

History

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THE SEEDS OF ALLIANCES

Chicago street gangs emerged in the 1960s when a "youth group" called the Black P-Stone Rangers developed into a criminal organization. The group's leader, Jeff Fort, united the leaders of about 50 area street gangs into a single organization, calling it the Black P-Stones. A commission consisting of 21 men controlled the group and projected the group as a socially conscious, self-help organization that would help uplift themselves and their community. As a result, the group sought and obtained \$1.4 million in federal anti-poverty funds, which were in turn used to support the group's illegal activities. A federal grand jury uncovered the mismanagement of funds and the leader, Jeff Fort, was sent to federal prison.

The perceived success of the Black P-Stone Nation resulted in the formation of many other street gangs that claimed to be politically and socially motivated. However, many of the groups dropped to a level of disorganization, while others developed into sophisticated, highly organized groups involved in prostitution, robbery, burglary, extortion, and drug sales.

Two very influential gangs, the Black Disciples, led by David Barksdale, and the Gangster Disciples, led by Larry Hoover, followed the Black P-Stones example and unified their gangs to form the Black Gangster Disciple Nation. Throughout the 1970s, the Black P-Stone Nation and Black Gangster Disciple Nation controlled the Chicago drug trade and became bitter rivals expressing their anger by creating the bloodiest gang in the history of Chicago.

THE EMERGENCE OF ALLIANCES

Many of the leaders and members of the Chicago gangs ended up in federal and state correctional facilities. The increased number of individual gangs created a need for immediate visual gang identification that would enable members to distinguish allies from enemies among the prison population.

Inside the correctional facilities during the 1980s, gangs began separating into alliances. The two alliance names that emerged were the People Nation and Folk Nation. All gangs that were originally aligned with the Black P-Stone Nation aligned with the People Nation, and those that were originally aligned with the Black Gangster Disciple Nation aligned with the Folk Nation.