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FBI Raids Home of Rep. Cunningham

A federal grand jury is looking into the San Diego congressman's ties to a defense contractor.

By TONY PERRY
Times Staff Writer

RANCHO SANTA FE, Calif. — Federal agents Friday raided the home of Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham as part of a grand jury probe of the congressman's links to a defense contractor. Agents also served search warrants on the Washington offices of the contractor, M2M Inc., and at the Duke Strip, the 42-foot yacht owned by M2M founder Mitchell Wade where Cunningham (R-San Diego) has been liv-

ing for more than a year. K. Lee Black, Cunningham's lawyer, called the raid "an appalling abuse of government power." The federal investigation centers on the sale of Cunningham's house in November 2003 to Wade for \$1,675,000. Investigators appear to be looking at whether the price was inflated to allow Wade to funnel money to the congressman. Cunningham's position in Congress, where he sits on a committee that controls the Pentagon budget, could have allowed him to influence the flow of contracts to M2M. The house was never offered publicly for sale. Months after buying it, Wade sold the home for \$975,000, a \$700,000 loss. Cunningham and his wife bought



HAJNE PALMOUR IV/North County Times
RAID: FBI agents searched the Rancho Santa Fe home of Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham as part of a corruption probe.

their current house, an 8,000-square-foot home in Rancho Santa Fe, for \$2.5 million soon after selling the Del Mar Heights house to Wade. Cunningham says he offered

to sell the house to Wade after the contractor said he needed a place near Miramar Marine Corps Air Station, where M2M has a project.

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Killings Rise in Sheriff's Jurisdiction

Homicides are up 11% so far this year in areas served by Baca's department. Gang violence gets much of the blame.

By RONG-GONG LIN II
Times Staff Writer

Killings in communities served by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department rose 11% in the first six months of this year, even as homicides within the city of Los Angeles fell. Officials blamed the spike on increased gang activity in areas such as Compton, Lynwood and surrounding communities, and Sheriff Lee Baca acknowledged Friday that his department has struggled to deal with the problem.

In Compton, the change is especially dramatic. While the first six months of 2004 saw 12 homicides, the lowest number in decades, 35 have already been recorded this year — just four shy of last year's total. "You've got to say to yourself, 'Have we really seriously affected gangs and violence here?' And the answer is no," Baca said the day after his department buried a 15-year veteran who was shot and killed last week in Hawaiian Gardens; a longtime gang member is the main suspect.

Out of the 198 homicides that occurred in sheriff's jurisdictions so far this year, at least 100 were gang-related, said Capt. Mike Ford, who heads the sheriff's law enforcement unit. Last year, at this time, there had been 179 homicides.

By contrast, the Los Angeles Police Department has recorded a 7% drop in homicides citywide during the same period, from 257 last year to 238 this year. Even in high-crime areas of South Los Angeles, the number of killings has remained about the same. Ford acknowledged the LAPD's record, pointing out that the department has focused more attention on gang crimes, including allocating more officers to special units and researching gang-crime patterns.

"They reorganized their gang units, they recognized the trend and devoted tremendous resources to it that we haven't been able to match," Ford said.

Although the Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement services for communities throughout the county, officials said the spike in killings was most pronounced in a southern section of the county. "There's a lot of violence out there," said Capt. Ray Peavy of the sheriff's homicide bureau. "Gang activity is more prevalent today than it was a year ago, and it seems to be increasing."

The number of homicides in areas served by the Sheriff's Department rose steadily between 2001 and 2004 — increasing from 329 to 383, a 16% jump, according to the sheriff's homicide unit. Meanwhile, areas served by the Los Angeles Police Department saw a 13% decline from 591 to 515, a 13% decline.

Baca said he did not believe the contrast between the county's rising homicide count and the decline in the city of Los Angeles was significant. Even with downward crime trends re-

ported by the LAPD in many categories, Baca said, crimes per capita remained higher in the city than in the county.

But some residents in the areas most severely hit with homicides and shootings said that their neighborhoods were being taken over by the violence and that law enforcement wasn't doing enough to stop it.

"Every time I turn around, someone is telling me someone is shot," said Royce Esters, a Compton resident who heads the National Assn. for Equal Justice in America. "It's like people are slowly dying in Compton, and no one is saying [anything] about it."

Esters said he planned to go to next week's Compton City Council meeting to call for more

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'Each town has something to celebrate.'

Lynn Ziegler, chairwoman of the Defeat of Jesse James Days Parade in Northfield, Minn.



