed by these gang members include the sale of narcotics, theft of vehicles, cloning of cellular telephones, and drive-by shootings.

Other African-American gangs are also involved in robberies. For instance, 21 Crips gang members were arrested in Los Angeles on various occasions during the latter part of 1996 for robbing armored cars. These gang members represent at least three different Crips gangs in Los Angeles, and they are suspected of numerous armored car robberies throughout Los Angeles County. During one of the robberies, gang members murdered a guard during a business transaction at a junior high school in Carson.

Hispanic Gangs -- It is estimated there are 170,000 Hispanic gang members in California. Criminal activities committed by these gang members include robbery, burglary, grand theft, carjacking, drive-by and walk-up shootings, assault, battery, homicide, kidnaping, witness intimidation, and murder for hire.

More female Hispanic gang members are forming their own gangs and are independently involved in criminal activities such as robbery, burglary, auto theft, carjacking, assault, and homicide.

California Hispanic street gangs remain turf oriented, taking whatever steps necessary to protect their claimed areas of operation. In many Southern California cities, Hispanic street gangs control entire neighborhoods--making living conditions for law-abiding citizens often unbearable. Intimidation is used by these gang members to keep witnesses from reporting crimes or testifying in court.

Some community parks, once a safe haven for children, are being frequented by Hispanic gang members making recreational conditions unsafe. Children playing in these parks are becoming innocent victims of drive-by shootings, suffering injury or death from bullets meant for rival gang members.

Weapons play an integral part of a Hispanic gang member's existence. Law enforcement authorities in various parts of California report gang

members carrying 9mm and .45-caliber semi- and fully-automatic weapons, AK47s, and sawed-off shotguns. Hispanic gang members also use Molotov cocktails and hand grenades modified to explode on contact.

In September 1996, law enforcement authorities with the Los Angeles Housing Authority discovered members of the Varrío Nueva Estrada (VNE) street gang hiding weapons in a telephone relay box at a housing project. When authorities opened the box, they found a fully loaded AK47, a sawed-off .22 caliber rifle, and an altered hand grenade filled with black powder, sealed with wax, and an attached fuse.

Violent crimes perpetrated by Hispanic gang members are usually committed against rival street gangs, however, innocent people are also victims of this violence. In February 1996, a 12-year-old girl sitting in the back seat of a neighbor's car in San Pedro became the victim of a drive-by shooting intended for two other individuals. The young girl was shot in the head and died the following morning. The 17-year-old shooter is a member of the Rancho San Pedro Hispanic gang.

Home-invasion robberies, once the forte of Asian gangs, are now being committed by Hispanic gang members. Many of the victims associated with the robberies live in constant fear for their lives since they often live in the same neighborhood as the gang members.

Attacks and shootings geared toward law enforcement authorities by Hispanic street gang members present major concerns. In late 1996, two law enforcement officers in Los Angeles County were shot during confrontations with Hispanic street gang members. One officer died as a result of his injuries. Northern California law enforcement authorities are experiencing an increase in violence from these gang members who often pelt officers and their patrol cars with rocks or bottles.

Hispanic prison gangs--such as the Mexican Mafia (EME), the Nuestra Familia (NF), and the Nuestra Raza (NR)--play a role in criminal activities committed by some Hispanic street gang members. Hispanic Street gang members serving sentences in correctional institutions become allies with either the EME, NF, or the NR--often committing crimes for these prison

gangs. Their criminal activities committed within the institutions range from the smuggling of contraband and narcotics to assaults and homicides.

Prison gang influence on these street gangs outside of the correctional institutions is also increasing. Prison gang members are being paroled to various communities where they intentionally seek out street gang members to commit robbery, assault, and homicide on behalf of the prison gang.

White Gangs -- There are an estimated 5,000 white gang members in California. Although the number of white gang members remains relatively small compared with the number of Asian, African-American, and Hispanic gang members, they still pose a significant threat to society.

Skinheads and Peckerwoods continue to be the most violent white street gangs operating in the state. The typical Skinhead or Peckerwoods gang has approximately 5 to 20 members who range in age from their early teens to their mid-20s. Most of these gangs lack leadership and structure.

Most Skinheads are white supremacists--both male and female--who are primarily motivated by racism and bigotry. Many gang members shave their heads and have racist-related tattoos including swastikas, Nazi flags, hooded Ku Klux Klansmen, and "SWP" for Supreme White Power.

