

MTA Chairman's Brave New World

Strong Seeks \$4.5 Billion To Fund Upgrade Services / Fares Hike In, Page 3

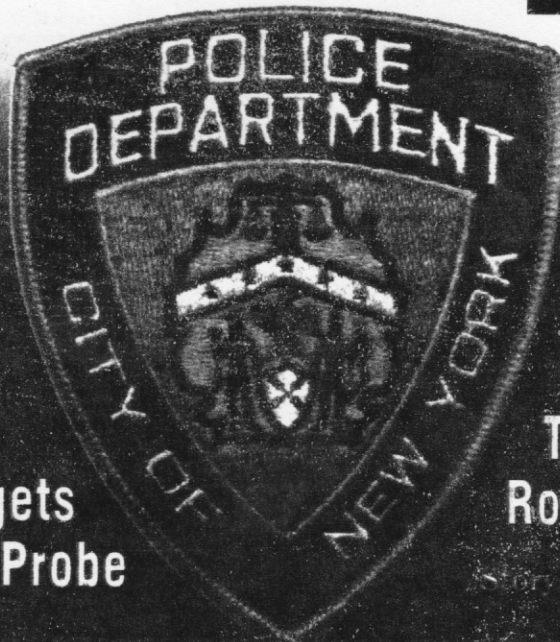
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Feds Zero In On Cops



Sources:
At Least 10
Precincts Targets
Of Corruption Probe

Officers Tied
To Drug Dealing,
Robbery, Extortion

Story on Pages 1-5

Feds Target

Probe focusing on 10 precincts

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Federal law enforcement authorities have launched an investigation into allegations of police corruption in at least 10 of the city's 75 precincts, sources close to the investigation said.

Some officers in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens precincts allegedly are involved in illegal acts that include extorting merchants, taking payoffs to protect apartment houses, dealing drugs, robbing shop owners and acting as spotters for burglary rings.

Three Brooklyn precincts under investigation by the U.S. attorney in the Southern District, Otto Obermaier, are linked to accused "coke cop" Michael Dowd. Investigators are preparing a racketeering case against Dowd, who was one of five officers arrested last month on charges that they ran a cocaine ring from two Brooklyn precincts and sold drugs on Long Island, sources said.

Many of the corruption allegations in other precincts involve officers in Police Commissioner Lee Brown's heralded Community Policing, or "CPOP" units, sources said.

New York Newsday reported earlier this week that, in an unprecedented move, federal investigators are probing allegations of police corruption and excluding the NYPD's Internal Affairs Division because they don't trust IAD's disciplinary system.

The expanded investigation also is being conducted independent of IAD, sources said yesterday.

"We have no information about them [federal authorities] expanding their probe," Police Deputy Commissioner Suzanne Trazoff said, adding IAD officials conferred with Southern District investigators yesterday.

Andrew Maloney, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District, which includes Brooklyn and Queens, couldn't be reached for comment yesterday.

Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes also has begun a police corruption investigation, according to sources. Hynes refused comment yesterday.

Because the probe has only recently begun, the allegations haven't been substantiated and do not involve the majority of the 10 precincts' officers. The precincts under investigation are:

- The 34th Precinct, Washington Heights, Manhattan. Longstanding allegations of drug-related corruption against officers are now being investigated along with allegations that CPOP officers are "shaking down" merchants.

The officers "go around to the stores introducing themselves to the merchants. They tell the store owners they're also there 'soliciting for burglary insurance,'" said one source involved in the investigation. Some officers allegedly also are selling drugs from their cars and are providing protection to dealers.

- The 30th Precinct, Harlem, Manhattan. Some officers on the midnight tour allegedly are dealing drugs. It is unclear how many officers are accused.

- The 23rd Precinct, Upper East Side, Manhattan. Some officers are accused of having an unwritten policy of doing favors for neighborhood residents in exchange for payoffs. Doormen, restaurant and store owners and residents are granted extra protection and cops are paid as if they were private security guards, according to the allegations.

- The Fifth Precinct, Chinatown, Manhattan. Some officers are accused of robbing merchants. Sources said the Asian merchants are reluctant to report crime and corrupt officers have taken advantage of that.

- The Ninth Precinct, East Village, Manhattan. Officers are accused of taking kickbacks from dealers.

- The 108th Precinct, Long Island City, Queens. Allegations are that officers have been shaking down owners of small factories and warehouses for protection and that they are "casing the places for the burglars" if they don't comply.

- The 90th Precinct, Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Allegations that officers are involved with Dominican heroin gangs.



- The 73rd, 94th and 75th Precincts, Brownsville, Greenpoint and East New York, Brooklyn. As many as a dozen officers are being investigated in connection with Dowd and the five other cops charged with operating a cocaine ring from the 73rd and 94th. Investigators also are looking into whether Dowd and other officers may have been involved in a cocaine ring operated by cops in the 75th Precinct and busted in 1988.