Photographs by GLENN KOENIG/Los Angeles Times

SILLY UTILITY VEHICLE: A Los Nietos Shriner navigates the Strawberry Festival parade in Garden Grove. Local businesses helped with donations to the 47th annual event, which had been in danger of cancellation.

A Nation in Step With Parades

Squeezed by budget limits, threatened by rising insurance rates and security charges, America's street spectacles still march down Main Street.

By DAVID HALDANE
Times Staff Writer

Garden Grove's annual Strawberry Festival parade was on its last legs, a 47-year tradition threatened by the rising cost of security and insurance. But because America loves its parades — just take a look around on July Fourth — the community stepped forward.

A car dealership donated \$10,000 plus a small fleet of vehicles bearing the company's name. Several other businesses, including a supermarket and dermatology clinic, pitched in and, soon enough, nearly \$44,000 was raised. The parade, a remnant of bygone days when the city cloaked in strawberry fields, was saved.

Thousands of people lined Garden Grove Boulevard that day in May to watch high school marching bands with uniformed clarinet players and girls in feathered boots. The town's mayor passed in



FAMILY EVENT: Parade-watchers were out in force in Garden Grove. In Los Angeles, about 80 parade permits were issued last year, according to the LAPD.

a vintage Chevrolet waving to the crowd. Beauty queens strutted their stuff and Shriners rode fire engines. Moms and dads cheered loudly as kids wearing Scout uniforms sauntered by. "I love the music," gushed Richard

Gould, 42, amid vendors circling the crowd selling cotton candy and an announcer addressing marchers by name. "I like seeing people I know."

Rodney Smith, relaxing in a folding chair. [See Parade, Page A15]

Mexican Emigres Celebrate, Shrug Over New Presidential Voting Right

Getting to vote in their homeland's elections for president provokes a mixed response.

By SAM QUINONES
Times Staff Writer

The job of Los Inseparables del Norte is to remind Mexicans of the place they had to leave with songs of betrayal and unre-

quited love. Daily, accordionist Santos Macias and Juan Jose Salazar on *bejo serajo* guitar trapeze through the Alameda Swap Meet, southeast of downtown Los Angeles, to serenade people like themselves who left Mexico as economic outcasts.

Macias, for one, was therefore happy that Mexico had finally remembered its immigrants.

This week the Mexican Congress approved legislation that

for the first time will allow citizens living outside the country to vote by mail in Mexican presidential elections, beginning in July 2006.

Mexican officials estimate that 10 million of their compatriots live in the United States. Of those, an estimated 4 million may be eligible to vote in the next election. With this newfound power, immigrants can help make Mexico a country that people don't have to leave, Macias

said. "It's our country of origin," he said, his accordion lashed across his chest. "Most of us are thinking of going home. Naturally, we want to go home to a country that's better off."

Yet Macias was subdued. He'd felt his country's betrayal and unrequited love before. He'd voted several times in Mexico, and it had not done much good, he said. He had been forced to leave for lack of work.

Meanwhile, Salazar, his partner, had barely heard of the Congress' decision.

Like Los Inseparables del Norte, the Mexican community reacted with mixed emotions to their new voting right this week.

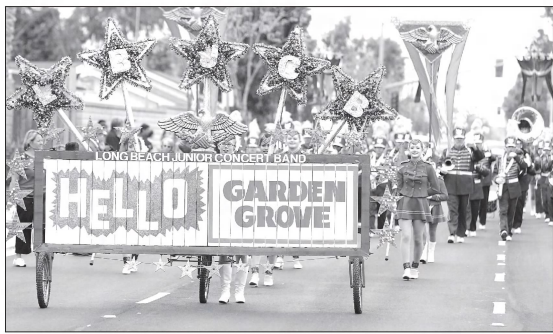
Immigrant leaders, who lobbied relentlessly for it, were overjoyed; people on the street took the development in stride.

Nonetheless, the decision seemed vindication for immigrants, who had long been dis-

paraged by Mexican government officials as traitors to Mexico. In the last decade, immigrants and their dollars have become central forces in the development of many Mexican towns, often performing government responsibilities, such as building roads and classrooms.

Their contributions have given them respect back home that many immigrants have used to influence how their rela-

[See Vote, Page A17]



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GLENN KOEHLER LOS ANGELES TIMES
PARADES TO BEAT THE BAND: The Long Beach Junior Concert Band in the Garden Grove parade. One parade promoter estimates there are more than 50,000 parades nationwide each year.