Peckerwoods have similar racist beliefs; and some are often tattooed with lightning bolts, swastikas; words or initials indicating White Pride, White Power, WP Peckerwood, Wood, 100% Wood, Peckerwood, or "SWP." They are often required by their peers to earn their "bolts," which refers to the lightning bolt tattoos usually found on the inside portion of their left biceps. To earn this tattoo, a Peckerwood must commit a serious assault against a non-white individual.

Criminal activities perpetrated by Peckerwoods include theft, burglary, vehicle theft, various weapon charges, possession and sale of narcotics, robbery, and assaults on peace officers. While in custody, they have been arrested for racially motivated assaults against other inmates. In the past, there have been attempts by Peckerwoods to form a prison gang; however, these attempts have failed because there has been no strong cohesive membership or leadership. Peckerwoods often possess literature or other

white supremacist propaganda advocating their Aryan white supremacist beliefs.

Most of these gang members assault people based on race, usually choosing their victims spontaneously and at random. They commit hate crimes that range from vandalism to murder. In January 1996, a Skinhead in Tustin killed a Vietnamese man for no apparent reason--other than the fact that he was Asian. The victim was a former student and president of the Vietnamese Student Association at the University of California in Los Angeles.

Most Skinheads do not confine themselves to a specific location. They travel between cities and states. They often align with traditional white supremacy groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), the White Aryan Resistance (WAR), and the Church of the Creator (COTC).

Skinheads attend white supremacist rallies, marches, concerts, and demonstrations both in California and other states. They distribute white supremacy literature at local schools, shopping malls, and neighborhoods.

Some Skinheads have post office boxes and telephone hotlines where prospective members can obtain information and listen to recordings regarding their racist beliefs. The use of the Internet is becoming popular with some white supremacists to recruit members, spread racist rhetoric, or discuss information about making bombs and using automatic weapons. Skinheads have more than a hundred websites on the Internet.

Analysis and Trends

- Many gang members are profit motivated, and the importance they place on obtaining money from criminal activities could lead to increased gang-related violence. The number of predatory-type crimes attributed to gangs will continue to increase, and many will be felonies.
- Asian gang members know there are huge profits to be gained from participating in the theft of computer chips. The internationalization of trafficking these stolen components will allow some gang members to develop worldwide criminal associates.

- Gang members, who come under the auspices of the “three-strikes” law, may be prone to resist or evade arrest by law enforcement authorities. Authorities will encounter more gang members wearing bulletproof vests.

- Female gang members will continue to be criminally active in order to make a name for themselves within the gang environment. More female gangs will form and their level of violence will be equal to their male counterparts.

Intelligence Operations Programs/Accomplishments

The Intelligence Operations Program (IOP) consists of three major components; the Organized Crime Unit, Gangs/Criminal Extremist Unit, and the Technical Operations Unit. They are staffed with criminal intelligence specialists, research analysts, photo-electronic specialists, and support personnel.

Members of the IOP are responsible for a multitude of duties. They are assigned to identify criminal activities involving members of gangs, criminal extremists, and organized crime groups operating in California. IOP personnel support local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating criminal intelligence on criminal groups in order to assess their criminal activities, structure, strengths, and weaknesses. Staff participate in task force operations, provide training in workshop and conference settings, and prepare intelligence bulletins and major publications for the law enforcement community.

Special agents in four regional offices located in Los Angeles, Sacramento, Orange/San Diego, and San Francisco work closely with IOP personnel to investigate targeted criminal groups.

In order to assist IOP personnel and special agents in the field, the Automated Criminal Intelligence Index (ACII) , an automated intelligence file, is maintained in the IOP. Criminal intelligence is stored and retrieved from ACII to further develop analyses of criminal activities and trends occurring in this state. The automated system is available, through staff in the IOP, for law enforcement inquires from around the world on a need-to-know and/or right-to-know basis.

Organized Crime Unit -- The Organized Crime Unit (OCU) is responsible for the collection, evaluation, collation, analysis, and dissemination of criminal intelligence information relating to traditional organized crime

groups, illegal gaming, and non traditional-organized crime groups such as Russian organized crime groups. The unit, staffed with criminal intelligence specialists, a research analyst, and support personnel, conducts short- and long-range analyses relating to organized crime groups, provides written documentation pertaining to potential problem areas they have identified, and recommends courses of action.

