



United States Attorney's Office
District of Arizona



Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms
and Explosives



Phoenix Police Department

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Public Affairs
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“OPERATION GIDEON” NETS 70 DEFENDANTS IN HOME INVASION ATTEMPTS

PHOENIX - United States Attorney for the District of Arizona, Dennis K. Burke; Special Agent in Charge William D. Newell of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); and Public Safety Manager Jack Harris of the Phoenix Police Department, announced today the preliminary results of a unique undercover initiative designed to pro-actively and aggressively address violent crime. Specifically targeted were incidents of home invasions occurring throughout the greater Phoenix area.

Dubbed “Operation Gideon,” the pilot project involved the deployment of some of ATF's most experienced undercover operatives to team with local agents and police investigators by conducting sting investigations involving violent home invasion crews. Phoenix was selected as the launch site for “Operation Gideon” to address violent crimes, including home invasion robberies and kidnappings. One case arose in the Tucson area, as well.

U.S. Attorney Dennis K. Burke stated that, “ The success of ‘Operation Gideon’ is due to the strong law enforcement and criminal justice partnerships we have developed throughout Arizona. By targeting resources toward specific criminal enterprises, we can prevent and reduce crime in our communities.”

ATF Special Agent In-Charge William Newell stated that, “ATF’s primary mission is to reduce violent crime and in doing so protect the citizens of our nation’s communities. We are very proud of our long-standing working relationships with police departments across the country to aggressively address violent crime. Over this past summer we did just that with the Phoenix Police Department when we joined forces to proactively combat home invasion robberies occurring in our area. ATF coupled its unique experience and expertise at the Federal level with the local expertise of the Phoenix Police Department to arrest the members of numerous home invasion robbery crews before they could carry-out their violent illegal activities. These joint ATF-Phoenix Police Department efforts will continue and our men and women will continue to work long hours side-by-side to ensure our citizens are safe in their homes.”

The U.S. Attorney’s Office has historically been able to charge individuals involved in home invasion robberies with an array of federal charges, including the use of firearms in the furtherance of a drug trafficking offense [18 USC 924(c)], as well as possession of firearms by prohibited persons and a host of other charges. The statute, 18 USC 924(c), carries a minimum mandatory sentencing that must run consecutive to the sentences for related criminal offenses. It is with this philosophy and the combined enforcement efforts of ATF and the Phoenix Police Department that will impact violent crime and help

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to prevent spillover violence in our communities.

“The relationship between the Phoenix Police Department and our federal law enforcement partners, such as this is crucial to our success in reducing crime in Phoenix,” stated City of Phoenix Public Safety Manager Jack F. Harris. “Those individuals who feel they can commit violent crimes, such as home invasions and kidnappings need to understand that we will hunt them down and bring them to justice. Joining forces with these federal agencies allows us to expand our reach and arrest these criminals where they once thought they were untouchable.”

Operation Gideon yielded 70 arrests, the seizure of approximately \$39,000 dollars, several firearms along with ballistic vests, plastic restraints, duct tape, gloves and ski masks. The vast majority of these cases will be prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office. Operation Gideon began in May 2009 and ran for 120 days.

Although Operation Gideon has come to a close, ATF will continue to investigate these violent robbery crews in partnership with the Phoenix Police Department.

Criminal complaints are simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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