Parades March Past a Long List of Obstacles

[Parade, from Page A14]
chair on the sidewalk, shared those sentiments. "It's lots of fun to watch," he said. "The kids get a kick out of it. This brings people together."

It's a scene played out across the country, from Villa Park to New York City: the historic and steady public affection for hometown parades.

It's unclear how many parades are held annually in Southern California. In Los Angeles, about 80 parade permits were issued last year, compared with about 50 in 2000, according to information supplied by the Los Angeles Police Department. Nicaraguans are planning a parade near MacArthur Park to honor their homeland, said Bill Lomas, president and CEO of Pageantry Productions, a Lynwood company that produces and manages parades statewide.

In Stanton, Lomas said, residents plan a parade in October to commemorate the anniversary of cityhood. In Long Beach, a state firefighters association is planning a parade for October 2006 to recognize firefighters, especially those killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Last year, parades were born in San Fernando (for Veterans Day), Lynwood (Cinco de Mayo) and Van Nuys (celebrating diversity).

In recent years, various Los Angeles neighborhoods have held parades celebrating Buddha's birthday, black history and police officers.

New suburban communities are quick to put parades on their civic agendas.

When they build these new subdivisions, Lomas said, they don't build downtowns anymore. There are new communities all over Southern California, but they're not putting in a downtown and there's no sense of community in that. Parades bring a sense of community."

Sylvia Allen, a parade consultant from Altamira, Minn., where the Fish House parade features town elders festooned with tree branches (which provide shelter for fish fishermen) says that it takes for a successful parade.

"It has to be interesting — music, dancing, floats, kids — and you have to involve the entire community," she said. "You have to have the military, the fire trucks, the VFW — and you have to pace it."

"You don't put all the fire trucks up front; it has to be noise, interesting, quiet, noise, interesting, quiet. High school marching bands, high-step dancers, Boy Scouts, Troop 309. You want to have successful events, so you put kids in them because kids come with parents."

Ceremonial group processions are believed to be among the oldest forms of organized human celebration. As far back as 3000 BC, historians say, people marched along prescribed paths in religious observances.

The Romans were fond of staging imperial processions into the city with triumphant soldiers returning from foreign conquests. Their purpose, according to Jack Santino, a professor of popular culture at Ohio's Bowling Green State University, was "to reinforce the [emperor] and the government."

"The Roman parades," he said, "were to demonstrate the victory, but also to show [off] the ruling power."

Such displays of vanity by the rulers were adopted far and wide, easily adapted in the United States beginning with military reviews during the Revolutionary War and extending through today's presidential inaugurations, as well as parades celebrating Armed Forces Day



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GLENN KOEHLER LOS ANGELES TIMES
TAKE THAT: Sadie Nolde makes a two-handed contribution as she marches with the Garden Grove Senior Citizens. Nearly \$44,000 was raised to save the Strawberry Festival parade.

'It's kind of a hometown thing. The parade is so unifying. Everyone can get behind a parade.'

John Bahorski
Seal Beach city manager

and Independence Day. Ethnic and special-interest parades also evolved, such as those for St. Patrick's Day and Cinco de Mayo, and annual gay pride parades.

Then there are parades spawned by parades. Pasadena's Rose Parade is parodied by the satirical Inland Fair, also in Pasadena — which has itself inspired other anti-parade parades.

The annual July 4th Doo Dah Parade in Columbus, Ohio, urges spectators and participants to "throw everything you ever knew about political correctness, social norms or decency out the window. Eccentrics, protesters, the sexually unrestrained and just plain wack-jobs come out of the woodwork to attain new levels of free expression."

Based on information that comes to his website, Hometown Parades of America, Minneapolis-based parade promoter Dan Fries estimates there are more than 50,000 parades nationwide every year — and they don't wait for themes.

They include the Lighted Sarnia Inland Parade in Sunnyside, Wash.; the Fall Popcorn Festival Parade in Marion, Ohio; the Golf Cart Parade in Palm Desert; the Fiesta Pooch (think costumed dogs) and Fiesta Flambeau (imagine torches) parades in San Antonio; the Chocolate Fest Parade in Burlington, Wis.; the Pickle Parade in St. Joe, Ind.; the Butter & Egg Day Parade in Petaluma, Calif.; and the Defeat of Jesse James Days Parade in Northfield, Minn.