Unit staff regularly participates in regional intelligence meetings to disseminate and collect criminal intelligence data. They provide training to local law enforcement agencies and are an integral part of the Attorney General's Annual Organized Crime and Criminal Intelligence Training Conference. Unit specialists also provide analytical support to local, state, and federal agencies in major criminal investigations.

The unit acts as the central coordinating agency for the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit (LEIU), an international association of approximately 250 law enforcement agencies in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Great Britain. LEIU is devoted to the rapid exchange of criminal intelligence information on traveling criminals. During 1996, an automated database was developed to enhance communication between LEIU members and the tracking of traveling criminals.

The unit also serves as the state liaison for the International Police Organization (INTERPOL.) This provides California law enforcement agencies with a more expeditious communications channel for the exchange of criminal data with law enforcement authorities in foreign countries.

Gangs/Criminal Extremist Unit -- The Gangs/Criminal Extremist Unit (G/CEU) consists of criminal intelligence specialists, research analysts, and support personnel who are skilled in identifying members of street and prison gangs, terrorist and criminal extremist organizations, and Asian organized crime groups in California. The unit is responsible for collecting information pertaining to these criminal operations; maintaining the information in a central clearinghouse of investigative leads; assessing the information for trends and patterns; and providing the information to law enforcement, the Legislature, and the public.

Unit staff provides training and analytical support to investigators and prosecutors responsible for targeting these criminal operations. Staff also maintains an ongoing, statewide assessment of criminal activities committed by members of these groups.

The analytical support contributes to the arrest and conviction of gang members, terrorists, criminal extremists, and Asian organized crime figures. Training in the form of workshops, seminars, and conferences provides the latest information regarding the magnitude, criminal activities, and violence potential of these groups to local, state, and federal law enforcement officers. Assessments--via special reports, bulletins, and publications -- detail the widespread criminality of these operations, along with their impact on society and the state of California.

Technical Operations Unit -- The Technical Operations Unit (TOU) was established to provide law enforcement agencies with an inventory of sophisticated electronic surveillance and communication equipment used to combat organized crime, gang, and criminal extremist activity in California. Staffed with three photo-electronic specialists, the unit maintains an inventory of specialized equipment available for temporary loans at no cost to peace officers in California.

Unit specialists perform custom-design, fabrication, and installation of covert surveillance equipment, travel throughout the state installing court-ordered pen register and wiretap equipment, and supply expert witness testimony. The unit also provides technical advice and training on the use and installation of electronic surveillance equipment. Unit specialists, in conjunction with the California Department of Justice's Advanced Training Center, teach the POST-accredited Specialized Surveillance Equipment course and the Interception of Wire Communication class. They also perform audio and video tape analyses and enhancement in the unit's sophisticated tape laboratories. These tapes are used for further investigation or to facilitate prosecution.

Publications, Bulletins, and Training

Tiny Rascal Gang Publication -- The G/CEU developed a major report targeting the Tiny Rascal Gang (TRG), which is one of the fastest growing Asian gangs in California. The report identified 580 TRG members (including 85 female members) in over 80 cities throughout the state.

The report provided an assessment of the gang's violence potential ranging from assaults and home-invasion robberies to drive-by shootings and murders. The report also addressed the gang war with a Hispanic gang that resulted in 38 deaths.

The report was offered to all law enforcement authorities responsible for investigating and prosecuting TRG members. A summary of the report, in the form of two "Intelligence Operations Bulletins," was provided to 1,400 law enforcement authorities throughout California and the rest of the United States.

Law enforcement authorities will use the information from the report, bulletins, and workshops to recognize and identify TRG members involved in criminal activities; track and monitor inter- and intrastate movements of the gang members; develop investigative leads and target specific gang members for coordinated investigations; and solve and prevent crimes.

Russian Organized Crime Publication -- In March 1996, a comprehensive report entitled *Russian Organized Crime: California's Newest Threat* was released to the public. This report, prepared by personnel in the Organized Crime Unit, outlines the magnitude and threat of Russian organized crime in the former Soviet Union, the United States, and California. This report was requested by and distributed at the United States Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations hearings on Russian organized crime held in Washington, D.C. during May 1996.

