

FBI task force says violence of street gangs may increase

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Gang violence rages on in the City of Angels and street thugs are expanding their drug trade to other U.S. cities despite police sweeps, a new FBI task force said Friday.

More than 200 people have died in gang-related slayings so far this year; 11 people were slain last weekend, and an undercover police officer was shot to death Saturday while tailing suspects in a drive-by shooting.

Los Angeles County had a record 357 gang-related slayings in 1987, and authorities are expecting more than 420 in 1988, said Deputy District Attorney Michael Genelin, head of the district attorney's Hardcore Gang Unit.

Drive-by gang killings now average more than one a day and often claim innocent bystanders in their plights.

Community outcry prompted Los Angeles police to launch a full-scale assault in March. Twice since then, they have marched 1,000 officers into

the most gang-infested areas on weekends to stop the gang wars.

The result has been a decline in the overall crime rate, although the gang murder rate continues to climb.

"We're in a holding action," Robert Philibosian, former district attorney and head of a state task force on gangs and drugs, said. "We're keeping the flames from spreading but we're not putting them out."

Los Angeles gangs are expanding their cocaine-trafficking networks as far as Seattle, Kansas City, Mo., and Philadelphia, law enforcement authorities said.

"We have people coming from L.A. to sell cocaine, not to start gangs," Seattle police Officer Dan Fordice said. "It's a business deal here, it's not gangs."

A Los Angeles gang member was recently sentenced to 25 years in prison in Seattle for selling drugs near a school, he said.

Kansas City has had eight successful prosecutions of Los Angeles gang members for narcotics offenses, Sgt. Kathleen Pierce said.

Authorities said it will take much more than cops on corners to make a dent in the 70,000 members of the 600 gangs in the county.

"It's going to take years," Lawrence Lawler, the new FBI chief for Los Angeles, said. "The FBI has worked at stopping the drug problem for 30 years and still hasn't stopped it. It's a form of life to some people. It may be an entire generation before this goes away."

When Lawler arrived here from Minneapolis two months ago, his first big action was to establish an FBI gang unit here because he had begun to see Los Angeles' Bloods and Crips gangs sell cocaine in St. Paul, Minn.

U.S. Attorney Robert Bonner also created an anti-gang unit of federal and local law enforcement.

Official: Response to flight emergency has been improved

WASHINGTON (AP) — Improvements in emergency procedures since the Delta Flight 191 tragedy three years ago contributed to an "excellent" response after last week's crash, a member of a federal investigating team said Sunday.

"This emergency response appears to be one of the most effective that I've ever seen," said Lawrence D. Roman, a representative of the American Association of Airport Executives and a member of the "survival factors" group of the National Transportation Safety Board team investigating Wednesday's crash.

Delta Flight 1141 crashed and burned on takeoff, killing 13. Ninety-five people, including the three members of the flight crew, survived as the Boeing 727 skidded to rest at the end of a runway.

"It would appear that on first impression that this response was excellent," Roman said.

He stressed that he was not speaking on behalf of the investigation, but as a representative of the airport executives association.

Roman said changes made in emergency response procedures at the airport since the 1985 crash of Delta Flight 191, including installation of cellular telephones in ambulances, helped in evacuating survivors.

Forest fires blaze across more of Yellowstone National Park

SILVER GATE, Mont. (AP) — Residents outside the northeastern entrance to Yellowstone National Park were told to evacuate Sunday as hundreds of firefighters mounted a last-ditch effort to save this town, and a spokesman said the situation within the huge park was deteriorating.

"It's going to be a siege for the next 48 hours," Pat Kaunert, a fire information officer, said.

More than 50 fire engines stood by to protect homes in Silver Gate and nearby Cooke City as the 57,000-acre fire approached from the west. Park County disaster coordinator Bob Fry said about 150 people were being evacuated from their homes.

In a last-ditch effort to save this town, Kaunert said. "We need two miles of buffer in front of the fire to hold it. Two miles of black."

The blazes now cover some 910,000 acres of the greater Yellowstone area, including 611,000 acres within the park itself, or more than one-fourth of Yellowstone's 2.2 million total acreage.

Within Yellowstone itself, firefighters Sunday tried to save wooden foot bridges and protect a campground.

"This situation is growing increasingly more serious day by day," Yellowstone National Park spokesman Joan Anzelmo said. "It is a magnitude that no one in their wildest imagination or scientific predictions could have suggested."

Anzelmo added that without help from the weather, no amount of money spent by the National Park Service or the U.S. Forest Service will help douse the blazes.

"Mother Nature is making the decisions here," Anzelmo said.

Elsewhere Sunday, Washington state's most serious forest fires ballooned to more than 10,000 acres, sending smoke and ash over the town of Republic but posing no immediate threat to the town.

In Silver Gate, Mont., a sheriff's department vehicle drove down the street at 8 a.m., its siren blaring. Authorities knocked on doors and phoned people, asking them to leave. Under Montana law, officials cannot force anyone to evacuate a home.

Wayne Johnson watched the firefighters march by and said he was staying. "There's no real reason to leave," he said. "I don't think the town's going to burn."

The lightning-sparked fire threatening Silver Gate has been burning June 14. Under Forest Service policy for naturally occurring fires, the blaze was allowed to burn as long as it remained within certain boundaries.

But in mid-August, wind gusting to 70 mph blew the fire across several miles in a matter of hours, and a human-caused fire to the west also gained ground.

Statue of Liberty remains woman linked to politics

WASHINGTON (AP) — While politicians normally don't want to be linked with women other than their wives, there's one gal that candidates have been fawning over for more than 100 years.

She's 151 feet tall and stands demurely in New York Harbor.

Candidates and their image makers say there's no better company to be seen in — especially on coast-to-coast television — than that of the Statue of Liberty.

So coveted is she as political company that the campaigns of Michael Dukakis, the Democratic presidential nominee, and Republican vice presidential contender Sen. Dan Quayle clashed over which of them would hold the lady's hand this Labor Day.

Quayle prevailed, but only because he asked first, according to the National Park Service.

As the statue's custodian, the Park Service takes great pains to assure the statue does not show favorites.

Still, she has been always been a willing companion since her dedication by President Grover Cleveland in 1886.

"There's more emotion packed in the Statue of Liberty than almost anything else in America."

— Greg Stevens, media consultant

Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Richard Nixon have all paid calls on the statue during reelection bids.

"The Statue of Liberty is something special," says Greg Stevens of Ailes Communications, media consultant for George Bush.

For tugging at voters' emotions, the grandiose statue and her dramatic surroundings are a better backdrop than any Hollywood set.

The statue took its prime place in the World War I war bond drives of 1917, replacing the female Colum-

bia as the personification of America, says Park Service archivist Barry Marino.

"There's more emotion packed in the Statue of Liberty than almost anything else in America," Stevens says.

President Reagan chose Liberty State Park in Jersey City, N.J., to kickoff the 1980 campaign that put him in the White House.

The Hudson River-front park offers a dramatic view of the statue against the skyscrapers of lower Manhattan.

Both Dukakis and Quayle wanted to appear Monday at the two-island Statue of Liberty-complex: Liberty Island, where the statue stands, and Ellis Island, where millions of immigrants entered the United States in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

Since Quayle asked first, Dukakis had to settle for a tour of Ellis Island on Saturday.

He escorted his mother, Euterpe, a Greek immigrant who arrived in this country via the island.

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Wednesday, Sept. 14 -- Casual Gathering
7:00 p.m. Rudder 701

Friday, Sept. 16 -- Social before Yell Practice
8:00 p.m. Timbercreek Party Room

Monday, Sept. 19 -- Formal (business attire)
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