"Each town has something to celebrate," said Lynn Ziegler, chairwoman of the Jesse James event, commemorating the day in 1876 when a local banker refused to open his vault for the infamous gang, resulting in his murder and an uprising of local citizens who killed two gang members and drove the rest out of town. "This is the best event of the year."

Among its most enthusiastic participants, Ziegler said, are those portraying the historic gangsters who, in re-enacting their attempted robbery and its aftermath, "are the only ones permitted to shoot. They like to make a ruckus and run around on their horses," she said. "That's a big

highlight for the kids."

Her most memorable failure: a man in a gorilla suit riding on roller blades while playing an accordion.

"That wasn't such a big hit," Ziegler recalled. "I didn't bring him back again."

Further in the realm of whimsy and closer to home, consider the parade of boats held annually in the Orange County community of Villa Park, 20 miles from the Pacific. It's the Great Villa Park Inland Yacht Parade, touted as the nation's only boat parade on land, now in its eighth year and growing.

"It's the kind of thing you do in a small town," said Karen Holthe, who has served as the event's chairwoman.

Some parades are on the ropes, in part because of added insurance and security costs spawned by 9/11 or because of government cutbacks. Others thrive, in part because corporations frequently see parade sponsorships as an effective form of advertising.

This year the Seaside Lions Club of Seal Beach, overwhelmed by the expense, said it would pull the plug on its 25-year-old Spruce parade.

"It was just getting to be too much," Jackie Maloney, the event's coordinator, said.

"There've been so many cuts in the city's budget that we ended up having to pay for street closures, toilets, barriers and setting up the stages all by ourselves. We've been doing it for three years under duress; for this year we just said no more."

But city officials intervened, promising to co-sponsor the parade next year, 9/11 or because of government cutbacks. Others thrive, in part because corporations frequently see parade sponsorships as an effective form of advertising.

"It's kind of a hometown thing," Seal Beach City Manager John Bahorski explained. "The parade is so unifying. Everyone can get behind a parade."

Similarly, when the Snow Festival parade in Tahoe City was jeopardized because the California Highway Patrol, for the first time in 24 years, decided to charge for its services, the community rallied with donations and saved the event, said Ruth Schnabel, the event's executive director.

Garden Grove's Strawberry Festival parade was salvaged when the local Nissan dealership stepped forward with a large donation and was allowed to provide many of the parade's vehicles.

And so it came to pass that San Klein, general manager of the Nissan dealership, found himself driving one of the parade cars, sandwiched somewhere between a waving politician and a group of marching clowns.

"I'm so glad that the city is still doing this," said Susan Arnd, 47, who's been attending the spectacle since childhood. "I just love a parade."

Suspected Ringleaders Among Those Arrested

[Raids, from Page A14]
that notoriety would hurt Koreatown businesses that are finally recovering from the effects of the 1982 Los Angeles riots.

The Southern California investigation was launched two years ago by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Internal Revenue Service's criminal investigation division and the Los Angeles County sheriff's vice squad.

Using court-authorized wiretaps and undercover informants, investigators said, they were able to track the activities of the organization's leaders for months.

Among the 18 people arrested in Southern California last Thursday and early Friday on prostitution-related conspiracy charges was the alleged ringleader, Young Joon Jung, about 40, a resident of Koreatown. Investigators also seized more than \$1 million.

Yang said the Jung organization was a "top to bottom" criminal enterprise. The organization smuggled women into the United States via Canada and Mexico, usually after they agreed to pay as much as \$16,000 from their earnings as prostitutes, she said.

The women were then turned over to an underground network of Korean "taxi" services that assigned and transported them each day to various brothels. Authorities said the brothels operated under the guise of being massage parlors, chiropractic clinics and businesses offering aromatherapy, acupuncture, and acupuncturists were implicated.

Across the street from one Koreatown establishment frequented by investigators, a store owner Jong Sun Kang said Friday she could hardly believe that people would pay to lease professional licenses to engage in prostitution.

"I have heard about things like that happening in some massage parlors," she said. "But medical offices? This is very, very serious."

"I just hope this will not harm the Korean community's reputation," she said. "Most Korean immigrants are like me — we work hard and are good citizens. I hope the mainstream will understand that and not think badly of all of us."

The suspected brothels were not limited to Koreatown. Some were located in the San Fernando Valley, South Gate, Santa Monica, Redondo Beach and Anaheim.

The taxi services, which allegedly were run by members and associates of Jung's organization, occasionally sent the women to work at brothels in Texas, Colorado and Northern California, according to the affidavit.