1995 Annual Report on Organized Crime to Legislature Publication --One of the responsibilities of the IOP staff is to provide an assessment of organized crime, gang and criminal extremist activity to the California State

Legislature. This report, released to the legislature in December 1995, is an open source document and is available to the general public and other government entities.

Intelligence Operations Bulletins -- During 1996, the Intelligence Operations Program researched, prepared, and disseminated 19 Intelligence Operations Bulletins to over 1,400 criminal justice agencies throughout the United States and Canada. These bulletins are for law enforcement use only and describe specific gangs, organized crime groups, or criminal extremist groups. They also describe the magnitude of a crime problem, various methods of operation, and the violence potential of these criminal enterprises, along with timely investigative leads and police officer safety issues.

Tiny Rascal Gang Workshops -- The G/CEU co-sponsored five TRG-related training workshops for law enforcement personnel between November 1996 and April 1997. The workshops were held in San Bernardino (twice), Fresno, San Jose, and Sacramento. Approximately 400 law enforcement authorities received POST-certified training at these workshops regarding the gang's membership, crimes, violence, and mobility.

California Attorney General's 11th Annual Organized Crime and Criminal Intelligence Training Conference

The California Attorney General's Annual Organized Crime and Criminal Intelligence Training Conference held in August each year is designed to provide law enforcement personnel with practical information on organized crime, gangs, and criminal extremist groups in California, as well as training in the criminal intelligence process. This conference supports and fosters critical networking between local, state, and federal law enforcement investigators.

In August 1996, the Bureau of Investigation hosted its tenth annual training conference. The conference was attended by an all-time high of

745 law enforcement personnel. It was described by attendees as one of the most well organized, professional, and "first-class conferences" in the state.

The conference hosted attendees from all over the United States and as far away as Singapore. The 1997 Annual Attorney General's Organized Crime and Criminal Intelligence Training Conference will be held during August, 1997, in Sacramento.

New Automated Information Systems

The Bureau of Investigation has been involved in the development of a statewide automated gang information system which will enhance law enforcement's ability to identify gang members and help to coordinate investigations. A description of the automated system follows:

The Cal/Gang System -- The Cal/Gang System is being developed by the Bureau of Investigation. It will give law enforcement authorities the ability to identify gang members involved in criminal activities and track them throughout the state. The rapid growth of gangs in California, and the increasing mobility of gang members from one jurisdiction to another, has tested the resources of many local law enforcement agencies. Some agencies simply lack the resources to accurately assess the number and size of gangs in their jurisdictions and identify suspected gang members. As more jurisdictions begin to experience problems with gang-related crime, there is a growing need for law enforcement to share gang-related data with other authorities through an on-line, automated database. The key strategy for collecting such information and sharing it with the largest audience of law enforcement agencies throughout the state is the CAL/GANG System. It will become the most comprehensive, automated gang information database in the nation.

Since gang activities are no longer isolated acts limited to just the neighborhood of the gang members, the CAL/GANG System will provide a mechanism for pinpointing investigative needs and identifying crime

suspects beyond each agency's local jurisdiction. Gangs that spread their violence to diverse parts of the state and import their special brand of terrorism to areas that have never known gang problems before, will soon be effectively tracked. Gang members involved in criminal activities will be more readily identified and arrested with investigative assistance and information gained from CAL/GANG.

The CAL/GANG System will initially network those law enforcement agencies currently using the Gang Reporting Evaluation and Tracking System (GREAT). CAL/GANG will replace the GREAT system and through subsequent development will allow for the integration of similar systems and other law enforcement agencies who do not use GREAT. GREAT is an automated gang database that already contains information on the identities of approximately 200,000 gang members, their criminal activities, and information on their particular gangs throughout California and Nevada. New members are being added to the system daily.

The identification of gang members in CAL/GANG, as with the GREAT System, will be premised upon criminal predicate in accordance with California Penal Code Section 186.22, Street Terrorism Enforcement Prevention (STEP) Act. The names of the members are maintained in the system in strict adherence to the California Attorney General's *Criminal Intelligence File Guidelines*, and in conformance with intelligence file requirements under federal regulations Title 28, Code Of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 23.

