

POLICE

Muslims, Arabs Targets of Intimidation

(AP) -- Hate crimes in Oregon increased 50 percent last year, according to new statistics released by the FBI.

The agency says anti-Arab sentiment after the 2001 terrorist attacks contributed to the rise in such reported crimes in Oregon, from 171 to 255 between 2000 and 2001.

Nationally, the United States recorded a 21 percent increase in bias-motivated crimes between 2000 and 2001, according to the bureau's annual Hate Crimes Statistics report.

A more comprehensive data collection system put in place by



the Portland Police Bureau also contributed to the statistical spike, said Susan Hardy, a state police crime reporting specialist in Salem.

Hardy said that no anti-Arab bias crimes were reported in all of 2000. But in 2001, there were 29, she said, and all of them came in after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The 29 victims — 24 men, five women — were targets of intimidation or vandalism because of a hatred for Arabs or Muslims, Hardy said.

One of the most serious of Oregon's anti-Arab hate crimes in 2001 occurred five days after

Hate Crime Backlash



An Anglo woman uttered a racist remark at two Arab men at a highway rest stop in Douglas County. When one of them stepped forward to challenge her remark, she shoved him.

the 9/11 attack. An Anglo woman uttered a racist remark at two Arab men at a highway rest stop in Douglas County. When one of

them stepped forward to challenge her remark, she shoved him.

"She told them to go home, because they weren't wanted

here," Hardy said.

The number of hate crimes reported to Portland police in all areas — race, religion, sexual ori-

entation, ethnicity and disability — increased from 33 to 108 between 2000 and 2001, according to the FBI statistics. The number of hate crimes based on religion alone climbed from 2 to 14 reports in that time.

Gulzar Ahmed, a founding member of the Islamic Society of Greater Portland, said the number of hate crimes against Arab-Americans would lessen if the general public learned that they, too, condemn terrorism.

"They have to be shown that Muslims in general are peace-loving people," he said. "They are going through difficult times."

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Three Arrested in Tigard Heroin Sweep

(AP) — Narcotics agents arrested three men and searched six homes in Tigard, Woodburn and Portland in a drug sweep that officials say took out a distribution ring with the potential to supply half the heroin addicts in the metropolitan area.

Last week's arrests were the result of a 10-month investigation by the FBI and the Regional Organized Crime and Narcotics Task Force, said John Laing, assistant U.S. attorney.

He said the group was responsible for big shipments of high-grade heroin intended for Portland area streets. About two-thirds of Oregon's drug deaths last year were blamed on heroin.

"We hope that this will make a ma-

ior impact on the availability of this high-purity heroin," Laing said.

Three Mexican nationals were arrested and three others are fugitives in the case.

Officials say they are part of a drug trafficking network in western Mexico that has ties to the Tijuana-based Arellano-Felix cartel, one of Mexico's leading exporters of heroin, cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamine into the United States.

Arrested on drug trafficking charges were Rubial Perez-Diaz, 27; Abel Mendoza-Esqueda, 34; and Cornelio Mendoza-Esqueda, 32. Being sought are Guadalupe Mendoza-Esqueda, 28; Juan Carlos Lopez, 25; and Marco Antonio Diaz-Vernal, 25.

Drug Kingpin Pleads Guilty

(AP) — An accused drug kingpin has pleaded guilty in federal court to importing more than \$1 million of the popular teenage drug Ecstasy to Portland.

Andre Nevin Wegner, 32, was to stand trial last week, but instead pleaded guilty to seven counts of importation and distribution. He also agreed to turn over \$1 million in drug proceeds.

Wegner was charged in July 2001 after agents seized 21 pounds, or 30,000 tablets, of the drug — the largest seizure of Ecstasy in Portland to that date.

In the following months, agents seized more than 100,000 tablets and arrested five men.

Wegner faces up to 20 years for each count but will likely serve much less under U.S. sentencing guidelines.

He will be sentenced March 4, although he may be sentenced in Los Angeles where he faces another federal case involving Ecstasy importation, said his attorney, Ronald Hoevet.

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Leads Sought in Northeast Murder

Portland Police Bureau Homicide Detectives, in cooperation with Crime Stoppers, are asking for your help in solving a homicide.

On Sunday, Nov. 17 at 4:30 a.m., police responded to a report of "shots fired" near the intersection of Northeast 22nd Avenue and Lombard Street. Upon arrival officers found evidence that several shots had indeed been fired and at least one person had been injured.

Shortly thereafter, officers learned that



Domingo Lee Gonzalez

a man, later identified as 25-year old Domingo Lee Gonzales of Portland, had been transported from the location to a hospital by private vehicle and had died.

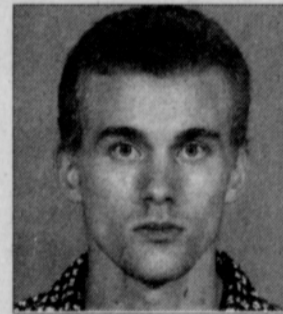
According to investigators, Gonzales had been outside a home used as "after hours club," at 7144 N.E. 22nd, where it is believed 30 to 50 people were inside. Investigators also

believe Gonzales' killing may have been either gang related, or stemmed from an earlier altercation at the address.

Auto Theft Task Force Seeks Suspect

The Portland Police Bureau's Auto Theft Task Force, in cooperation with Crime Stoppers, is asking for your help in locating and apprehending Jacob Gilbert Bowe.

A felony no-bail arrest warrant charges Bowe with unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. The task force also wants to question him in connection with



James Gilbert Bowe

a number of other stolen vehicles.

Bowe is a 21-year old white male with a date of birth of June 11, 1981. He is 6 feet tall and weighs approximately 150 pounds with blond hair and blue eyes. He has "WS" tattooed on his right leg, "CRIP" tattooed on his left leg, and three dots tattooed on his right hand.

Crime Stoppers is offering a cash reward of up to \$1,000 for information, reported to Crime Stoppers, that leads to an arrest in this case, or any unsolved felony crime, any you need not give your name. Call Crime Stoppers at 503-823-HELP.

FBI Tackles Child Porn Undercover

(AP) — The FBI in Oregon has begun an undercover operation in cyberspace to expose child pornographers and sexual predators.

FBI officials will be logging into chat rooms and pretending to be children, to hook a sexual predator and curb an epidemic of child pornography.

The start of the Innocent Images Task Force in Oregon comes after the state Supreme Court adopted new rules allowing lawyers to work in undercover investigations.

The FBI estimates that one in five children receive sexual solicitations online.

Insurance Agent Charged with Fraud

A Vancouver insurance agent has been charged with 18 counts of theft in a fraud scheme prosecutors estimate cost the Farmers Insurance Co. and individual victims \$321,000.

Police said Darel Scott McMahon's arrest was the result of an investigation into allegations of securities fraud and theft while working as an insurance agent for Farmers.

The company was alerted to the possibility of fraud and theft when a customer with a question about an annuity type investment of \$97,900 discovered the account was never established.

Authorities said Farmers responded immediately with a group of auditors and investigators descending on McMahon's Mill Plain office seizing records, documents, computers and data.