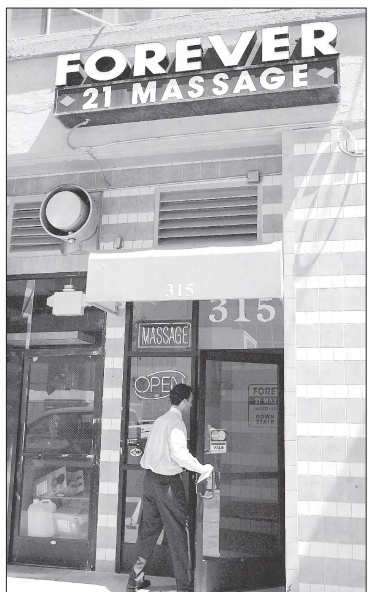
In one wiretapped conversation recorded in April, one of Jung's associates was overheard complaining about the arrest of 16 women by U.S. Border Patrol officers as they were being taken across the Canadian border in a recreational vehicle rented in El Monte.

Another alleged ring member lamented a crackdown by Mexican officials in Mexico, saying the police there were arresting everyone who looked Korean. He said he found a way around the crackdown in Mexico, saying he had a friendly Mexican immigration officer on his payroll.

In the San Francisco-area roundup, about 400 federal and local officers arrested 27 suspects. Five others charged in a grand jury indictment were still at large. The raid, dubbed Operation Glided in El Monte, netted \$2 million in cash.

By morning, more than 100 Korean women detained at 11 separate massage parlors had been taken to an undisclosed location. They appeared to be about 20 to 27 years old. Victim assistance workers were living among them in an effort to coax them out of the parlors. More than half a dozen local social service and legal groups dispatched aid.

Under the nine-month Northern California investigation, which was hailed as a coordinated effort, involving the U.S. attorney's office, the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, the FBI,



BEN MARGOT Associated Press
IN SAN FRANCISCO: A reporter enters a massage parlor Friday, the morning after 27 people were arrested in raids on this and other businesses and homes in the Bay Area.



LOBI SREPKER Los Angeles Times
IN LOS ANGELES: Young Joon Jung, arrested in one of the raids made late Thursday and early Friday, is suspected of heading a prostitution ring from this Santa Monica Boulevard site.



BEN MARGOT Associated Press
PROSECUTOR: U.S. Atty. Kevin Ryan said it wasn't immediately known whether the women were coerced.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the San Francisco Police Department, the Internal Revenue Service and the State Department's Diplomatic Security Service.

Officials said the operation successfully dismantled a "large criminal organization" headed by Young Joon Yang, 37, of Pleasant Hill, Calif.

Brad Schlozman, acting assistant attorney general for civil rights, said the still-unfolding investigation appeared to be "one of our biggest" nationwide. Officials said the San Francisco investigation unraveled a "sophisticated criminal enterprise" and therefore was a more serious case than the one brought in Los Angeles.

According to the indictment, two defendants — Wu Sang Nah and Sung Yong Kim — are believed to have smuggled at least two female Korean nationals across the U.S. border from Canada. The women were then taken to Virginia, Los Angeles and eventually San Francisco to work as prostitutes.

The indictment alleges that

Young Joon Yang operated a taxi service and travel agency dedicated to transporting those two women as well as many others to and from brothels throughout San Francisco as well as to other prostitution engagements in Las Vegas and other cities.

Many of those arrested worked as drivers or support staff for Young Joon Yang. The more than two dozen men and women indicted face charges of conspiring to bring in and harbor aliens, sex trafficking, money laundering conspiracy, and transporting women in interstate commerce to engage in prostitution.

The indictment does not specify whether the women were working off smuggling debts or engaging in prostitution against their will. Advocates said 20% to 30% of women in such situations typically are coerced into prostitution and that the rest are working as prostitutes voluntarily.

Kevin Ryan, U.S. attorney in San Francisco, said information about the circumstances of their prostitution will probably emerge in the coming days.

"There's a belief that San Francisco is a major player in human trafficking," he said. "It's a gateway to the Pacific, and this is a city where many of the women are brought."

Friday afternoon, several dozen shocked family members and friends crowded into a federal courtroom to await the first court appearances of the detained, as defense attorneys milled about to pair with potential clients.

"It's a very broad sweep," San Jose criminal-defense attorney Tak Chang said of the raids. "I suspect some of these people will be very minor players — drivers and receptionists. This might be a tactic to get the bigger fish."

Times staff writer Lee Romney, reporting from San Francisco, contributed to this report.

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