The CAL/GANG System will provide all agencies now participating in the GREAT System direct access to each others information via a central database in Sacramento. The GREAT System has been remarkably successful at the local level in providing critical street gang information to officers in the field and law enforcement authorities in general. The CAL/GANG System promises to enhance the use of this information by providing faster access, a more user-friendly interface, analytical tools that will provide a better overview and analysis of the information available, and

the ability to share photo's and videos and line-up arrangements of mug shots of known gang members with law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

The CAL/GANG System is a major strategy that will contribute to the overall reduction of gang related crimes in California and will provide authorities with the following enhanced benefits.

- Identifying gang members involved in crime
- Tracking the movement of gang members across jurisdictions
- Coordinating police response to gang violence
- Enhancing officer safety
- Measuring gang crime and violence
- Forecasting trends
- Assisting in solving crime and preventing violence

\$420,000 in combined Gang Violence Suppression and federal funding was received from the Office of Criminal Justice and Planning (OCJP) in May 1997. This will pay for the first phase development of regional information databases (nodes) in Sacramento, San Diego, and Los Angeles. OCJP will make an additional \$385,000 available in fiscal year 97/98 to fund completion of the remaining five nodes. The project is scheduled for completion in December 1997.

The CAL/GANG system will be a showcase system for future DOJ automated information systems. Its web-based, open systems approach promises tremendous application improvements and analytical advantages over older, point to point, proprietary systems. It is anticipated that CAL/GANG's user friendly interface, extremely low start-up and maintenance costs, as well as its ability to provide statewide information to end users via a single point of entry into the system, will result in hundreds of additional agencies that are now unable to participate in GREAT, utilizing CAL/GANG.

The technology under which CAL/GANG has been developed will provide DOJ with the ability to interface with other DOJ, local, state, and

federal information and criminal intelligence systems thus providing a more integrated source of information to local law enforcement.

Investigative/Intelligence Results

Northern California Auto Theft Group, Sacramento -- In May 1993, special agents and analysts from the Bureau of Investigation began developing intelligence on a growing criminal enterprise in the Sacramento area. A Russian criminal group was found to be involved in an organized effort to steal late-model vehicles such as Lexus', Hondas and Toyotas. This criminal group operated in the Sacramento region, as well as other parts of Northern California, Oregon, and Washington. Members also became active in extortion, drug trafficking and major frauds involving credit cards, welfare and cloned cellular telephones. As a result of the intelligence gathering effort, a multi-agency task force was formed, which included special agents and analysts of the Bureau of Investigation, Federal Bureau of Investigation, California Highway Patrol, Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Secret Service and the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department to target this group.

In July 1996, 12 members of this Russian organized crime group were named in a 17-count federal racketeering indictment. The alleged leader of this group provided direction to his criminal network and was involved in the planning and execution of extortions, theft of vehicles, and the sales of stolen vehicles and stolen vehicle parts. Members of the group used cloned cellular telephones to communicate with each other in order to organize and conduct their criminal business. Trial dates are currently pending.

"Operation Gas Gangsters," Los Angeles -- In 1994, special agents from the Los Angeles Regional Office, along with members of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Departments of Defense and Transportation, Los Angeles Police Department, and Long Beach Police Department formed a joint task force and conducted an investigation of a

Russian organized crime group operating in Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties.

This group ran a black market diesel fuel network that supplied fuel to gas stations and truck stops throughout Southern California. They defrauded the Internal Revenue Service and the State Board of Equalization through various schemes. It is unknown exactly how much the crime group profited; although, according to the U.S. Attorney's office, this criminal group cost the state and federal treasuries "in the tens of millions of dollars over a number of years," in lost tax revenue.

In 1996, 12 members of the crime group were found guilty or pleaded guilty to various charges including racketeering, mail and wire fraud, money laundering, extortion, and distribution of heroin and other narcotic controlled substances. They were ordered to turn over \$3.4 million in assets and properties and pay \$6.4 million in restitution to the State Board of Equalization and the Internal Revenue Service. The group's leader plead guilty to multiple criminal counts, and in March 1997, he was sentenced to 14 years in prison. He was also ordered to pay \$2.2 million in restitution to the State Board of Equalization and \$170,000 to the IRS. He was also ordered to forfeit additional property including an apartment complex valued at approximately \$500,000.

