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PRESS RELEASE

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Thirteen Men Indicted For Shootings, Other Violence Tied to Gun Battles Between Rival Crews - Crimes Include Multiple Shootings, Homicides -

WASHINGTON – Thirteen men have been indicted on conspiracy and other charges stemming from murders, shootings and other crimes committed since July 2009 in a violent rivalry between two street crews in Southeast Washington, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department, announced today.

The charges were contained in two indictments returned on March 15, 2011 in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and involve crimes committed by crews that operated in the Benning Terrace area, also known as “Simple City.”

One indictment charges four individuals from the “Avenue,” an area in Benning Terrace west of 46th Street SE, with conspiring to assault several individuals from the “Circle,” a cul-de-sac located in the 600 Block of 46th Place SE. The other indictment charges nine individuals associated with the “Circle” with conspiring to assault several individuals from the “Avenue.”

The charges expand upon two earlier indictments against four of the defendants. The new indictments charge additional people and broaden the allegations of criminal conduct.

Five of the defendants already were in custody. Law enforcement authorities arrested the remaining eight defendants as part of a coordinated effort by MPD and the U.S. Marshal Service.

The indictments include charges from several shootings in April and May of 2010, including two murders.

These charges carry significant penalties. The four alleged members of the “Avenue” crew face charges including first degree murder while armed, which carries a penalty of 30 years to life in prison. Six alleged members of the “Circle” crew face charges that include second

degree murder while armed, punishable by at least 20 years in prison.

“Today’s indictments allege that rival street crews who shared a tiny patch of real estate in Benning Terrace engaged in urban warfare that turned deadly,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “The indictments seek to hold members of both crews responsible for the murder that resulted from their gun battle over Memorial Day weekend in 2010. These sweeping charges demonstrate the aggressive work of our prosecutors to dismantle the crews that bring waves of retaliatory violence to our neighborhoods.”

“Typically gang members not only target rival gang members, but they also commit other criminal acts,” said Police Chief Lanier. “As a result of this operation, violence will be significantly reduced in this neighborhood. I want to thank our fellow law enforcement partners – particularly the U.S. Marshal Service - for their efforts.”

The defendants named in the case against the “Avenue” crew include: Raymond Davis, also known as Soldier Boy, 18; Deante Harding, also known as White Boy Tay, 22; Jean-Robert Jean-Baptiste, also known as Junior, 20, and William Spriggs, also known as Weetie, 22.

The defendants named in the case against the “Circle” crew include: Curtis Faison, 19; Antonio Fortson, also known as T.O., 19, Anthony Hebron, also known as Peanut, 17; Lamonte Henson, also known as Tiggy, 19; Kevin Magruder, also known as Son, 29; Marcellus McCray, also known as Mateo, 17; Deandre Mungo, also known as Dee, 19; Timothy Parker, also known as Step, 33, and Lamont Thomas, 20.

All but Henson are from Washington, D.C. Henson is from Upper Marlboro, Md. The earlier indictments were returned against Faison, Magruder, Parker and Spriggs.

The indictments charge that several shootouts occurred since July 2009 between “Avenue” and “Circle” individuals. They allege that, on April 10, 2010, Faison murdered Melvin White, 27, in the 600 Block of 46th Place SE. Subsequently, Thomas and Fortson allegedly armed themselves and fired several shots at individuals they associated with the “Avenue.”

On May 14, 2010, Spriggs, Jean-Baptiste, and Davis entered the 600 Block of 46th Place SE and shot Thomas, according to the charging papers.

According to the indictments, more violence followed. On May 30, 2010, McCray, Mungo and Hebron are accused of shooting several rounds at individuals around the 600 block of 46th Street SE. A few minutes later, Spriggs, Jean-Baptiste, Davis, and Harding allegedly entered the Circle and fired several rounds. In the Circle, Fortson, Henson, McCray, Mungo, Hebron, and Parker also fired several rounds, according to the charging documents. This firefight resulted in the death of Antwan Buckner, 32.

An indictment is merely an allegation that defendants have committed a violation of criminal law and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty in a court of law.

This case is being investigated by lead detective Kenniss Weeks of the Metropolitan Police Department and other detectives of the Violent Crimes Branch. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jeff Pearlman and Laura Bach.

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