Some sources said the FBI is monitoring the investigation, but FBI spokesman Joseph Valiquette said yesterday the FBI hasn't been asked to join a probe.

The investigation is being conducted by the Official Corruption Unit of the Southern District. The unit's head, Assistant U.S. Attorney David Lawrence, re-

fused to comment.

New York Newsday reported in November that pockets of corruption exist within the city's precincts and that IAD has either been unwilling or unable to root them out.

In the case of Dowd, IAD failed to make a case against him despite allegations that he was using and dealing drugs since 1988.

During New York Newsday's four-month investigation last year, police officers and prosecutors cited allegations of corruption and brutality throughout the city that IAD failed to pursue aggressively. In some instances, sources said IAD deliberately leaked its own probes to its targets.

In the 1970s, the Knapp Commission was formed to

Dirty Cops

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Under Scrutiny

Brooklyn

73rd Precinct Brownsville

One of Brooklyn's busiest with 78 homicides last year. The number of robberies have risen in the precinct, police say, but burglaries and robberies have declined.

75th Precinct East New York

One of the city's most violent precincts, East New York was the highest homicide area until Manhattan's Washington Heights recently edged it out. More than 100 homicides occur in the precinct each year, mostly in drug-related violence.

90th Precinct Williamsburg

A precinct in which about two dozen homicides occur each year, Williamsburg has been marred by increasing drug traffic.

94th Precinct Greenpoint

Relatively peaceful area. Only eight homicides occurred in the precinct last year and the murder rate has never exceeded single digits in the past four years. There has been a slight increase in robberies in the area but burglary and assaults in the precinct have declined, according to police statistics.

Manhattan

Fifth Precinct Chinatown, Little Italy

With about a dozen homicides each year, this precinct has had some instances of Asian gang-related violence and increasing presence of drug traffickers.

Ninth Precinct East Village

A mix of yuppies and longtime residents, art galleries and drug dealers, violence in this

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neighborhood has declined in recent years as homicides dropped from more than 20 each year in 1990 and 1989 to 13 last year.

23rd Precinct Upper East Side

A neighborhood that has slowly become more economically mixed as gentrification moves uptown and drug trafficking moves south. Over the past four years, homicides have remained at around 30 each year.

30th Precinct Harlem

In this area which police say has had a longstanding drug trade, violence has escalated each year, from 44 homicides in 1988 to 56 last year.

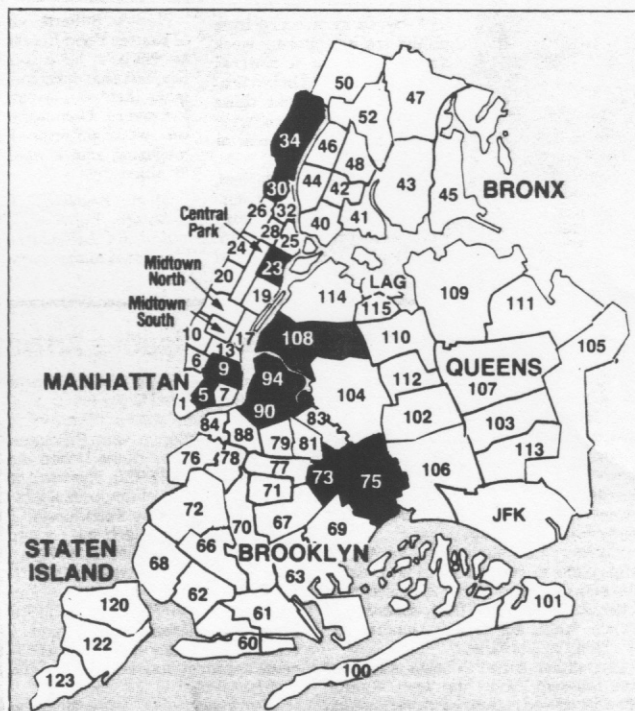
34th Precinct Washington Heights

Cocaine has made Washington Heights the home of one of the city's busiest, and most controversial, police station houses — the 34th Precinct. It leads the city in drug arrests, and is the city's most murderous neighborhood, with 119 murders last year. In the past three years, robberies have increased by 45 percent; assaults by 35 percent. All crimes are up in the Washington Heights neighborhood, law enforcement officials say — including those committed by cops.

Queens

108th Precinct Long Island City

A precinct in which homicides have declined each year — until last year. Homicides dropped from 19 in 1988 to only six in 1990 and then jumped to 10 last year.



Newsday File Photo / Jim Cummins

investigate widespread police corruption and laxity on the part of police brass in investigating it.

One result of the Knapp Commission was a beefed-up Internal Affairs Division, which became a nationwide model of how police can police themselves. However, sources told New York Newsday that during recent years, police officials have again grown lax in investigating corruption to avoid the embarrassment of scandals.

In November, IAD officials denied the existence of police corruption and said IAD had been successful in weeding it out. However, since Dowd and his cohorts were arrested last month by Suffolk County authorities, IAD Chief Robert Beatty has conceded that his division's procedures need revamping.