Jackson Street Boys, San Francisco -- In the early 1990s an investigation was initiated by special agents from the San Francisco Regional Office, officers from the San Francisco Police Department Gang Task Force, and special agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. As a result of the investigation, agents learned that the Wo Hop To often used Jackson Street Boys as "enforcers" because of their reputation for violence. Due to the success of the investigation, the subsequent indictment of many members of the Wo Hop To, and the flight of its leader to China, much of the Wo Hop To's criminal enterprises reverted to the Jackson Street Boys.

A classic example of the Jackson Street Boys' viciousness was their attack on a 14-year-old boy in Chinatown. The boy, who had no known affiliation to the criminal group, was attacked without provocation by three

Jackson Street Boys, who kicked, punched, and then stabbed with a large meat-hook type implement which punctured the youth's lung. A joint investigation by special agents of the San Francisco Bureau of Investigation Regional Office and San Francisco Police Department Gang Task Force officers resulted in the arrests of all three suspects.

During the 1996, special agents from the San Francisco Regional Office and officers from the San Francisco Police Department Gang Task Force arrested over a dozen members or close associates of the group for crimes including robbery, extortion, assault with a deadly weapon, and possession of "ice" methamphetamine for sale.

United Bamboo, Los Angeles -- The United Bamboo organized crime group is primarily involved in illegal gambling, which includes, bookmaking, residential mah jong, loansharking, debt collecting and money laundering. This organized crime group has amassed billions of dollars worldwide from these crimes as well as from alien smuggling and drug trafficking. The United Bamboo owns legitimate businesses in Southern California which serve as "front" companies for money laundering.

As a result of a three year joint investigation by the Los Angeles Regional Office of the Bureau of Investigation, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 15 members of the United Bamboo were indicted for operating an illegal gambling operation. In July 1996, seven members were arrested on federal charges of operating an illegal gambling business, interstate transmission of wagering information, and money laundering. Several members remain at large and more arrests are expected.

Japanese Organized Crime Associate, Los Angeles -- The Japanese Organized Crime Southern California Network (JOCSCN) is a law enforcement intelligence sharing network composed of the Bureau of Investigation and law enforcement agencies in Southern California and out-of-state. In March 1995, members of JOCSCN initiated an investigation on a Japanese organized crime associate suspected of smuggling cocaine from

the West Coast to Japan. In January 1996, a search warrant was executed on the suspect's residence and cocaine was seized. The suspect was extradited to Japan and will be prosecuted there. This was a landmark investigation in which Japanese law enforcement agencies used evidence seized by U. S. law enforcement agencies to successfully prosecute a Japanese national in Japan.

Asian Organized Criminal Enterprise, Los Angeles -- In March and April 1996, special agents from the Los Angeles Regional Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department conducted numerous surveillance and intelligence gathering operations on an Asian organized criminal enterprise. This group has been involved in armed takeover robberies of computer companies and the nationwide kidnappings of their executives. Between 1995 and 1996, approximately 125 individuals were involved in 11 computer business takeover robberies in California.

This organized crime group operates in San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, Stockton, Los Angeles, San Diego, and other major cities in the United States, China, and Thailand. Criminal intelligence sources indicate that this group has an international hierarchical organizational structure, consisting of bosses, crew chiefs, lieutenants, and soldiers. The bosses orchestrate and direct armed robberies after receiving orders for specific computer components from the buyers. The bosses are so well insulated that many of the group's members are unaware of their identities.

In April 1996, this joint investigative effort led to the indictment and arrest of seven subjects on violations of the Federal Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization (RICO) statute and conspiracy to interfere with interstate commerce by threat under the Hobbs Act. As a result of the criminal intelligence gathered during this investigation, two murder cases and several armed robbery cases were solved.

Compton Bloods and Crips, Los Angeles -- In September 1996, West Coast rapper Tupac Shakur, was shot and killed after attending a boxing match in Las Vegas. In March 1997, East Coast rapper, Christopher Wallace, also known as Notorious B.I.G., was shot to death in Los Angeles after attending a music awards party. The shootings brought national attention, not only to the on-going feud between Bloods and Crips, but also rivalries between the West Coast and the East Coast Rap music community who also claimed allegiance to the respective gangs.

The shooting of Shakur sparked a number of retaliatory assaults and killings by rival gangs in the Compton area. The Los Angeles Regional Office of the Bureau of Investigation participated in a multi-agency operation targeting both Bloods and Crips gang members in Compton who were suspected of involvement in the crimes. As a result of this enforcement action, 21 gang members were arrested and numerous firearms and narcotics were seized.

- The California Legislature needs to pursue the passage of Assembly Bill 856 seeking the establishment of the Witness Protection Program. The protection of witnesses before and during a trial remains a problem for many district attorneys. Witnesses are being intimidated, threatened, and killed by gang members to keep them from testifying. Prosecutors indicate witness intimidation is a key factor that must be overcome in many violent gang cases. Often, gang-related cases never go to trial without the testimony of witnesses because the prosecutor lacks sufficient physical evidence to convict the gang member. Some of the cases that go to trial end in dismissal when witnesses refrain from testifying out of fear for their life or their family's lives. Prior to its elimination in 1991 due to reductions in the state budget, the California Witness Protection Program provided protection for 620 witnesses in 543 cases since its inception in July 1978. A major portion of the program's funding was directed toward the protection of witnesses threatened by gangs.
- Criminals are becoming increasingly astute in concealing their identities, criminal activities, and assets earned from their illegal enterprises. As a result, it is often difficult for law enforcement authorities to track investigative leads and identify these criminals and businesses involved in criminal activities. There is a need for the California Department of Justice to establish a research unit that would scour various public records for this vital information. On-line database records would provide investigators and prosecutors with the criminals' current and former addresses, social security numbers, aliases, telephone numbers, banking and financial histories, business and corporate records, and real estate transactions. This information would also be useful to help

identify well hidden assets obtained with proceeds from illegal activities. Access to this information would be an invaluable criminal intelligence tool in building investigative profiles on organized crime groups, criminal street gangs, and criminal extremist organizations, and increases the odds of a successful investigation. Funding for such a research unit is critical and would save immeasurable personnel hours.

- Legislation is needed to create a State Gambling Commission. As gambling has grown throughout the United States, most states have responded by forming a state regulatory agency to monitor the industry. Such a regulatory agency in California may have thwarted several previous attempts by members of organized crime groups and other unscrupulous people to infiltrate the industry, which is especially vulnerable to skimming and money laundering. The creation of this commission is essential to discourage the migration of organized crime groups to California. The powers of such a regulatory agency should include regular audits of legal gaming establishments, background investigations of casino owners, investors, employees, and vendors; and an enforcement team for investigating crime associated with the industry. Gambling is a growing industry in California and regulating it should be a primary concern to the California State Legislature because of the enormous potential for corruption, money laundering, tax evasion, and other similar crimes.

- Identification of a permanent funding source for the maintenance and expansion of the CAL/GANG System is needed. While initial project funding from the Office of Criminal Justice Planning ensures that CAL/GANG may now be built in its entirety, there are no assurances that ongoing funding for maintenance and system expansion will be available in future years. As the system grows, and linkages are developed to other Department of Justice systems, and more agencies begin to use CAL/GANG, additional positions will be required to ensure reliable performance and response from the system to client agencies.

A permanent funding source should be identified and approved that provides for full time critical support positions at the Department's data center and the Bureau of Investigation. As the technology driving CAL/GANG begins to support newer, more innovative, and cost effective applications for existing databases, it will become a model for deployment of a web-based national gang database solution. It then will only be a matter of time before CAL/GANG becomes a sought after and invaluable link for criminal intelligence information for law enforcement agencies throughout the United States.

- Identify an ongoing funding source for the replacement and update of wire intercept and electronic surveillance equipment housed in the Department of Justice, Technical Operations Unit (TOU). This electronic surveillance equipment is critical to local and state law enforcement agencies in their efforts to investigate organized crime groups, street gangs, criminal extremists, and for officer safety. TOU's current inventory does not provide reliable technology needed for officer safety. Outdated body wire systems (used to monitor undercover operations) do not have encrypted transmitters which prevents monitoring by suspects using common scanners. Current body wire technology also provides much clearer voice reception which is crucial for officer safety. Additionally, current night vision scope technology provides greatly enhanced visibility under even extremely low light conditions. The ability to more clearly observe nighttime undercover situations reduces officer safety concerns. Cases could currently be compromised and officer safety threatened due to the inability of current equipment to provide clear pictures of the situation. Other specialized equipment in the TOU inventory requires many personnel hours to repair and maintain.